

Jazz It up - In Kansas City

The first 2017 NABC was held in Kansas City, a great location. Even though the events were in two hotels, the Westin Crown Center (national events) and the Sheraton Kansas City Hotel (regional events), the hotels were joined by a glass-enclosed walkway. The playing sites at both hotels were well lit and spacious, and the temperature control was good. There were several affordable restaurants in the Crown Center, and the hotels offered a free shuttle service to other restaurants.

The final table count was 8691, less than the original estimate but more than the revised estimate of 8500 tables.

One hundred and sixty-nine D17 players attended and enjoyed this well-run tournament. Below are the D17 players who made the overalls in national events at Kansas City Spring NABC.

One might say, "Oh, really? 20th, 30th, 40th place?" Yes, it is an accomplishment to make the overalls of any national event. It is very difficult to put together two games to even qualify for the finals of a national event, and then one must

put together two more good games to make the overalls. And this is against the best bridge players, not only in ACBL, but in the world!

If you have not been to an ACBL NABC, put it on your to-do list. There are three a year: Spring, Summer, and Fall. The 2017 Summer NABC will be in Toronto, July 20-30, and the Fall NABC will be in San Diego, November 23-December 3.

If your calendar is full this year, plan ahead for 2018: Spring in Philadelphia, March 8-18, Summer in Atlanta, July 26-August 5, and Fall in Honolulu, November 22-December 2.

NABCs are fun and exciting!

D17 Shining Stars

Bobby Levin, Henderson, Nevada, topped the D17 masterpoint winner list in Kansas City with 304.55.

Vanderbilt Knockout Teams

1. Bobby Levin, Henderson, Nevada
- 9/16. Geoff Hampson, Las Vegas
- 9/16. Roger Lee, Las Vegas

Baldwin Flight A NAP

25. Gregory Herman, Fort Collins, Colorado & Varis Carey, Superior,

Colorado President's Cup Flight C NAP

20. Steven Lockwood & Joseph Freedman, Albuquerque

Kay Platinum Pairs

4. Adam Wildavsky, Dillon, Colorado
14. Bobby Levin, Henderson, Nevada
19. Haig Tchamitch, Paradise Valley, Arizona
21. Anam Tebha & Steve Zolotow, LV
22. Markland Jones, Phoenix, & Robb Gordon, Sedona, Arizona
27. Brad Moss, Denver

Lebhar IMP Pairs

23. Curtis Cheek, Las Vegas
28. John Kranyak, Las Vegas

Leventritt Silver Ribbon Pairs

34. Steve Cohen, Las Vegas
38. Allan Deserpa, Tempe, Arizona
50. Rebecca Rogers, Henderson, Nevada

Rockwell Mixed Pairs

4. Fred Gitelman & Sheri Winestock, Las Vegas
14. Allan Deserpa, Tempe Arizona
15. Linda Lewis, Las Vegas
19. Joe Harris & Cindy Harris, Abq
43. Jill Levin, Henderson, Nevada

Silodor Open Pairs

14. Sheri Winestock & Fred Gitelman, Las Vegas
22. William Harker, Santa Fe
26. Haig Tchamitch, Paradise Valley
30. Adam Wildavsky, Dillon, Colorado
32. Daniel Braucher, Brighton, Colo.
50. Mitch Towner, Tucson

Smith Life Master Women's Pairs

6. Linda Lewis, Las Vegas
12. Jill Levin, Henderson, Nevada
16. Anne Brenner, Denver

NABC+ Fast Pairs

21. Haig Tchamitch, Paradise Valley
24. Valentin Kovachev, Las Vegas

Jacoby Swiss Teams

4. John Kranyak, Las Vegas
7. Roger Lee, Las Vegas
8. David Caprera, Denver
14. Brad Moss, Denver

Machlin Women's Swiss Teams

3. Jill Levin, Henderson, Nevada

0-10K Swiss Teams

- 17/18. Chris Champion, Wendy Turk, Richard Olson & Mary Olson, Colorado Springs

Go to bonniebagleyd17.com to see the complete list of D17 masterpoint winners at the Spring NABC.

Consult the Coopers

By Kitty & Steve Cooper

Finding the Best Major Suit Fit over Partner's 1NT Opening

A recent letter to the editors highlighted the problem of finding the right major suit fit when partner opens 1NT.

Richard Ford, El Paso, Texas: In the March *Improve Your Play* hand from Larry Matheny, the author neatly showed how a 4-4 fit often plays better than a 5-3. I think the bidding is worthy of comment as well. This pair was obviously not playing any version of "super acceptance" over Jacoby Transfers.

