



¿Qué Pasa? --Continued from page 1

Obviously there will be learning curves associated with this. You can get status information from the ACBL web site (www.acbl.org). Hopefully, things will start to settle down toward the end of March. This is an exciting time for the staff, and for those of us who have worked to make this happen.

The year 2012 marks ACBL's 75th anniversary. In addition to attending the Spring NABC in Memphis, players will have the opportunity to visit the new headquarters and meander through our museum, archives and library, meet the staff and get to know more about our great organization.

Special Games at Clubs

You've been pretty silent on this subject, which seems to imply satisfaction with the status quo that lets clubs hold special games whenever they wish. I felt that way for most of the time since the board of governors raised this as an issue. But a couple of things have happened that have altered my thinking somewhat.

First, I learned that several clubs did not participate in the Great Western STAC in December, and held special games in their clubs instead, feeling that the overall awards they can give in these games outweigh the awards for placing overall in the STAC.

Second, there is a concern that these games will eventually adversely affect sectional attendance. Why should people travel to sectionals, except for those who need silver points, when they can win as many, or nearly as many, points at home?

So it is an issue that requires some action. I'm inclined to believe now that the masterpoint awards for special games must be reduced, and that perhaps the number of such games a club can hold be limited.

Should we consider not allowing these games whenever there is a sectional or regional in the area? I'd hate to see this source of income dry up for the ACBL Charity Foundation, the Junior Fund, the International Fund or the ACBL Education Foundation, but the potential demise of tournaments is not acceptable either.

Miscellaneous

Last year was an exceptional year for ACBL membership growth. Our total membership on December 31 was 165,249, up 6,128 from a year ago. Paid membership increased by 6,248 as the number on non-dues paying Life Masters fell in 2009. Tournament attendance was also good. Regional table count was up by over 1100 tables, sectional tables were up by over 8200 tables, and STAC participation increased by over 7200 tables. All of this occurred despite the recession and sickness scares.

Volunteers across ACBLland are responsible for all of this, and we're in good shape if these trends continue.

ACBL Presidency

Since my last article, I attended the District 22 regional in Palm Springs. While attendance was down somewhat, due largely to the fact that the San Diego NABC had just finished a week before, it was still a 3000 table tournament, large by anyone's standards. In what has become a tradition, there was a short ceremony where I passed the presidential gavel to the 2010 ACBL president, Rich DeMartino from Connecticut.

After three days at home, I took my last trip as ACBL president, to the Kansas City regional in district 15. Unfortunately, here we encountered the worst weather I experienced on any of my trips, and it did affect attendance. However, enthusiasm was high. Like all the other tournaments I attended during 2009, our Kansas City hosts supplied terrific hospitality and made everyone feel more than welcome.

So that concludes my narrative of my year as ACBL president. It went by very quickly, and leaves me with many wonderful memories. I attended 31 tournaments in four countries, and was on the road for all or part of 35 weeks. I played bridge with about 75 different partners of all skill levels, mostly in pair games, and attended lots of meetings.

As you might imagine, I spent a considerable amount of time in airports during the year. Fortunately, I experienced few problems with flights or hotels.

What's Next?

The ACBL past president becomes chairman of the board for the next year. That is a ceremonial title with the only requirement being that the chairman assumes the presidency should the current president not be able to serve his/her term. It means I am free to choose the committees on which I desire to sit. It also means I have the time to attend more tournaments in our district, and I plan to do that.

We started to make some serious technological advances in 2009, but much needs to be done. ACBLscore is overdue for a rewrite. Too often innovations are stymied because ACBLscore won't accommodate them. The Bridgmate/BridgePad scoring offers tremendous potential, but there are still bugs and the units are still too expensive for many. We need to bring technology to the Swiss Teams score reporting and match assignment process. These are just examples.

