

Zoom Video Conference.

Attendance: Steve Moese, Jeff Bayone, Steve Gaynor, Rich Carle, Betty Starzec, Kathie Macnab, Henry Meguid, Ellis Feigenbaum, Susan Miguel, Silvana Morici

Guest: Stefan Skorchev – Intobridge

Key Links:

Committee Documents: <http://www.district11bridge.com/BoG/2017BoGTCODocs.html>

BoG Reports: http://www.district11bridge.com/ACBL_board_reports.html

BridgeWinners Clubs & Teachers Forum: <http://bridgewinners.com/forums/browse/clubs-and-teachers/>

Priorities - Grow Membership, Grow Tables, Grow Classes

NEXT MEETING Tuesday Oct 22, 2024 - 8 PM ET, 5 PM PT

AGENDA

Stefan Skorchev – Intobridge

Upcoming changes – how shall we grow into the future?

DISCUSSION

Attendees introduced themselves to Stefan.

Stefan stressed the need for innovation spurred by competition.

Stefan is 37 (no children) started bridge at 12. Played chess at school then in 2 weeks started playing rbridge instead. Bulgaria perception is that cards are gambling – so bridge not well received there. 25 years doing bridge. 17 turned pro and won medals in international competition. Started working in one of the largest bridge clubs in London England (1100 members). It's a social bridge club – not affiliated with the federation. Masterpoints are seen as building tension and attracting experts who are not friendly to club members. Customer satisfaction is very very high. All about having a good time with the game. Club had structure for lessons and onboarding new members. They have many different types of bridge games. Social, duplicate, open duplicate, etc. Winners get one entry for free. There is an annual ladder, but very few people care about that ranking.

Jeff Bayone – doesn't think that will work in the US. People are fixated on masterpoints in his experience.

Steve Moese – mentioned social bridge's rise in Cincinnati – three open games a week unsanctioned (40 table a week) where people play for the fun of it. Playing at the community center or the local bridge center. Game owner wants to be able to run the game as a party – they do not want to run the game by all the rules.

Ellis Feigenbaum – There is a club in LA that runs a social game using ACBLScore but never send in a Masterpoint report.

Steve mentioned to Stefan that this might fit into her Social Bridge plans. Stefan and Bronia have been in frequent contact. E believes non-sanctioned bridge is bigger than sanctioned bridge in every country in the world. There are many online services where people play casually for fun.

Stefan mentioned a problem with the lesson plans. Once a week was not working – by week 6 they have forgotten everything from week one and they lost interest. Weekend lessons were too intense – by the 4th 5th hour people were overwhelmed. Too much information. **NEW FORM – 4 hour seminars with more hands and lots of practice** – more play and less talking with a comfortable lunch break. We were able to charge double for this approach. Profitable for the club. Those who make a successful business can overcome challenges and stay long term. When a TD is called for a ruling, the TD makes a ruling based on fairness, not the letter of the law. Supervised play 24 tables with 3-4 teachers. People were not introduced to duplicate tools during their supervised play, causing a transition barrier to duplicate. That

changed. People were embarrassed to make mistakes so they called the teacher too often. Solved this in a positive matter – **supervised gentle duplicate**: runs at the pace of slower, newer players. Players get three tokens and must buy answers to questions with a token. 3 questions limit per game. Caused people to rely less on coaching and more on developing their decision process. When they start returning the chips at the end they believe they are now ready for full duplicate.

