

eDeclarer

December 2021

ACBL UNIT 499 NEWSLETTER

President's Message



Holiday Greetings, Unit 499!

Here we are in the last month of December, 2021. What a long ride it has been! I wish all of you a joyous and happy holiday season with all of the festivities that the season brings about.

Bridge, of course, is finally getting back to face-to-face encounters, and what a long time it has been to finally get back. Clubs are opening up, inviting players back. Players are graciously accepting the challenge and returning eagerly.

This will be my last column as president. My term will come to an end in a few weeks, and there will be a new president of Unit 499. I have enjoyed serving as your president, with all of the challenges and perks associated with the task. The Board of Directors has been an outstanding Board and a delight to work with. Many of the same members will remain on the Board to help with the coming tasks. We have always had a strong Board and I am glad so many are remaining active.

Bid those slams and make them—I'll see you at the tables.

Lyn Sacco



...from the Editor

The old normal is returning to some of our clubs with face-to-face games. There are still plenty of online games for our more cautious players. It would be nice if there were enough games for everyone to play at their comfort level, whichever situation they prefer.

I've thrown a little challenge out there, further described elsewhere in this issue. Look for it!

I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving, and are getting ready for Christmas and Chanukah. Be safe and stay healthy!

Judy Keilin
Editor.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1
From The Editor	2
Unit 499 Milestones	3
In Memoriam	4
Contributions	5
Lessons	6
Club News	10

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To submit a letter to the editor, send it to Judy Keilin at jkeilin@gmail.com

Mary Krouse, Publisher

Be sure to visit the unit website for more information on our clubs and events, as well as archives of our newsletters.

diablovalleybridge.com/ccbc

Milestones and New Members

MILESTONES

NEW JUNIOR MASTER (5)

Katherine Evans

NEW SECTIONAL MASTERS (50)

Steve Dinning

Marilyn Gschwind

Linda Virden

NEW REGIONAL MASTERS (100)

Coralee Wilkes

Timothy Zuffi

NEW NABC MASTERS (200)

Ed Becker

Christine Foley

Daniel Noal

Roberta Polson

NEW BRONZE LIFE MASTERS (500/750)

Laurie Hailey

Gregg Riehl

Nancy Thomas

NEW SILVER LIFE MASTER (1000)

Lorraine Weisenberg

NEW GOLD LIFE MASTER (2500)

Carol Cottam

NEW MEMBERS

Robin Bauman

Andrea Schell

William Cantrell

Barbara Elliott

Hilary Jacobson

Naomi Myers

Priestley Parker Jr.

Jeff Speer

J. Peter Wright

Please welcome these folks when you meet them online or at the tables.

CONTEST

There's a very subtle change to something that appears regularly in every issue of eDeclarer. See if you can spot it and send me an email when you do. Those of you with sharp eyes will see their names in next month's edition.

Judy Keilin (jkeilin@pacbell.net)

IN MEMORIAM



William Seeman Samuels, Jr.
March 19, 1940 - October 9, 2021
Resident of Lafayette, CA

Bill Samuels, 81, of Lafayette, Ca passed away on October 9, 2021 in Walnut Creek, Ca. A resident of Lafayette since 1970, he was born on March 19, 1940 to William Sr. and Eleanor Levy Samuels in New York City. He spent his early years in Manhattan and the family later moved to Great Neck, NY where he graduated from high school.

He earned a bachelor's in accounting from Lehigh University in 1961, and after a two-year stint in the US Army he practiced as a CPA in New York. He graduated from the University of Arizona Law School (Order of Coif) where he earned his JD in 1969 and met his wife Margaret (Peggy). After honeymooning along the California coast, they moved to Oakland and he joined Coopers & Lybrand.

In 1980 he started his own tax & estate planning law practice. He retired in the early 2000's to pursue his favorite activities. He was passionate about travel, tennis, bridge, following his stocks, pickleball, and eating chocolate desserts. He loved his family and was very proud of his children and grandchildren.

Bill is survived by Peggy, daughter Gail Schwartz (Michael), son Robert Samuels (Suzanne), his three grandchildren, Jordan, Ben, and Elena as well as his sister Barbara Samuels (Nancy Ryburn).

A Celebration of Life will be held later this year.

What Are You Hiding?

It maybe the gift-giving time, as we near the season of buying presents.

Some hide them under a tree, others celebrate for days, or mail them, and some just don't care.

