

Editors: Arlene Port 220 N Dithridge #404  
Pgh.PA. 15213  
Tel: 412-521-3637 aport220@comcast.net  
Bruce Stephen: 106 Crofton Dr, Pgh PA 15238  
Tel: 412-979-3205  
bmichaelstephen@gmail.com

Unit 142 Pittsburgh, PA February 2016

# POST MORTEM

**WEBSITE AT [www.pittsburghbridge.org](http://www.pittsburghbridge.org)**  
President: Ron Franck  
Vice President: Lorraine Hanna  
Secretary: Mary Paulone Carns  
Treasurer: Jane Marshall  
Club Manager: Mary Carns  
Unit Recorder: Judi Sonon ([judi@diegosan.com](mailto:judi@diegosan.com))

## All the news that fits in print

.....by bruce stephen

Hello. This is the first, of what I hope to be many, Post Mortem issues in which I'll contribute. Arlene has been incredibly welcoming and informative. I am very grateful to her for that generosity.

Arlene and I welcome input from all our readers. Please send likes, dislikes, ideas, opinions and especially articles written by you. We can't promise that everything submitted will be printed as we are limited by space and other considerations. We will make every effort to accommodate all who are willing to put their name to something they believe. We will edit, if necessary, for length and grammar, but pledge not to change the meaning of your words. Please feel free to contact Arlene and I. Our emails and phone numbers are on the upper left corner of the front page. When emailing, please put both our addresses on the correspondence so that we can fight for the credit for getting your submission published.

For those of you who don't know me, I'm a relative newcomer to bridge. I've just passed the three-year anniversary of playing my first hand. There are many things that surprised me. I knew bridge was hard, but had no idea how complicated, frustrating and elusive the game was. I was hooked pretty quickly, and wondered what I'd gotten myself into. I had played golf at a highly competitive level and was surprised that a bridge game took nearly as long as 18 holes. I was pleasantly surprised that my yearly bridge costs were far lower than my monthly golf expenses. There are many things the two have in common, but the one I like to remember is that just when you think you've got it licked, it shows you who's boss.

The one aspect of bridge that is most surprising is the game's desire to continually reinvent itself. The speedy evolution of conventions, systems and approach to card play leaves any game or sport I can think of in the dust when the measure of success is making the game/sport better.

In a relatively short span: Strong twos became weak; Vulnerability was introduced; Point count became the basis for many of Goren's innovations; The number of points needed to open or raise changed as play became more aggressive; and The law of total tricks gained popularity in the 1990's and paved the way for Bergen's contributions. In the three years since I've started, the 2 over 1 system has rocketed in popularity at the expense of SAYC. Compare all of bridge's advances to those of your favorite game/sport and you'll find it glacier-like by comparison.

What makes the above all that more remarkable is that bridge is played by an aged population. The average age of a first-time ACBL joiner is 65. The average age of the active player is 71. This is not a group that comes to mind when thinking of who will be making future standards regarding bridge and changing the way they've done things for years.

This unstoppable force of change should be a point of pride for every bridge player. Thank you for welcoming me into your head. I hope to stand on the shoulders of all who have made Post Mortem and help it improve and progress just as the game we love .

## EDITORIAL POST: I COULD BE WRONG (I often am) BUT

.....by arlene port

### Computer dealt hands have been a detriment, rather than a bonus to bridge.

There are several variables that affect the outcome for each bridge player.

The major ones are:

Skill level of both your partnership and that of the opponents.

Unforced errors (stupid mistakes)

Luck (playing against the right people at the right time)

Although not quite as important, is holding most of the high cards often produces a winning game.

I believe that computer dealt hands we now have are, in fact, not really randomly dealt, whether by design or by the nature of the machine, because they certainly do not reflect the percentages that are known to exist regarding the bidding and the play of the hands. There are simply too many long minors and distributional major holdings at the games. Today, too many games that should be bid fail because opponents hold all the right cards . It is just too much of a coincidence.

So, you may say that it doesn't matter because everyone plays the same hands. I believe it does matter because this actually favors less experienced players.

These are the players who tend to be more timid in their bidding and reach fewer game contracts and are rewarded for their non-efforts. These are the players who settle for longer minor suit contracts because they didn't learn how to find a major suit fit that won't work..

