

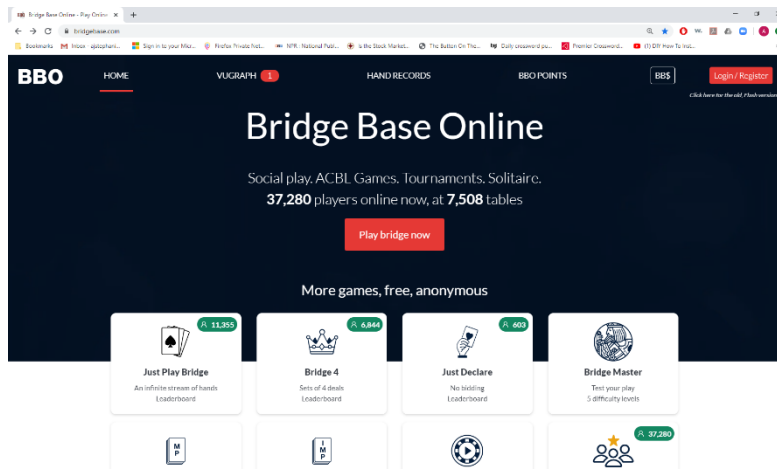
# 2020 SPRING ACBL BOARD NEWS

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## Corona Cocoon Update

I wish I was writing to you with congrats to the Columbus NABC Committee on a successful NABC recently completed, news on upcoming D11 tournaments, details for the District GNT Finals, various and sundry club tidbits, and the like, but this once-in-a-generation crisis has forced us all into a digital bridge world. We should be thankful our pastime of choice isn't bowling!

It's an imperfect replacement, but BridgeBase.com has been a haven in the Corona storm for so many of us. I know many of us have been thrust into unfamiliar terrain and forced to struggle with making our technology work. If you haven't created an account yet, please give it a try. It's been a lifesaver.



I'll continue to communicate important information about our bridge universe, both large and small, and try to anticipate some of your questions. You can always email me at [AJStephani@gmail.com](mailto:AJStephani@gmail.com) or my ACBL email listed up top.

## Migrating to Online Bridge

Kudos to the folks at Bridgebase.com, the Common Game, and the ACBL for establishing our clubs online with remarkable speed. There are lots of glitches and challenges, but the time and talent that has gone into this migration is unbelievable. Dozens of people are working all day to make this happen, and an hour-long daily post-mortem and strategy meeting is held every evening on the transition. It's not uncommon to see 75 club directors and tech experts on the call, and the dedication of these folks is inspiring. It's been the single most amazing thing I've seen since I've been an ACBL member. Shout-outs go to Jay Whipple, Greg Coles (ACBL Director of Bridge Services), the folks at BridgeBase.com, and Silvana Morici (club manager on Long Island) for their incredible dedication to the cause. If you run into them online, make sure to say thanks. They deserve it.

You can now play for ACBL Masterpoints all day on BridgeBase.com. They offer a number of robot tournaments in various formats – these games don't require a partner. Robots are certainly more patient than most of us, but they're somewhat shy in the personality department and in their capacity for building partnership morale, and these games award "unpigmented" points only. For black points, you can play in several "Support Your Club" games offered a couple of times a day. These games allow you and your partner to play in a pairs game just like you would at your club, but in a larger field made of players across the ACBL spectrum.

However, I'm most excited about the "Virtual" ACBL clubs up and running, and I recommend you check out these games. Many of the larger clubs in our District now run their own games (mostly 18 boards) online. Participation in these games is generally restricted to players who have played at your club within the last year, so you will know or recognize most of the other players. The Chat app (at the bottom of your BridgeBase window) allows you to catch up with our friends (and foes) imperfectly, but it's really nice to hear a warm word of greeting from a familiar name in these desolate times.

The Director of your Virtual game can help you with problems, and I hosted a [Zoom webinar](#) a few weeks ago for those who need help getting started.

## Tournament Update

Any hope that this shutdown would be short-lived was dashed by the news that we have now cancelled the Summer 2020 NABC in Montreal. The Fall 2020 NABC is still on the calendar, however, and I'll be anxious to see my friends across the ACBL again next November.

## District 11 Regionals and Related News

- The Evansville 2020 Regional has been cancelled. They look forward to hosting us again in 2022.
- The Cincinnati 2020 Flying Pig Regional has been postponed to an undetermined date, but it's not cancelled. We hope to get something on the calendar later in the year when the State of Ohio opens up events like ours. Stay tuned for a new date.
- The District 11 Board will have its next meeting at the next available Regional date.
- The District 11 GNT Finals have been postponed indefinitely. The status of the 2020 GNT is up the air right now, and I should know more about that event and the 2020 NAP when the Board meets by teleconference next Wednesday evening.
- It's not all grim news – from April 30-May 3, the ACBL is hosting its first online Regional! Check out the details to the right.