- ♠AK85
- ♥KJ2
- ♦Q62
- ♣A54

- ♠J742
- ♥A10963
- ♦A87
- ♣8

South	West	North	East
		1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Coopers: We agree that when partner opens 1NT it is important to find a 4-4 (or 5-3) major suit fit when you have one. But you need to be able to handle invitational hands, such as the one above, as well as game forces. You also need to be able to escape to a suit in which you have a fit when you have a weak hand, since such hands often (usually?) play better in a suit in which you have even a minimal fit than in notrump.

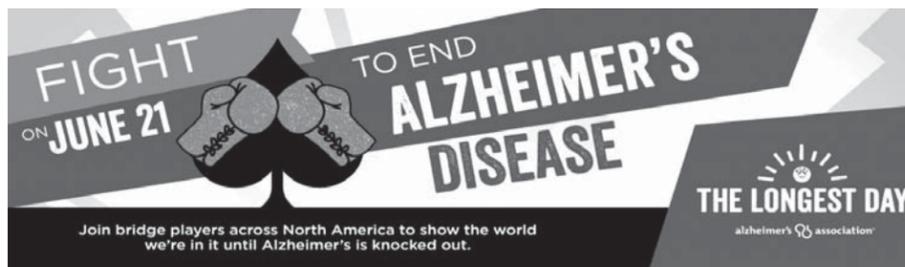
Transfer breaks ("super accepts") can be very useful, but would not apply to this auction since you need four card support for that action. It would be far too dangerous to jump to 3♥ with a maximum but only three trumps when partner could just be trying to escape 1NT holding a bad hand with five hearts. (See our previous discussion of transfer breaks at d17acbl.org/index.php?page=not-taking-a-transfer-mar-2012 from the March 2012 *ScoreCard*).

The addition of "Garbage Stayman" to your 1NT response structure (see

Consult the Coopers from the October 2011 *ScoreCard* - d17acbl.org/index.php?page=garbage-stayman-oct-2011 means that game invitational hands with five hearts and four spades must start with a transfer to hearts and follow by bidding 2♠. Hands with five spades and four hearts can use Stayman and bid 2♠, but not 2♥, over a 2♦ response; 2♥ is reserved for Garbage Stayman.

Forcing hands with 5-4 in the majors (either way) use the Smolen convention, which was briefly mentioned in our Basic Bidding 7 article on responding to 1NT at d17acbl.org/index.php?page=responding-to-1nt-stayman-and-transfers and is covered well at larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/536 by Larry Cohen. This lets you pass the 2♠ bid in the above auctions, since it is always an invitational hand, never a game force.

We will reprint some of these articles in the next few issues.



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opening 10 HCP point hands. Fearing a weak opening bid, Joe passed 1NT. Brad had the full 13, 3NT was a good contract that was bid and made at the other table, and Grue-Moss lost seven IMPs.

I asked a half dozen of the best players I know who play methods similar to ours for their opinion. Without exception, they all opened Annie's hand, noting that the good controls and major suit length made the hand attractive as an opening bid. Included in that poll were Mike Passell and Chris Compton, somewhat regular partners with a combined 125,000 masterpoints! (You have to be careful when you combine numbers like that. The record of 768 for major league baseball home runs by brothers is held by Hank and Tommie Aaron; Hank had 755 and Tommie had 13. But in the case of Mike and Chris, it is more like 81,000 and 44,000 respectively.)

What about Annie's concern regarding her rebid? Here the responses were split pretty much down the middle. In fact, Mike and Chris disagreed. Mike voted for "Pass," Chris for rebidding 2♠. Mike's reason for passing 1NT was that one should not try to improve on a partscore. For example, take the simple auction 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2NT (invitational) - 3♥. Suppose opener holds ♠Axxx ♥Axx ♦Axxx ♣x, a minimum hand that will not accept partner's game invitation. But opener might think that 3♥ is likely to be a better contract than 2NT and want to bid it. Too bad; 3♥ is universally played as forcing; it says, "I accept your game invite but think 4♥ might be a better spot." It is not an attempt to improve on a part score.

This from Mike: "The more I look at

this hand the more I dislike 2♠. I don't like it if partner bids 2♥ or 3♣ or 2NT or 3♥. Those are most of his probable bids. When Chris bids 2♠ with me I would expect either nine cards or a hand that would accept everything or at least something. Arguments the other way make no sense to me. To this, Chris responded, "Mike's rule sounds logical."

Mike's answer sounded good to me and made a lot of sense. I was content and had actually written my first draft of this column. But three days later I had the opportunity to ask the same questions of Jeff Meckstroth. He opened Annie's hand, saying "I would always open at IMPs because I want to get to four of a major if possible."

But with respect to whether he would rebid 2♠ he said, "I would definitely bid 2♠ over 1NT. We belong in a suit contract." Jeff and Mike were in total disagreement.

So, I have now confirmed what I have known all along: "No matter what I do I will be wrong, and I will always end up sleeping on the couch."

