

# THE NORTH PENN FINESSE

## NORTH PENN DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

118 South Line Street

Lansdale, PA 19446

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**President's Message:** We moved to 118 S. Line St. almost three years ago. We knew the place wasn't perfect but it was all we could do with the resources we had. I remember somebody asking at the first board meeting in 2007- 'Do you see us still being here six months from now?' Well, now it's three years later and here we are....same ol' place. We learned some stuff in the last two years about organization, financial management and real estate (when we looked at several properties in 2007). We learned that we didn't have enough cash in reserve and that our organization needed fixing. Now we legally exist as a not-for-profit organization, we have usable bylaws and a strong membership base. Our cash situation is improved. I have begun to hear rumblings about looking for new a new place again, so I suspect that process will be starting this year. In the meantime, keep on playing bridge (at North Penn, of course).

***Mitch Snyder, President, e-mail bridge4all@comcast.net***

**Club Manager's Message:** The Board of Directors has decided that the following membership rules shall apply for our new year beginning April 1, 2009: The membership fee will be \$10.00. Benefits for being a "member" are:

- 1) Our regular game fee will become a standard \$7.00. However, "members" will pay only \$6.00 for our regular games.
- 2) For our "special" games (charity, unit-wide, NAP qualifying, etc.), "members" will pay \$7.00 and non-members will pay \$8.00 or more depending on the fee charged by the ACBL.
- 3) Members will continue to be eligible for the "free play" program.
- 4) Members will have "voting rights" for all club elections.
- 5) Members will be given first choice over non-members regarding seating requests.

We are a "member" owned club and hopefully we will continue to operate and grow for the benefit of our membership.

***Real Fradette, Club Manager***



**Coming Without a Partner?** There will be a change to partnership policy effective March 1. Singles must call ahead or arrive at least 15 minutes before game time to be guaranteed a partner. Parings less than 15 minutes before game time are at the director's discretion. Partners for singles are not guaranteed for the Wednesday afternoon game or Swiss teams events.

**North Penn Duplicate Bridge Club Board:** Welcome Jackie Umphlet and Dave LeGrow to the club board. Other members include Elaine Clair, Real Fradette, and Mitch Snyder (2007-2009): Steve Becker, Lois Kittridge, Sandy Sill, and Roger Willig (2008-2010).

**Sunshine:** Due to an extended illness, Kingsley Jarvis has moved to Washington. His address is 2614 Warren Avenue N., Seattle, WA 98109 if you are interested in sending him a card.

**Member Achievements:**

Jim Watters	Life Master	Marlene Hino	Life Master
Ginny Tinner	Life Master	Jack Fishman	Life Master
Evelyn Melchiorre	Life Master	Jean Mansmann	Bronze Life Master
Bruce Lieberman	Bronze Life Master		
Sam Yake	Silver Life Master		
Ellie Goldman	Gold Life Master		
Ala Hamilton-Day	Gold Life Master		
Mitch Snyder	Gold Life Master		



**Tournament Highlights:** At a regional bridge tournament that was held in Charleston, SC over New Year's week, the KO team of ***Mitch Snyder, Dave LeGrow, Real Fradette, and Elaine Clair*** advanced to the finals to find that they were about to play the under 21 junior team that represented the United States in the world games that were held in Beijing this past summer. Both teams had breezed through the competition to reach the finals, and our opponents obviously thought that they were going to continue to do so.

While they were very polite, well-mannered, respectful and a lot of fun to play against, there was a "cockiness" in their attitude that said it all. They probably looked at us and thought that we were dinosaurs - certainly Real and I could have been their grandparents! They thought that we were going to be pushovers and that they were going to pre-empt us right out of the game. However, at the end of the first 12 boards, the "old folks" were up by 4 imps, and I think the "kids" were a little surprised.

When play resumed, they were much less cocky and much more respectful of our ability. At the end of the match, surprisingly enough, the "old folks" had prevailed and won the match by 24 imps. I think that the "kids" were in shock. It was one of the most satisfying matches that I have ever won. The fact that we went into it as underdogs (at least in my mind) and won decisively left us all on a high. It's a match that we'll always remember.

***Elaine Clair, Club Board Member***

Jim & I attended a national bridge tournament in Boston in November. During one event we played against two high school seniors skipping school in Washington DC to play bridge in Boston. How cool is that? Usually high school students skip school for other reasons!!

