

October, 2016

Washington Report for District 12 Unit Board Members

From: Dennis Carman, District 12 Director

The cooler weather that has arrived this fall has not quite blunted my memory of the weather at the Summer NABC in Washington, D.C. It was hot, hot, hot. The hotel, the Marriott Wardman Park, and the availability of a good variety of nearby, affordable restaurants made this a better than average national's site. Susan and I did make trips to the National Mall, to the World War II Memorial (which did not exist during our last trip to Washington, D.C.), and to a Nationals vs. Dodgers baseball game. There were massive crowds on the Mall the Sunday we were there, there were traffic jams, and there was the heat. Everything done out of doors was very uncomfortable.

Board of Director and Committee Actions in Washington, D.C.

Expulsions

Clearly, the expulsions of Lotan Fisher, Ron Schwartz, Fulio Fantoni, and Claudio Nunes from the ACBL by the Ethical Oversight Committee as the talk of the tournament. They were found guilty of violating three sections of the ACBL's Code of Disciplinary Regulations, CDR, Sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.20. They were convicted of violations of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge (Law 73132), violation of ACBL regulations and cheating and similar ethical violations. Forfeiture of 100% of their masterpoints, titles, ranks, and membership privileges were part of this penalty. Pursuant to CDR 4.18c the partners and teammates of all four are subject to mandatory forfeiture of all masterpoints, titles, and status ranks earned during the four years preceding the findings of guilt. That period is calculated from the 2015 Spingold Final. The well documented charges against the pairs were a collaboration of CEO Robert Hartman, his staff, League Council, Peter Rank, and countless hours of work from many other sources to present an ironclad case. Video evidence was presented as part of the case against the two pairs.

As a member of the Appeals Committee, I will be involved in the automatic review of these cases in Orlando during the Fall NABC.

I will mention a few Board actions from the nationals, and minutes from Washington, D.C. are available at: <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/about/DCMinutes08032016.pdf>

Item 162-26: Summer NABC Scheduling

A summary of the Board's action: To provide consistency with the current MP limits for the Flight A and Flight B GNTs, change the masterpoint limits of the 0 – 5,000 LM Pairs and the 0 – 5,000 Spingold to 0 – 6,000 MP; and the 0 – 1,500 Pairs and the 0 – 1,500 Spingold to 0 – 2,500.

The actual wording as voted: The masterpoint limits of the Bruce LM Pairs and the 0-5,000 Spingold KO Teams shall be 6,000 MP. The 0-5,000 Mini Spingold shall be renamed 0-6,000 Mini Spingold. The masterpoint limits of the Young Pairs and the 0-1,500 Spingold KO Teams shall be 0-2,500. The 0-1,500 Mini Spingold shall be renamed the 0-2,500 Mini Spingold.

These changes are in effect for next summer's nationals in Toronto, and I would suggest forming teams that fit the new criteria.

Item 162-06: Notrump Opener

The ACBL General Convention Chart is modified as follows:

DEFINITIONS

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2. A notrump opening or overcall is natural if, by agreement, it contains no void, at most one singleton which must be the A, K or Q and no more than two doubletons. If the hand contains a singleton it may have no doubleton.

Effective immediately (August 1, 2016)

Item 162-11: \$5 Junior Membership

1.4 A \$5 Junior membership will be available to all players under the age of 26.

1.4.1 In lieu of a hardcopy monthly Bulletin, Junior members will have access to the Bulletin online via MyACBL.

Effective January 1, 2017

A comprehensive explanation of Recorder Regulations & Procedures was added to the ACBL's Code of Disciplinary Regulation as Appendix C.

On some Positive Notes

Membership has risen to 168,742 members which is an increase of 986 players from a year ago.

Face to face table count is up 1.23% as compared to last year at the same time. Total table count was 1,357,569 of which 437,296 was from online games.

The ACBL recently signed a four year agreement with BBO which will increase our revenue by \$500,000 annually (or \$2,000,000 over the contract terms). In 2016 the ACBL will realize \$250,000 in revenue for this year, as the contract was signed mid-year.