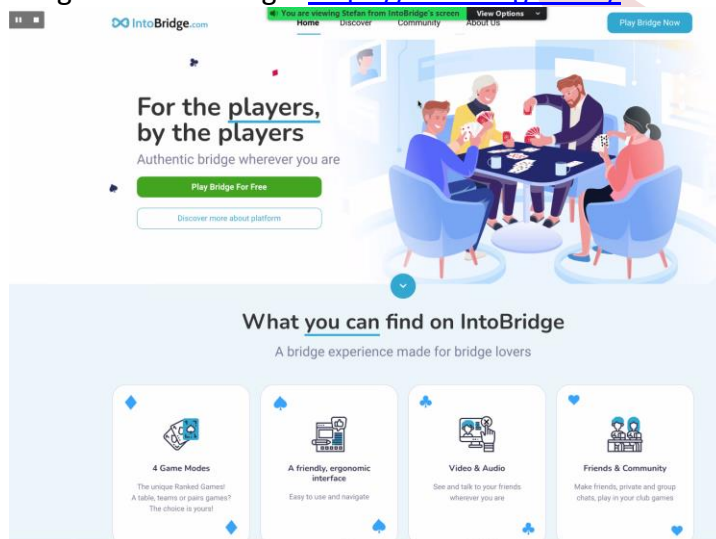
Introduced **Bridge Holidays** – holiday makers skimming profit from club members. Organized events for club members and created new friends and partners – an extra partner or two meant more games per person (more partners to play with). Holidays allowed people to meet and greet others. When players come to the holiday Stefan pays one entry fee for 8 days away.

Started Websites for Bridge Clubs – ancient too old, need something more attractive. Introduced **Bridge Cloud** to allow clubs to advertise their games and attract more players.

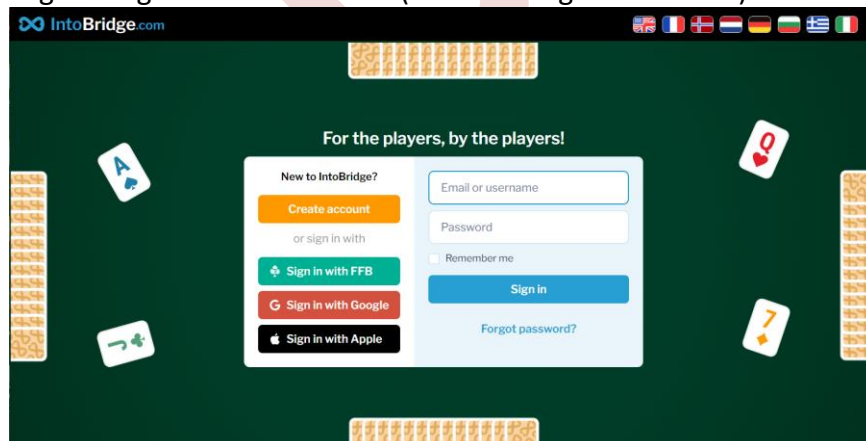
Covid bankrupted all those businesses. 🤖

After Covid, Stefan organized IntoBridge – a platform for playing bridge. Older platforms are not innovating. Christophe Grosset raised \$1MM to fund the venture. Neither have been paid in three years in order to deliver the service.

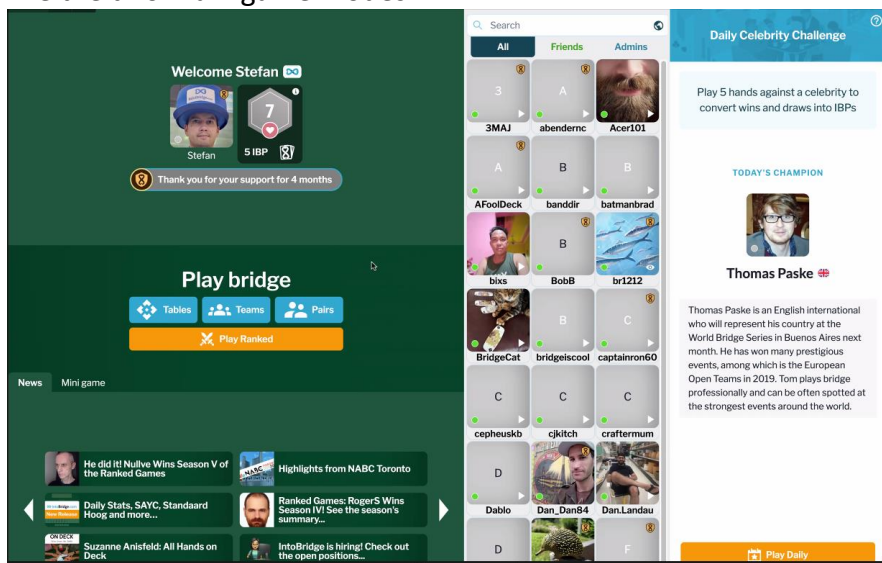
Stefan Skorchev shared details about Intobridge and why it is an excellent tool for engaging beginners in the game. Home Page: <https://intobridge.com/>



