

# CONTRACT BRIDGE

## Forum

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By Stu  
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District 21  
President

### Dodecachartitis

Now there's a mouthful! Okay, it's a made up word, but breaking down the parts yields:

'dodeca' - twelve; 'charta' - card from the Greek or Latin; 'itis' - inflammation. Taken as a whole we get twelfth-card-itis - something most of us have experienced at the bridge table. How many times have you defended a hand and gotten down to your last two cards and have no idea which one is right on trick 12? Well, that's dodecachartitis all right.

Bridge players deserve a mouthful of an affliction and there aren't many that apply. After all, what respectable bridge player would ever have triskadecaphobia - fear of the number 13?

If you are concentrating for the whole hand, you would have probably had a good idea what declarer has left for his two cards, but so many times we don't con-

### President's Report

centrate like we know we should. So here you are with a 50-50 chance of making the right decision simply by sheer happenstance, and guess what? You're more often wrong than right. It's just not fair! If you revoke on trick 12, the error is corrected and there is no penalty; that's the law. But have a legitimate discard, and you'll probably sit there in agony and shuffle the cards again and again in your hand, thinking "I have no idea which is right, so eenie, meenie, mynie, moe." You usually end with Moe, but even if you throw in Larry and Curly, no matter how you handle it, you are the stooge.

No doubt the main cause of dodecachartitis is lack of concentration. Maybe you weren't paying enough attention to the previous tricks because you felt your hand wasn't worth any more tricks. Maybe when it got down to the last few cards, you felt "it's all over now, I can relax" only to find there really was a problem with two tricks left. Or you were just overly confident that with two cards remaining you would always work out this trivial position; what to have for dinner was a more pressing decision.

So what does this have to do with the president's report; aside from biding time while the writer's block subsidizes? Well, in my previous column in July, I proffered a goal of 10000 tables for our four regionals this year. If the Santa Clara All-Western Regional attendance improved by 10% over last year, we would make it. Not at all unreasonable since the other three regionals this year were up between 10% and 20%. The Santa Clara Regional just ended and sure enough, a form of dodecachartitis set in. We had 2522.5 tables, which is a good turnout but about a 1% decline over last year. This left the total count in 2009 at 9810 tables.

Mind you this is still great result for the year and D21 is doing well. But to quote Maxwell Smart: "Missed it by that much!"

Now for the next topic; finances. Seldom in the *Forum* columns do you see any details about the financial status of bridge. We do present it at our district board meetings and the representatives from the various units take the information back to their unit boards. What happens with the numbers after that is a curious question. Most of you probably never see or hear of monetary issues, nor do you care about them, unless of course, the table fees go up.

Harvey Brody is our district treasurer and he does a fine job of maintaining the books (he does a pretty good job at the bridge table too). But Harvey has no desire to explain what he does in print. So here is what he might report if we twisted his arm hard enough and took away his eyeshade.

District 21 has cash assets of roughly \$350,000. In our first three regionals in 2009 we netted \$43,000. This does not count the Santa Clara Regional, which just concluded and for which the receipts are not in yet. By compari-

son, in 2008 we netted \$18,000 from all four regionals. We are expecting a net gain from Santa Clara even though the table count was down ever-so-slightly, so we are doing much better than 2008.

Now we did raise the table fees from \$9 to \$10 at the beginning of 2008, so both years had the same fees and the comparison is fair. If you look back on this year's total table count, you would see that \$1.00 increase alone accounts for \$30,000 of the \$43,000 net gain (not counting Santa Clara).

The remaining increase in assets are a result of higher attendance figures. Many of the expenses at a regional are fixed or predetermined, so higher attendance can yield significant gains.

Since our regionals average close to 2500 tables a tournament, it is easy to calculate that a regional takes in \$100,000 in revenue. Most of that goes out in expenses; for example, the biggest costs from our Monterey Regional were: directors fees, \$22K; directors expenses (hotel, meals, travel), \$15K; ACBL sanction fees, \$10K; tournament manager, \$5K; hospitality, \$5K; supplies (including pre-made hands), \$5K; Western Conference fees, \$5K; caddies, \$3K, prizes, \$2K, plus many other smaller items. When all is accounted for we have a gross profit of \$20K.

But many of our non-tournament related expenses come out of that \$20K. Supplies, office expenses, equipment, donations, and a few small salaries are included in that category. Harvey noted that the allowance he gets as treasurer computes to about 50 cents per hour of work. No doubt he gets more than 50 cents per card when he plays pro.