Not everyone celebrates Christmas, but if you do, December is upon us and winter is near, so clean out your closets and bring out the cheer. Santas, pandas and all the cute toys, put up a tree and have some tea, if you've got the energy. How about a Hot Toddy! Remember when lots of us celebrated the holiday season with this special drink? It seemed to warm your heart and give you comfort, all in one cup. Hum, I'm getting thirsty; it must be 5 o'clock somewhere!

So, what should you be hiding? It's your bridge hand. If you don't cover your cards, and you don't think folks won't take a peek, you're not cookin' on all four burners.

I've done it, not intentionally, but I try and swiftly turn away, and tell the opponents to hide their cards. (*most of the time*). I've really only seen one pair cheat, pretty blatantly, and they were dismissed from the bridge center. Of course, there are the Italians, who, during a world championship, after winning, were discovered cheating. The directors reviewed a video of the game, and just with a minimal separation of their fingers, that indicated what card should be returned. Of course the title was taken away.

So, it's imperative to be cautious at the bridge table, and don't assume someone can't see your cards OR over-hear the bidding and outcome of the game. Even when I groan, make a face, roll my eyes, or take a deep breath, they're all giveaways. Poker face is what we need, so you don't reveal what you're hiding.

Wishing you all a Happy, Healthful Holiday.

Lisa/The Shortcut Cook



Play a Hand with Me

December, 2021

	North	
	S KQ752	
	H 10	
	D AK42	
	C A93	
West		East
S A98		S J103
H 986		H 7543
D QJ976		D 5
C 108		C QJ542
	South	
	S 64	
	H AKQJ2	
	D 1083	
	C K76	



This deal occurred in a local virtual club game where South, a robot, opened 1H. North, a local unnamed player who regularly contributes articles to the eDeclarer, responded 1S and raised the robot's 1N to 3N.

I led the Q diamonds and the robot won in dummy and led the 10 hearts which held and then ducked a diamond hoping for a 3-3 split. I won the diamond and forced out the high diamond in dummy and the robot then cashed 2 clubs and 4 hearts, making 3 for a zero. All the robot needed to do was force a spade trick which would have given them a score of slightly better than 50%.

It appears that making 5 is possible by leading towards the spades twice, but that runs the risk of hearts splitting 5-2 and then you only get 1 or 2 spade tricks depending upon where the A spades is located, but you still get a spade trick, 4 or 5 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs making a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5.

My question is should North ask for his money back when his robot failed to find a good line?

Jerry Weitzner

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BRIDGE CONVENTIONS & GADGETS



EQUAL LEVEL CONVERSION DOUBLE & LEAD-DIRECTING DOUBLE

By Mel Chaplin
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EQUAL LEVEL CONVERSION DOUBLE

The Equal Level Conversion Double is a special off-shape Take-Out Double used by Intervener after Opener has called 1H/1S. Intervener will have a two-suited hand, NOT a three-suited hand. One of Intervener's suits will always be the "other" major & his second suit will usually be Diamonds (generally 5 cards). Intervener will usually be short in Clubs. If Advancer bids Intervener's shortest suit (let's say it's Clubs) then Intervener can bid the next higher suit, Diamonds, at the 2-level & Intervener's 2D bid does NOT show a strong hand. This is an Equal Level Conversion Double. Advancer can also make this bid.

Larry Cohen made an apropos comment a few years back when addressing the Equal Level Conversion Double. He quipped that if the convention reminded you of a term from high school calculus it might be best for you to forget about it. And, most bridge players seem to have taken his hint & have forgotten the convention. But let's take a look at this convention anyway. It has some interesting aspects & it may be a useful addition to some partnership's toolbox.

Remember the two main types of Take-Out Doubles? (eDeclarer, January 2021 issue).

#1) The classic Take-Out Double where Intervener holds:

3+ cards in all three un-bid suits.
Approximately opening hand values.
Shortness in the opponent's suit.

#2) The "Big Double" where Intervener holds 18+ HCP & an un-balanced hand OR an 18+ HCP hand with No Trump distribution.

But today you open your hand to 1) ♠AJxx ♥xx ♦AQ10xx ♣Ax in second seat & are about to open 1D when Opener blurts out 1H. You still have the hand values sufficient to overcall 2D but if you do that you have probably lost forever the opportunity to search for a 4-4 Spade fit. Meckstroth & Rodwell popularized the idea of the Equal Level Conversion Double for bidding situations like this which allowed them to immediately enter auctions where other players would pass because they didn't have the correct hand structure for a classic Take-Out Double or the "Big Double". The bidding probably looked like this for "Meck" & "Well" when "Meck" held hand 1):

<u>Opener</u>	<u>"Meck"</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>"Well"</u>
1H	Dbl	P	2C
P	2D		

If "Well" initially replied Spades in response to "Mecks" Take-Out Double a 4-4 Spade fit has been discovered & all is OK with the bidding. If "Well" replied Diamonds a 9+ card Diamond fit has been found & all is OK with the bidding. But if "Well" replied 2C, then "Meck's" 2D bid is an Equal Level Conversion, NOT the "Big Double" showing a big hand. Rather, "Meck's" 2D bid is simply a correction to the strain one step above Clubs, & at the same bidding level, namely, 2D.

