



BOARD MEETING REPORT

Fall 2011
Seattle

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The Seattle Committee put on a great NABC. For the first time, I had to return home at the close of the Board Meeting in order to be with my mother for her first Thanksgiving since moving to Louisville earlier this year. I therefore missed the Board of Governors' Meeting and played NO bridge—I'm sure that threw all the seeding off. ☺ I hope all of you who attended did well and enjoyed beautiful, but damp, Seattle. By flying in early in the morning I was able my first afternoon to do a little sightseeing, including the breathtaking Snoqualmie Falls and the Troll under the bridge...



New Leaders/Elections

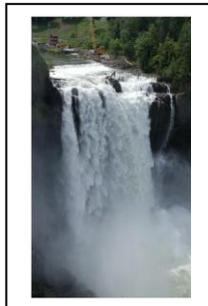


New ACBL CEO Robert Hartman hit the ground running. His official first day was November 7th but he has really been tackling his new duties all fall. As chair of Finance I was asked to serve on his transition team and I can report that his leadership and energy are extraordinary. The team provided a detailed survey to the entire Board and responses were read only by Robert, although a summary was available to all. By providing him strategic focus from the Board, we agreed to "give him his head" for his first 18 months allowing him to manage without our interference and to bring the Board a strategic plan based on its stated goals, e.g. growing membership. In addition to the survey, Robert met with each Board member for at least an hour to solicit his or her views. His first big project was the budget and that meant dealing with yours truly. Poor man. More below.



New ACBL President Elected

Sharon Anderson of Eagan, Minnesota (District 14) was elected President of the ACBL for 2012, succeeding Craig Robinson. Sharon is a professional non-profit Board consultant and a very nice woman so I think she will do an excellent job of helping Robert and the Board build their new relationship. She has asked me to continue as Finance Chair.



New ACBL Educational Foundation Trustee

I am VERY pleased to report that our own Sandra Marlin of Lexington has been elected to a three-year term as Trustee of the ACBL Ed Foundation. The Trustees are comprised of six at-large ACBL members and three members of the ACBL Board of Directors (I am one of these). The Foundation makes grants to further bridge educational efforts to ALL age groups. As most of you know, Sandra has been a leader in education in our district and she received not only my support but a glowing endorsement from Craig Robinson who encountered the Marlins several times over the course of the Louisville NABC in March.



STRENGTH OF FIELD

As I discussed in my Toronto report, the Masterpoint Committee has worked very hard to devise a new formula to address problems that have developed with SOF. When the original formula was devised, the makers didn't imagine the explosion of stratification and new games and certainly did not anticipate that one could play in a 10-table game on Monday and get 5 points and play in a 10-table game on Tuesday against exactly the same opponents and get 15 points because a stratified senior game is playing at the same time. On the other hand, new players LOVE LOVE LOVE winning masterpoints and the proposed new formula would reduce the payday. The makers have addressed many of the complaints and have tweaked the formula significantly to alleviate the "rich get richer" problem, but the Board remains divided and many felt that with every competing example presented the confusion increased. As this is an extremely important issue, the Board voted to defer its decision to the Spring NABC. I voted against deferral simply because I don't think more examples will help me much but I have no serious objection. We have been assured that changes to ACBLScore, if required, will be easy and quickly accomplished so delay is acceptable. We discussed the issue at the District Meeting and were, unsurprisingly, divided. I welcome your input!

FINANCE

2011 Budget

Fall is the meeting at which the Finance Committee approves the annual budget. This is a lengthy and complex process. The staff, headed by CFO Dee Wallace, solicits budget input from the entire headquarters staff and the budget is prepared by Budget Manager Patricia Glover. The budget is submitted to the FC by the end of October and we have a VERY long conference call to raise issues and questions prior to the fall meeting. The FC, together with staff, then meets all day the day before the full meeting begins. The FC must satisfy itself as to the financial health of the organization and the rational support for the budget presented. The FC must then decide which fees, if any, should be raised in order to come reasonably close to a balanced budget.

The budget presented to the FC forecast for 2012 expenses in excess of income in the amount of \$140,880. Of this amount, \$85,000 were one-time expenses and therefore not a "permanent" budget hit. As I reported last year, it is

the policy of the FC to make small annual adjustments to TD fees, as described below, in order to avoid big "catch-up" years to try to bring revenue in line with costs. The increases bring the project budget bottom line to \$ 118,190 projected expenses over revenue.

