

BRIGHT LEAF ALERT

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF UNIT 191

MAY, 2025

Message from the Unit President:

Happy Spring my fellow unit members! Thank you to all Unit members who attended the Annual meeting on April 16th. We discussed the state of the Unit and the ACBL and voted to amend the Unit Bylaws as described in earlier communications. The current Bylaws can be found on our unit website: www.bridgewebs.com/unit191brightleaf. A summary of the meeting notes is available if anyone would like to read them. Just contact me at deanna@elarus.com. Our next Annual meeting will be in December 2025.

Congratulations to our local team for winning the **ACBL District 7 Grand National Team Fight B** competition last month. **Ian Cloudsdale and Marc Goldberg** teamed up with **Rich Pfeffer and Marty Friedman** (both of Greensboro) to compete in the two-day event. They finished the event in first place among 8 teams and will represent District 7 in the GNT competition at the Summer NABC in Philadelphia. We hope to offer more GNT qualifying games next year and perhaps have more representation in this national competition for the future. Prizes include stipends to cover the expenses for attending the national competitions.

Unit championship games were held on April 7th and April 25. These events are scheduled monthly and offer opportunities for more points and higher levels of competition. The dates for May's Unit championships are May 5th and May 16th. Join us!

Our mentoring program will finish for the year with the May games and take a hiatus for the summer. Thank you to **Michael Lavine** and the committee (**Beverly Craig, Joan Roberts, Morris Weinberger, Ed Fuller, Allison Bowes, Barbara Bute and Maggie Smith**) for organizing this program. Thanks are also due to **Henry Meguid, Hugon Karwowski and Eric Hamilton** and all of our mentors for volunteering their time helping others improve their bridge skills.

Coming up this month is a special event where we will honor our Unit Award winners. On May 16th, we will host a party and game at Triangle Bridge Academy where the Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKinney awards will be given. Award winners have been notified and invited to attend. If you plan to be there, please contact **Mary Newman** at mnewman0529@gmail.com. While RSVPs are not required for this event, an estimated table count will be useful for party preparations. Hope to see you there!

See you at a table soon!

Deanna Larus

The archives of our monthly alert contain a lot of really good information. We have been blessed by some great contributors who have spent the time to pass on some of their hard won experiences. In particular, Kay and Randy Joyce have contributed many excellent articles. Working with various mentees, at some stage I usually direct them to one particular set, written by Kay, covering Roman Key Card Blackwood. The RKCB convention covers not ONLY asking for the key first round controls, but also how to find other critical kings and queens in order to make the best decisions on whether to play in a slam (small or grand), or to choose between a trump or No Trump slam. I encourage you all to take some time to look back over the archive to find these not so hidden gems. In the meantime, with Kay's permission, we are reproducing her articles written in 2018 on how to play and use RKCB to its fullest extent.

Ian Cloudsdale

“HOW TO” ARTICLES MAY HELP—NUTS AND BOLTS

By Kay Joyce

At the risk of boring you, I play to write a few “how to” articles to give you and frequent partners an opportunity to review just “how” you play some of these complicated things that we all like to play. Everyone wants to play Keycard, but I find that I'm not sure that I', on the same page with partners that I play with once or twice a month. If you can straighten out confusion, great, if not, move along.

I will do three articles on Keycard, getting more complicated each month:

1. First step response
2. Queen ask, when you need to know and the answer you got was 5 C or 5 D.
3. Asking for specific kings, sometimes number of kings just doesn't do the job—you need to know whether partner has the king of diamonds or the king of hearts!

First step over 4 NT

Most of us are pretty proficient with this. The only hang up is whether you play play RKC or 1430. Sometimes I will include part of a lesson I have done, so here goes....

A frequent reason for the failure of a slam was insufficient quality in the trump suit. An antidote to this was first played by the Italian Blue Team, hence the name “Roman” Keycard

Blackwood, now usually shortened to Keycard. This variation on Blackwood adds the King of trumps to the Ace-asking process, just as if there are 4 aces.