What bothers me the most is that these are the players who are being cheated out of wanting to learn how to become more skillful, because they are now so successful at being mediocre. (I have seen too many high-fives congratulating their bad bridge)

(Continued on page 8)

## FACES ACROSS THE TABLE: Nick Rescher

.....by bruce stephen

You may have seen Nick Rescher and his regular bridge partner Richard Kotler playing each Monday at Rodef Shalom and Wednesday at the. Nick is a tall, slim, bald, genial, well-dressed recreational player with slightly over 200 masterpoints.

In his professional life, Nicholas Rescher Ph. D is one of the most renowned philosophers of his generation. Rescher's family emigrated to the United States from Germany in 10. Rescher obtained an undergraduate degree in Mathematics from Queens College and a Doctorate in Philosophy from Princeton. The next nine years were spent between the Marine Corps, the Rand Corp. and teaching at Princeton. In 1961 he taught at Pitt and a year later he became chair of its Center for Philosophy Science.

Through the years Dr. Rescher has garnered many achievements including authoring over 100 books, founding the American Philosophical Journal and being elected Secretary General of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science .Dr. Rescher's greatest honor may be his newest. On January 12, 2016, The Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities announced he will receive its highest scholarly award, the Helmholtz Medal in recognition of his lifetime achievements. The medal is bestowed every two years to a scientist or scholar of internationally recognized standing. Four of the last 12 recipients have been Nobel Prize winners in the natural sciences. The Berlin-Brandenburg Academy is the present-day successor to the Prussian Academy of Sciences founded by celebrated scientist G.W. Leibniz in 1716. Among many accomplishments, Leibniz invented the first calculator capable of performing all four basic mathematic functions (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). He also invented, on paper, the world's first cryptography machine for sending and receiving coded messages. At that time, coded items were produced with pens, pencils, invisible ink and various hand-made ciphers. For various reasons, this leap in technology was never made. The design was relegated to the thousands of other papers left behind at his death.

This is where we return, in a moment, to the story of Nicholas Rescher, Richard Kotler and bridge in Unit 142. Nick Rescher played some bridge in high school, but pretty much stopped during his college years. In 2010, his wife Dorothy, encouraged Nick to take bridge classes at their local community center. It was there that he met Richard Kotler, an engineer with a specialty gear-based machines. They soon became close friends and steady bridge partners. As they were forming their friendship, the cryptography design paper was re-discovered. Rescher showed the design, which incorporated gears, to Kotler and they decided to try and build, what in 1700 would have been the world's first mechanical cryptography machine. It took nearly two years, but their working version was successfully unveiled on December 12, 2012 at Hillman Library, where it still resides. How many things had to happen in a certain order, including Pittsburgh bridge lessons, to bring this piece of history to the world?

Nick Rescher has an appreciation for bridge that manifests itself in joyful, peaceful tranquility. He is content to play in his regular twice a week games with Kotler. He doesn't read bridge instruction, take lessons or play online. He does admit to having enough of an addiction that he stages his own game on Martin Luther King Day. On that day, the Rodef Shalom game is cancelled.

## WORLD CHAMPION IN TRAINING POST

by bruce stephen

There isn't a bridge player in the world who doesn't want to, or think they should, be better. We all try to improve with varying degrees of intensity. Ultimately, it's the journey that is precious. Reaching a final goal, if possible, would have be bittersweet.

From time to time we will share the stories of bridge players and their quest. The reader will learn the joys, frustrations and humility engendered by the pursuit of bridge happiness. From these tales we believe many players will find a connection that goes beyond the number of masterpoints earned in a lifetime.

We are part of a bridge community. Friends are made and lost. Victory and defeat are impermanent. There is the bridge life, the life outside the game and the intersection of the two.

We want your stories. Tell us about those who've helped you. Relate lessons learned at the table that translated into "real life". Share what you've discovered is important to you. Have you ever done something foolish in a game and are willing to be self-deprecating, put yourself out there.

The goal of devoting space to these revelations is so readers can take away knowledge, feel emotion, experience humor and know that there is a commonality of experience that means, whether expert or novice, we don't go through our bridge lives alone.

So, gather your thoughts about the past when you were less than the expert you are today and we will be around to document your brilliant remembrances.