In 2016 ACBL members raised \$760,000 toward the cure of Alzheimer's disease. Two Michigan clubs were included in the top two dozen fund raisers (October Bulletin, page 16, Longest Day). The Kalamazoo Bridge Center raised \$6,338 with a silent auction which included, in part: three local experts being "bought" for a session of bridge, Chicago Cubs/Chicago White Sox tickets at Wrigley Field, 4 rounds of golf at an exclusive golf club, dinner for 2 at a top line eatery, a painting from a Unit 195 artist, as well as a seasonable

supply of fruits & vegetables from a local player with a green thumb. Catherine Gay and Bill Northrup spearheaded this event with Catherine directing the bridge games at the club. Bill ran a rubber bridge game, and those players also contributed to the fund raiser. Player fees and the club's rent were donated by the club, and directors donated their time. For those who simply wanted to contribute without participating in the auction, envelopes were available for donations.

The Michigan Bridge Connection (Southfield) joined with Bridge Central (Bloomfield Hills) to raise \$5,580 with a similar bridge expert auction of 15 players and an auction of classic bridge books. (See picture and article, page 13, of the October Bulletin.) Marilyn Nathanson and Vickie Vallone initiated this event.

As your District Director, I have had the pleasure of receiving notification when members of District 12 reach masterpoint milestones. I've been able to congratulate these people and ask them for a story or for suggestions on how the ACBL can improve their bridge experience.

Ed Nolan, who recently moved to Traverse City, became a Sectional Master last year. He says,

"Thanks for your note. Age 72 is a little late in life to be making Sectional Master, especially considering that my wife, Kitty, and I have been playing bridge together for over 50 years, but it is a familiar story. We started playing duplicate while in grad school in Chicago and were turned off by the rudeness and clouds of cigarette smoke. For decades after that, it was strictly social bridge for us. Finally, trying duplicate again on a cruise ship not long ago, we met some really nice people, life masters, who, in a way that was not at all condescending, but genuinely friendly, urged us "beginners" to give the ACBL another try. We retroactively claimed the points we had won on the cruise, and have been playing on and off ever since."

I'd like to think that the League's Zero Tolerance program has taken care of the "rudeness" that chased away Ed and Kitty years ago. We're glad you came back to duplicate bridge, Ed!

Gloria Bennett has become a Regional Master. She reports about her winter bridge in Florida:

"I spend my winters in Florida in The Villages. Our bridge club has created an outstanding program for beginners and intermediate players. Newer players are given 4 free lessons and an opportunity to learn more at a nominal fee. After several lessons, they can participate in a game for players with under 50 points. Beginning and intermediate players have an opportunity to be matched with a mentor. Partnerships play together once a month in a special game. I frequently contact my mentor with questions about specific boards I have played. Each week, there are min-lessons before the 399er games. Additionally, classes are offered on different bridge topics each month. Pre-registration is required to attend these classes. The cost is \$5.00 a day. Last year, we hired Larry

Cohen for a day long seminar. This was expensive but very well attended. I think the best thing our club provides is a copy of all the hands after each game. This is so helpful for the bridge learner!"

The nice thing about our bridge passion is that you can find a game throughout the country, especially in those places who cater to retirees! Thanks for your story, Gloria!

A player who played a session of bridge with me while I was on my honeymoon in Toronto in 1978 with Susan sent me this note.

"Read five weeks to winning bridge and was hooked. Thought I was a bridge player after reading only five chapters. Called my best friend and "taught" her to play. Spent the next 40 years learning how to play the game. Seems the five chapters were just not enough. I've been lucky to have great partners and still think the game of bridge is the best thing ever. You can have a good time no matter your skill level, and you never stop learning." – Kathy Newman



Congratulations on achieving the status of Platinum Life

Master, Kathy!

The Fall Nationals are in Orlando at Walt Disney's Swan and Dolphin Hotels with modest parking charges of \$10 per exit for attendees not staying at the site. I hope to see many of you in Orlando from November 24 to December 4, 2016.

Dennis Carman
District 12 Director

