

CONTRACT BRIDGE

Forum



Volume 85 Issue 1—January 2010

Huffaker brothers win Mini Blue Ribbon Pairs

Harold Huffaker, a District 21 player from Moraga, Calif., won the NABC Mini Blue Ribbon Pairs, playing with his brother Ron from District 22. This two-day event is restricted to players with fewer than 5000 masterpoints.

The brothers qualified with two comfortable sessions, standing ninth after the first day. Their two sessions in the finals were also comfortable, as they moved up to



Harold & Ron Huffaker

seventh with a 56.30% game in the first final session, and then

scored 59.02% in the evening to edge the runners-up by 14.36 matchpoints on a top of 90.

Ron and Harold first began playing together in 1960, but Harold took three decades off from serious play to work as a physician specializing in internal medicine for Kaiser. Says Ron: "That's why our game is strictly Standard American from 40 years ago, and we only play together about six times a year."

ABTA Master Point Press Teacher of the Year Award



Not every bridge teacher has authored a bestseller, written a newspaper column, or become well-known enough to receive an entry in the Encyclopedia of Bridge. Nevertheless, there are many teachers who continue to inspire their students day in and day out, promoting the game in their community and answering any question clearly, concisely and without judgment, whether it's about Roman Keycard Blackwood or simply, "What's a finesse?"

Their work too often goes unrecognized, yet it is vital to the future of the game.

Starting next year, thanks to Master Point Press, the world's largest publisher of books on bridge, and the American Bridge Teachers Association (ABTA), these anonymous-yet-praiseworthy mentors will finally have an annual award to call their own: the ABTA Master Point Press Teacher of the Year Award.

"This is really for the unsung heroes of the bridge world," Barbara Seagram, co-author of the best selling *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, chair of the ABTA

Teacher of the Year Committee, and a bridge teacher herself, said in a statement. "At last there is an award for those in the trenches."

To nominate someone, students are encouraged to e-mail one or two paragraphs to Seagram (bseagram@ca.inter.net) explaining why their teacher deserves consideration. Nominees must have at least five years teaching experience, and teach at least 75 hours a year. Nominations will close on April 1, 2010. The award will be given to a teacher who exemplifies what Seagram calls "love for the game." "They may

not have a famous name, but ... their communication skills and enthusiasm promote bridge's future, adding to your enjoyment," Seagram said.

Master Point Press co-founder Ray Lee is "delighted" to be working with the ABTA to create the Teacher of the Year award.

"It is the bridge teachers who bring new people into the game, and we want to recognize their hard work and dedication," he said.

The first winner will be presented with a "Teacher of the Year" plaque and a cash award next July in New Orleans, at the ABTA's 2010 convention.

The ABTA is a professional organization of bridge teachers from Canada, Mexico and the USA. Its mandate is to help those who teach bridge to do it better.

Master Point Press is the world's largest publisher of books on contract bridge with more than 150 titles in print.

Most recently MPP has expanded its reach by starting a blog site at www.bridgeblogging.com, aimed at providing a forum for discussion on all things bridge, and a sister site masteringbridge.com designed for teachers and students.

For more information, contact Barbara Seagram 416 487-8321, barbaraseagram.com or Linda Lee 416 781-0351, masterpoint-press.com, or visit the ABTA web site at www.abtathome.com



Barbara Seagram

Grand National Teams 2010



By Jackie Ortiz
D21 GNT
Coordinator

Flight Open, Unlimited; Flight A, 0-5,000; Flight B, 0-2,000; Flight C, Non-Life Master with fewer than 500 masterpoints to August 1, 2010. Pre-registration is required.

Flight A & Flight C deadline is Feb. 1, 2010.

Flight Open deadline is March 15, 2010

Flight B deadline April 15, 2010 to jackieo@sonic.net

Please check D21 net pages for Conditions of Contest.

Flight A
February 20, 2010: 12:00 and TBA - 2 sessions, Burlingame Bridge Club

February 21, 2010: 12:00 and TBA - 2 sessions, Burlingame Bridge Club

February 27, 2010: 12:30 and

TBA - semi-finals, San Mateo Sectional

February 28, 2010: 10:00 and TBA - finals, San Mateo Sectional

Flight C

February 20, 2010: 12:00 and TBA - 2 sessions, Burlingame Bridge Club

February 21, 2010: 12:00 and TBA - semi & finals, Burlingame

Flight Open

April 10, 2010: 1:00 and TBA - 2 sessions, San Jose Sectional

April 11, 2010: 10:30 and TBA - 2 sessions, San Jose Sectional

May 22, 2010: 12:00 and TBA semi-final, Burlingame Bridge Club

May 23, 2010: 12:00 and TBA finals, Burlingame Bridge Club

Flight B

May 22, 2010: 12:00 and TBA 2 sessions, Burlingame Bridge Club

May 23, 2010: 12:00 and TBA semi & finals, Burlingame Bridge Club

North American Pairs Finals, January 30 & 31, 2010



District Director Report

By Bruce W. Blakely

D21 Representative to the ACBL

Board of Directors

The ACBL Board of Directors met on November 22, 23, and 24 in San Diego, prior to the Fall 2009 NABC. On the first day, we were introduced to new directors, Bob Heller (D7), Susie Subeck (D13), and Claire Jones (D18), who replaced directors Bruce Reeve, Harriette Buckman and Dick Anderson, respectively. All three of the outgoing directors had been presidents of the ACBL. (By the way, Claire Jones is a man, not a woman.)

