



American Contract Bridge League

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Spring 2015

Jazz....And All That Bridge

The Spring NABC was held at the New Orleans Marriott at the French Quarter in New Orleans. This was an excellent playing site across the street from the other main hotel, the Sheraton New Orleans, with many good restaurants, bars and tourist attractions in walking distance or nearby. The tournament was well run, with excellent hospitality. Attendance was excellent with 11,402 tables, 10% more than expected.

The opening party on Friday night again did not disappoint with lots of nice food and an excellent band.

A moving event was the celebration of the life of Jeff Johnston, who for many years was in charge of producing our NABCs and lately head of ACBL Operations. He was a hard worker, who worked tirelessly for ACBL especially during the recent flood and NABCs, always putting in long hours. Jeff passed away in December and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

This has been a difficult year for the ACBL, with a large financial loss due to ACBLscore+, the flood, changes in Pension Plan etc. There were mistakes made along the way, both by the Board and by staff. It is my hope that we can get past and learn from what happened in the past and do things better in the future.

At the end of this report, I have included a bridge article by Rod MacKenzie, my favorite and long time bridge partner who is acknowledged as one of the finest players produced in the Atlantic Provinces. Thank you, Rod.

I am looking for other contributors. All I ask is that it be at most 1 page long and that it be done in Word. Next one would be needed for my report after the Chicago NABC which is in August.

I am also listing major results by District 1 players at the NABC. The list is at the end of this report.

Highlights of the New Orleans Board of Directors Meeting

- **Membership** is virtually the same as the beginning of last year, and stands at 167,392.
- **Regional attendance for last year** was slightly up, but average table count was down 2% (there were 4 more regionals).
- **Sectional attendance** was down 4% and average table count was down 6%.
- **STACs** table count was up 2% and average table count was down 6% (6 more STACs).
- **Finance:** the decrease in net assets from Operations for 2014 is \$335,000, \$73K more than the \$262K decrease forecasted. The total decrease in Net Assets was \$4,085,658. There was an ACBLscore+ write-off of \$1.9M, Pension termination cost of \$1.7M, pension balance sheet adjustment of \$600K, and TD travel back pay of \$281K among other significant items that were not anticipated.
- **Insurance:** Our broker has changed for Property & Casualty and Health and Welfare policies. As a result we will realize an annual saving of \$59,000.

United States



Canada



Mexico



Bermuda

- **IT:** A number of member-friendly updates have been implemented on acbl.org including The Partnership Desk which was launched in January and already 900 members have created profiles. We are looking at enhancing options for future credit card transactions and changing credit card processors.
- **Table count:** 2014 table count for club games was 3,153,000 of which 1,007,000 was from on-line games.
- **ACBLscore** training for Club Department employees is scheduled so the department will be better able to help club managers and directors.
- **Longest Day:** Planning for 2015 is underway for the dates of Sunday, June 21st (Father's Day) and Mon, June 22nd. 100% of money raised in Canada will go to Canadian Research projects.

Strategic Planning:

- **Tournament Director:** Tournament Director University (TDU) is approaching its first graduation. 3 of the 5 students are scheduled to run small sectionals soon. The pilot program was an excellent learning experience for students, teachers and ACBL.
- **ACBL Resource Center:** was launched on Nov 7th. This is an easy to use tool to order or download anything needed by Clubs, Teachers, Units and Districts to help them grow the game. As of Feb 23rd the Center has received 1,700 site visits. The Center has a blog called Tricks of the Trade (which is distributed by e-mail blasts) which offers marketing guidance and information on new releases. Customer Service workshops continue and after New Orleans, 40% of our TDs will have completed this Course. 2 new Field Managers have been announced, one of whom is former Montrealer Sol Weinstein. Sylvia Hardin is now head of all field operations.
- **Pianola:** Negotiations are underway with Pianola to replace our current tournament e-mail marketing program, to allow tournament chairs to better control the e-mail marketing process. Rollout is planned for Summer 2015.
- **Privacy Policy:** was overhauled in 2014 to meet North American privacy laws and to safeguard our members personal contact information. ACBL has updated the privacy policy.

Actions and Motions approved at New Orleans Board of Directors Meetings:

- Ken Monzingo (San Diego area) was elected as ACBL Treasurer for a 1 year term starting May 1, 2015.
- For the first 2 days for Flights A, B, and C of the GNT National Final, the entry fee is waived as an award for winning the district portion of GNT.
- At non-NABC events, players on KO teams with more than 4 players, for every half match that is won and the player sits out, the overall award will be reduced by 5%.
- A new unit was created for the metro Atlanta area.
- Requirements for League Counsel now include knowledge of duplicate bridge.
- 3rd and 4th place finisher in NAP Flights B and C will be allowed to participate in the National Finals, but will not receive any prize money.
- Fall 6 Session NABC Swiss will be called the Keohane NA Swiss (150 MPs for 1st) and the Summer NABC Swiss (changed from 4 to 6 session) will be called the Roth NA Swiss (170 MPs).
- Clubs can no longer bar players from ACBL wide games.
- Side games that are not part of a side-game series will see their M factor go from 65% to 80% (needs 2nd reading).
- A change is being made to the distribution of Grass Roots Fund money, where smaller districts that raise a larger amount per member will be rewarded. We are one of these districts.
- Operating budget shows a \$9500 excess of revenue over expenses. Capital budget will be \$270,000.
- Future NABCs were approved for Columbus and Toronto.