If you think the district has big-time money, one, you are not Warren Buffet, and two, by comparison the ACBL has about \$10 million in assets and made a net of \$1 million last year. We have over 5% of the ACBL membership within D21, but are still under 5% of the ACBL's assets and net income. Even so, as a district we are in better financial shape than many of the other 24 districts in the ACBL.

One nice aspect of being on the plus side is that we are not anticipating a raise in the table fees anytime in the near future. Other district's regionals charge from \$11 up to \$13 or more, so D21 is still a real bargain.

As usual, after a District 21 board meeting, it is my obligation to report on the agenda. This board meeting was quite ordinary. There was the formal vote on the changes to our D21 bylaws. Having discussed the ramifications of these changes at our previous board meeting, there were no surprises and the new bylaws were approved unanimously.

District elections are coming next February, and nomination are still open. We already have a candidate for each position and two for the vice presidency. We have applied to the IRS for a group exemption, which will allow each unit within the group to avoid filing income tax returns. The IRS



### North American Pairs

By Jackie Ortiz  
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A few rules to clarify about NAP: District 21 units may have only one unit final and D21 members can play in only one unit final to qualify to go to the D21 NAP finals.

Flight A: Saturday, January 30, 12:00 and TBA 1st & 2nd sessions. Sunday, January 31, 12:00 and TBA semi & final session.

Flight B Sunday, January 31, 2:00 and TBA, First & Final session. Flight C Saturday, January 30, 12:00 and TBA, First & Final session. Unit 505 Folsom Bridge, Folsom, October 4 at 1:00, Josh Kantor 916 987-7177.

Unit 507 San Jose Bridge Club, October 4 at 12:00 noon & TBA, Ray Yuenger rayyuenger@comcast.net

Unit 501 4133 Regalia Court, Pleasanton, September 25 at 7:00 p.m., Ameen Paul ameen@aol.com

Unit 509 Santa Rosa, Bridge Gallery November 15 at 1:00 p.m., jackieo@sonic.net

Unit 503 2693A Terminal Blvd., Mt. View, October 11 at 1:15 & 5:45 p.m., Eric Mayefsky mayefsky@stanford.edu

Unit 512 Napa Senior Center, Napa, October 18 at 1:00 p.m., Joe Freeman joe4777@aol.com

Unit 550 Santa Cruz Bridge, Capitola, October 24 at 12:30 p.m., KenLlacera pasa49@pacbell.net

Unit 522 Fresno Bridge Club, October 25 at 1:00 p.m., Richard Medfey 559 453-0620.

After spending a week at the Santa Clara Regional I had thoughts about our players and I felt that the majority were very, very nice and considerate. I did run into one rude player from my own unit and thought about that and I think that we all should call the director on these players and not allow it to happen instead of just letting it go by. Please, Do Call the Director.

Also there are many really special people like Alice Hopkins from Santa Cruz that should be mentioned as the example of what we all should be like at the bridge table.

### Tournament Trail

Santa Rosa Fall Sectional  
Odd Fellows Hall, Santa Rosa, Calif.  
October 3-4, 2009

Carson/Tahoe Fall Sectional  
Plaza Convention Center, Carson City, Nev.  
October 8-11, 2009

Santa Cruz Surf's Up Sectional  
Harbor High School, Santa Cruz, Calif.  
October 10-11, 2009

Sonora Fall Sectional  
Toulumne Senior Center, Sonora, Calif.  
October 17-18, 2009

Santa Clara Valley Fall Sectional  
Masonic Temple, San Jose, Calif.  
October 23-25, 2009

Fresno Halloween Sectional  
Bridge Center, Fresno, Calif.  
October 29-November 1, 2009

San Diego Fall NABC  
Manchester Grand Hyatt, San Diego, Calif.  
November 26-December 6, 2009

has notified us that they are behind in their reviews of applications, so we will just have to wait for them to catch up. They did have the time to cash our application fee, however.

The most controversial subject was whether we should move the start time for the evening sessions at regionals from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. As district president I have been getting verbal and written requests for this change. In order to determine the general sentiment, I asked each unit representative to poll their unit boards and report back.

Along similar lines, on the last

day of the Santa Clara Regional a tournament director voiced an opinion that the Flight A/X Swiss should be reduced from 56 boards down to 49 boards, just like the other Swiss events and what the Flight A/X was three years ago.

Being skeptical about the director's assessment of the players feelings, I polled all the players in the Flight A/X event. The show of hands was most convincing, maybe as much as 12 to 1 to keep 56 boards. There's that number 12 once again; dodecachartitis.

Wish I could poll the A players next time I have two cards left and can't decide.

### DEADLINES

Deadlines for *Forum* copy and ads is the 5th of the month!

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