The King of trumps often has just as much significance as an Ace, so it is given equal value by this convention.

Also incorporated into the responses, is information about the queen of trumps. The “queen info” may be imbedded in partner's first response if he holds 2 keycards, otherwise, asker will have to “ask” for the queen with another bid.

5C = 0 or 3

5 D = 1 or 4

5H = 2 without the trump queen

5 S = 2 with the trump queen

Yes, Virginia, there are 5 Keycards and no response for that. If you need all 5, perhaps you are a little too ambitious!

Today many people call this old version “Roman Keycard” as if it was called originally when the Italians first played it.

Now many people reverse the answers to 5 C and 5 D, calling it 1430 (the easy to way to remember score for a small slam in a

Major!) Rank and file club players call this version just “Keycard” to differentiate it from the earlier version.

The reason for the reversal of meanings, I believe, is that 1 or 4 comes up more frequently, and if you are at 5 C, you have another step (or more room) for further inquiries.

Back in the early days of RKC, many pairs got to grand slams off 3 aces! That came from misinterpreting the 0 or 3 or 1 or 4 responses to be the higher number. Today, we don’t see that so much, because bidding is more sophisticated, and there has often been a cue bid from responder that will give away the right answer. *If there is any doubt about which partner has, asker should sign off, and responder should bid on with the higher number.* I hope this gives you a little food for thought.

I suspect that many of you don’t bother too much with asking about the queen, if you get a 5 C or 5 D response. Wait ‘til next month! This month, be sure you are on the same page about RKC or 1430, and that you give some thought to the previous paragraph, if you have not already encountered that wrinkle.

There are two more follow up articles written by Kay on Roman Keycard and will appear in the June and July Alert.

It’s not the handling of difficult hands that makes the winning player. There aren’t enough of them. It’s the ability to avoid messing up the easy ones—S. J. Simon

Regardless of what sadistic impulses we may harbor, winning bridge means helping partner avoid mistakes—Frank Stewart



At a recent club game, Ian noticed that Audrey and Robin were looking at the above creation. When they returned to the table, Robin said she would give us \$1000 if we knew what it was—obviously, we had no idea. It’s a snuffle mat for lemurs. Audrey’s son-in-law volunteers at the lemur center and the very talented Audrey and her daughter are making these mats for the lemurs. Lots and lots of cutting and inserting the strips into a plastic base! What a terrific volunteer project!!!

“A snuffle mat challenges your dog/animal to use their nose and brain to locate hidden treats, offering a rewarding puzzle to solve. This type of mental stimulation is vital for your dog’s/animal’s overall well-being, helping to prevent cognitive decline in older dogs/animals and keeping younger dogs/animals sharp and focused.”

Unit 191 Mentor/Mentee program

Unit 191 held a Tier II (higher level) Mentor/Mentee game on Tuesday, April 8th. There were nine pairs. Congratulations to **Gerri Stanczyk and Deanna Larus** who finished first. The game was preceded by a lesson from **Hugon Karwowski** on interference over notrump. He discussed how you can intervene when the opponents bid notrump and how you can handle your own auctions when the opponents intervene over your partner's notrump.

The Unit held a Tier I game on Tuesday, April 22. There were 6 tables. The winners were **Jill Beachler** and **Ken Bann**, North-South, and **Carrie Dailey and Larry Stanczyk**, East-West. The game was preceded by a lesson from **Henry Meguid** on bidding judgement. **Michael Lavine** wrote comments on several hands from the game.

As always, you can find handouts from the lessons and discussions from the mentors by going to the **Unit 191** web site, following the link to **Mentoring Program** webpage, and looking at the **Learning** section there.

Tier I games are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM, preceded by a half-hour lesson from Henry Meguid starting at 12:15. Tier II games are held the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM, preceded by a half-hour lesson beginning at 9:15. The fee is \$12 per person, except that the Unit will subsidize \$5 of the fee for each mentor who is playing with a Unit mentee. That makes the fee \$19 per pair if the mentee is from the Unit. We encourage mentees to pay their mentors' fees.