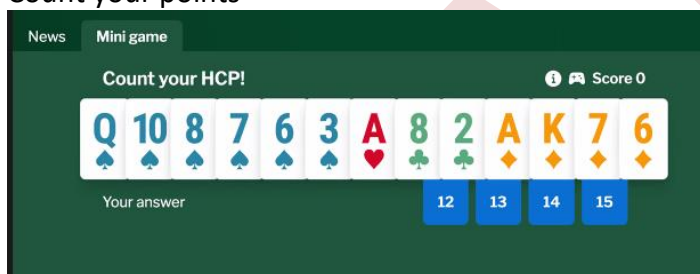
Login integration with the FFB(French Bridge Federation) and the ACBL (just now!). Here is the screen:



Ranked Games
Daily Celebrity Challenge
Are the two main game modes.



5 Beginner games available:
Count your points



Memorize your hand (toughest)
Complete your chape
Recognize your pattern



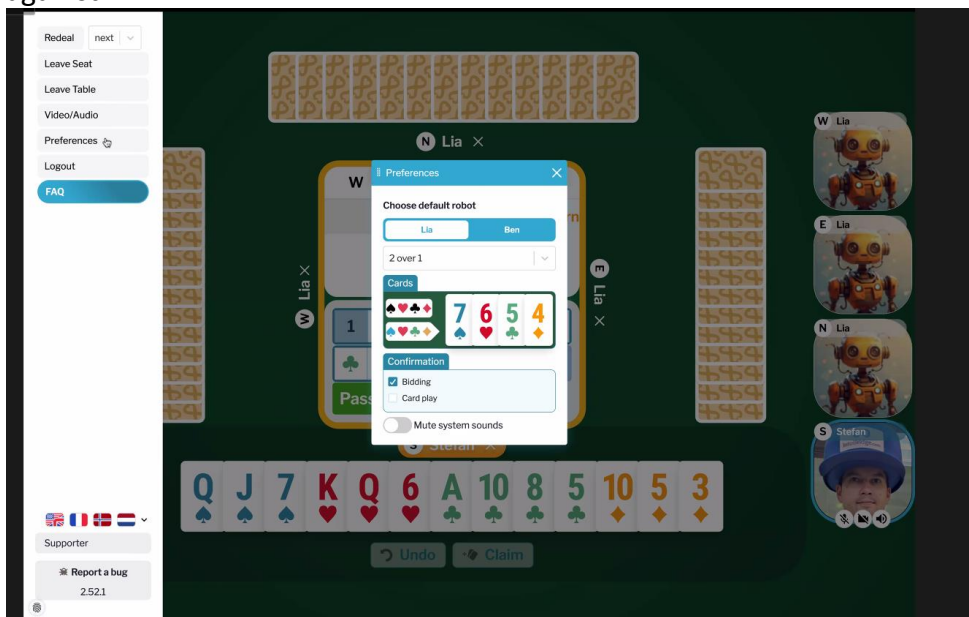
Casual tables – good for teachers
Onboarding videos are available.
ABTA teachers have uploaded content everyone can access.

Clia is the IntoBridge proprietary robots. They know 10 different systems across internationally popular systems. Can keep adding systems to help people practice their system.

Working on convention builder – pick a system and customize it by choosing appropriate conventions.



Teachers can manually upload hands for their library. Libraries maintained for all teachers. Students can access those hands for practice between lessons. Robots can play the system the students want to play against.



Very flexible controls for who plays and what hands are seen.

In the beginning the teacher creates source hands that can be reused indefinitely. Everything for teachers so far is free – no charge.

A video connection costs \$10 per month. Others use Zoom. Using the camera is a cost so IntoBridge needs to charge for that.

Can organize duplicate or supervised play online. Can talk with students just as you do in a real club.

