

## WESTERN CONFERENCE

# CONTRACT BRIDGE Forum



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## Las Vegas Regional

June 7-13, 2010

The Riviera Hotel and Casino will host the Las Vegas Regional 2010



Here's the usual month-of-the-tournament reminder for the Las Vegas Regional June 7-13 at the Riviera Hotel and Casino. Check out the ads and stories in this and recent issues and get ready for a great

week of bridge plus, well whatever it is, it stays in Vegas.

Need a partner or a team for the regional? You might want to play with one of the 15 players/pairs who have posted their information on the partnership page of our

website, [LVRegional.com](http://LVRegional.com), or go directly to the list of players looking for partners.

The partnership list includes players of all levels, from relative beginners to players with over 2500 masterpoints. Give it a look!

## Phoenix Desert Empire Regional

August 9-14, 2010



4-diamond DoubleTree Resort in Scottsdale

By George Drake  
Publicity Chairman

The annual Phoenix Regional will be held August 9-14 at a new location this year, the 4-diamond DoubleTree Resort in Scottsdale. With a \$90/night room rate, free parking and close proximity to many restaurants of all kinds and great shop-

ping, we expect a very successful tournament.

Schedule highlights appear in our ad elsewhere in this issue and include the return of Senior Pairs and 199er Pairs events, four Knockout Teams, and many Open Swiss Teams.

While it will be hot outside it will be cool inside and we hope you will join us.

## Important NAP News

By Dale Sweetwood  
D17 NAP Coordinator

Alert!

There has been a change!

Originally, this year's North American Pairs finals were scheduled for October 8 and 9 at the Tucson Regional. Since that date conflicts with the tournament being held in Philadelphia by the World Bridge Federation, and many of our players have expressed a desire to play in both competitions, we have rescheduled the North American Pairs finals.

They will now be held in Albuquerque on January 21-22, 2011. If we had not made this change many of our players would not have had a chance to qualify to play in the NABC NAP finals in Louisville, Kentucky next spring.

Having said that, did you know that three of our District 17 partnerships placed in this year's finals in Reno? In Flight A, Allen

Kane and En Hay from Colorado placed fifth and Steven and Kitty Cooper, also from Colorado, placed 11th. And in Flight C, Nancy Ruis and Bob Walsh from New Mexico placed 21st.

Way to go folks, your accomplishments speak well for the quality of bridge in our district.

The 2010-2011 NAP season is upon us and we are starting all over. Qualification begins this month and lasts through August 31. Check with your local clubs for the dates they have scheduled qualifying games. Remember, you can't win a national championship unless you can play in the nationals in Louisville, March 10-20, 2011, and you can't play in the nationals if you don't win or place high in the district finals, and you can't play in the district finals if you are not qualified at your club.

Your personal road to a national championship is about to begin. I wish you all the best of luck.



## A Rocky Mountain Hi!

By John Van Ness  
District 17 President

Pre-duplicated boards are my idea of a perfect technological innovation. Players are able to enjoy the benefits without having to learn how to operate anything or worrying about hitting the wrong little button. You just sit down and the boards are right there ready for play. In the old days tournament sessions began with the tournament director announcing "shuffle, deal, and play." If there was to be duplication between sections, after the play the players spread their hands out on the table, and used another deck to copy another board for another section.

This all took time, and with 52 cards spread out on the table in order to copy another 52 there was a substantial possibility of error, which resulted in matchpoint penalties for the offender and his partner.

Producing hand records for the players was theoretically possible, but it would have taken several hours, and day-old hand records have never been a big seller.

In the 1960s the ACBL began using computer technology to generate random deals. This produced printed records of each deal which were distributed to each table and the players would distribute the playing cards in accordance with the hand record.

Of course the players preparing the deal couldn't play it, so the boards were usually passed to another table before play began. Occasionally, some players were required to duplicate more than one set of boards. This all took time.

Computer-generated deals also enabled post-game hand records to be printed before the tournament and made instantly available when the session ended. Security was paramount. Only two people in Memphis ever had access to the hand records, and one was the printer and neither was a bridge player. The hand records were printed and mailed to the director-in-charge under seal to be opened only at the beginning of each session. Sort of like the Academy Awards.

Computer-generated deals also enabled STACs, where identical deals are played in hundreds of locations. Barometer events also became much easier to operate.

For years there was considerable debate about whether hand-shuffled or computer-generated deals more accurately reflected pure random reality. It got to the point where scholarly articles were appearing in academic journals. There were theories that the computer had some bad habits and theories that human shuffling produced flatter hands because most players didn't give the deck the recommended seven riffles. Players now accept computer-dealt deals (and other computer products), and seem to find other things to argue about.

Around 1999 the ACBL began adding a brief analysis to the post game hand records. A software program called "Deep Finesse" tells you the number of tricks possible in several most likely contracts. The analysis is purely double-dummy, where stiff kings are automatically picked off and every declarer play works no matter what the odds in the real world. People are perfecting systems that take human reality into account, and we might start seeing them soon.

A machine capable of reading the hand records and dealing hands as instructed has been around for awhile. There were several patents in the late 1960s, and some machines were available in the 1970s. But the idea never really caught on until the late '00s, and when it did it spread like wildfire.

The machine is basically simple. The operator inserts a deck of cards and a hand record and a few seconds later the machine deposits the four hands into a special board that simply needs to be snapped shut and it's on to the next deal. Dealing cards has to be a mechanical process, so compared to iPods and cell phones it looks and sounds like something out of the early industrial revolution. But looks can be deceiving. First there is the blinding speed. The fastest machines can produce a deal in less than five seconds. The latest machines are loaded with sophisticated information technology, and capable of all sorts of tricks. You can see one in operation at [youtube.com/watch?v=fMLE4Yjub\\_g](http://youtube.com/watch?v=fMLE4Yjub_g)

Players love pre-duplicated deals because they don't have to spend ten to fifteen minutes performing manual labor at the beginning of each session and they don't have to worry about a match point penalty if they mess up. Tournament directors love them because they have a lot more flexibility in setting up a movement and human error in the duplicating process has been virtually eliminated.

District 17 host units love them because the district organization pays for the pre-duplication and the tournament no longer has to bear the expense of providing playing cards and boards for pair events.

Of course, most team events still use the old "shuffle, deal, and play" since no duplication is necessary.

The district board is happy because we have had to make no financial investment whatsoever. Dan Williams of Denver provides pre-duplication for all our regionals for a fee based on the number of boards needed. (Does anybody remember the old joke about some things being cheaper to rent than buy?) Taking into account the sav-

(See Rocky on page 10)

## Deadlines

ScoreCard no longer accepts hard copy ads. All ads must be e-mailed directly to the publisher Ken Monzingo:

[kenn@contractbridgeforum.com](mailto:kenn@contractbridgeforum.com), with a copy to Jared Johnson, the ScoreCard editor.

Stories and all other articles of any sort still get e-mailed directly to the ScoreCard editor at: [jaredjohnsonco@aol.com](mailto:jaredjohnsonco@aol.com)

Just regular e-mail, no attachments please.

Deadlines are the fifth of each month for the following month's issue. Deadlines are firm, exceptions for only the most pressing and unusual of circumstances.

Stories past deadline still go to the editor, not the publisher, for inclusion in the following issue.

So now it's all e-mail. Ads to the publisher (with a copy to the editor, okay for attachment on ad copy), stories and all else to the editor. Thanks for your help.