

2007.1 NABC – St. Louis, Missouri
ITT COMMITTEE – MINTES OF MEETING
Renaissance Grand Hotel, March 11, 2007, 11:00am

Michael Becker, ITTC Chairman, conducted the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Present: Henry Bethe, David Berkowitz, Gary Blaiss, Peter Boyd, Joan Gerard, Bob Hamman, Marty Harris, Jan Martel, Chip Martel, Jeff Meckstroth, Dan Morse, Bill Pollack, Larry Simon, John Sutherlin, Adam Wildavsky, Howard Weinstein, Sol Weinstein, Kit Woolsey

Conditions of Contest Chairperson

Becker, who resigned as CoCC chairperson in January, began a discussion with Bethe, who was acting chairperson in the interim. Bethe described the way he wanted to conduct committee affairs if he were appointed chairman: presentation of one proposal with responses directed to him, publication of committee member's views by him, further emails involving an interchange of ideas among the entire committee, no off topic discussions, a time period for resolution of an issue by the committee, and if necessary, a conference call to resolve contentious matters. Also, a smaller Inner Circle would be used to provide input for matters to be discussed. A discussion ensued, the result of which was Bethe agreed to be chairperson and work with the CoCC as best as possible, but without any preset structure. Becker congratulated Bethe on his appointment. Becker would remain as chairman for the 2007 CoCs.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Sunday, July 16, 2006, Chicago meeting were approved as amended. Hamman mentioned that the USBC would be a better event if it were restricted to the teams that actually had a chance of winning, perhaps starting with the round of 16, and added that a shorter event would be better for the players attending. Jan Martel mentioned that given the ACBL's position that the trials be open, it would be difficult to restrict the event. Hamman also suggested there be three USBCs instead of four.

2007 Conditions of Contest

Meckstroth said that the CoCC should be cautious in making any changes since the present CoCs were working well. Becker discussed the lead page of the CoCs. He subtracts and adds members of the Committee of the Whole list based on attendance. Becker mentioned that he removed Ross, Ekeblad and Soloway because they had not attended meetings in the past few years, but was adding Hamman. Becker reiterated that those who attend ITTC meetings were deemed committee members, and that anyone who wishes to serve on the CoCC is welcome to. Fred Gitelman resigned from the CoCC due to the daunting amount of correspondence. On reviewing the functions of the Appeals Committee, Howie Weinstein was "impressed" into being the 2007 USBC Appeals Committee Chair.

Becker noted slightly amended closing dates for byes and entries. It was agreed that entries may remain open to obtain an even number of teams in the RR with certain large entry sizes.

The four and five board match VP scales were discussed. Becker noted that there would be no more 4 board matches. It was agreed to leave the 5 board match scale intact.

2009 Format Report

Harris noted that a subcommittee had been appointed to present a recommendation on the merits and format of a pairs trials being used to qualify USA II in 2009. Meckstroth and Hamman voiced their distain of pairs trials. The matter was deferred for later in the meeting but was not brought up again as time ran out.

2008 Conditions

Bethe led a discussion of the 2008 CoCs. The committee agreed that with some large entries, a Preliminary Stage (exempting all but a small number of teams) could be held if it improves the format (and size of field) of the RR (opening) stage of the main event. The RR would always begin on a Friday afternoon, and a Preliminary Stage would be held just prior to that. The CoCC was authorized to develop the final specifics. Berkowitz suggested and the Committee agreed that after entries close, a team scheduled to play in the Preliminary Stage may withdraw (and obtain a refund of its prepaid entry fee) within one week of being noticed.

A discussion took place on byes being given to teams that did not play “intact” (who played in NABCs with foreigners, or replaced US players, or added or subtracted players to their USBC team). The discussion also covered byes to the R16, deeper byes and byes to the R32. It was agreed that there be no change to the 2008 CoCs. But the matter could be brought up at the summer meeting for inclusion in the 2009 CoCs.

2008, 2009 and 2010 USBC Locations

Jan Martel reported that a benefactor was prepared to donate \$10,000 if the 2008 USBC were held in the Palm Beach, FL, area, and that negotiations were underway with the P.G.A. Resort in Palm Beach Gardens (\$129 a night). White Plains is unavailable in 2008, but available for May 29-June 8 2009 at a higher hotel rate (around \$139/night), but finalizing White Plains has been delayed pending the 2007 USBC in Chicago. If Chicago works well, the 2009 USBC may take place there again. Bill Rosenbaum is looking into having the Green Valley Ranch, the site of the Cavendish event, to host the 2010 USBC. Meckstroth suggested revisiting Memphis. While Player sentiments favor moving the USBC about the country, Memphis is a possible future site.

Augmentation to USBC Teams

(Note not for minutes: below addresses the fact that Lynch-Dawson, Grue-Cheek, Gitelman-Moss are playing in the 2008 cycle but Spector-Wolpert are replacing Lynch-Dawson in the 2008 USBC and will pre-register.)

Eight committee members remained after 12:40 for this discussion (several had byes in the Vanderbilt). Jan Martel said that the current wording that guides the Credentials Committee in its work includes "...is determined to be significantly less than the remainder of the team..."

Instead of revising the Credentials Committee's guidelines, the committee revised the CoCs as it pertains to augmenting players to a USBC team. The new wording, to be included in the "Pre-Registration" section, subject to editing, CoCC and ITTC approval, is: **"If a pre-registered team in the USBC is different than a team that earned a bye, and the player or pair being added has bridge expertise determined to be significantly less than that of the remainder of the team that earned the bye, but the player or pair being added makes the team equal to or better than the team that earned the bye, the team's PPs earned during the cycle will be reduced by 50%."**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1: 15 PM.