Can register as many robot pairs as you wish. Can register with a robot or a human. There is a way to seat friends together. You can start the game whenever you like unlike BBO. Director controls the start time.

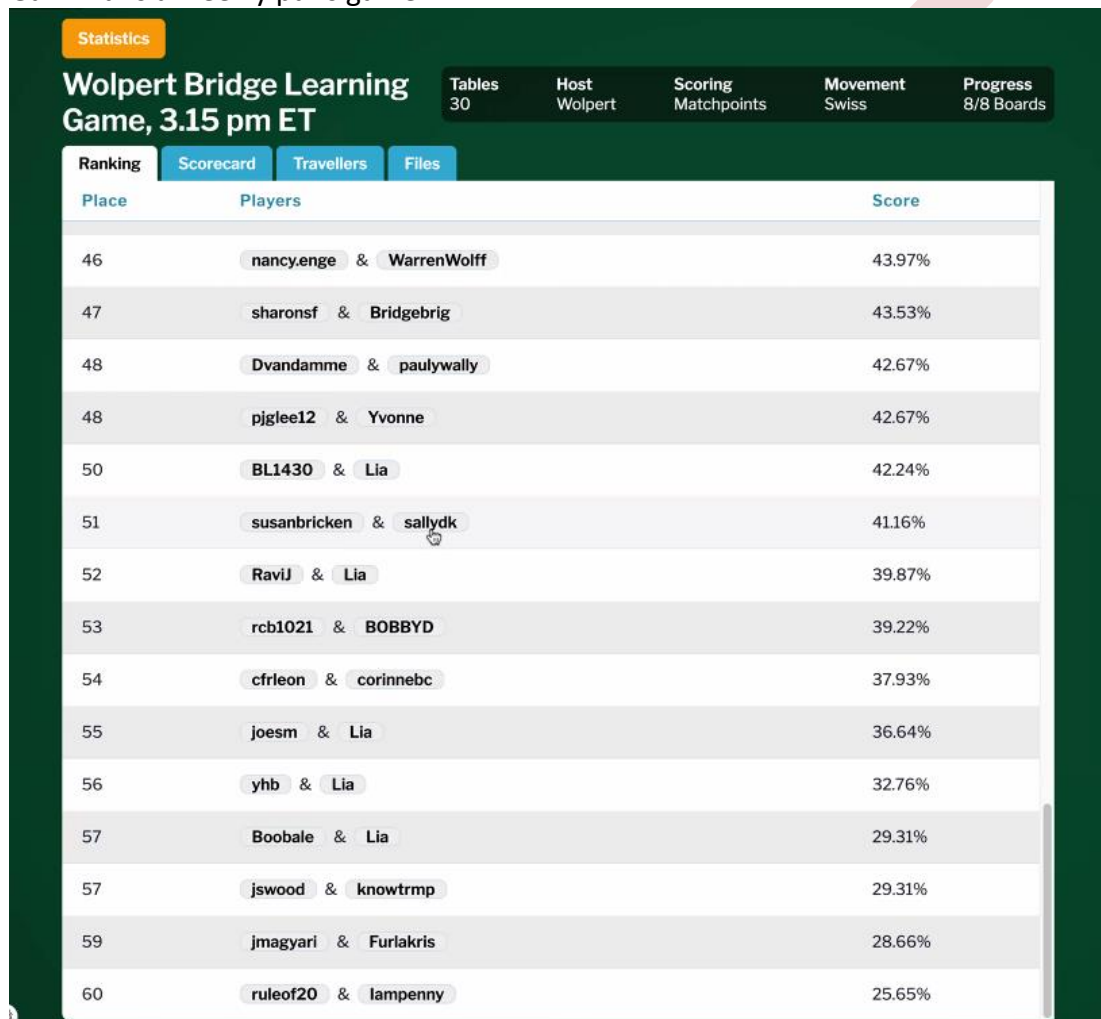


Stefan described many details about the capability of the site. IntoBridge can also teach teachers (Directors?). Most important component for success in recruiting new players is to teach the teachers. Greece example cited.

