



AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE

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Washington DC Report - Summer 2002

The Washington NABC was in most ways a huge success. The large number of attractions in the Nation's Capital made sight-seeing a delight. The one hotel site along with great hospitality made for a very attractive venue. A minor drawback was a less than anticipated turnout. 14,650 tables is a nice number, but 2000 or so tables below estimate. Several factors contributed among which are the stock market jitters, fallout from 9/11 and the upcoming World Championships in Montreal.

Some highlights of the meetings include:

- 1) We were presented with a full size prototype of the new ACBL Bulletin. It will feature larger and therefore easier to read print, and very attractive four colour layout. Audrey Grant's Play Bridge magazine will be a 12 page insert in every issue. This feature will keep our many new comers interested in this great new product. Also on Page 17, each month, the information currently on your point card will be ink-jetted into the magazine. Thus we will be back to a monthly point count confirmation. The new Bulletin will debut in January 2003.
- 2) In a further effort to make membership more attractive to the small number of players at NABC's who are not members or who choose not to pay a service fee, the \$1 per session charge has been increase to \$2. This applies only at NABC's and not at Regionals or Sectionals. There was a move afoot to make membership mandatory to play at Regionals and Sectionals, with a few board members even thinking of including club games under this requirement. I am pleased to report this was soundly defeated. 70 years of history is hard to change and I think tournaments and clubs in District 18 would be devastated by such a move. I hope it has gone away for some time.
- 3) A motion to make the announcement of a 15-17 NT not necessary was defeated. A majority of the Board felt that people will get used to it and want to give it a longer chance to become effective before changing procedures again.
- 4) The masterpoint review committee spent a great deal of time studying and revising the various masterpoint awards. Most changes occurred in NABC+ events and in KO's. There will be a slight reduction in the middle brackets of very large KO's at Regionals. Most of the changes will not affect our area, since the number of teams usually doesn't warrant that many brackets. For Continent Wide Charity Games, International Fund games and District Wide Charity Games, there will be overall and District awards (providing official hand records are used.) First overall ACBL Wide will receive 20 pts and first overall District Wide will receive 10pts. All of this is good news for 2003. There will be NO increase in sanction fees, entry fees or membership fees. The only increase will be tournament session fees which will rise 3.5% to cover salary increases.

6) The Appeals & Charges Committee spent many hours reviewing and making changes to a completely rewritten Cod of Disciplinary Regulations. Further minor changes are anticipated with the final draft to be present to the full Board in Phoenix. Another change which was approved, but doesn't take effect until January 1, 2004, will see no more appeal committees (except for NABC+ events). Instead the directors, in consultation with experts, will deal with appeals. Fortunately, our District has very few appeals, compared to most other Districts, and we will notice little impact here.

I have covered most of the legislation dealt with in Washington DC. Other minor motions were voted on, but they have little consequence on our every-day bridge activities. I was sorry to see the demise of EasyBridge, as I felt it was an effective tool for recruitment. Unfortunately, the high costs per member gained, along with some difficulty with rights to materials resulted in Edith McMullin and the ACBL parting ways. For those who are interested you can still do EasyBridge through Edith.

I hope to see many of you in Helena in September. (23 - 29) Mary Jo and Linda promise everyone a great time.

All the best in bridge.

Dick