



WESTERN CONFERENCE CONTRACT BRIDGE Forum

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Special Events in Palm Springs December 12-18, 2011



Westin Mission Hills Resort, Rancho Mirage

The annual Passing of the Gavel Reception on Saturday of the Palm Springs Regional will feature, as always,

the incoming ACBL president accepting gavel honors from the current ACBL president, Craig Robinson. But this year we'll also feature a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, as we have also invited both the outgoing CEO, Jay Baum, and the incoming new CEO, Robert Hartman, to attend and to both be honored.

Teacher Accreditation

Teri Atkinson will present a special Teacher Accreditation program on Sunday, Nov. 11. To participate contact Teri by phone at 661 664-1678 or by e-mail at teriatk@sbcglobal.net

Mick Riccio & 299ers

On Monday Mick Riccio will offer a lesson on Reverses and Responses along with a complimentary lunch.

Gold Rush Pairs

We'll have three popular Gold Rush Pairs on Wed-Thurs-Fri.!

Bridge Behind Screens

As one more special treat Palm Springs will present a regional tournament first: Knockout Teams Bracket I & II played behind bidding screens --their final deciding match behind screens just like the finals of national and world events.

2011 D22 Goodwill Nominees

By Warren Cederborg
D22 Goodwill Chairman

Area I: Nominees from Teri Atkinson & Warren Cederborg
Connie Bruce, of Unit 514. Connie is the cheerful player you see walking into the game with her hands full -- she cooks and bakes and prepares all kinds of wonderful things to eat. She makes Tuesdays and Sundays the days you don't want to miss! But food is not the only thing that sets Connie apart: she is very friendly and takes particular care with new players and visitors. She is always willing to play with anyone when we need her. She serves on the Unit 514 Board of Directors and takes responsibility for hospitality at two sectionals a year. She's a hard worker - the kind every unit wants to have on hand!

Don Schroeder, Unit 542. Don is one of those players who makes attending a tournament in Santa Barbara such a pleasure! He is friendly and helpful to all. He has chaired sectionals for his unit and served on the unit board. He is supportive of all the players and always ready with a smile to do whatever job is required. His fellow unit members consider him "one of their finest."

Area III: nominees from Bill Grant & Jon Wright
Matthew Kidd, Unit 526. The

nomination is for his widespread and tireless work with the unit websites, technology and the Internet in the service of the bridge community. His innovations in posting scores have helped units districts as far away as Nashville. He has also shown the San Diego area how a website can be used to promote the activities of several units in projects such as teaching bridge to high school students.

Mary Huffaker. Mary is from Unit 539 San Diego. She is the epitome of a good volunteer: she can do almost anything and she does it without anyone asking! She served on the Unit 539 Board as an outstanding Hospitality Chair. She's a great cook, and attendance grew at the games "because the food is always so good." Even now, Mary always steps up and fills the empty spot.

The game of bridge inspires Mary's helpfulness at any location. When other units have games, she can be seen (very quietly, I might add) picking up after people, folding bidding boxes, helping wherever needed. Where there is a game with newer bridge players in attendance Mary always quietly answers any questions and offers a welcoming attitude. A fine example for us all.

(Area II and Area IV nominees will be in next month's Forum.)



District Direction

By Ken Monzingo
National Board Representative

"One's first step in wisdom is to question everything; one's last is to come to terms with everything."

– Georg Christoph Lichtenberg 1742-1799

I'm having nightmares regarding the full court press that the Strength Of Field (SOF) creators are foisting upon our board. The SOF advocates a modification of the masterpoint formula, substituting a system based on the strength of the field, as opposed to the current system, which is influenced more on table count and class of the event, to determine the masterpoints awarded.

I'm opposed to this attempt to overhaul our good working point system that has served us very well, and replacing it with a complicated new formula that may reduce points available in lower brackets or strats, and award better players more points. We upped their LM requirements to 500, I don't relish reducing their MP awards.

Why change? What could be gained that is worth the effort and possible confusion? We're told that "... there is no doubt the current system is badly broken." Really? Where? The only people I know who think we have major problems are these who want to change it. Not the players I hear from; not the directors I've discussed it with.