Can do pairs or teams with or without scorecards.

After the game is over there are conversation rooms where players can gather and discuss the game they just played.

Gavin runs a weekly pairs game



The screenshot shows the 'Wolpert Bridge Learning Game' interface. At the top, there's a title 'Wolpert Bridge Learning Game, 3.15 pm ET' and a statistics bar with 'Tables 30', 'Host Wolpert', 'Scoring Matchpoints', 'Movement Swiss', and 'Progress 8/8 Boards'. Below this is a navigation bar with 'Ranking', 'Scorecard', 'Travellers', and 'Files' tabs. The 'Ranking' tab is active, displaying a table with columns 'Place', 'Players', and 'Score'. The table lists 16 pairs of players with their respective scores, ranging from 43.97% down to 25.65%.

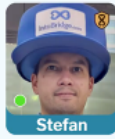
Place	Players	Score
46	nancy.enge & WarrenWolff	43.97%
47	sharonsf & Bridgebrig	43.53%
48	Dvandamme & paulywally	42.67%
48	pjglee12 & Yvonne	42.67%
50	BL1430 & Lia	42.24%
51	susanbricken & sallydk	41.16%
52	RaviJ & Lia	39.87%
53	rcb1021 & BOBBYD	39.22%
54	cfrleon & corinnebc	37.93%
55	joesm & Lia	36.64%
56	yhb & Lia	32.76%
57	Boobale & Lia	29.31%
57	jswood & knowtrmp	29.31%
59	jmagyari & Furlakris	28.66%
60	ruleof20 & lampenny	25.65%

Diagnostics about the game are many...

Wolpert Bridge Learning Game, 3.15 pm ET

Your rank

3



Stefan



Rumen

24/09/2024

8 Boards

60 Pairs



Average HCP

YOU

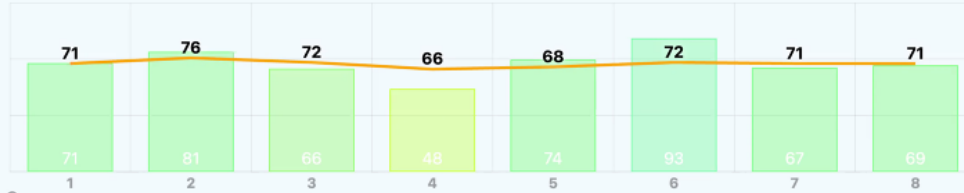
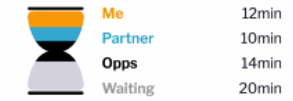
PARTNER

13.00

10.38

Total time

The game lasted for 56min

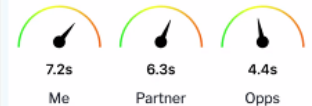


Ranking	Scorecard	Travellers	Board 4
Board			
30	4♠ N =	♥ A	620
23	5♥x W -2	♠ Q	500
6	5♥x W -1	♠ Q	200
2	5♥x W -1	♣ 8	200
15	5♥x W -1	♠ Q	200
18	5♥x W -1	♠ Q	200
12	5♥x W -1	♥ 2	200

Average

Action time

Your pair was not the quickest



	Me	Partner	Opps
Bidding	12s	9s	7s
Declaring	4s	5s	3s
Defending	6s	4s	4s

Wolpert Bridge Learning Game, 3.15 pm ET

Your rank

3



Stefan



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YOU

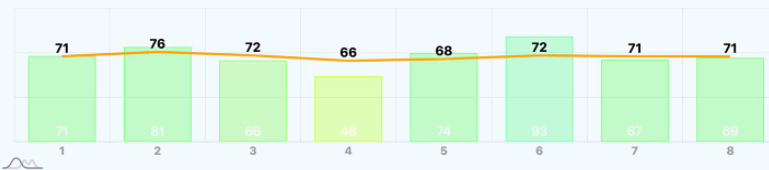
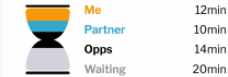
PARTNER

