

**National Tournament -**Three times a year the ACBL conducts a National tournament, the most recent being held over Thanksgiving in San Diego, CA.  As usual, the event was well attended with 4716 players participating and nearly 100,000 masterpoints being awarded.  While not many of our club members made the trip to San Diego, Nancy Colbert and Joe Hollis did.  And did they ever represent our club well.    Finishing first in one event and second in another, they won 36.87 masterpoints, nearly all gold.  Congratulations to them both!

**STOP!!! -** Yes, that old STOP card.  It's officially gone from tournaments effective January 1 2018, and it's already gone from our club.   But elimination of the STOP card does not relieve the next bidder from waiting approximately 10 seconds before making a call.  The purpose of waiting is to ensure that unauthorized information is not relayed to his partner.  For example, if South opens with 2S and West passes without waiting (he should be waiting and appearing to be "thinking"), when North passes (if he does), East may conclude that an aggressive bid at the 3 level would be risky since his partner (West) passed quickly and likely has a weak hand.  This information passed from West to East is not allowed.

Bottom line is that, if it's your turn to call and you are following a skip bid, wait approximately 10 seconds while studying your hand.  It's the right thing to do.

*Sears Sez*

**Preemptive Opening Bids** - When our hand is weak and distributional, these bids are very effective in preventing the opponents from entering the bidding and finding a contract which belongs to them.  So when you have such a hand (approximately 6-10 HCP and a 6-, 7-, 8-card suit), go ahead and open with a bid of 2, 3, or 4.

There are two exceptions to making this bid that I recommend.  One is when your long suit is very weak and your hand has tricks OUTSIDE your long suit.  In those situations, wait to see how the auction proceeds and compete appropriately.  The second exception is when your are in fourth seat and there are three passes ahead of you.  In that situation, you should pass the hand out and take your good score on the board!

**Holiday Luncheon** - Last reminder that our holiday luncheon is Thursday December 14.  $18 for the lunch and the game.  Extra masterpoints to be won!

**Rank Progression -** Congratulations to our players on their continued fine play and accomplishments.  Moving up in rank this month are:

   Gerry Patten - new Junior Master

   Nancy Colbert - new Advanced NABC Master

   Joe Hollis - new Advanced NABC Master

Merry Christmas and

Happy New Year!!!