***Elaine Watters, Newsletter Editor, ejwatters@verizon.net***

**Bridge Classes:** There is a monthly class for advancing players on the third Wednesday before the regularly scheduled game. The class starts at 9:45 and ends around 11:15 a.m. The scheduled game starts at noon. The cost is \$10 for the lesson or \$15\* for the lesson and game. Reservations are not required. Contact Mitch for more information. (\*does not include extra charges for special games)

Dave LeGrow will be conducting a 6-session course in the 2/1 game force system from February 9 through February 26. For more information, visit his website at [www.dave.legrow.net](http://www.dave.legrow.net).

**Tuesday Morning Game:** North Penn holds a Novice/Intermediate game (0-750 mps) every Tuesday at 10 a.m. The game is followed by a free lesson in the form of a post-mortem. Reservations are not required. Contact Mitch for more information.

**Charity Games:** The North Penn Board decided to continue the charity games for another year. The charities chosen for 2009 include Manna in Norristown, Make-A-Wish Foundation in Blue Bell, and Laural House in Lansdale. The following schedule was created and posted for 2009:

January 5 to 9 - ACBL Charity Foundation  
February 9 to 13 – ACBL Junior Fund  
March 6 to 10 – Charity selected by our club  
April 6 to 10 – ACBL Charity Foundation

May 4 to 8 – Charity selected by our club  
June 8 to 12 – ACBL Charity Foundation  
July 13 to 17 – Charity selected by our club  
August – No charity games

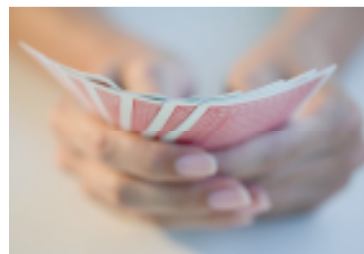
Please note that all charity games yield “triple points.”

***Roger Willig, Charity Chair***

**At The Table:** “*Rather be lucky than good*” is my motto in some tournament plays. Here is one good example, which occurred in Open Swiss Teams in the Lancaster Regional Tournament on October 30, 2008. One of eight rounds my team played was unusual because three of seven hands were in slam territory. Two were stone-cold. The other one was very interesting.

Both vulnerable, as declarer I had S-AT742, H-AQ9, D-AQ9, C-A5. If your system uses “Smolen”, you can open 2NT. I always believe that strength in aces is good for suit contracts, not NT contracts. So, I opened 1S. LHO bid 2S (Michael’s) to show hearts and a minor suit. After my partner bid 3S, I was interested in more than just a game. I cuebid 4C and partner bid 4H (showing the K and some strength. If not good enough, 4S would have been his bid. My 4NT RKB brought partner’s 5C (showing one or four keycards). I bid 5D to check for the Q of trumps. Partner’s 5H “confirmed” having it. (For those who are not familiar with this, any bid other than going to 5S indicates holding the Q of trumps and usually the K of the bid suit.) I was content to settle for 6S even though I could check for minor suit Ks. Unless LHO was insane, she should have some strength in one of the minor suits. When I saw partner’s hand come down with: S-K95, H-K732, D-J75, and C-KQ6, my heart sank. All I thought about at that moment was a likely big swing of 750 or even 850. After the initial shock, I figured the only way to make the hand was that LHO has to have a singleton spade honor. I played a spade toward the K and the J popped up from LHO. Early Christmas! The finesse with the 9 on the way back brought the trump suit in. The whole deal was:

S – K95	
H – K732	
D – J75	
C – KQ6	
S – J	S – Q863
H – T8654	H – J
D – KT6432	D – 8
C – 7	C – Jt98432
S – AT742	
H – AQ9	
D – AQ9	
C – A5	



It turned out that partner misread 5D for 6D which in our system asks for controls in diamonds. Still it should have been done only after checking the Q of trumps. His “5H” meant to show no diamond control. He did not realize that I “had not” checked for the Q of trumps just yet. Here we have one good example of “I’d rather be lucky than good.” Not only did LHO have a singleton trump honor, but also the beautifully placed spot cards in trump suit were perfect for finessing. Life is good. But, this was not the end of the story.