13.00

10.38

Total time

The game lasted for 56min



Best score

Board 6

6♠ = 93%



B5922



Lia

Worst score

Board 4

4♠x -1 48%



POSTMORTEM



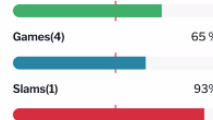
Lia

Average

Score by contract

Great game overall

Part-scores(3)

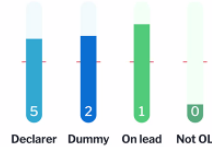


Average

Score by role

Great declaring skills

Part-scores(3)



Average

Action time

Your pair was not the quickest



	Me	Partner	Opps
Bidding	12s	9s	7s
Declaring	4s	5s	3s
Defending	6s	4s	4s

Play Ranked Games

Gavin

Wolpertbridge.com

4

1

6♠N

0

1

We

0.0

0.0%

They

0.0

0.0%

IMPs

4

1

6♠N

A

10

7

A

Q

7

4

9

♠

♠

♠

♥

♥

♥

♥

♣

N Lia

Q

♣

E Lia

K

2

5

3

5

4

7

3

♠

♠

♥

♥

♠

♠

♦

♦

S Gavin

Undo

Claim

5:56 / 20:31

CC

Settings

Full Screen

7

4 IBP

3

Ranked statistics

Stefan

Rank: 1982

1w

1mo

3mo

Dashboard

Leaderboard

History

Play next

Sep 18

Sep 20

Sep 22

Sep 24

Sep

You are better than 22.8% of players

TOTAL	VICTORIES	DRAWS	DEFEATS
12	2 (17%)	3 (25%)	7 (58%)

BETA A

I. 8

II. 10

III. 8

IV. Q

V. 9

Today's

History

Statistics

Gavin Wolpert

23 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Quentin Robert

22 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Adam Kaplan

21 SEPTEMBER

+10

▶

Adam Wildavsky

20 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Sveinn Eiriksson

19 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Christophe Grosset

18 SEPTEMBER

+35

▶

Danny Miles

17 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Stefan Skorchev

16 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Adam Kaplan

15 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Ola Rimstedt

14 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Sveinn Eiriksson

13 SEPTEMBER

-

▶

Daily Celebrity Challenge – one expert or celebrity plays 5 hands with robots. While they play they record themselves. For 24 Hours anyone can play those 5 hands and compare themselves with the expert. Can see expert's system Can play hand one at a time. Don't need to finish in one sitting. Can see how the expert bid and played. Also get his logic to his choices from their recorded video. About 25% who play watched the video for educational purposes.

Ranked Games – most popular format. Offers competition against similarly ranked players. Compared to opponents. Rating increases or decreases. 100% flexibility. Can stop start whenever you want. Always return to the place you left. Bridge has a time commitment problem (can be a large barrier for some). Ranked games eliminate the time commitment. People are playing 200-400 board a day for months. Gavin Wolpert played 10,000 board for 3 months. Steve Weinstein played 6000 boards for month and a half. Adam Kaplan played 500 board for 3 weeks. Addictive – people love it because they can compare. Ranked Games have their own leaderboard. Current season 2500 people playing, last season 4000 people playing. About 25% from USA. Canada is doing fine (150 players). 750 out of 2500 are ACBL members.

IntoBridge works 24/7. Usually see about 250 people online. Marketing is the biggest challenge we face. Most successful campaigns are word of mouth. Bridge world is conservative.

Raised about \$2.3 MM total. Zhivko Draganov is the CFO.

Biggest customer base 1) USA, 2) UK, 3) Canada.

Steve Moese – is there an easy way for people to meet new partners on IntoBridge?

Stefan - Best way is to go to Gavin's Tournaments and look at partnership area. Also use the casual play area. BBO doesn't help this. When you do the same thing even better, no one cares.

Steve mentioned his intention to step down as chair of this committee effective January 1, 2025 so the new Chair can appoint his successor.

Sue Miguel – The mini games – are they the same or do they change?

Stefan – all deals are random. Sue sent us hands from her games where the intermediate players play so they can come here and replay those hands. →

Sue – At the Norwich Regional we are going to experiment with uploading the hands so people can replay them all.

