Advisory Council Teachers and Club Managers Committee Proposals
1. Restructure Virtual Club (VACB) Sanctions
2. Change Approach to Online Bridge Contracts

VACBs:
1. **Clearly record a sanction as F2F or VACB**. Link the VACB sanction to the associated F2F sanction.
   a. VACB sanctions and F2F sanctions are clearly named in all ACBL data bases.
   b. Allow club table count searches on either sanction type.
   c. VACB shall be granted to members who are F2F Club Managers or actively teaching new players.
   d. Clubs who ghost F2F games for the purpose of running online mostly or wholly, can award only clear masterpoints, no pigmented points.
   e. Clearly identify all clubs and teachers who are actively supporting New Player training and member recruiting.
      i. Teaching Clubs offer lessons and work with teachers to train new players.
      ii. Teaching Centers are where multiple clubs share a single address and train new players.
2. **Limit VACB sanctions:** one each per qualified F2F club owner or teacher who is teaching beginning bridge while their classes are underway.
   a. All sessions for one club owner must be listed in one sanction.
      i. No multiple sanctions for multiple days or day parts.
   b. Existing VACB sanctions may be extended without a F2F club in operation, subject to the clear point limit above.
   c. No one person may own more than one sanction for online play.
   d. Teachers may offer teaching games to support a teacher's class.
      i. Teaching games are limited to 12 boards and under 20 Masterpoints.
      ii. There is no district limit on who can attend a teaching game.
      iii. Teaching VACB games must include video sessions discussing the hands.
3. **Limit VACB attendance** to district membership (defined by the district of the club owner), and allow any district member to invite any member in good standing to play. *(District attendance limits exist for online Regional Pairs. This is proven feasible).*
4. **Limit all online pairs and teams play to 1 event per day part**
   a. Day parts: Morning, Afternoon, Evening, Overnight
   b. Define day part time by the residence of the VACB owner.
   c. Any one sanction may run up to 3 games within any one day-part as follows:
      i. One open game,
      ii. One limited game, and
      iii. a second limited game for 0-100 players or any <u>lower</u> upper MP limit.
   d. One sanction may run up to 12 sessions of duplicate bridge in any given day, seven days a week.
5. **Raise Table Fees for VACB games to $8 per table above 12 tables** for all sessions combined in a given day part.
   a. *(E.g., Club VACB runs an open game with 9 tables, and an NLM game with 13 tables. The 10 tables above 12 are charged $8 each. The first 12 are charged the normal F2F table fees).*
6. **Grant one double point VACB game per week per VACB sanction**.
   a. This weekly bonus applies to only one session and not all events in a given day part.

b. If a club runs 3 sessions, only one session is eligible for a double point game.

c. Allow F2F to match this double point game allocation.

7. **Limit a VACB game maximum MP award to what 25 tables can earn**.

8. **Provide a curated current list of all VACB games** outside of any bridge service provider's application, available independent of platform.

For the purpose of the following recommendations, we define Bridge Service Providers (BSPs) as any individual or business providing a service that allows people to play bridge online.

Online Bridge Contracts

1) **Eliminate/ban exclusive contracts** with any online BSP.

2) Define an **open bidding** process by which the Board of Directors will allocate share of online games as defined by number of sanctions assigned.

   a. The process must encourage competition among capable BSPs.

   b. The process must encourage innovation and User Experience improvements by BSPs.

3) Require the Board of Directors to approve a complete set of **specifications and standards** that BSPs will deliver under contract with the ACBL.

4) Require the Board of Directors to **approve all online contracts** with BSPs

5) **Limit the duration** of online bridge contracts with BSPs to two years maximum.

   a. All renewals are subject to open bidding.

   b. Contracts will be bid and negotiated in advance of their termination to eliminate disruptions in service.

6) Encourage multiple BSPs to **compete for ACBL sanctioned club and tournament game business**.

   a. Capable BSPs may be from any location.

   b. Those not located within the ACBL will take the Central Time Zone as their operating benchmark.

7) **Eliminate special status for online providers**, and eliminate the annual fees by which BSPs buy that status.

8) **Disallow any club owner from negotiating their own terms** for ACBL Sanctioned online games.

9) **Prohibit ownership of any ACBL club or tournament sanction by any BSP**, their employees, investors, and individuals with financial interests in their business.

   a. Require sanction owners to be eligible members (club owners and teachers) of the ACBL in good standing.

   b. Make a violation of this requirement subject to suspension of not less than 2 years and a probation of an additional 5 years. A second offense denies the BSP and the individual involved the right to host ACBL events.

10) **Eliminate exclusivity regarding which any one BSP can run ACBL masterpoint games.** All under contract shall be able to do so.

11) **Eliminate exclusivity** regarding the running of ACBL robot games.

12) **Limit all non-robot pairs and team online play to 3 sessions per day part** (Morning, Afternoon, Evening, Overnight) *(This is moot as long as online games are VACB only – no ownership by BSP's).* Allowing a human-robot pair to play in a pair or team game does not constitute that game as a robot game. A robot game as one person playing at a table with 3 robots.

13) Include the following **performance requirements** in the contract:

   a. Indemnify costs from provider outages, whether the provider is the cause or not.

   b. Make all ACBL games clearly identified by ACBL visual brand requirements - icons, images and color scheme.

       i.   The ACBL and not the BSP owns the visual identity seen by players in all ACBL sanctioned games.
- c. Create a **web location outside the confines of any one BSP website where all online ACBL games are listed** and can be seen by all ACBL members.
    - i. Allow users to go to enroll directly in the game by clicking on the game title.
    - ii. Eliminate multiple clicks to find ACBL games on any platform.
    - iii. Clearly displays Sanction owner, game start time, MP limits, type (pairs/Teams), special event type, # Boards, approximate end time and number of tables subscribed.
- d. **Conform the software to the Laws of Duplicate bridge and existing ACBL regulations.** Specifically:
    - i. Players without approved ACBL convention cards are banned from play online
    - ii. Players use real names in ACBL events
    - iii. Players have the ability to interact with a director as they would in a face-to-face game. Time pressure does not foreshorten conversations about irregularities as is done today. Ruling the game is not affected by the game clock. Directors may pause the clock for up to 5 minutes to complete rulings.
    - iv. Directors are enabled to impose procedural penalties according to ACBL regulations.
    - v. Directors are listed by their real name.

14) Run all ACBL community games through SYC profit sharing.
- a. Players who have a teacher sponsor should play in their teacher's/club's games and not in community games.
- b. VACB games established by clubs or teachers for new players should be free (no table fees).
- c. SYC profit sharing should be limited to new players Under 100 MPS.

15) Provide **training for new VACB sanction owners**.

16) Make **VACB management** part of the Club Director Certification test.

Submitted Respectfully,
The Advisory Council Teachers and Club Managers Committee
Jeff Bayone, Rich Carle, Ellis Feigenbaum, Steve Gaynor, Kathie Mcnab, Henry Meguid, Susan Miguel, Steve Moese, Sylvana Morici, Betty Starzec