Several sources I've read state that the Equal Level Conversion Double does NOT have to be alerted. But you do need to check the box labeled "Min. Offshape T/O" on your convention card (it's in the SPECIAL DOUBLES section). And your Partner must remember the bid! The possibility of a catastrophic mistake always lurks when playing the Equal Level Conversion Double. The apparent fact that the Equal level Conversion Double does not need to be alerted is curious to me. Many of us were taught that if we first call a Take-Out Double then bid our own suit we are showing a long, strong suit with at least 18 HCP. It was nick-named the "Big Double". In the interest of full disclosure & fairness to all I favor alerting the bid particularly since many players are not familiar with the Equal Level Conversion.

A minor downside of using the Equal Level Conversion Double would occur when Intervener holds 18+ HCP & a long Diamond suit. But Intervener can easily handle this situation by calling a cue bid of Opener's suit (forcing).

Intervener's Hand: ♠AK10x ♥x ♦AKQJxx ♣Qx (19 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1H	DbI	P	2C
P	2H		

TAKE-AWAY: The main idea of the Equal Level Conversion Double is to provide a pathway to search for a 4-4 fit in the "other" major suit when Opener has started the bidding with 1H/1S & Intervener holds an off-shape two-suited hand otherwise suitable for a Take-Out Double. But when Advancer does not bid the "other" major but instead bids 2C, Intervener's correction to 2D is an Equal Level Conversion showing four cards in the "other" major & 5+ Diamonds. The 2D bid does NOT show a strong hand.

LEAD-DIRECTING DOUBLES

Lead-Directing Doubles are doubles of artificial bids meant to suggest a good opening lead to Partner. Lead-Directing Doubles are an important item to be included in any defender's toolbox. Your intent is also to defeat the contract so the lower the level of the opponent's bid the stronger the suit you need to call your Lead-Directing Double.

SITUATIONS FOR A LEAD-DIRECTING DOUBLE

Double of a 2C Stayman bid.

Advancer's Hand: ♠Jxx ♥xx ♦Jx ♣AQ10xxx (8 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1NT	P	2C	DbI

Advancer should call a Lead-Directing Double since she holds a good Club suit containing three of the top five Club honors.

Double of a Jacoby Transfer bid.

Advancer's Hand: ♠xx ♥Kxx ♦AK10xx ♣Jxx (11 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1NT	P	2D	DbI

Advancer should call a Lead-Directing Double of 2D since she holds five Diamonds including three of the top five Diamond honors. Don't call a Lead-Directing Double at this bidding level if your 5-card suit is headed by fewer than three of the top five honors.

Double of a 1430 sequence.

Advancer's Hand: ♠xx ♥xxx ♦Jxxx ♣AQxx (7 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1S	P	3S	P
4NT	P	5C	DbI

Advancer's Lead-Directing Double of 5C asks Intervener to lead a Club. At this high level of bidding Advancer's Double does NOT require a long Club suit or a strong hand but it likely shows the Club Ace &/or King.

Double of a Control Bid.

Advancer's Hand: ♠xxx ♥Ax ♦KQxx ♣xxxx (9 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1S	P	2NT	P
3C	P	3S	P
4C	P	4D	DbI

Responder's 4D bid is a control bid showing first or second round Diamond control. Advancer's Lead-Directing Double is asking for a Diamond lead.

Double of an Artificial Bergen Bid.

Advancer's Hand: ♠xxx ♥xxxx ♦Jx ♣AKxx (8 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1H	P	3C	DbI

Responder's 3C bid is a Regular Bergen Raise showing four Hearts & 6-10 total points. Advancer's Lead-Directing Double strongly suggests Intervener lead a Club if she is on lead.

Double During Opponent's Slam Bidding Sequence.

Advancer's Hand: x ♥10xxx ♦KQ10x Jxxx (6 HCP).

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Intervener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Advancer</u>
1S	P	3S	P
4NT	P	5D	DbI

Advancer's Lead-Directing Double directs Intervener to lead a Diamond if she is on lead. The strict requirements to make a lower-level Lead-Directing Double are not needed to make a Lead-Directing Double of a high-level artificial bid.

