

**ACBL BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 20-23, 2009**

**REPORT FROM BILL COOK, JR.
DISTRICT 10 REPRESENTATIVE**

- Richard DeMartino from Riverside, CT was elected ACBL President for the year 2010 over Phyllis Harlan from Oklahoma City, OK.
- Defeated a motion to permit I/N STac's for players under 300 masterpoints.
- Approved ACBL-wide races for masterpoints won in internet bridge games.
- Approved a motion to discontinue declaring the first Saturday night of each NABC as Dress Up Night.
- Approved allowing any former member who pays back dues for three years will have all unrecorded masterpoints credited at no charge. All masterpoints earned during the nonmember period for which payment is received will be recorded to the extent possible.
- Any member who pays his dues within 90 days after his membership paid through date shall have his masterpoints recorded free of charge, such dues payment credited from the original paid through date, and no break in membership recorded.
- Deferred to Fall 2009 NABC a motion to form a committee jointly with management to examine and suggest changes in the relationship of clubs and management.
- Approved publishing on the web site within one week after the end of each NABC, the ACBL Treasurer's report given at the Board of Governors meeting and describing what the data represents.
- Also approved publishing on the website the annual audited ACBL financial statement within one week after the conclusion of the Spring NABC also with appropriate commentary.
- Changed the competitive bidding policy from \$25,000 to \$50,000. In addition, for proposed expenditures of amounts more than \$50,000 but less than \$100,000, the bidding policy may be waived with the unanimous consent of the CEO, the President and the Treasurer or their Designees.
- Deferred to the Fall 2009 NABC a motion to eliminate the requirement to pre-alert short preempts (5 card weak 2's and 6 card 3 level) and undisciplined (less than Q high) preempts and replace the pre-alert with an alert upon occurrence. (Motion referred to Competitions and Conventions committee to be included in modifications to the alert procedures.)
- Deferred to the Fall 2009 NABC a motion to change the masterpoint rating of the following special games at clubs for 100% sectional-rated black points to 90% sectional-rated black points: Club Charity Games, Club Junior Fund Games, Club International Fund Games, Club Educational Foundation Games and Club GNT Fund Raiser Games.

- Defeated a motion that would allow the Canadian Open Pairs Championship and the Canadian Senior Teams Championship to serve as the equivalent to an NABC event for fulfillment of the requirements for the title of Grand Life Master.
- Amended the Schedule of Nationally Rated Events at NABCs as follows:
 - A. The Silodor Open pairs is moved to Thursday-Friday (just before the last weekend) of the Spring NABC, replacing the IMP pairs.
 - B. The IMP pairs is moved to the first Friday-Saturday at the Spring NABC, replacing the Silodor Pairs.
 - C. The masterpoint award for 1st overall in the IMP pairs to reduce from 125 to 100.
- Deferred to the Fall 2009 NABC amendments to ACBL Disciplinary Sanction Guidelines Appendix B, Part A&B.
- Approved amendments to Code of Disciplinary Regulations (CDR) Definitions (details on request)
- Approved amendments to CDR – Recorder Regulations (details on request)
- Approved amendments to CDR-Application for ACBL membership (details on request)
- Defeated a motion amend the policy on expelled members
- Approved the Hyatt Regency St. Louis Riverfront and Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark in St. Louis, MO as the site for the 2013 Spring NABC, March 14-24
- Approved that in stratiflighted and limited pair and team events, once the flight of the pair or team is determined, stratification within each flight may be based, at sponsor option, on the average masterpoint holding of the team or pair.
- Revised the masterpoint averaging policy that now reads “In Stratified events the stratification level of a team or pair may be based, at sponsor option, on the average masterpoint holding of the team or pair. This option may be exercised in club games, unit games and tournaments but not in qualifying events.”
- Approved ACBL Policy on Fill-ins that states “new entries are not allowed in team games once the initial session has begun. New pairs may be admitted to the 2nd session of a pair game for session awards only at the discretion of the tournament director.” Exceptions may be allowed by tournaments chair or tournament director for cause that was beyond the control of the team.
- The board agenda included over 4 ½ hours for presentations and open discussion on marketing, technology and NABC’s

JAY BAUM, ACBL CEO REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

- A lease purchase agreement has been executed with the City of Horn Lake, MS for our new headquarters’ building. ACBL has purchased the revenue bonds that the City sold to finance the purchase of the building and property from First Tennessee National Bank and to make other outside improvements. An architectural firm and construction manager have been employed. A list of contractors who will be invited to bid on the interior build out has been developed. It is anticipated that ACBL will receive bids by late September and construction contract awarded with anticipated completion and occupancy to be January/February 2010.

