11/1/15: The Web Movement at BA II

by Bob Gruber

OK, what's this mysterious "Web Movement" Tom Ciacio loves to use on Fridays? ACBL director John "Spider" Harris created it in the 1970's. (The name of the movement is apparently a play on Harris' nickname.)

Basically, the Web Movement is an enhanced Mitchell Movement that makes use of two sets of identical boards (preferably of different colors) and divides the game into an upper half and a lower half. Let's call these halves partitions, Partition 1 being the lower half.

2 sets of boards

2 partitions

Seeming scoring complexities and the time/difficulty of creating two identical sets of boards meant this movement "sat on the shelf" for years. The advent of ACBLscore was a step in the direction of employing this movement, but it was not enough. It took the invention of the dealing robot that allows two identical sets of boards to be prepared ahead of the game. Now, if 2 sets of boards are available and the director is willing to prepare both sets, the Web Movement is an attractive choice for a large game.

The Web Movements built into ACBLscore work for an even number of tables or an even number of tables less a phantom pair. Movements exist for odd numbers of tables and rover movements, but they are beyond the scope of the movements built into ACBLscore.

Even # of tables

Why Use a Web Movement?

Three major advantages of Web Movements are:

1) they offer a better comparison of scores than some Mitchell Movements,
2) they can shorten a sit out, and
3) they can eliminate a skip

A regular Mitchell Movement in a large section may result in 2, 3 or more board sets not in common (a board set is the number of boards per round), and a similar or greater number of opponent pairs not in common. And, the "not in common" elements will differ slightly from Pair 1 to Pair 2 to Pair 3 to …. There will be too few apples-to-apples comparisons to claim a fair comparison of skill.

The Web Movement corrects one of these problems by having all pairs play the same 26 (or 27) boards. There will still be a number of opponent pairs not in common, but playing exactly the same boards is a big boost in the fairness of the game.

How is the Room Setup?

Table Markers are for a single section starting with 1 and running consecutively to the total number of tables in play. There will be two equal-sized partitions and two assembly tables (one in each partition, next to the highest table number in that partition). Each partition will have its own set of boards.

For the lower partition, Partition 1, boards are played in the normal (ascending) order.

Board order in Partition 1 looks like a normal Mitchell.

Partition 2 is another matter entirely. Boards are generally encountered in descending order with an odd jump here or there. North may check the Bridgemate to verify the proper boards.

Partition 2 looks like a Mitchell with the boards in an oddball order

Where are the Assembly Tables?

The (two) assembly tables are next to the highest numbered table in each partition. For Partition 2 it's easy, it's next to the highest numbered table in the game. For Partition 1, divide the number of tables in the game by 2 and the assembly table will be next to that table. In practice, the assembly tables may be simply a stack of boards on the floor or on a chair.

How do the Players Move?

Players move just like a straight, single-section Mitchell. They move up one table each round. After they play at the highest numbered table, they go to Table 1.

Players Up 1

How do the Boards Move?

Boards move down one table within a partition/half. When the boards reach the lowest table in a partition, they go to the assembly table for that partition, which, you may recall, is next to the highest table number in that partition. They eventually reenter play at the highest numbered table in the partition/half.

Boards Down 1 ***within the partition***