---

### STAY ALERT: YOU AIN'T HEARD NOTHING YET!

Sharpen up your rhyming skills	You may have to write a poem
Take some memory pills	What was your funniest experience as a novice?
Find out what you really think.	We need feedback
What is your favorite convention?	Blackwood? Who knows?
How many masterpoms do you expect to earn?	
There will be much more for you to do.	

**SO, AS THEY SAY IN THE MOVIES:**

**WE'LL BE BACK!!!**



# BRIDGE BYTES

.....By Ernie Retetagos

## BRIDGE BYTES

Q/Q Bidding Convention

West	East
S- Q J 9 3 2	S- A K 7
H- 9 8 2	H- A 10
D- K J 10	D- Q 6 3
C- A 5	C- 10 9 7 4 3

This hand came up in a 13 table club game. I was surprised that I got only 1/2 a matchpoint after my opponents bid and made 4 spades. East dealt and would open 1 club and get a 1 spade response. Against silent opponents, there are several routes to 4 spades.

With strong 3 card spade support, East should rebid 2 spades, and not 1 NT. Even with a NT rebid, West has enough to make a game try by bidding 2 diamonds. This is New Minor Forcing, and asks partner to show 3 card spade support or a 4 card heart suit. East should bid 3 spades, not 2. This shows 13 or 14 HCPs as opposed to 11 or 12, and West can now raise to game

If East does raise 1 spade to 2 spades, West can bid 3 diamonds as a game try in spades. East, with all working cards, should bid 4 spades. There is a gadget called Q/Q that can be employed after an auction that starts with 1 minor-1 major-2 major. A 2 NT rebid by responder asks 2 questions, how many trumps and how many HCPs. A 3 club response by opener shows 3 card support minimum, 3 diamonds shows 3 card support maximum. 3 hearts is 4 card minimum and 3 spades is 4 card maximum. After East bids 3 diamonds, West can raise to game.

In the play of the hand, declarer can count 9 top tricks. They just have to ruff a heart before pulling trumps.

(ed. note) Q/Q is usually bid not only to show major suit length but hand strength as well. The 2NT bid is only forcing for one round and is invitational or better. This is really a great bid.)

# UP THE LADDER POST

## JUNIOR MASTER

Phil	Barnhart
David B	Jones
Joanne C	Rilling

## CLUB MASTER

Sheila M	Brotherton
Lou R	Cepanec
Janice	Grier
Robert	Grier
Betty L	Grossheim
James R	Kilzer
Karen D	Kilzer

## SECTIONAL MASTER

John M	Alioto
Beverly G	Cassidy
Sheila C	Catz
Joseph W	Easton
Helen	Miller
Susan	Riley

## REGIONAL MASTER

Genevieve C	Novak
-------------	-------

## LIFE MASTER

Arlene	Cullen
James	Drake

## SILVER LIFE MASTER

Ernest E	Collins
James J	Fox
Shirley K	Meyers

## RUBY LIFE MASTER

Ami	Elis
-----	------

## GOLD LIFE MASTER

Elio	Catalfamo
------	-----------

## CONGRATULATIONS

**VERY**

**WELL**

**DONE!!!**

## LISTENING POST

When new opponents come to the table, very often one or both pairs are still discussing (a euphuism for fighting, or crowing ) the previous hand; sometimes very loudly. We all do it. Lately, we have had feedback by others that this kind of discussion passes on mostly unfair information to the other pair at the table or even the surrounding tables. . When this is mentioned, opponents always say: “You won’t remember this!”

Well, many times this is not true. Many of the players know exactly what hand is being discussed and what happened. You have ended up giving out information that will ultimately give an advantage to other players.

So, you should not discuss any previous hands with any opponents. It is not fair to any of the players and you should just go on to the next torturous hand without comment about the last one.

We know I don’t hear very well and if you are going to talk, please speak a little louder. In my case, however, I object to opponents whispering about a previous hand. After all, why shouldn’t I have the same advantages as others  
 .....Arlene

---

## GET WELL POST

We continue to offer our hopes and prayers for the speedy recovery of the following players:

Mary Anne McNeirney  
 Norman “Doc” Williams  
 Bill and Norma Spicher  
 Betty Noble  
 Phil Miller  
 George Cross

### INTERNET POST RESULTS:

BID	Nat.	Pgh	Award
5C	8	0	100
4H	6	0	90
5D	5	7	70
6C	4	1	60
5H	2	2	60
6H	3	1	50
4NT	0	3	30
6D	0	0	20
5NT	0	0	10