FURTHER READING

Max Hardy. "Advanced Bidding for the 21st Century", pp. 191-193, 2002.

Larry Cohen. "Equal Level Conversion Double". December 2013.

Bob Crosby. "Equal Level Conversion". acblunit390.org.

Robert Todd. "They Double Our Control-Showing Bid". www.advinbridge.com.

Larry Cohen. "Lead-Directing Doubles". www.larryco.com. November 01, 2014.

Next Time: NEW MINOR FORCING & IT'S COUSINS

Club News

This section is for club owners and managers who wish to submit news about their games. Please go to our website for information about all our clubs, game times, and to check on the latest results. Dial-valleybridge.com

Until further notice all bridge clubs in Unit 499 are closed due to the coronavirus. Stay home, stay safe! Visit our website for information.

Also visit ACBL.org to find information about on line classes and places to play.

ROSSMOOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Gateway Club, Rossmoor



ROSSMOOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE GAMES and HOLIDAY PARTY

The Rossmoor Duplicate Bridge Club is back to in-person games! Here is the current schedule of in-person and online games.

MONDAY at 1pm. - Section A - Open; Section B 499er. **Members only.**

TUESDAY at 1pm. - Section A - Open; Section B 299er

WEDNESDAY online, 0-5000 at 1pm.

THURSDAY online, 0-750 at 1pm

FRIDAY at 9am. - 0-100

SATURDAY at 1pm. - Open

The **HOLIDAY PARTY LUNCH** will be held on **MONDAY, December 13.** Lunch will be served at 11:30am. followed by play at 1pm. This is a member only event.

Proof of vaccination and photo I.D. are required for those who have not already provided it. All in-person games are held in the Oak Room at Gateway.

Kit Miller

Contra Costa Bridge Center

ccbridgecenter@gmail.com • diablovalleybridge.com/ccbc

December News

In-person games have restarted on Mondays at 10:00 (open), Thursdays at 10:00 (999er), and Saturdays at 1:15 (299er and open). The online games those days are suspended. Full schedule below.

STaC Week (Sectional Tournament at Clubs), December 6–12. Earn Silver points in CCBC in-person games. Extra \$1 to help cover the higher sanction fee. Note that online games may not participate in the STaC.

Charity Week, December 13–21. Every time you play in-person or online this week, CCBC will donate \$1.50 to the **Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano**. There will be no extra charge for these games. We hope you'll play often and help us make a **BIG** donation!

NO GAME on Christmas Day, December 25.

NO GAME on New Years Day, January 1.

*Thank you for your support of CCBC!
Grant Robinson*

Game Schedule

Monday	10:00	Open	In person	\$9
Tuesday	10:00	749er	Online	\$5
Wednesday	9:50	299er	Online	\$5
Wednesday	10:00	Open	Online	\$5
Wednesday	2:00	0–20	Online	\$4
Thursday	10:00	999er	In person	\$9
Friday	10:00	Open	Online	\$5
Friday	12:30	749er	Online	\$5
Saturday	1:15	299er	In person	\$8
Saturday	1:15	Open	In-person	\$9



Grant Robinson

Club Manager

Lamorinda Bridge Club



We are still working to set up opportunities to play outside in the fresh air in the back garden, which may not be really practical in the dead of a cold and rainy winter, but if it turns out to be a mild winter into spring we will announce the possibility.. Currently we have assembled a smaller metal roof gazebo on an outdoor deck and we are assembling a larger version to be placed on the concrete patio. We will wait until California shows much more improvement before reopening any Face-to-Face games indoors, but we might consider experimenting with outside games when the time comes, and we will continue with our virtual games on the weekends.

We are scheduled to run sectional tournaments on three Princess back-to-back Cruises beginning Feb 10 which will likely be our first F2F bridge in 2022. There will be a fourth Cruise to Alaska in September.

If you are interested in learning about the cruises please call or email and we can share the information with you.

Continuing through December, 2021:

Virtual Online Game Schedule:

Saturday 9:50am Limited Game (499) \$5 Saturday 10am Open Game \$5

Sunday 9:50am Limited Game (499) \$5 Sunday 10:00am Open Game \$5

You are welcome to partner with a Robot in any of our games.

Please note that the 499er games on Saturday and Sunday mornings both begin promptly at 9:50am. The Open games on Saturday and Sunday will begin on the hour at 10am.

Winnie Jasper and Jerry Chamberlain

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