



Upcoming Tournaments

Taos Fall Sectional October 23-25, 2009

It's one of the newest sectionals on the District 17 tournament calendar. Come play at the fourth annual Taos Fall Sectional October 23-25 at the El Monte Sagrado Living Resort and Spa at 317 Kit Carson Road. A fairly standard schedule of events is detailed in the ad elsewhere this issue of *ScoreCard*.

Laughlin Sectional October 23-25, 2009

Check out the half page regional sized ad elsewhere in this issue of *ScoreCard* for information on the Laughlin Sectional, set October 23-25 at the River Palms Resort at 2700 S. Casino Dr. And especially check out the astonishingly good room rates for this attractive tournament. Reserve before October 7.

The schedule features a variety of popular events.

Longmont Fall Sectional October 23-25, 2009

One of the most longstanding playing sites for a District 17 sectional is the Boulder County Fairgrounds in Longmont. The dates are October 23-25 and the schedule is set forth in the ad this issue of *ScoreCard*. Join us please.

Tucson Non-Life Master Sectional October 30-Nov. 1, 2009

The Tucson Non-Life Master Sectional is October 30 to November 1 at the Holiday Inn Palo Verde at

4550 S. Palo Verde Road. Check the ad last issue for the details and full schedule of events. Note: This year the tournament will be open to players with over 300 masterpoints who are not yet Life Masters.

Mesa Kachina Sectional November 5-8, 2009

New Location! This year's Kachina is at the Buttes, the beautiful resort next to Tempe Diablo Stadium, 2000 Westcourt Way in Tempe. Three Knockout Teams events, six pair events and Swiss Teams are all at our popular 10:00 and 3:00 times.

Free coffee and free Sunday lunch provided! See our ad in this issue for details or go to our unit web site at : www.unit351.com

Albuquerque Roadrunner Fall Sectional November 6-8, 2009

Standard dates (November 6-8), the standard site at the Duke City Bridge Center at 8616 Northeastern Blvd. NE and a standard schedule (see the ad elsewhere this issue) awaits you at Albuquerque's Roadrunner Fall Sectional.

Come join the competition.

Denver Fall Sectional November 12-15, 2009

The Denver Fall Sectional wraps up Colorado's bridge tournament season. The dates are November 12-15 at the Jefferson County Fairground Auditorium at 15200 W. Sixth Ave. Plenty of parking, plenty of space and plenty of bridge. See the ad this issue.



KAY MCKENNA BOULDER FALL SECTIONAL

October 23-25
Boulder County Fairgrounds
NE Corner of Hover & Nelson
Longmont, Colorado

NEW TIMES ON FRIDAY & SATURDAY!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

9:30 am, 1:30 pm & 7:00 pm

Bracketed KO Teams, Semifinals & Finals (light lunch provided)

1:30 pm & 7:00 pm

Stratified 299er Pairs (0-50; 50-150; 150-300)

1:30 pm

Stratified Open Pairs (0-750; 750-1500; 1500+)

7:00 pm

Strati-Flighted Pairs (Flight A = 3000+; X = 0-3000 with mid-chart conventions; B/C = 750-1500; 0-750)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

10:00 am & 3:00 pm

Stratified 299er Pairs (0-50; 50-150; 150-300; single sessions)

Stratified Open Pairs (0-750; 750-1500; 1500+; single sessions accommodated)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25

10:00 am

Strati-Flighted Swiss Teams

Flight A = 3000+; X = 0-3000 (with mid-chart conventions)

B/C/D = 750-1500; 200-750; 0-200

7 matches of 8 boards each with lunch break.

Lunch is provided. Approximate finish time: 6pm

Entry Fees

Stratified and Open Events: \$8.00 per player, per session

Sunday Swiss Teams: \$88.00 per team (each additional member \$6.00, includes meal)

Non-ACBL members and non-dues-paying members pay an additional \$1.00 per session

No entry fee for ACBL members with fewer than 5 masterpoints

Director in Charge Bill Michael

Tournament Chair Karen Renne 303-499-1559 e-mail: karenrenne@att.net

Partnerships Reiko Raese 303-494-5537 e-mail: rrraese@hotmail.com
303-570-3850 cell

FREE COFFEE, SODA, & FABULOUS SNACKS EVERY DAY

The playing area is wheel-chair accessible. Non-smoking tournament with hospitality breaks.

Lodging & directions: www.boulderbridge.org

Unit 359

Rocky --Continued from page 1

When the Internet became popular in the 1990s you had to pay a fixed fee per month for Internet access plus an hourly fee, which could be as much as \$20 per hour. If your provider did not have a local phone number, you ended up paying toll charges as well. Early online bridge such as Sierra also charged you by the hour, so an evening of bridge could easily be more expensive than a Las Vegas "escort" - or a plumber. It's your choice.

Internet for the masses would have never been possible without the huge increases in computer speed that occurred throughout the 1990s (and continue today). I'll never forget an old friend who had been given a used computer circa 1990. I told him I didn't think his old computer would work very well, but I helped him get connected to an Internet service provider. To download one page took his computer four hours!

