

ACBL Board of Directors Meeting
Las Vegas, Nevada
July 14-17, 2014

At times, though essential to our organization, these meetings can appear to be very uneventful. I am pleased to report that the Las Vegas meetings produced some very positive and meaningful changes. In my tournament travels the most universal comment I have heard is that our Pairs players are being treated as second class citizens. I am pleased to announce major improvements are being proposed. Masterpoint award motions require two readings before being implemented. Las Vegas provided the first reading for a number of changes. Without going into the x times y times z of the masterpoint award formula I will outline what these changes mean to you.

- The T factor in the formula for Pairs was changed from 1.0 to 1.25. When enacted all pairs games at tournaments will pay 25% more than today.
- For overall awards it is proposed that pairs events will pay 25% of the number of pairs entered as opposed to the current 17.5%.
- Possibly the largest change occurred with a proposed new structure for strati-flighted events. Under the present structure there is a large void for players who have more than 750 points and are forced into an A/X structure where they feel they are not competitive. The new structure will allow a 3/3 two flight structure or a 2/2/2 flight structure. In the 3/3 structure the A/X is done away with and the top flight will be able to have 3 strats with the lower strat being something like a 750 to 1500 strat. In the 2/2/2 structure there will be a separate 750 to 2500 flight where these players with more than 750 points are not forced to compete directly against the more experienced A flight. This structure is meant specifically for larger tournaments that will produce 3 good sized fields for the players.

I was involved in this committee and feel this is something our players have been asking for. Second reading will occur at the November meetings in Providence with a proposed effective date of January 1, 2015.

So as not to ignore our team players we also looked at complaints about the relatively low awards for 3 session team games as compared to 4 session games. 2nd and 3rd place finishers will find their awards are being increased.

There is the feeling that Sectional tournaments are undervalued. Under the current formula Sectional tournaments use a 10 factor when calculating masterpoints. The new proposal will increase that to 11, a 10% increase, for actual Sectionals which use tournament directors. The new proposal for other previously rated Sectional games, which are played in clubs and use club directors will now use a 9 factor. This was done as a specific step to recognise the value of true Sectional play. To get away from our present confusion of what game pays what the various other special club games will now use one common multiplier, 7.

If you remember the Dallas meeting deferred a motion to eliminate a number of special club games. Although relatively small these games are important to the clubs using them. This motion was defeated with the recommendation a more in depth study be done to investigate alternate ways to deal with the small game problem.

Not all the good news came from the motions. Our head office team in Horn Lake outlined a number of new initiatives that you will find beneficial.

- Developing a strong Tournament Director team is high priority. Watch the August Bulletin for information on the new TDU (Tournament Director University) initiative. The League is undertaking a new program for recruitment and training the directing staff. If you know of anyone interested in becoming a Tournament director have them look into this.
- There has been a rescheduling of the Special games at the club. Beginning in 2015 January will be Junior month and the Grass Roots month will move to May.

- Las Vegas is the testing ground for the ACBL on line partnership desk. By January 2015 the League is hoping to have this feature available for all our regionals and Sectionals. Make sure your tournament chairs check into this.
- The Longest day has been another huge success. The current tally is \$400 000 and growing. By the time the final tally is in it is hoped to top the \$500 000 mark again. Heartfelt thanks and congratulations to all those who participated.
- In Providence the ACBL will be testing a program to e-mail results at the end of each session to every participant. This is another service that we hope to offer to all our tournaments in the new year.
- I'm sure everyone has had the opportunity to try out the new ACBL web site (www.acbl.org). If you haven't already check into the expanded:
 - Bridge Bulletin article search features.
 - Find a teacher page.
 - Find a Club page.
 - Find a Tournament map search option.

One topic in the Good News-Bad News category is ACBL SCOR+. This was a massive program aimed at replacing our present ACBLSCOR with a new and improved 21st Century version. After investing much time and effort it has been determined that this is easier said than done. That's the Bad News. The developers of the new program have been replaced by an in house team and a new project manager. ACBLSCOR was found to be a very good program with one problem, no 21st Century bells and whistles. The new team is working on new features for ACBLSCOR that will make it far more useful to all our users. Now for the Good News. By building on our current program many of these features will be available much sooner than if we had continued with the rewrite. Watch for new features as soon as Providence this Fall.

As always these are only some of the items coming out of Las Vegas. The complete meeting minutes should be available on the ACBL web site by the 1st of August.

And as always, may all your finesses be successful,

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