

ACBL BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
July 16-19, 2007

APPENDIX C

REPORT FROM BILL COOK, JR
DISTRICT 10 REPRESENTATIVE

Changes to Conditions of Contest, Masterpoints Formulas and Board Operations "housekeeping" occupied much of the Board's time.

The most heated and controversial issue on the agenda was a motion for ACBL to sever its relationship with the World Bridge Federation (WBF). The motion was defeated. I was one of the 6 who voted for this motion. There were 5 who abstained (the ACBL reps to the WBF) and 14 voted to defeat mostly on the belief we needed to be a part of the international bridge community. I am opposed to the autocratic manner in which the WBF operates. Our representatives have very little influence on the decisions that WBF makes. WBF voted to increase their dues from \$0.50/member to \$1.00/member over our representatives' objections. This will cost ACBL members an additional \$75,000 annually. Some of the countries, mainly China, do not report their membership accurately and do not pay their fair share of dues. This issue is not going away.

Other Actions of the Board were:

- Dan Morse from Houston, TX was elected ACBL President for 2008, defeating Shirley Seals from Florida and Rich DeMartino from Mass.
- Authorized a loan upon creation of the North American Contract Bridge Hall of Fame of up to \$50,000 and repayable with annual interest on or before 12-31-10.
- Approved change in the Code of Disciplinary Regulations that defined a "member in good standing".
- Adopted a recommendation from the Board Operations Committee that organized all of the previously passed motions dealing with Board of Director Expenses and Board of Directors meetings into one document.
- Added the Educational Foundation to the list of Special Games that are eligible to be beneficiaries of games played at clubs.
- Defeated a motion to authorize the formation of a committee to establish a system to handicap matchpoint games.
- Defeated a motion to eliminate consolation compact KO's.
- Approved the following changes in Masterpoint Formulas (second reading required)

NABC Events

- Overall masterpoints will be awarded to all pairs that qualify for the finals of the 6 session NABC Pair events (L M Pairs, Blue Ribbon Pairs).
- Match awards for Vanderbilt/Springgold are increased to 6 masterpoints.
- Reduced the percentage from those eligible for overall awards from a maximum of 35% to 25%.

Pair Team(nonKO) Events

- Change the formula used to determine overall awards below fourth place for 2 session pair/team events to the formula presently in use for events of 3 or more sessions.

Clubs

- Eliminate the Super Club Championship, District Wide Charity Game and 49er's Pairs.

- Replace all the unit games, including Unit-wide Championship and Unit Extended Team Games with one class of Unit Championships. Increase the number of games from 16 to 24 with a fee of \$1.25/table.
- Replace all Unit or District Charity Games with one class of Fund or Foundation games. There will be a maximum of 4/year per Unit and 4/year per District. The fee structure will be the same as Special Fund or Foundation games at clubs.
- Increase the Swiss match awards to .015 board at club rated events and .02 board at club championship rated events.
- Increase the maximum allowable overall award at an open club rating point or an Internet club game to 2.50 at .10 per table. The maximum for invitational and lower games will be increased by the same percentage section awards will still be limited to 1.50 for an open rating point game. Overall awards are allowed for all games of 16 or more tables.
- Add a cap to all special fund/foundation games of 6.0 masterpoints.

Miscellaneous

- Match awards for Swiss Teams will be increased by 20% in Flight A (and X) Stratiflighted events (0.36 to 0.44 for Regions; 0.26 to 0.32 for Sectionals).

Knockouts

- A proposed formula for determining the first overall award based on the “strength of field” was approved. Overall awards below first place will also be based on a percentage of the first place award and the number of rounds played.

- Changed the Conditions of Contest to Read

In the Grand National Teams NABC final for all flights, teams will play a one day Swiss event to qualify into a seeded KO bracket, based on their position in the Swiss. Each Swiss event will be 8-7 board matches. The 20 VP Scale will be used. There may be playbacks at the bottom of the field. Ensuing knockout matches will be 64 boards in length in the Championship flight; 56 boards in length in all other flights. These events will be governed by the Knockout General Conditions of Contest.

A fill-in pair must play at least 87.5% of the boards to qualify for overall awards.