Every time you have a technological advance, you are making something obsolete. The average time of use for a cell phone in the U.S. is currently about 16 months. We have about 250 million cell phones in use, but every year about 200 million become obsolete and are no longer used. There are presently about 800 million cell phones that are no longer in use. Most of them are in somebody's drawer. On average computers last about two years before they are replaced, so every year about 100 million become obsolete. Worldwide almost one billion computers become obsolete every year!

Computers first came on the bridge scene about twenty years ago when they were used to compute scores. Using computers to keep track of everyone's masterpoint holdings was another obvious improvement. Bridge publications routinely appear on the Internet, and districts and many units use their web sites to keep us all informed (and at the same time promote bridge.)

There is constant interest in adapting modern technology to bridge tournaments. The current rage is electronic scoring, which basically replaces pickup slips. The first mention I could find was a November 1974 *Bridge World* article by David Lee Powell. He envisioned each player at their own computer terminal and everything would be done via computer, including scoring. Computer equipment was way too expensive; he figured it would cost up to \$15,000,000 to equip a large tournament. In 1981 a U.S. patent was issued for an "electronic scoring machine," but nothing much came of it, and the patent quietly expired in 1999.

Currently "in development" we have the BridgeSpinner, which will deal the cards, keep score, and do everything at the table short of shining your shoes. The BridgeButler promises (hopes) to also provide an extra player (called a robot) or even an extra pair to fill in so as to avoid half tables. Then we have the BridgePhone, which doesn't need any wireless equipment at the table because everyone will use their own cell phones to keep score and report it to the central computer, which can also be a cell phone. Who knows what next year will bring.

BridgeMate and BridgePad have been around for a few years, and people say they do save time and money at club games and some sectionals. Earlier this year the district board investigated their use at regionals and determined that the district would not buy them because the cost of storing and shipping them from one regional to the next would be prohibitive, and there was the inevitability that they would become obsolete in just a few years' time. There would be no savings in tournament director costs and it was possible these costs would increase. The cost of leasing BridgeMates would be approximately the same as the "live" caddies they were replacing. Thus, it was left up to each tournament whether BridgeMates would be used. Since there (currently) is no significant cost savings in using these devices, if any, the question becomes whether their use adds to a player's enjoyment of the game or whether you could care less whether *North* is keeping score by pushing a pencil on a piece of paper or pushing buttons on a little device.

Mr. Powell's "ultimate vision" was that live bridge tournaments would ultimately become obsolete. "All of us may have our telephone, TV sets, and typewriters interconnected and will play in the tournament every weekend from our own kitchens." Notice no mention of the Internet. And, "Mommy, what's a typewriter?" It was 1974. Otherwise, this sounds a lot like OKbridge or Bridge Base Online.

OKbridge came on the scene around 1994 and simply charged an annual fee (now \$99). It was an immediate hit. At one point they had close to 20,000 members. There were several other online bridge organizations that have come and gone or never really took hold, but the game changed when Bridge Base Online showed up in 2001, featuring free bridge. The price was right and they have well over 100,000 participants. Two days ago they had over 22,000 bridge players tuned in. A big portion was following the Bermuda Bowl on VuGraph, but a lot were playing bridge. BBO has over 20 tournaments every day. They charge a one dollar entry fee for ACBL masterpoint tournaments.

Meanwhile, live tournaments are doing just fine. Last month's Western Conference STAC was up 12% from the year before, and the May STAC was up 18% from 2008. Recent regionals in Phoenix and Santa Clara, Calif. (near San Francisco) had their best attendance in at least ten years, as did many others throughout ACBL Land, including a lot of sectionals. I wanted to play in my local club game last month, but they only had room for 17 tables and there were 25 people on the waiting list.

There's still time to get to the Ruidoso, New Mexico Regional October 5-11.

Game - Continued from page 1

ganization that gave nothing to winners other than masterpoints, and that masterpoints were in fact worthless in terms of material value. Imagine, people pay to attend, pay to enter, stay in expensive hotels, and receive nothing other than their names in lights for one brief shining moment when they win an event.

Bravo to the founders!

Unfortunately the very thing that worked so well is the anchor which prevents young people from joining our game. As a retired teacher of 33 years, I can tell you the ease of interesting young intelligent minds in the game of bridge. The catch did not come when I said we played for masterpoints. The catch came when they asked me what we could get for the accumulated masterpoints. I watched young eyes glaze over when I said you reached a higher rank in bridge by accumulating points, but there was no pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

One axiom of education is that nobody does anything for which there is not a payoff, either now or in the future. Self-satisfaction could be the payoff, but far too few will grasp it as adequate reward.

We can continue to introduce bridge into the schools which will allow it. We can put money into trying to interest students in bridge. We have done all of those things before. As my five year old great nephew would say, "Good luck with that!"

I am one of those who still has every masterpoint card I ever received since I started in 1973 and the magazine page that has replaced them. Depending upon when you started you may or may not know that ACBL stopped keeping track of your gold points after you made Life Master.

I broached the subject to the late Chris Wilson while she was president of the ACBL, and she promised to look into the matter. ACBL does label your points in recent years, but their tally of your gold points is inaccurate if you are long in the tooth in bridge playing. My own tally shows 200 or so more gold points than does the "official" one. However the total of points is absolutely correct.

It's Only A Game!

"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing!"

-Socrates