## District 11 Sectionals

All District 11 sectionals have been cancelled through the end of May. June and July sectionals (Louisville, Dayton, and Lexington) are still on the calendar, but please check with the tournament organizer for details if you're planning to attend.

## What You Can Do to Help

Even sheltered in place, you can do a lot to keep bridge thriving during this crisis. We need your help!

- PLEASE renew your ACBL membership. About 35 % of the ACBL's budget comes from membership dues, and maintaining our membership base is probably the most important thing we can do. The ACBL Bridge Bulletin will continue to be published monthly, and it allows us to stay in touch with you when we come back to live bridge.
- Play in a Virtual Club game on BridgeBase.com! Our club owners have lost a lot of revenue over the last 2 months, and you can help support them most directly by playing in one of their games.
- Touch base with your partner or friend if you haven't heard from them already. Videochats are super-easy to set up, and we don't realize how much we miss those familiar faces.
- Family and friends driving you crazy? Now's that chance you've always wanted to teach someone bridge! The internet has a ton of resources to help, but I'm partial to starting off with Minibridge. Have you ever heard of it? It's what I use for all beginner players, regardless of age. [Here are some](#) good websites (each word is a different website link) that explain how it works. You can have someone actually playing bridge in about 20 minutes. It takes a lot longer to learn to bid, but this gets people actually playing rather than listening to someone talk about rules, opening bids, etc.

## Board of Directors Update

The ACBL Board of Directors held its Spring NABC meetings via teleconference across 5 days the second week of March, and we had a full agenda. I've included a list of the highlights below, but I'm thrilled to tell you that the Board voted 20-4-1 on a restructuring plan to reduce its size from 25 to 13. I've been working on this since, well, it seems like forever, and I'm quite gratified we got it passed. I'll explain in a future newsletter exactly what this means for us (if you're wondering, the operation of the District and Units remains the same), as the plan isn't final until the necessary ACBL Bylaws amendments are approved at a second Board of Directors meeting and then ratified by the Board of Governors. Expect final passage in July.

Here are some other notable decisions made at our virtual Columbus:

- The Appeals and Charges Committee (of which I am the Chair) processed a number of changes to our Code of Disciplinary Regulation (CDR). The most significant was a complete revision of CDR § 3.20, under which one could be found to have



Shelter and play to win red and gold masterpoints® in ACBL's regionally rated online tournament: Stay @ Home, Play @ Home, a four-day tournament beginning Thursday, April 30 that features one and two-session 18-board events on [Bridge Base Online](#). The games – which range from Gold Rush to Side Pairs events – begin each day at 4 p.m. EDT with more events and second sessions starting at 7:30 p.m. EDT. Entries are \$15 per player, per session for all events.

Participants must be ACBL members with BBO accounts; member numbers must be [linked to your BBO account](#) at least 24 hours before the start of the tournament.

engaged in “Cheating and Other Ethical Violations.” We’ve now broken that into First, Second, and Third Degree Violations, with various prohibited behaviors detailed within each category. This should bring uniformity to our Disciplinary Committee decision making and help Recorders figure out what kind of evidence might be needed to charge someone with an Ethical Violation. Take a gander sometime if you dare.

- Masterpoint adjustments were made to Soloway-style KO/Bracketed Team events held at Regionals. Contrary to a rumor circulating around out there, these events are not going away. I just hope I get to play in one soon.
- We approved a new 0-2500 Swiss Team NABC event on the Tuesday and Wednesday of the Spring NABC. We hope this encourages players under 2500 MPs to dip their toe into a 2-day event against players of similar experience.
- We approved the 2020 budget, though we know it was essentially obsolete upon passage because of the Corona crisis. I’ll provide a more complete financial picture in my next newsletter, but as you can imagine, it’s not looking good for 2020. We were actually expected to run a substantial surplus this year, but that’s obviously out the window now. With in-person clubs and tournaments all cancelled for a decent chunk of the year, we will lose all the revenue from those events.
- It’s not all bad news, though – we approved the decision to hold the Spring 2024 NABC in Louisville! We’re returning to the Galt House, which will have undergone a complete renovation, and which hosted the 2011 Spring NABC. Clear your calendars for March 14 – 24, 2024!

I am always available by phone (513-313-0488) or e-mail ([AJStephani@gmail.com](mailto:AJStephani@gmail.com)) with questions or concerns. Take care of yourselves, your partners, and your neighbors out there.

A.J.