



AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE

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NEW YORK. NEW YORK. A WONDERFUL TOWN

The summer 2004 ACBL Board meetings took place in New York, NY just prior to the NABC. The local organizers led by host ACBL director Al Levy and supported by District 3 had worked tirelessly to ensure that players had a good time. CBS's morning show provided publicity and attendance substantially surpassed Management's estimate.

We were very fortunate to have had a choice of two excellent candidates for the 2005 ACBL Presidency: Chuck Wilkinson and Roger Smith. By a narrow margin Chuck prevailed. I am confident that he'll continue to provide strong leadership to our organization.

WBF President Jose Damiani also visited NY in conjunction with the First School Bridge World Championship, and announced that the 2005 Bermuda Bowl will take place in Estoril, Portugal (October 22- November 5), while the 2006 World Championships are scheduled for June 10-24 in Verona, Italy. He is very optimistic that the IOC will accept the concept of Intellympics and the first event may take place in 2007.

Highlights of actions taken during the NY Board Meetings

I. FINANCIAL

1. Membership dues and LM Services Fees are scheduled to increase by US \$3 effective January 1, 2005 (New members dues will increase by US \$2 and Youth dues by \$1.25). The good news for Canadian members is that due to the improvement of the Canadian \$ on the foreign exchange market we'll still pay less than what we paid 18 months ago converted to Canadian currency. Certainly an increase in fees of approx. 10% over a four year period (the last adjustment was effective in 2001) appears to be reasonable.
2. The 2005 ACBL Budget will be decided at the Fall meeting. Preliminary indications are that there will be no increase in sanction fees and so far the Finance Committee rejected Management's recommendation to increase NABC entry fees.
3. Patron members dues will be \$250 for individuals and \$350 for household, while benefits will change as well effective August 1, 2004.
4. Effective January 1, 2005 when members pay their renewal fees within 90 days of their expiration date, the term for which they are paid up will begin from the date that their membership originally expired.
5. a) At NABC's for players aged 15 and younger the entry fee is US \$1, while for players aged 16 - 25 will be no more than 50% of the regional rated event entry fees. Juniors playing professionally are discouraged to avail themselves of these reduced fees.
b) Districts, Units and bridge clubs are encouraged to adapt a similar fee policy.

II. TOURNAMENTS & CLUBS

1. We have made important changes to Special Games held at Clubs effective January 1, 2005. Clubs may hold almost unlimited numbers of special games by paying US \$1.00 per player (but no other table fee) in support of the Junior or Charity or International Fund and provide players with 100% Sectional rated black points!
February will remain designated as Junior Fund month; April will be designated as Charity Month and September will be designated as International Fund Month.
In the other calendar months clubs may hold special games for any of the Funds.
2. We have made some changes to the schedule of Nationally Rated Events at the Spring, Summer and Fall NABCs.
3. Amendments to ACBL Convention Chart:
 - a) General Chart will permit jump responses to an opening bid of one in a suit that show one unknown suit with a minimum of five cards and one other known suit with a minimum of four cards.
 - b) Methods permitted by the Mid-Chart will be approved for the length of the segments being played (12-6-2 boards)
 - c) Players using Mid-Chart methods are required to:
 - i) prealert the methods
 - ii) have written descriptions of methods available for the opponents
 - iii) have a copy of approved suggested defense available, that may be referred to during the auction by both pairs.
4. Created two new Life Master Categories:

Emerald:	7,500 points
Platinum:	10,000 points that does not require winning a National or World Championship
5. Amended Conditions of Contest:
 - a) The 0 - 5000 Spingold event will allow the use of Mid-Chart
 - b) When playing behind screens it is proper to adjust the tempo back to normal after an opponent has acted quickly.
6. In the future the National Finals of Flight "B" & "C" North American Pairs will qualify closer to 50% of the field.

III. POT-POURRI

1. Amended Zone II regulations to clarify a few points:
 - a) The ACBL Board of Directors will act as a Zonal Conference for WBF Zone II.
 - b) Each country's Federation has the authority to select, approve and subsidize players for International representation, who must be citizens in good standing or residents of their country.
 - c) International Fund monies collected by ACBL at NABCs shall be distributed (as previously) to respective national organizations. The CBF will divide the Canadian International Fund money among members of all teams, at the CBF's sole discretion. The CBF will also be in total control of how to allocate Canadian Junior Fund money.
 - d) In order to be eligible to receive subsidy, any US Junior aged 19 or under must be a high school graduate (or equivalent), or be a student attending school and making orderly progress toward graduation.
 - e) It is compulsory for Junior Teams to ensure that all players play sufficient number of boards to be eligible for receiving medals.
2. Established a new award: President's Volunteer of the Year. One or two members shall be selected and the recipients will be invited to the next Spring's NABC (air fare and two nights of hotel will be provided).

3. The ACBL Goodwill Member of the Year shall receive air fare to the Fall NABC plus two nights of hotel, per diem and free play.
4. In 2005 the Goodwill Committee will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. All previous Goodwill Members of the Year will be invited to the Spring 2005 NABC (air fare and two night hotel covered).
5. Management will prepare a report on developing a pilot program for bridge camps for youngsters aged 21 and under.
6. Approved the first reading of the revised ACBL By-Laws. The size of quorum had been increased to 250. The entire text will soon be available on the new ACBL website.
7. According to Management's report:
 - a) There is a welcome slight increase in membership numbers.
 - b) The redesigned ACBL website (www.acbl.org) has lots of new features and useful information for our members.
 - c) Financially the ACBL is in good shape and may finish the year better than the planned break-even budget.
8. The World Schools Team Championship and the Junior Individual World Championship were held during the New York NABC, Poland won the Team event. Canada was the highest ranking North American team. Michael Nowosadzki of Poland won the Individual.

I do hope you are all having an enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing many of you September 13 - 19, 2004 in Billings, March 21 - 27, 2005 in Calgary at the CBF International Fund Regional, and/or May 16 - 22, 2005 in Casper, Wyoming.

Yours truly,

Dick

Dick Anderson