



BOARD MEETING REPORT

Spring 2008
Detroit

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Electronic devices, excluding health-related equipment, capable of sending or receiving communication, including but not limited to, headphones, earphones, cellular phones and mini-computers: (1) shall not be allowed in the playing areas, adjacent hallways, restrooms or accessible break areas; and (2) shall not be used during a session. These restrictions shall apply to all pairs, team members, captains, coaches, recorders and kibitzers and shall apply throughout any actual playing session or segment. A violation of this policy shall result in a disciplinary penalty of one full board (or 12 IMPs at that form of scoring) for the first offense. A second offense shall result in disqualification from the event for the pair/team. Kibitzers violating this policy shall be removed from the playing area for the remainder Of the session.

Electronic Devices Banned



The biggest news coming out of our Board Meeting was the unanimous vote to ban all electronic devices capable of communication from NABC nationally-rated events. The policy will be effective beginning with the Las Vegas NABC this summer. The policy as adopted is set out at left. This issue has received MUCH study and this was the recommendation of Management and the Bridge Committee. We believe that NOTHING will kill our game faster than a perception that cheating is rampant. The Chess Federation, for instance, has had such a policy in place for several years. We discussed the possibility

of "checking" phones at the door for those players who forget to leave their phones at home or in their rooms, but believed the liability exposure to be far too great. We may have plastic bags available so that players may check phones at the hotel bell desk and it is quite possible that a third-party vendor will soon step in to fill the "checking" need. In any event, we'll all have to stretch our minds way, WAY back to a time before cell phones and make plans to meet our friends after games at pre-arranged locations. Notices of the new policy were published every day

in the Bulletin, will be in the monthly Bulletin and will be prominent on the website.

I URGE YOU TO POST THE NEW POLICY IN YOUR CLUBS AND SPREAD THE WORD!

I practiced for the new rules in Detroit and left my cell phone in my room during all play (and in between, due to elevator rush) and got along JUST FINE. The pressing need to respond to reports of cheating simply outweighs the minor inconveniences. The vast majority of players I ran into at the tables were very much in favor of the policy. I hope you agree!

My First Meeting—

Everyone was most welcoming and helped to get me in the swing! I've been placed on the Finance, Audit, Board Operations and Governance committees. Lots of detail-oriented hard work, but I think I can make significant contributions in these areas—and many of my new colleagues were kind enough to say they agreed (yes, that means my resolution to sit back and "listen only" at my first meeting went by the wayside—I know you're shocked!). I will do my best to find the right balance between making sure the problems and concerns of all of you in the District are addressed and the need to act in the best interests of the ACBL as a whole. I hope you'll let me know when you think I've fallen "off the beam"!

Headquarters

Still no decision on moving (or not) out of Memphis. We sold our building last year and are leasing it back. The Board asked that the Real Estate Committee continue to review options and the matter was deferred to Las Vegas.

Other Issues--Bridge

STAC GAMES

Beginning in April, the ACBL will change the way it charges sponsors of STACs for the services of Tournament Directors ("TDs"). The fees will now be on a "per table" rather than "per session" basis. The effect of this change is to enable smaller sponsors (who often don't hold games during all the available time slots) to hold STACs. In any event, the change is necessary because of the way the ACBL compensates TDs—it is better to use full-time personnel with "idle" time than to pay overtime to part-time employees. The long-term impact should be revenue-neutral, although in the short term some Districts are projected to have lower, and some higher, costs. Our District is projected to save money, but I would have voted for the change regardless—my balancing act begins! The new fee scale has already been sent to units. If you haven't received it, let me or the ACBL know and they'll get it to you.

KO MASTERPOINTS

There were some technical problems with the implementation of the new masterpoint scale for knockouts. The Board had previously approved the changes basing awards on the level of competition within a bracket rather than simply the number of teams in that bracket; with the effect that the top brackets, where the competition is toughest, get higher awards, and the lower brackets, where awards were widely perceived to be often inflated due to the sheer number of participants, get lesser ones. ACBL Score had a programming error that is being corrected retroactive to January 1st, and some other mathematical tinkering was done to refine the tables. They will be available on the website and in the Detroit minutes when posted. Please let me know if you'd like to see them before then.

A special e-mail to district and unit presidents and disciplinary chairpersons and district appellate chairs will be sent by Management advising them that the change that prohibits attorneys from representing players in a hearing is effective for charges brought after April 1, 2008.



CONVENTIONS CHANGES

Two changes were made to the Mid-Chart:

- 1) The applicable point level was raised from 1000 to 1500.
- 2) The "multi" two-diamond convention was banned in pair events.

A motion to allow a "wide-range" no-trump opening on the Mid-Chart failed, receiving only 4 votes—mine wasn't one of them.

APPEALS AND CHARGES

The burden of proof in disciplinary hearings was changed from "clear and convincing evidence" to "a preponderance of the evidence". Attorneys were barred from appearing in the hearing room, although they can certainly represent folks and sit outside. These changes bring the ACBL into conformity with the majority of administrative hearings held by membership organizations.



Detroit put on a fabulous NABC. All who attended agreed that the site was great and the hosts were friendly. And who can beat entertainment by The Miracles and The Contours? Attendance was hurt, however, by weather and the city's "bad rep". It also hurt that they were bracketed by San Francisco last fall and Las Vegas this summer. (Louisville in Spring 2011 will be bracketed by Orlando and Toronto—gulp.) Nevertheless, we can learn a lot from the Detroit volunteers and our Louisville NABC chair, Hannah Davis, was taking copious notes! I know our fabulous District will work together to follow Detroit's example of hard work, friendliness and hospitality!

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS OR HEYHOWAREYAS YOU WISH AND I'LL DO MY BEST TO RESPOND PROMPTLY!

SEE YOU IN CINCINNATI!!

BETH

Other Issues--Administrative

Governing Document Clean-Ups

The prior practice of the Board has been to simply add changes and amendments to documents such as the Board Behavioral Code without incorporating them into the original text (!). Nadine Wood worked hard to rectify this mess and went through and renumbered and made appropriate additions and deletions based on prior motions in order to put these documents in readable form. Essentially no substantive changes were made---but they easily can be now due to Nadine's hard work!

Political Statements at Bridge Events

Following the events in Shanghai last fall, the USBF acted to settle the disputes and discipline the players under its jurisdiction. The ACBL Board promulgated the following statement:

The American Contract Bridge League (ACBL), acting as the WBF Zone 2 Authority, expresses its disapproval of all non-bridge related public statements and demonstrations by any Zone 2 federation representative participating in an international bridge competition"

I voted against the motion, not because I disagreed with its substance, but on purely technical grounds of jurisdiction. I did, however, vote in favor of the related motion :

The ACBL requests that the federations in the jurisdiction of Zone 2 adopt regulations disallowing such public statements and demonstrations.

Appointments

President Dan Morse made the following committee appointments, ratified by the Board:
Hall of Fame
Cecil Cook
Amalya Kearse
Betty Ann Kennedy
Zeke Jabbour

Competition and Conventions

Doug Doub
Bob Hamman
Steve Beaty
Elaine Said
Mildred Breed

Ethical Oversight

Bruce Ferguson
Eric Rodwell
Denny Clerkin
John Sutherlin

Disciplinary

Lisa Berkowitz
Nagy Kamel
Tom Peters

Laws

Chip Martel
Jeffrey Polisner
Chris Compton
Peter Boyd
Howard Weinstein

THE ACBL TOPPED 3 MILLION TABLES 2007—CHECK OUT THE ARTICLE IN THE MARCH BRIDGE BULLETIN!