

August 2008

Report of ACBL Board of Directors Meetings

Las Vegas NABC, July 2008

Bridge players like to go to Las Vegas and we proved it once again. My early prediction, which I stuck with, was 20,000 tables which would not reach the all time record of 24,000 tables set in 1991; however, would be very good for the current times. In the weeks prior to the tournament, those who should “know” told me I was wrong and the old record would be broken or at least come close. The final number of 19,720 was a little under my prediction, but I was closest. We all forgot to take into account the big jump in room rates on the two weekend Friday and Saturday nights (\$40 per room) which was reflected in the table count. Still, it claimed the spot of the fourth largest NABC, pushing the 1993 Washington DC NABC to 7th place and Baltimore 1987 to 8th place.

The local hosts were outstanding -- food every day in a convenient, accessible place -- plus Elvis was everywhere and was a lot of fun. Oh wait, most of the key people were from San Diego (another District) or Colorado with a few from Las Vegas. Well, hats off to those in the Unit and our Management who have good arm twisting techniques and brought this crew on board -- especially amazing since they have their “own” NABC to run in the Fall of 2009.

Many discussions have been held over the years, some formal but most not, about increasing the number of masterpoints needed to make Life Master. Recently a Life Master requirements committee was appointed. They met, discussed and made a recommendation to the Board which was unanimously approved, effective January 1, 2010. The new requirements for Life Master include earning 500 points, of which 250 must be pigmented as follows:

- 50 must be gold or platinum
- 50 must be red, gold or platinum
- 75 must be silver
- 75 must be black

These requirements do not apply to people who are ACBL members as of December 31, 2009 and maintain continuous membership in the ACBL until they achieve Life Master status. These players will attain Life Master status upon earning 300 points, of which 150 must be pigmented as follows:

- 25 gold
 - 25 must be red or gold
 - 50 must be silver
 - 50 must be black
- (the rules in effect July 1, 2008)

For members achieving Life Master under the new rules, the rank of Bronze Life Master is abolished. For these members, a new rank of Advanced NABC Master is created. The requirements for this rank are 300 masterpoints, of which 150 must be pigmented as follows:

- 25 must be gold or platinum
 - 25 must be red, gold or platinum
 - 50 must be silver
 - 50 must be black
- (these are the requirements for Life Master in effect July 1, 2008)

A new three-day (6-session) NABC+ pair event has been tentatively approved pending finding a satisfactory place on the schedule. The idea is to have one three-day pair event at each NABC. This would be a Platinum Pairs open to members that have won 50 or more platinum points in the three years prior to the event.

(There is some sentiment about making this 100 lifetime platinum points and not having to recalculate each year plus allowing for those who have a gap in attendance.) This Platinum Pairs would be a smaller, more prestigious event, perhaps like the Blue Ribbon used to be. Redoing the schedule will not be easy.

Three future NABC tournaments were approved for Management to negotiate and sign contracts. They are: Summer 2013, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Atlanta, GA, August 1–11, 2013; Fall 2013, Sheraton, Phoenix, AZ, November 28 – December 8, 2013; Summer 2014, Hilton, Las Vegas, NV, July 17–July 27, 2014.

One more time a motion was on the agenda to have the Tournament Directors hear and rule upon the appeals filed in NABC+ events. Fortunately, the motion failed despite one of the votes being mistakenly cast the wrong way. (After listening to each Board member rant one way or the other for over an hour, it is easy to see the confusion.) I was asked why this was on the agenda again and I explained that two Board members were going off the Board this year (voluntarily) and this was their last shot to try and get it passed.

If it happens that a StaC is scheduled during a week when there is an ACBL-wide special event, we can now hold the StaC session in lieu of the ACBL-wide event.