District News

George Retek: was named the first recipient of the CBF Lifetime Achievement Award. He will be presented with the award during the Hall of Fame ceremony during the Canadian Bridge Championships in May in Montreal.

Congratulations George, for this well deserved honour!

- **District Meeting:** District 1 Annual Meeting will held in Montreal on Saturday, August 22nd. Minutes of the 2014 meeting are on the District website www.district1acbl.org. District Executive members and the Unit Presidents are having quarterly conference call, two being held in November and February and the next one being in May.
- **Tournaments:** Please come to our District's tournaments. Montreal will host the Canadian Bridge Championships in May and the Can-Am in August. There will be a Regional in Quebec City in May, the CanAt in Fredericton in

June/July and the National Capital Regional in Ottawa in Oct. Kingston will also be the site of the CBF Regional in July/August.

- **Upcoming NABCs:** Chicago (August) and Denver (Dec), Reno (Mar, 2016)
- **Good luck:** to our players who will be representing District 1 in the GNT National final in Chicago.
- **Grand National Teams:** There have been changes in how our District chooses our GNT representative. Flight Open and B will be played in the Swiss on Sunday, May 17th of the Quebec City Regional, and Flights A and C will be played in Halifax on May 9th.

Golden (and Platinum) Performances in New Orleans

The following is a listing of excellent achievements by District 1 players. I am listing the top 25 placings in NABC events (2+ days) and 1st or 2nd in Regional (2 session + events). As I am doing this manually, I apologize in advance if I missed someone. If you e-mail me, I will correct this in my next report.

1. Nicolas L'Ecuyer: 18th Lebar IMP Pairs, 9/16 Vanderbilt Teams, 4th Jacoby NA Swiss Teams
2. Marc-André Fourcaudot: 25th Jacoby NA Swiss, 1st Wed Compact KO 4
3. Andre Chartrand and Charles Martineau: 15th 10K Swiss 16th Silver Ribbon Pairs
4. Trisha and Gerardo Malazdrewicz: 7th NAP B, 2nd Onstatt KO 2
5. Stephane and Eric Reiher: 19th NAP B
6. Fred Hoffer and Don Piafsky: 1st Daylight Open Pairs, 1st Sat Daylight Open Pairs
7. Ethan MacAulay: 1st Fri-Sat KO 4, 1st Sun-Mon KO 3
8. Bob Zeller and Mark Siegrist: 8th 10K Swiss
9. Ken Eisner, Karl Hicks and Elwin Brown: 2nd Onstatt KO 2
10. Roger David, Lise Bedard, Denis Piton, Suzanne Brisebois: 1st Daylight KO 4
11. Pierrette Desmarais and Michel Trudel: 2nd Wed Gold Rush B
12. Margie Knickle and Glen Dexter: 1st Compact KO 10

Please see Rod Mackenzie's article on the next page.

See you in Chicago,

Leo

The Short Club

By Rod Mackenzie

Short suit minor suit slams are often overlooked in pairs games. The lure of no trump usually prevents players from investigating too vigorously beyond the 3 level. Playing IMP Pairs presents a different challenge. The opportunity to pick up a sizeable gain should be considered.

As North, you hold: ♠ A10xxx ♥ xx ♦ 10xx ♣ KJx

The auction proceeds:	W	N	E	S
	P	P	P	2C
	P	2D	P	2NT
	P	3H	P	3S
	P	?		

2♦ is positive, 2NT is unlimited, 3♥ is a transfer.

A move is called for. 4 NT is quantitative but vague. I chose 4♣ to check partner's temperature. His 6♣ bid ended the auction.

His hand was: ♠ Kx ♥ AKJx ♦ AKx ♣ AQ10x

Opening lead: ♣ 9

After an almost indiscernible eyebrow arch, partner won the ♣ K, cashed the 3 outside AKs and led a ♥ towards dummy. Both opponents followed and the high cross ruff yielded 12 tricks.

The full hand:

♠ Jxxx ♥ Qxx ♦ Qxx ♣ 98x	♠ A10xxx ♥ x x ♦ 10xx ♣ KJx <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 10px auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> ♠ Kx ♥ AKJx ♦ AKx ♣ AQ10x	♠ Q x ♥ 10xxx ♦ Jxxx ♣ xx
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The 4-2 Spade split dooms 6NT and partner forgave my Club debt, and that's the short and long of it.