On Sunday, the full board met for a pre-committee session. The first order of business was to vote on whether a "non-agenda item" would be considered by the board. Directors Blakely (D21), Gerard (D3), and Levy (D24) jointly moved to bring a motion to restrict the number of "special games" at clubs, the so-called triple point games, since some clubs are holding every session as a "special" game, and giving out triple points every session. The motion was brought in part to respond to a motion presented to the Bridge Committee to lower the number of points awarded for these triple point games by 10%, without reducing the frequency of the special games. It was the proponents' view that the issue of special games should be considered as a whole, rather than in piecemeal fashion.

A vocal group, including the president of the league, who was the sponsor of the reduction of masterpoints only motion, opposed allowing the board to consider this item on procedural grounds. However, the board voted 13-12 to allow the motion to be considered.

The board then heard the CEO and League Counsel reports. CEO Jay Baum reported that the league is up over 3,000 members on the year and, for the first time in more than two decades, membership is over 160,000. The league plans on occupying the new headquarters building in Horn Lake, Mississippi beginning in March of 2010. League Counsel, Peter Rank, reported that the class action suit by directors against the League has been settled, and there is no pending litigation against the league.

Following these reports, George Retek (D1) and Alvin Levy (D24) were re-elected to be ACBL representatives to the World Bridge Federation. Warren Buffet and Bill Gates were announced as Honorary Members of the Year. They will receive (much needed) free memberships for 2010. Patricia Rasmus of District 5 was named Volunteer of the Year. The board then broke into committees. The Marketing Committee heard that management was intending to use the phrase "ACBL - Promoting the Game of Bridge Since 1937" as a tag line.

A number of us felt this slogan fell flat, was retrospective, rather than forward-looking, and was less than gripping. The Marketing Committee chair suggested that all promotion materials, including posters and signs at NABCs, contain the word "bridge" since visitors coming to our tournament hotels have no idea what "ACBL" is.

The Internet Committee considered whether all Internet masterpoints should be considered for rank advancement, rather than the current rule which allows only one-third of the points to count. It was decided that this matter should be considered in the larger context of internet bridge as a whole. The Conditions of Contest Committee recommended that Strat B of North American Pairs be raised to 2500 masterpoints. The Special Events Committee considered whether there should be a fourth 5000 masterpoints strat for the NAP's.

This was not a popular notion among the many smaller districts since they did not believe there would be enough pairs to have a meaningful championship flight event.

On Monday, a number of other committees met, including Tournaments, Bridge, Technology and Board Operations committees. This last committee was equally divided on whether the election for ACBL president should be moved to the Fall NABC meeting or should remain at the Summer meeting. On Tuesday, the full board met. We received a report on proposed NABC sites through 2008; heard a speech from the president of the World Bridge Federation, Gianarrigo Rona from Italy, and had an extensive presentation by Fred Gitelman, president of BBO, on the benefits of robot Internet games.

Following these presentations, the board voted upon the motions reviewed in committee. In keeping with my prior practice, I will explain each of my decisions when I did not vote with the majority.

A motion to make many detailed changes to the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations passed unanimously.

The board considered whether the election of the ACBL President should be moved from the Summer NABC to the Fall NABC. The reason for the suggested change was explained to be that some past presidents have felt like lame ducks after the vote occurs in the summer. I voted against moving the date since I thought any president-elect should work with, not against, the current ACBL president; I thought there would be a smoother transition; and an incoming president, who often attends 40 or more regionals all over the continent during his or her presidential year, should have more than one month to plan his or her travel schedule. Although the Board Operations Committee had voted evenly 5-5 regarding this issue, the full board voted 19-6 in favor of moving the date.

(See Director on page 12)

FORUM DEADLINES

Deadlines for *Forum* copy and ads is the 5th of the month!

Rich Luttrell

D21 *Forum* Editor

6550 2nd Street,
Rio Linda CA 95673

Phone: 916 991-6997

Fax: 916 992-6997

luttrellr@sbcglobal.net

Change of Address

Send change of address to:
addresschange@acbl.org

Or regular mail to:
ACBL/Address Change
P.O. Box 161192
Memphis TN 38136