Bridge out here in District 22, and the entire Western Conference, is on a huge upswing; players are coming out in happy droves, tournaments are booming, and the next complaint I hear about our current masterpoint formula will be the first since the infamous triple decker giveaways, and will be only the second I have ever heard. Best of all, our lower brackets and up-and-coming members are really happy.

Do you think we should insert a different formula that might confuse them? Or ... heavens! ... one which could reduce points available in our escalating Gold Rush Pairs? Not me. (We just added Gold Rush Pairs to the Orange County Regional, and had 102 pairs in our first 0-750 B/C Strat, en route to the largest OC Regional ever!)

Although I am against SOF, there is plenty of support, and a lot of thought and work has gone into it. I believe those who want SOF – those with x's, o's and numbers spinning in their heads – are purists who will always be searching for a more perfect system. Can't argue with that, but our masterpoints are the keys to ACBL's success, and the current formula has stood the test of time. It's not only working great, but is easily tweaked to keep up with our ever-changing new events. Until SOF can answer all the questions being asked of it, and prove to be a better way to go, I do not want to chance diminishing the good life we are currently enjoying.

Another Landmine: Our players of all levels pretty much understand the existing masterpoint formula. Every time we tinker with it there is an uproar, and when something goes haywire the roar is loudest. I don't believe the masterpoint wheel is broken. Just needs a little fresh paint and axle grease occasionally. Can we improve on it? Sure, why not? That's what our ACBL Board Masterpoint Committee is responsible for – adjusting to fit the times.

We're in the masterpoint-for-sale business and the market is currently very good – under existing conditions there are bargains to be had, and Americans do love a bargain. I've discussed SOF in detail with our two D22 head directors (who both contributed to this column) trying to understand if there was any reason we wanted – or needed – a masterpoint award change. Their answer was no.

ACBL Goodwill Committee Appointees

This is the time of year I select two of our district members to be recognized as inductees into the Aileen Osofsky ACBL Goodwill Committee. My 2011 choices are: Jean Holt, a tireless contributor doing it all in the North San Diego County area of San Marcos, and John Jonas of Dana Point, who tossed his volunteer hat into the arena to ably assist in the very successful Orange County Regional.

Although selection to the Goodwill Committee requires no action or participation, it is my privilege to appoint you both, and it's an honor to be recognized by your peers for your tireless contributions to bridge in Southern California. Congratulations and welcome.

See all the ACBL Goodwill Members from District 22, present and past, on my website at www.kenmonzingo.com

District 22 Goodwill Inductees: This is also the time of year the eight area board members of our district each select an honoree to be inducted into the District 22 Goodwill Committee – see Warren Cederborg's Goodwill article here. In mid-December, at the huge Palm Springs Regional, all our 2011 honorees in attendance will be recognized during the popular Passing of the Gavel reception.

International (Over) Spending

At the Seattle Fall NABC board meetings later this month the ASOF issue will be discussed in detail. Also in Seattle I will make another attempt to slow down the league's exorbitant spending (\$400,000 annually) to support only six pro/expert teams the United States Bridge Federation sends globe-trotting. My mission remains the same: to rescind or modify a long lasting board motion that allows the annual \$162,000 of our players' money we waste paying our (their) faux World Bridge Federation "membership" that does not exist. On a personal note, to the many of you who have been so kind as to approach me and give me your blessings on my struggles to effect this end, I thank you so very much. Your support is the strength I need to continue.

D22 Forum Deadlines

The D22 Forum deadline for articles and ads is the 5th of the preceding month.

All ads must be prepaid, payable to D22 ACBL c/o Patrick Page P.O. Box 1212 Morongo Valley CA 92256 Please e-mail all ads (after prepayment) & all copy to: Joel Hoersch joel@contractbridgeforum.com 858 336-1508

Change of Address Send change of address to: addresschange@acbl.org or snail mail to: ACBL/Address Change P.O. Box 289 Horn Lake MS 38637