

NOTES FROM USBF INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Thursday, November 22, 2001, 11:00am

A small number of people attending this meeting meant to reach all those players interested in playing in USA trials as well as those interested in supporting the efforts and goals of the USBF. Attending were:

Howard Weinstein, David Berkowitz, Larry Simon, Gene Freed, Gary Blaiss, Bruce Reeve, Larry King, Henry Bethe, Barbara Nudelman, Charlotte Blaiss, Rena Hetzer, Peter Rank, Mike Becker, Dan Morse, Richard Schwartz, Chip Martel, Chris Compton and Adam Wildavsky

Mike Becker, USBF President recited the history of the USBF to date. He described the purpose of the USBF, how it was formed, key points in the Bylaws, the organization's financial situation and the need to raise money, how the SLC team was chosen and the benefits of bridge becoming an Olympic sport.

Included was a discussion of Active Membership its privileges: accumulation of Positioning Points, trials participation, international team subsidy, voting rights and the right to be elected to the Board of Directors.

Henry Bethe posed the question of special prices for juniors. Becker explained that a reduced Active Membership price was under consideration but not yet decided. It was suggested that any juniors playing in the trials on teams other than all junior teams should pay the full active member price.

Nudelman asked what constituted the dues year and why the dues would not be solicited on the ACBL renewal form. Becker explained the new ACBL dues renewal form structure that includes two sections for USBF contributions, but no section on Active Member dues. A review of the time frame of Active Member dues payments will be made.

Becker stated that while his opinion was that gaining a slot for Bridge as an Olympic sport was unlikely, the benefits to bridge of obtaining that goal would be so beneficial to bridge that the organization must do every possible to further that goal.

The current financial situation of the USBF was described by Becker which illustrated the importance of not only collecting Active Member dues but soliciting donations and sponsorship money. The \$50,000 loan from ACBL is expected to be repaid at the end of five years. The ACBL International Fund and the ACBL Junior Fund will continue to support the bridge athletes participating in international competition as in the past.

Additionally, the USBF hopes to raise money via a Charity (buy a pro partner) event which Active Members may or may not be required to volunteer for auctioning as pro partners. Adam Wildavsky objected strongly to the notion of required participation. Nudelman suggested that volunteers would be plentiful the first time or two but then volunteer interest would wane. The group in attendance felt that volunteerism is preferred to obligating experts to offer to be auctioned off in the event.

Larry King mentioned he had a long range idea for the USBF to raise money – an affinity program – which he would discuss later with Becker.

Becker discussed the method used to select the SLC teams. There were no adverse comments. Compton asked that there be a provision in the bylaws that future teams be selected via an objective method.

Becker agreed.

Becker closed the meeting by listing the accomplishment of the USBF Board to date which included:

1. Formed a Corporation and created bylaws
2. Held five meetings, including a 1 ½ day meeting
3. Attained recognition by the USBF as the representative of U.S. bridge
4. Attained recognition by the ACBL and ABA as the organization which qualifies and trains athletes for international competition. ACBL will transfer International Fund and Junior Fund proceeds to the USBF to continue the support of US international activities
5. Developed a three year financial plan
6. Formed several committees, and made the ITTC and WITTC committees of the USBF. Began planning the 2002 Trials
7. Selected teams for the IOC Grand Prix in SLC, and undertook to develop plans for player media training, publicity and public relations.
8. Developed plans for fund raising and obtaining donations.
9. Amendment to the ACBL membership renewal form to include an optional \$1.95 donation check off box plus an unlimited donation line both stating that contributions to the USBF are 100% tax-deductible
10. Obtaining tax-free status with the IRS
11. Preparation and filing a 157 page application for and applying to the United States Olympic Committee

Meeting Adjourned at 12:15pm.