When we went to compare scores after the round, our teammates had minus 1190 to our plus 1430. We thought they had recorded a wrong score for the hand. Their opponents did not go for a slam. Their 4S contract was doubled by one of our teammates who thought his partner, the two-suit holder should have had more strength and the contract was made with two overtricks. It was risky to double with his partner’s hand being almost an opened book. Again the principle requirement for doubling in IMP format is that you almost need to have a setting trick in your own hand. We joke that our teammates actually prevented opponents from getting to a slam by doubling their game contract, and in fact got a better score, minus 1190 instead of minus 1430. Try this in MP (pairs) only.

*Albert Horng, Club Member*

**What are Support Doubles (and Redoubles) and Why Would I Play Them?** Support doubles are one of the special doubles that are commonly used in today's game. Having determined that penalty doubles are generally useless at lower levels of bidding, a better use can be found for most doubles at the one- and two-levels.

Consider the following scenario: You open a semi-balanced hand with 1♦. After your left-hand opponent passes, your partner responds 1♠. Holding 3 spades, you are prepared to rebid 1NT when your right-hand opponent overcalls 2♣. Do you raise partner's spades? If you do, your partner will assume you have four-card support, and you will possibly forego 3NT for an impossible 4♠ game. But if partner has 5 spades, you may miss a great spade game. Don't you wish you had a way to find out more about partner's holding?

It is this frequent occurrence that leads to the use of the Support Double. The Support Double promises partner **exactly three-card trump support**. Since it is enacted by the opening bidder, there are no (further) restrictions on the Doubler. This permits partner to steer the bidding away from a 4-3 trump suit, but permits partner to go on when an eight-card fit is found. In this way, a direct raise of responder's suit **always promises four-** (or more) card trump support. A double is a Support Double when made by an opener after partner responds with a new suit at the one-level and the opponents interfere. It is not usually used by an opener after partner responds with a new suit at the two-level (already promising a five-card suit) and the opponents interfere, but can be done so following a partnership discussion.

In the same vein, if the opponents double after an opening bid and a one-level response, a redouble promises the same 3-card support, whereas a direct raise would promise at least four-card support. Since you now can show four-card support with a raise, and three-card support with a double, it follows that a pass in this seat would usually signify a doubleton (or less) in partner's suit.



Most players treat a double (or redouble) in that situation as a Support Double through opponents' bidding of 2♠. You give up the ability to punish the opponents at lower levels of bidding, but this is not likely to occur with great frequency. Doubles above this agreed level should be treated as penalty doubles.

Examples:

Holding: ♠ AT4 ♥ Q76 ♦ A8 ♣ KT974  
 1♣ (you) - Pass - 1♥ (partner) - 2♦ - **Double** (you)

Holding: ♠ AT4 ♥ Q76 ♦ A8 ♣ KT974  
 1♣ (you) - Pass - 1♥ (partner) - 1♠ - **Double** (you)

Holding: ♠ AT4 ♥ Q76 ♦ A8 ♣ KT974  
 1♣ (you) - Pass - 1♥ (partner) - Double - **Redouble** (you)

This treatment, allowing an important distinction when trying to determine the proper denomination in which to play a contract, is an integral part of most of today's 2/1 Game Force players, and would be a useful addition to your game as well.

*Do you have a question that you think is of general interest? E-mail me and I'll try to answer it in the next newsletter.*

**Dave Legrow, Club Board Member, [dave.legrow@att.net](mailto:dave.legrow@att.net)**



## Upcoming Events

(subject to change)

Weekly Games:	Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays – 12:00 noon Tuesdays and Fridays – 7:30 p.m. Tuesday 10 a.m. (0-750 mps)
Club Appreciation Week	October
STAC (Silver Week)	Week of April 13 to 17; August, and December
Club Championships	Week of March 23 to 27
Unit-Wide Charity	March 17
Charity Swiss Teams	Second Friday at 7:30 p.m. (Come as a team or pair as teammates are guaranteed. Singles will be accommodated if possible.)
Other	Conshohocken Sectional – Friday April 3 (No game at North Penn)



### NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS

#### NAP National Finals

Houston, March 2009.

*Additionally, 1<sup>st</sup> place finishers in each District flight receive \$700 and 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers receive \$300 each to help defray costs.*

*Qualifying for the 2010 North American Pairs begins June 1 and ends August 31.*