- We have gained 1,421 members in the first half of 2009. Jay believes with the changes in life master requirements and mailings to unpaid LM that a net gain of 2,500 is possible for the year. Retention of new members remains above 65%.
- Based on the first six months tournament table count, it appears that 2009 will equal 2008 and may exceed it.
- Regional's are over 5,000 tables behind last year due to seven fewer tournaments in the first half of the year but on a per regional basis tables per tournament are 40 more than in 2008. With the shift in the number of tournament to the last half of the year and one additional it is expected we will catch 2008 total tables by year end.
- Sectional tables are relatively flat with 2008 but 2009 will have 24 more sectionals than 2008.
- STAC's, in spite of there being eight fewer than 2008, are expected to exceed 100,000 tables in 2009 and the average tables per STaC will probably break all previous records.
- Club table counts through May are down less than 1%.
- Effective January 1, 2010 we intend to eliminate the printing and mailing of hand records, analysis and travelers for the ACBL wide games held at clubs with the exception of the ACBL instant Matchpoint held September.
- The 2nd annual Youth NABC scheduled for Washington, DC is expected to be well attended with 124 pre-registered and another 20-40 anticipated. Players will be coming from at least 15 states, 5 Canadian Provinces and China.
- Marketing, in an effort to increase awareness of the changes in the Life Master Requirements, has created and distributed a post card to former ACBL Non-Life members with 100+ masterpoints. The mailing encourages recipients to re-join ACBL before the new Life Master requirements.
- Marketing also has developed an amnesty campaign. A postcard has been sent to former ACBL members who currently have unrecorded masterpoints. The offer gives them an opportunity to renew their membership by December 31, 2009 to receive reinstatement of their unrecorded masterpoints at no additional charge. As a special incentive, those that renew for three years before October 1, 2009 will receive a complimentary deck of ACBL playing cards.
- An online member satisfaction survey was sent on June 29, 2009 to approximately 84,000 members. The survey ended July 13 and generated a 23% response rate. 97% indicated they would renew their membership in ACBL for the coming year. Extremely satisfied responses were up over 2008 as follows: Affordability 9%; website 7%; Tournament and Schedule results 5%; ACBL Sanctioned Clubs 7%; sectionals 4%; and Regional 5%. 36% indicated they play bridge online - up 3% over last year. Mental stimulation - leading reason responders enjoy the game of bridge

PETER RANK, LEAGUE COUNSEL REPORTED:

The lawsuit filed by tournament directors Peter Marcus and Susan Patricelli against ACBL for failure to pay overtime as required by Federal law and for retaliating against Mr. Marcus for his efforts to obtain overtime is in the discovery stage. Their lawsuit has been conditionally certified as a class action under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Of ACBL's 140 directors, 34 others have joined the lawsuit. A settlement conference was recently held before a Federal judge in Connecticut. Significant progress was made and a settlement offer is on the table. ACBL is hopeful that the matter can be resolved soon. No other litigation is pending against ACBL.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS STEP UP TO ENFORCE THE RULES AT WASHINGTON NABC

A cell phone violation penalty was assessed to a team containing national champions. Although they were the top seed in their 4 way bracket, the twelve IMP's in penalties for having a cell in the playing area was just enough to eliminate them in the first round from the prestigious Spingold Teams competition.

Slow play warnings were ignored by some national champions. Matt Granovetter and Ron Rubin were found responsible for a very late finish in the second quarter of their Springold match. They were put on 30 day probation, the first major penalty I can remember ever enforced for this violation.