- Deferred to the Fall 2007 meeting a decision on requiring all calls, questions and plays to be in English once hands are removed from the boards.
- When a Unit nominates a District or Districts to conduct a STaC all clubs within the District(s) must be offered the opportunity to participate. Participation is at the club level when sponsored by a District. If a Unit outside of the sponsoring District chooses to participate all clubs within that Unit must be invited to participate.
- Authorized management to develop a plan as soon as possible for banning all non-medical electronic devices from the playing rooms, hallways contiguous to and bathrooms on the floors in which any events are being played at NABCs. The implementation plan will be presented to the Board prior to the Fall NABC in San Francisco.
- Eliminated the Spring 49er Pairs and the Fall Non Life Master Pairs from the NABC schedule effective January 1, 2008.
- Defeated a motion to limit the number of fund games an ACBL club could hold.
- Authorized management to establish procedures and guidelines to suspend or rescind a club game sanction or a club director's accreditation for cause such as but not limited to egregious conduct detrimental to ACBL by the club manager or club director, an unsuitable venue, discriminatory

practices as noted in the ACBL Handbook or Rules and Regulations, violating ACBL regulations or in the case of a director, misapplication of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge.

- Authorized the holding on an experimental basis a Youth North American Bridge Championship for youth under the age of 19. The first will be held in Atlanta in the summer of 2008 or 2009 and the second the following year with evaluation to be held at the Fall Board meeting after each event.
- Were informed of IRS new filing requirement for small tax-exempt organizations. Beginning in 2008 those organizations who previously were not required to file Form 990 for Form 990-Z because their gross receipts were less than \$25,000 may be required to file an annual electronic notice, Form 990-N (e-postcard). Organizations will need to obtain an EI # (identification number) from IRS whether incorporated or not.

Jay Baum, ACBL CEO report to the Board included the following:

Membership at the 6 month mark for 2007 is up 623 compared to the member ship total at June 30, 2006.

Current paying member total is the highest it has been since 2000.

The cost of printing the Bridge Bulletin is headed up based on announced increase in paper costs.

The ACBL Bridge Series books, "Bidding in the 21st Century" and "Play of the Hand in the 21st Century" have been updated and sent to Baron Barclay. Both are available now. "Defense in the 21st Century" should be ready by end of the summer. Teacher manuals are available on line for free download from ACBL website for the two books that are available.

Electronic file membership rosters are now available by request for Club Managers and Unit & District Officials.

Table counts for regionals are slightly ahead of 2006 in spite of four fewer tournaments. Sectionals and STaC's are also doing very well with increases in both.

For 2007 we have six fewer regionals, nineteen fewer sectionals and eight fewer STaC's sanctioned vs 2006 actuals.

We have another contract to sell the Memphis headquarters property. It appears the sale will close in September. A provision for ACBL to lease back space from the Buyer until a decision is made regarding a new site has been included in the sales agreement.

A new marketing plan has been formulated that includes the following strategies: Public Relations, Promotion and Youth.

Public relations will attempt to:

- 1) Create awareness of bridge by building stories around the people that play bridge not their accomplishments at the table
- 2) Emphasize the brain and health factors for all ages and involve the media that has special interest in health, education and leisure activities
- 3) Promote bridge as "fun" in the media.

Promotion will be

- 1) Specific to helping clubs promote new members, welcome new members and encourage mentoring programs in clubs
- 2) Providing greater support for our professional teachers
- 3) Redesigning unit rebate program with the possibility of revenue sharing to the clubs.
- 4) Continue and update the Co-op Ad program
- 5) Make improvements to the website and continue working with AARP

Youth will continue to be introduced to bridge in partnership with the League (the Gates-Buffer school initiative) and other school programs. The School Bridge lesson program format will be revamped to place emphasis on fun. Links from Bridge-is-Cool website to blogs of well known successful juniors will be provided.

The 2007 membership survey received from a cross section of 1617 members indicated that 99% of the membership was either somewhat or extremely likely to renew their membership. 98% was either somewhat or extremely satisfied with the ACBL Bridge Bulletin. 92% was either somewhat or extremely satisfied with ACBL Headquarter Staff in Memphis and our Tournament Directors. 80% said increased fees for special games did not deter them from club play. Only 30% play bridge on line. 56% play bridge every day or several times a week at clubs.