TD Session Fees Increase

The allocated costs of providing TDs to our tournaments remain far higher than the fees we charge for them. This is because these very hard-working employees get raises and proportionate increases in benefits. The philosophical budget issue is "who should bear the burden of these increased costs?" Although some Board members believe that the membership as a whole should subsidize the cost of sectionals and regionals it is the long-held view of the Finance Committee, a view I share, that costs, to the greatest extent possible, should be allocated to the groups that incur them. If that means tournament managers need to raise entry fees rather than keeping them artificially low (like Gatlinburg) then that's the reality. That being said, TD Session Fees are going up 4%, effective 04-01-12 as follows:

National, Associate National Directors \$167.40 increased to \$174.10

Tournament Director

\$153.00 increased to \$159.10

Associate Tournament Director \$124.80 increased to \$129.80

Local Tournament Director \$99.70

increased to \$103.70

Regional and Sectional sanction fees:

Regional and Sectional (including STaC's) tournaments per table sanction fees are increased by \$.04 effective April 1, 2012.

NEW VOUCHER IDEA

The folks in District 9 are trying a new idea to boost attendance at tournaments and it's been very successful. Basically, they're issuing vouchers to players with fewer than 600 points who have not played in tournament in the last year. The voucher not only gives the player a free entry but provides the ACBL accredited teacher/sponsor an income stream (in this case \$1.00 per session) based on the player's future attendance at tournaments until he or she reaches 600 points.

For all the details, visit the District 9 website at

<http://district9acbl.org/Vouchers/index.html>



GNTs

In Toronto, the Board defeated a motion to provide free entries to GNT finals participants 12-13. The Board of Governors, as is its privilege, sent the motion back to the Board for reconsideration in Seattle. It failed 12-13 again but two Board members switched votes! I continued to oppose the motion as an inefficient fix. The entire Board is eager to see what comes out of the meeting of the GNT coordinators in Seattle as we believe participation in this event is a grass roots problem. Indeed, at our District Meeting, our Board took steps to try to improve attendance by "C" teams by rotating the location of the District finals. Our new GNT coordinator, Kit Overpeck, attended the Seattle GNT meeting and will have a report at the Indianapolis District Meeting.



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! WILL MISS YOU IN INDY!! *BETH*

Other News

REMEMBERING NADINE

The President's Volunteer of the Year has been renamed the President's Nadine Wood ACBL Volunteer of the Year, in honor of the tireless former Board Member who died suddenly earlier this year.



OTHER MOTIONS

For **masterpoint rank advancement** restrictions on the use of **online points** have been removed from the requirements.

Requirements for achieving rankings above Life Master were changed to include colored points

minimums, e.g., Silver Life Master will now require that at least 200 of the required 1000 points (no changes in the totals) be comprised of any combination of silver, red, gold or platinum points. These changes will apply to all players who attained Life Master after 1989.

These changes will not cause any player to lose the rank which he or she has obtained as of December 31, 2011. In addition, each player who has obtained the rank of Life Master or higher as of December 31, 2011, will not have to fulfill the new 2012 rank advancement requirements to obtain the next higher rank advancement.

Effective January 1st, the **Alert Chart** was changed removing the requirement to Alert a cheapest club bid response over a natural NT opener or overcall which asks for a 4-card or longer major suit. Rebids by the notrump bidder which are different from standard (such as "Puppet Stayman") will still be Alertable. In other words, the 2C or 3C Puppet Stayman bid is no longer alertable but the responses are.

The definitions of natural openers were amended to include a 1C opener on specifically 4-4-3-2 with 2 clubs and 4-4 in the majors.

A PERSONAL NOTE

As most of you know or have heard, I was involved in a serious car accident in December. I continue to make excellent progress with my recovery, but will simply be physically unable to attend both the Indy regional and the Memphis ACBL Board Meeting—obviously Memphis takes precedence. You know I LOVE the Indy regional so I am very disappointed to miss it—and you. I received countless cards, calls and emails from my District friends during my hospital and rehab stays and since. I am so grateful for all your thoughts, prayers and support—I feel sure they contributed to my miraculous recovery. You can be sure that I will be ready to fight the good fight in Memphis and Robert Hartman has assured me that he's arranging for vanity plates for my scooter—text unknown. I hope, as Memphis is SO close that I see lots of you there to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the ACBL!