- Opportunities are everywhere. Perhaps most importantly, we have to continue working until we develop a system that ranks players based on their current ability. The total masterpoint model we've traditionally used doesn't do that. The incentive to play goes way down when you're forced to compete at a level that does not match your skill.
• We have to become better marketers. We're very fortunate to have a cadre of teachers and club managers who have taken the initiative to bring people into bridge, but we need more effort and better direction from Memphis. This has started happening in the past two years, but much more is possible. All of us could help by making our games more enjoyable and attractive to outsiders. Active ethics has helped. I don't think I heard of a better example of this in 2009 than what happened in our own district 17 NAP finals, where Molly Hosford and Dan McGuire found and reported an erroneous score that prevented them from winning the event - well after the results had been posted.
• Zero tolerance has tremendous potential, which won't be realized until players take the initiative to call directors when bad or unpleasant behavior occurs. Complaining to your partner or to other acquaintances or waiting until after the game is over does not solve the problem. Address the problem to the one individual who can do something about it, and do so when the problem occurs! This has to be emphasized and enforced at the club level, as well as at our tournaments. If it happens in the clubs, I am confident we will see an improvement at our tournaments.

This is the third year of my present term as your representative on the ACBL board of directors. I would like to serve one more term, but I know that there are at least two other individuals who plan to run for this position this year. That in itself will make for an interesting 2010!

Your input and suggestions on any of the above topics (or any other issues you wish to raise) are always appreciated, whether you agree or not. My phone number is 505 662-3036, you can e-mail me at peanutcat@aol.com, or write me at 2175 La Tierra Road, Los Alamos NM 87544-2766.

A special thanks to those of you who have contacted me to share your opinions.

Santa Fe Sectional April 30, May 1,2 2010

Same Schedule Both Days Friday and Saturday, April 30 & May 1 Note - New KO's start each morning @ 9AM 9:00 a.m.

Bracketed KO session 1 Stratified Pairs 299'er Pairs

1:00 p.m. Knock Out session 2 Swiss Teams, single session Stratified Pairs, single sess 299'er Pairs, single session

7:00 p.m. Knock Out, final session Stratified Pairs, single sess

Sunday, May 2 10:00 a.m. Strati-flighted Swiss Teams, 2 Sessions Lunch Provided ('play-through' short break)

LOCATION

Santa Fe Community College 6401 Richards Ave.

I-25 Exit 278 North on Cerrillos East onto Rodeo South onto Richards to Community College

Holiday Inn 4048 Cerrillos 800-465-4329 Courtyard by Marriott 3347 Cerrillos 505.473-2800 Fairfield Inn by Marriott 4150 Cerrillos 505.474-4442 Sleep Inn 8376 Cerrillos 505-474-7570

Apv Masterpoint limits are: Teams Strat A/X A3000+ X 0-3000 Strat B/C/D 300/500/1500 Pairs Strat A/B/C un/1500/500 299'er 50/150/300]

Sanction #S 0905065

Chair Jerry Ruther: 505.988.3457

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ken@santafewebdesign.com

299'er Chair: Sharon Nanez 505-992-8090

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Las Cruces Unit 380 Down Country Sectional

April 23rd, 24th & 25th, 2010 KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

2755 East Idaho Las Cruces, NM 88011

www.lascrucesbridge.com

Schedule of Events

ACBL Sanction No. S1004091

Friday, April 23rd:

Compact Bracketed Knockout Teams* 10:00 am & 3:00 pm Stratified Paris (single sessions) 10:00 am & 3:00 pm 199er Pairs (single sessions) 10:00 am & 3:00 pm

Saturday, April 24th:

Compact Bracketed Knockout Teams* 10:00 am & 3:00 pm Stratified Paris (single sessions) 10:00 am & 3:00 pm 199er Pairs (single sessions) 10:00 am & 3:00 pm

Sunday, April 25th:

Stratified (by team average) Swiss Teams 9:00 am & TBA ----- Lunch included in Team Entry Fee -----

Stratification: (A) 2000+, (B) 500-2000, (C) 0-500

*Top brackets (Knockouts) may be handicapped at director's discretion.

Entry Fees:

\$10.00 per person/session \$11.00 per person/session for non-members & unpaid LMs \$80.00/team for Sunday Swiss (includes lunch)

Director in Charge: Ken Horwedel

Chairman: Evelyn Colson (575)524-9302 ekcolson@zianet.com

Partnerships: Sue Parker 575-382-5421 Betty Stori 575-532-5464 psuzann@netscape.net ed.stori@comcast.net

Hospitality: Chickie Lerdal Joanne Dunkel Sandy Miles Peggy Knapp

Host Hotel

Sleep Inn 2121 South Triviz

Tel: 575-522-1700

Fax: 575-522-1515

For Special Rates mention: Bridge Center Standard Rooms (Singles, Doubles) - \$65 + tax