Stefan – there are no analytics to track who/number of users.

Sue – Students loved it. They go there to play. They like the A/V part. They like IntoBridge more than Swan.

Ellis Feigenbaum – How does your chat work? We are looking into combining a zoom lesson in one country and a live lesson in another at the same time, followed up by 6-7 online games.

Stefan – Shark Bridge might do better for games. IntoBridge is for practice in between games. Changes require a bigger audience than we have. When the audience (demand) reaches a large enough proposition we can invest in more innovation.

Stefan – I com to all NABC's. Will be at Vegas.

Show cameras	
Manage	Stefan's table
viking	
Viking BC 18.Jan.24	Use
Viking BC - 25.Jan.2024	Use
Viking BC 2-over-1 hands	Use
Viking BC - 15.Feb.24	Use
Viking BC 14.Mar.24	Use
Viking BC 28.Mar.24	Use
Viking BC 04.Apr.24	Use
Viking BC 11.Apr.24	Use
Viking BC 8.Jul.24	Use
Viking BC 22.Jul.2024	Use

Henry Meguid – Good presentation at the ABTA convention. They thought that you are entertaining! (Entertainment and fun is more important than knowledge). I will be in touch. Are you able to offer Masterpoints?

Stefan – not until the ACBL agrees (contract limitation). We are interested. WikiBridge (mobile app) is also interested. Innovation needs support and players. Players can pay \$10/month subscription – badge indicates supporter.

Steve Moese – mentioned that Bronia said there will be no exclusive contracts for ACBL Masterpoints any more.

Stefan – BBO is worth \$2MM per month and \$24 MM per year to the ACBL. (This doesn't square with known ACBL income of about \$15 MM total across all activities). That's hard to ignore.

We thanked Stefan for taking the time at 4 AM his time to share his work with us.

Stefan thanked us and offered talk whenever we need to talk.

Henry Meguid mentioned man advantages that his site allows. Shark is great for giving lessons and IntoBridge is great for between lessons.

Ellis cautioned that everything we do online creates an insecure system and facilitates unethical behavior. He cited VACB and Common Game information sharing as one example.

Ellis mentioned the U99 game what hid District President Gave back to the ACBL to run in their new online clubhouse. Now club owners and directors are losing money. Why? Let the directors make money. 4 people have lost \$300 per month income as a result.

Steve Moese mentioned his decision to step down from the chair of this committee in January 2024 so that the next Chair can appoint his successor.

Sue Migule raised a question about the new EDGAR cheating detection system.

Ellis – Statistical analysis works. EDGAR is great. The system is inherently unfair. They are looking back 4 years. There are issues with the process. 30 days to decide I too short. Arbitration is a financial burden. The new arbitration agreement is even more a burden because the costs are 10x.

Ellis – It will take about 2 years to clear the first round of cheaters. We will know if we have succeeded in the next round.

Sue Miguel – How can people feel they are not cheating when EDGAR says they are.

Steve Moese – that's called a false positive. EDGAR has published their justification about how exceedingly rare false positives are. The charging party brings a case based on example hands not statistics.

Sue Miguel – I sit with these people. They are prone to silly choices and improbable decision making.

Steve referred people to the Bridge Winners EDGAR articles about why beginners and poor players are separated from the cheater. <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/edgar-tis-the-win-and-nothing-more/>

Sue Miguel – Its going to be a bloodbath.

Ellis F – You don't need to worry about that.

Sue Miguel – Personally investigated 400 hands (with help) about this elderly pair who have been accused of cheating online. They are physically incapable of cheating. Its all old people! What is the age distribution? It's perfectly plausible. These people are so very incapable.

Steve – Will talk with Larry Sealy about demographics behind EDGAR data.

Sue M – \$900 Arbitration fee, \$3500 Advocate fee, and cost of a lawyer. IBA website has a payment page that notes ACBL arbitration, as opposed to international bridge arbitration. I've spent 30 hours on this issue in the past two weeks.

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Meeting Adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Submitted Respectfully,

Steve Moese
Chair Advisory Council Teacher & Club Manager Committee