

December 2008

Report of ACBL Board of Directors Meetings

Boston NABC, November 2008

Boston has traditionally been one of our premier NABC sites that we look forward to attending about every nine years. It has everything we look for--excellent playing space, adequate hotel rooms, restaurants, shopping, tourist attractions, large bridge population, international airport, rail and bus transportation--except for the one important thing of a single site location for playing space including hotel rooms. The tournament was held at two hotels connected by a walkway and a mall that was a 7 to 10 minute walk. It was a little shorter, only a block, if you went outside, but it was too cold for that.

Nine years ago when we were at this location, our players were younger and could walk better. It also helped that the weather was better, because I remember taking the shortcut outside. Fortunately, this was the last tournament scheduled with Thanksgiving in the middle.

Having an NABC at two sites is also hard on the local hosts. They have to double up on many things like two partnership areas, arranging food for players in two hotels, and more. The local hosts did a magnificent job in this regard. They seemed to have everything covered. I only wish I could have gone on one of their tours.

The Board meetings were efficient and generally productive. Patty Tucker has been making such good progress in attracting middle school students to bridge that we redefined our youth division and set up new special events, benefits and awards for members under 20 years of age. In addition we redefined the Junior division guidelines. In anticipation of another successful Youth NABC in Washington next summer, following the first very successful one in Atlanta last summer, the Board approved a third one for the summer of 2010. The site and exact date will be determined by next spring.

Now for the bad news. Starting next year, there will be an increase in NABC tournament entry fees per player per session as follows:

NABC+ events \$18.00 to \$20.00

NABC limited events \$16.50 to \$17.00

Regional two-session events \$15.50 to \$16.00

Single session and I/N events \$14.50 to \$15.00

In addition the sectional surcharge has been increased from \$135 to \$165. In the big scheme of things, this relatively small amount of money will not make or break the ACBL. In fact they have had an excess of \$2.3 million over the last two years. The argument was that it cost more to run the NABC+ events.

At least the StaC charges for next year are just slightly modified from what they were this year and there will be no extra charges for separate scoring. There will be a special committee next year to review StaC policies, procedures and charges.

Management has been authorized to negotiate the purchase of a parcel of land and proceed with the development of an ACBL Headquarters building.

Online bridge clubs may now run Club Championships under similar conditions as face-to-face clubs. Each pair must play 18 boards in length. One open club championship may be awarded per quarter for sessions 1 - 12 (Monday - Thursday) with a maximum first place overall award of 3.90. All masterpoint awards are non-pigmented.

We passed a motion that I thought was already on the books, but perhaps not well enforced. It is that when a sectional (excluding StaC's) or higher rated event is being conducted within 25 miles of a club game's playing site, the club is permitted to hold only its regularly-scheduled club masterpoint games (no special games including club championships.)

In Las Vegas we passed new Life Master requirements, that go into effect in 2010, which I mentioned in my previous NABC report. The Board of Governors had asked that we add that a certain number of gold or platinum points be won in pair games. We debated the issue but decided against doing so.

My Las Vegas report also mentioned a new three-day (6-session) NABC+ pair event to be called the Platinum Pairs. The qualifications to enter the event have been set for players that have won 50 or more platinum points in the three years prior to the event, or 200 platinum points for lifetime. The overall award for first place will be 200 platinum points. A schedule has been presented which will require a second reading in Houston. The new event will be added to the Spring NABC schedule on the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Vanderbilt will be moved to begin on Monday. There are a few knowledgeable board members who believe that this is all that should be changed at this time. The proposed schedule that will appear in the *ACBL Bulletin* has other changes in it, but I believe they only complicate matters, do not fix anything and in some cases make it worse. If we can come to agreement on a new schedule in Houston, it will go into effect in 2010.

Currently, the hands used in pair events on the first day of an NABC+ event are the same as hands played in other games (Regional, side, I/N). For security purposes, in the future they will be playing different hands.

Now Management is authorized to sanction silver point sectionals on cruise ships at 65% of open sectional rating for games run by a club/cruise director and at 80% of open sectional rating for those run by an ACBL tournament director. The current per table sanction fee for open sectionals will be charged. Even though Sectionals belong to Units, cruise ships that stop for a day in a port shouldn't really count as belonging to that unit.

The stratification levels for teams in a Stratified Board-a-Match team event can optionally be determined by the average masterpoint holding of all of the team members. This is at the discretion of the sponsoring organization.

A few years ago, the Board passed a motion that eliminated almost all bridge appeals from reaching the Appeals and Charges committee. Therefore, it seems only appropriate that

serving as Director of Appeals does not disqualify a member of the Board of Directors from serving on the Appeals and Charges committee.

The Mini-Spingold Masterpoint Awards & Match Awards for NABC KOs are changed as follows:

0 – 5000 Mini – Spingold Fixed Award = 100 masterpoints;
For 32 - 47 teams, the award is 80 masterpoints; for < 32 teams, the award is 60 masterpoints.

0 – 1500 Mini – Spingold Fixed Award = 60 masterpoints;
For < 32 teams, the award is 45 masterpoints.

Match Awards for the following events formerly calculated by the old formula in effect prior to 2008 are replaced by fixed awards, as follows.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Old Match Award</u>	<u>New Match Award</u>
0 – 5000 Mini-Spingold	2.62	3.00
0 – 1500 Mini-Spingold	2.17	2.50
GNT – Superflight	2.70	4.00
GNT – A	2.62	3.00
GNT – B	2.28	2.50
GNT – C	1.64	2.00
Canadian National Teams	2.70	3.50
Canadian National Teams (B)	2.62	3.00
Canadian Women’s Teams	2.16	2.50

It appears that our election regulations for voting for District Directors and First and Second Alternates by the Unit Board of Directors were in conflict with the ACBL bylaws. In a nutshell, the regulations had quorum requirements for the units that the bylaws did not. Bylaws prevail and we amended the regulations. Fortunately it did not make any difference to any of this year’s elections.

In the District 6 election for First and Second Alternate, there was just one candidate for each office - the best way to win an election. Congratulations to First Alternate Steve Robinson and Second Alternate Michael Cappelletti.

The Charity Foundation announced the order for the \$20,000 charity grants which will be given to the Districts. District 6 is down for 2009 as is District 7.

I put on a motion to establish the level of service at each goodwill reception to be the same at each NABC and not be bound by an identical budget number. It is impossible to predict what any hotel might insist on charging for food in any city. For example, Reno was a cheap city for IRS per diem, but the hotel wanted more money for food than expensive cities. Anyway, the motion passed.

Speaking of Goodwill, I am pleased to announce my goodwill appointments for 2009 are Peggy Willett from Virginia Beach, Frances Burke from Burtonsville, MD, Nan Massie from

Charlottesville, VA and Nancy Cook from Chesapeake, VA. My appointments to the Charity Committee are Mary Ann and Ron Kral of Reston, VA. Congratulations and thank you for all the work that you do for bridge.