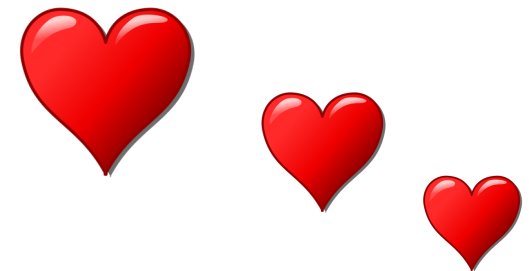
## EDITORIAL POST (Cont. from page 2)

When you make two hearts if you should have bid 4 and didn’t, and you get a top board, why wouldn’t anyone think they are doing just great and becoming a fine player. It’s simply not fair to those who have spent so much time and money taking lessons to be fooled into believing they are doing well.

What I know for certain is that the dealing machines have different programs that can be called on to deal certain hands. I have also been told that there is a difference between random and hand-dealt hands. If you ever watch pros on a vu-graph, it becomes clear that the hands are in the difficult range. As an experienced player, at this point, when I look at my hand, I can more often than not, know what the bidding is going to be. That is truly no fun. So many people I know, mostly experienced, say they do not enjoy the machine dealt hands.

I really do not know how to rectify this problem. I suspect the directors can produce hands that are more reflective of the percentages that govern the game. I don’t know if there has been a study made that would prove me either right or wrong in this matter, but if there is some wonderful mathematical genius out there who can do a study, it would be just great.. (Gail, are you listening?)

All I can say is that the quality of play is not the same as in those “good old days”. That’s really too bad. Even when I was a beginner and getting beaten by everyone, including the caddy’s, I didn’t care and I loved the competition and kept trying to become more knowledgeable so I could be as good as the other guys. I may not have achieved that, but I gave it my all.....and had a ton of fun trying.



### INTERNET POST

Here it is: Rubber bridge; E/W vul. You, South, hold:

S A 3  
H J 6 5 2  
D -----  
C A K Q J 8 6 5

The bidding is:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
-----	-----	-----	Pass
1C	1D	1H	4D
?			

**Bob Zimmermann: 5D** I will show my diamond control and hope partner can read it and bid slam accordingly. I think a 5H bid here is asking partner to bid slam based on his diamond control.

**Trudy Cohn** My bid is **5 Hearts** which asks partner how good his trump suit is. If he has two of the top three honors, I would like to be in slam

**PJ Prabhu .4NT.** Roman key card Blackwood. I expect to score 0 for this answer because experts loathe to use Blackwood with a void. I have found that this practice is over-rated. When you're already going to make a bid regardless of the response to Blackwood is a good time to use it. Once in a while, you get valuable information in response. For example, 1) if partner shows no key cards, I can stop in 5H or 2) if partner responds 5S showing two key cards and the trump Q, I could consider bidding 7H. If neither, I could settle for 6C. I believe 6C is safer than 6H, when partner has a 5-card suit with a loser.

**Richard Katz: 4NT** for hearts. If partner has the AD, we are not getting a good score.

**Paul Kaplan 6 hearts** If partner has as little K Q fifth of hearts you are a favorite to make.

**Asim Ulke:** I bid 5D. Only partner is in a position to determine the level of the contract. With 1 heart loser 6H is safer than 6C. We want a diamond lead and east is more likely to lead that suit.

**Steve Nolan: 4NT.** Roman Keycard Blackwood with hearts as trumps. I'm going to assume that all keycards that partner shows in response are heart honors and place the contract accordingly.

**Jane Marshall: 5 Diamonds** (exclusion keycard). My partner will tell me if he has the Ace and King of hearts. I already know that he has at least 5 hearts ( and no aces outside of diamonds). If he has AK of hearts I will bid 7 hearts. If he does not have 2 keycards outside of diamonds, I will bid 6 hearts.

**Bernie Fudor:** I bid **5d** must be a request for partner to look at his hearts and tell me how many losers in his hand in the trump suit . Find this problem easy so I am surely wrong.

**Jim Bachelder: 5H** Who knows? Anything could be right. Since East is preempting, I tend to think that partner has a little more than AXXX of hearts and a six count. Five diamonds would be exclusion Blackwood but I reject that since I want a diamond lead so if 5H asks for good trumps, I'll opt for that.