Registration for the Reisinger will be changed to two hours prior to game time rather than the night before beginning with the 2009 NABC in San Diego. Each team must select a captain, playing or non-playing, who will be responsible for all official representations to the tournament director or committee. The captain must enter the team not later than two hours prior to game time. At that time the entry must include the names of all players and a notation as to who is captain. **Current conditions requiring entry registration by 8:00 p.m., Thursday will be in effect in Boston.**

Other conditions of contest changes include:

- ♥ First-day pairing in both flights of the Mini-Spingold may include two-way, three-way, or four-way matches. The Director in Charge will create a bracket to the best playing advantage of the field.
- ♥ For qualifying sessions of NABC major pair events, the field will be divided into two or three section comparison groups.
- ♥ There will be no more orphan boards. In knockout teams a board not scheduled for play in a particular match will not be counted towards the result of that match even if played at both tables. The determination of which boards are scheduled for play in any match rests solely with the Director.
- ♥ Now that the first day of the National Finals of the GNT are a Swiss team, we needed to change the Conditions of Contest so that every team member of every team must play at least half of the scheduled boards of each day of the event (exclusive of play-offs) in order to continue participating on that team. The team captain may submit an application for exemption from the requirements of this paragraph to the Director in Charge, but must do so (other than for emergencies) prior to entering the team.

We adopted guidelines for exceptions to NAP/GNT residency requirements. They are not actually new but have been agreed upon in the time since the strict requirements were implemented. An exception may be considered in the following situations:

1. “Snowbird” - A member with seasonal residences who spends more than half of the GNT (September 1 – February 28) or NAP (June 1 – August 31) qualifying period in a district other than the district of his principal physical residence may play in the district of his seasonal residence. If he chooses to do so, he must play in that district’s finals to be eligible to play in the national finals.

2. A player with multiple domiciles should apply to the Credentials Committee for a one-time choice of district in which he wishes to play. The player must spend at least three months each year in a district in order to have it considered as a domicile possibility. Once a player chooses a district in which to play, he must play only in that district until he no longer has a domicile in that district. A participant who is a full-time student, a member of the armed forces or whose employment requires temporary relocation may play in the District in which he temporarily resides.

3. A player who is a member of a unit in a district in which he does not reside may seek permission to play in the district in which he has a unit membership. Such an exception will be considered only if all of the conditions below are met:

- a. Lives sufficiently close to the district borders.
- b. Has been a member of the unit in which he wishes to play for at least 5 years continuously prior to the start of the competition in the year for which the exception is being requested.
- c. Must not have played in the GNT or NAP in another district for that period of time. (The 2006/2007 GNT or NAP is not considered for this requirement.)
- d. Must have been actively involved as a volunteer in the Unit or District in which he wishes to play for at least two years.

There were some changes made to the Unit requirements, privileges and responsibilities. It is no longer required to have at least one club running sanctioned games in the Unit. Selection of a standing disciplinary chairman and a designated Unit Electronic Contact (UEC) is required. There are some other wording changes and I would encourage Unit officials to read Chapter Three, Sections 2 and 3 of the ACBL Handbook in a month or so when the changes will have been made.

ACBL management has the right to cancel a club director's accreditation for cause upon thirty days notice to the club director. Any one of the following will constitute "cause" for cancellation: direction of a club game out of compliance with ACBL regulations, unsuitable club venue or discriminatory practices by the club director.

All motions to be placed on the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting are first submitted to the "journal." Then these motions are assigned to an appropriate committee that reviews and makes recommendations. In general the Board meetings consist of committee meetings the first two days. The next two days the full Board meets to review and pass (or not) each motion. Occasionally, the committee changes the motion beyond what was originally presented. (For example, a motion to make Junior coupons the same amount of money no matter what event they played in, came back with changing the age of a Junior.) So, guess what, we passed a motion not to do this by stating that Board of Directors motions and amendments to motions may not be substantively changed from the presentation in the journal. A new concept requires a new motion to be submitted to the journal at a subsequent meeting.

A New Unit in District 7 is formed that will encompass Glynn County in southeastern Georgia. Usually, new units are formed, units change districts, or areas change units or districts and as long as the paperwork is done and all are in agreement, the Board passes these motions without dissent. This time the district was not in agreement; the unit was not in agreement (and would surround the new unit), but management insisted we had to approve it because they had done all the paperwork. A number of us did not agree, but it passed anyway.

And finally, the following motion was reported out of an Executive Session of the Board of Directors:

RESOLVED: that, contingent on relocation incentives that can be realized, management is directed to find a new site for the ACBL headquarters in the Memphis metropolitan area. Further, management is authorized to hire a consultant to deal with incentives. The RFP requirements for the hiring of such a consultant are waived.