If you or your partner are unable to attend a particular M/M game, please let us know in advance so we can find someone to take your place — either a mentor or mentee who would not otherwise have a partner. It's also a courtesy to your regular MM partner; no one likes to be stood up when they're expecting to play. Email Michael Lavine, mlavine@umass.edu, or any other member of the mentoring committee.

Finally, we encourage MM pairs to play in the Eight is Enough team game on the third Saturday of each month running from 10 AM to approximately 1 PM. If you and your MM partner would like to play, you can either form a team on your own or email Michael Lavine, mlavine@umass.edu, who will look for another pair to join with you to form a team.

To summarize:

1. We are running a **two-tiered** program this year. See the web site for details.
2. **Pairs who are not in the M/M program are invited to join the M/M game.** To join a Tier I game one player must have fewer than 250 masterpoints and the other must have fewer than 500. There is no limitation on pairs who want to join the Tier II game.
3. If and when you are unable to play, **please let us know**, so we can match your partner with someone else.
4. **Eight is Enough** is another good opportunity for MM pairs to play together.

A special birthday party was held at Tri-



gle Bridge Center on April 14—to honor a very special person in our unit. **Deanna Larus**—our unit president. Happy Birthday Deanna—as you begin a new decade. Thanks to **Diane Bastian** for the cake and all who brought delicious snacks

MISCELLANEOUS...

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the following tournaments in our area:

1. Greensboro Sectional - May 16-18
2. Winston-Salem Sectional—August 15-17
3. Pinehurst Sectional—September 5-7
4. Richmond Regional -May 19-23
5. **DURHAM SECTIONAL—July 10-13**

The Durham Sectional—hosted by Unit 191—is being held at a new location this July. The unit needs volunteers to make the tournament a success. Please **DO NOT** wait to be asked—volunteer! Contact Deanna or any unit board member and offer your services—it makes the job easier for the chairman and those in charge. If you could help move tables, chairs, bidding boxes, etc., that would be most appreciative. Our unit is known for its great hospitality and we need those with cooking and baking skills to show their talent. The tournament is the main source of income for the unit and it is essential to make money to continue the excellent programs provided by the unit. And please.....plan to play and support the tournament.

MAY 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			01	02	03
			12:30 PM ABA pairs (private)	12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	TBA Closed
05	06	07	08	09	10
12:30 PM Unit Championship Game	1:00–4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	12:30 PM Stardust Game*	12:30 PM ABA pairs (private)	12:30 PM Stardust Game*	TBA Closed
12	13	14	15	16	17
12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	Mentor-Mentee T2 9:15 AM Lesson 10:00 AM MM Game 1:00–4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	12:30 PM ABA pairs (private)	12:00 PM Awards Celebration and Unit Championship Game***	10:00 AM 8 Is Enough Swiss Teams
19	20	21	22	23	24
12:30 PM Silver Quest Game**	1:00–4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	12:30 PM Silver Quest Game**	12:30 PM ABA pairs (private)	12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	TBA Closed
26	27	28	29	30	
12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	Mentor-Mentee T1 12:15 PM Lesson 1:00 PM MM Game	12:30 PM Grass Roots FUNd Game	12:30 PM ABA pairs (private)	12:30 PM Stardust Game*	

*Stardust games award 25% gold points

**Silver Quest games award 25% silver points

*** The Unit Championship Game will immediately follow the Awards Celebration at approx. 12:30 PM

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Activity in Unit 191 from April 1—April 30, 2025

473 members

We welcome the following into our Unit 191 bridge community:

John Dunn

Sophia Lehrman

Rayan Malik

Swarajh Mehta

Loretta Michael

Angela Regan

David Robertson

Eileen Schmitz

Alexander Van Lanschot

Transferring in from other units:

Frances Geingross (from Unit 236 -Hudson Valley)

Sara Klugman (from Unit 165 -Tennessee Valley)

Congratulations to Unit members who have achieved a new ranking:

Junior Master

Maureen Berry

Bill Chappall

Loretta Michael

NABC Master

Ava Nackman

Lee Nackman