**Gail Carns 5D** The cue bid always works

**Stan Ruskin : 6C** This is easy in rubber bridge. I bid 6C and let everyone else figure out what to do. Maybe I can make it and maybe I can't but I am putting the pressure on them to figure out what to do. They can be 2 suited also in S and D. For all I know, they can make 5D too. If this were match points or IMPS, I would bid 5D which is exclusion KC blackwood for H. Since I play 0/3, 1/4, 2 wo, and 2w, I will have the opportunity to place the contract in the right place. If partner bids 5H (0), I pass. If he bids 5S (1), I bid 6C and hope I can pick up the H suit or go down and lose a little. If he bids 5NT (2wo), I bid 6H and if he bids 6C (2w), I bid 7H which should be a lay down as long as H are no worse than 4/1.

**Bill Holt 5D.** I need to know how good partner's Hearts are, but I think 5H asks for the diamond control that partner does not have. Our only issue is 'how many Heart tricks are we going to lose' unless they lead a S setting up a 2<sup>nd</sup> trick there once in with their H trick. Rubber bridge?

**Arlene Port: 5D** I may be treading where I shouldn't be going, but I can't think of anything else besides 5C and that seems a little too reasonable for me. However, this is rubber bridge and it really doesn't matter what game I bid. Slam seems unreasonable. Maybe 5 clubs is easier, but definitely not as exciting.


### HOW EXPERTS VOTED

Michael Becker	5C
David Berkowitz	5D
Bart Bramley	6C
Larry Cohen	4H
Mark Cohen	5C
Richard Colker	5D
Billy Eisenberg	5C
Sar Gohel	5D
Carl Hudecek	6H
Sami Kehela	5C
Danny Kleinman	5C
Eric Kokish	5C
Steve Landon	5D
Michael Lawrence	4H
Robert Lipsitz	5D
Jeff Meckstroth	4H
Marshall Miles	5H
Barry Rigal	6H
Arthur Robinson	6C
Andrew Robson	4H
Beverly Rosenberg	5C
Jeff Rubens	5C
Joey Silver	4H
Chris Willenken	4H
Anders Wirgren	5C
Robert Wolff	6H
Kit Woolsey	6C
Zia	5H

(Results on page 7)



# Pittsburgh Bridge Assoc. February 2016

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Charity Game Glenshaw	2 Charity Game Zelenople	3 Charity Game Glenshaw	4 Charity Game Wilkins	5 Charity Game Wilkins	6 Charity Game Glenshaw	
7	8	9	10 Charity Game Tem- ple Emanuel	11	12 Unit Swiss Teams	13	
14 	15	16 Club Ch. Zelen- ople	17 Charity Game Rodef Shalom	18	19 Club Ch. Sewickley	20 Club Ch. Sat. Night BC	
21	22	23 Charity Game Zelenople	24 Club Ch. Edge- worth	25 Club Ch. Longue Vue	26 Charity Game Sewickley	27	
28	29 Charity Game Export BC						

## FIRST AT THE POST

### 70%+ GAMES

Sheila Brotherton—Linda Wright	72.5%	Longue Vue
David Ruppert - Alan Leaver	73.96%	Zelenople
Judy Haffner - Harold Haffner	70.35%	Glenshaw N/S

### TWO IN A ROW

Donald Averbach,	Jan. 18 & 25 Whitehall
Shirley Eskew - Barbara Cusick	Jan. 19 & 26 SH Future Life Masters
Sandra Harris	Jan. 20 & 27 Temple Emanuel
Constance Hoechstetter	Jan. 20 & 27 Temple Emanuel
C. Nicholas Tredennick	Jan. 20 & 27 New Castle
Marlene Sienicki	Jan. 5 & 12 SH Future Life Masters

## PBA EVENTS 3 MONTHS

### February 2016

- 5 Open Pairs
- 12 Unit Championship Swiss Teams & PBA Board Meeting
- 19 Membership Game
- 26 Unit Championship

### March 2016

- 4 Unit Championship
- 11 Unit Championship Swiss Teams
- 18 Unit Championship
- 25 Open Pairs

### April 2016

- 1 Unit Championship Swiss Teams & PBA Board Meeting
- 8-10 PBA Spring Sectional
- 15 Unit Championship
- 22 Unit Championship
- 29 Open Pairs