



AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE

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REPORT FROM 2005 FALL MEETINGS HELD IN DENVER

Mother Nature smiled on the bridge players, as the weather was as ideal as the playing site. All the bridge events were held on the concourse level of the Adam's Mark Hotel, which made it easy to find your friends. Just outside the hotel, the 16th Street Mall with its free trolley and multiple eating establishments provided the players with an abundance of dining options to choose from. A variety of nightly entertainment and food was offered for our enjoyment. The final table count of 10,145.75 tables was right on target. Congratulations to Co-Chairs **Roy Weinstein** and **Bob Wingard** for an outstanding NABC.

I. FINANCE

- membership is holding at 155,500 members.
- 2005 tournament attendance was down a little, compared to 2004. (3% for Regionals, 4% for Sectionals and 1% for StaCs). Keep in mind, though, that 2004 was an exceptional year.
- Costs continue to increase for Insurance and Health Care for employees. These factors, along with cost of living increases for staff and tournament directors, have resulted in some increases in fees in order to maintain a balanced budget.
- Here is a compilation of the increases for 2006:
 - 1) per table club game fees will increase from \$0.65 to \$0.74, effective April 1, 2006. The last increase in this fee was in 2001.
 - 2) StaC sanction fees will increase from \$2.42 per table to \$3.04 per table, effective January 1, 2006.
 - 3) The Sectional Surcharge will increase from \$110.00 to \$135.00, effective January 1, 2006. The last increase was in 1993.
 - 4) NABC entry fees will increase \$1.50 per person across the board. \$1 of the extra \$6.00 per table will go to the host NABC city to be used towards hospitality costs.
 - 5) Per session Director fees (sponsor paid) will increase between 7% and 7.5%, effective January 1, 2006.

II. BOARD ACTIONS

1. After years of discussion and experimentation with various formulas for the ACBL's premier team events, the board unanimously approved a new formula which will reduce the field to a power of two by the second day. Depending upon the number of entries, there will be head-on matches, byes, and 4-way matches (with three teams surviving) on day one. Starting on day 2, all matches will be head-on.
For the Vanderbilt & Spingold, there are some numbers that are very difficult (17,18,33,34,65,66,129,130). In these cases, an announcement will be made during the evening session prior to the start of the event asking if any teams wish to withdraw and receive a free entry to the event of their choice. With insufficient withdrawals, there will be three way matches with one survivor

If the number of byes in any of the Vanderbilt, Spingold, Women's KO or Senior KO is six or greater, a separate two session swiss event will be held for those teams which receive byes. The current masterpoint formula and restrictions shall apply.

2. Another long-standing issue deals with residency requirements for participation in NAP and GNT events. By a unanimous vote, new regulations will go into effect for the 2006/7 GNT, and 2007/8 NAP. A member's principal physical residence as of Sept. 1st (for the GNT) and June 1st (for the NAP) of the year prior to the National Finals shall establish the District in which the member is able to participate.

Entry forms will have a clause stating that the players are eligible to play in this District and will be subject to disciplinary action if they are not. A Credentials Committee will be established to resolve disputes and may refer the matter to the ACBL President to make charges to the ACBL Disciplinary Committee. If a player requests an exception to the physical residency requirements, he must seek permission in writing (no less than 60 days prior to the start of club level games) from both the District Directors of the District in which he lives and the District in which he wishes to play. Both District Directors must agree to the request.

3. Several years ago, an additional fee was established for non-ACBL members and unpaid Life Masters who played in tournaments. For NABC+ events, one must be an ACBL member in good standing. For other events, a surcharge is collected.

Effective July 1, 2006, except for charity events or events limited to players with fewer than twenty masterpoints:

- i) For all sectionals, the sponsoring organization shall charge an additional fee of at least \$1.00 per person per session for non-members and non-service fee paying LMs (current surcharge is minimum .50).
 - ii) For all Regionals, the sponsoring organization shall charge an additional fee of at least \$2.00 per person per session for non-members and non-service fee paying LMs (current surcharge is minimum \$1.00).
 - iii) It is suggested that the sale signage present this as a discount for members.
 - iv) The additional fee shall be retained by the sponsoring organization.
4. In conjunction with the above, at my suggestion, management will implement an amnesty program beginning January 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2006. Upon payment of their membership dues/service fees, people whose membership had lapsed shall be credited with all masterpoints which were earned during the lapsed membership period. It has been several years since the last amnesty program, which brought back several thousand members.
5. Management presented proposals for three future NABC sites.
 - i) The ACBL was offered an excellent package of concessions (approximately \$25,000 in savings for the ACBL in 2007) from the San Francisco Marriott in order to approve the Fall 2012 NABC. The room rate for the Fall 2007 San Francisco NABC has been reduced from \$162 to \$149 (maximum \$162 in 2012).
 - ii) Memphis, TN was approved for the Spring 2012 NABC. That will be ACBL's 75th anniversary.
 - iii) Montreal, QC was not approved for the Fall 2013 NABC. While a majority of the ACBL Board wants to return to Montreal, they were not happy with the negotiated package that management presented to us. By about a 2 to 1 margin, the Board of Governors voted for the ACBL Board to reconsider holding an NABC in Montreal. It is my belief that management should be able to negotiate with the Montreal hotels and return to the ACBL Board with a more attractive package that will be approved.

While in Denver, I was able to arrange a meeting with Nancy Foy (ACBL meeting planner), Steve Lawrence (of Calgary) and myself. We discussed a proposal for Calgary to host an NABC in the summer of 2013. Steve and I convinced Nancy of the merits of this proposal. As a result Nancy will visit Calgary in May or early June to do a site inspection tour. I am very excited at the prospect of District 18 having another NABC. It has been a lot of years since Salt Lake City hosted such an event. District 18 certainly is ready for another!!

6. The Senior Swiss Team Trophy will now be known as the Alan Truscott United States Playing Card Senior Swiss Trophy.
7. The Windows version of ACBL Score has been tested at clubs and tournaments since August, and was used in Denver. It is expected that it should be available on the ACBL download site, for general release, in January 2006.

III. JUNIOR MATTERS

Phase one of the ACBL's ambitious marketing program geared towards younger players has been completed, and phase two is now underway. Be sure to check out the ACBL junior web site [Bridge Is Cool](#) which has just been updated and improved. It is a work in progress.

The ACBL is working hard to form alliances with youth groups around the country, and continues to co-sponsor the School Bridge Lesson programs with the ACBL Educational Foundation.

The issue of holding another ACBL World Junior Bridge Camp was discussed at length and deferred to the Dallas Spring 2006 meeting. However, by a 19-6 straw vote the board expressed its desire to sponsor a 2007 ACBL Bridge Camp following the Summer 2007 Nashville NABC. I expect management will act on the straw vote and report to the board in Dallas with a complete proposal to make the 2007 bridge camp a reality.

On a personal note, I am pleased to announce that I have been elected to represent the ACBL on the World Bridge Federation's Executive Council. I will do my best to represent the interests of the ACBL at the world level.

I would like to wish you all the best in 2006 and look forward to seeing you at our District 18 Regionals.

Moose Jaw - April 17 - 23, 2006

Boise - May 15 - 21, 2006

Calgary - August 7 - 13, 2006

Kalispell - September 18 - 24, 2006

Dick