

2006.1 NABC – Dallas, CO
ITT COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING
Hiatt Regency Dallas, April 2, 2006, 10:30 A.M.

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

Present: David Berkowitz, Gary Blaiss, Peter Boyd, Chris Compton, Mark Feldman, Joan Gerard, Rena Hetzer, Jan Martel, Chip Martel, Dan Morse, Barbara Nudelman, Shawn Quinn, Richard Schwartz, Barnet Shenkin, Larry Simon, John Solodar, John Sutherlin, Adam Wildavsky, Howard Weinstein, Sol Weinstein, Bobby Wolff, Kit Woolsey

The large turnout was probably due to the fact that the top 42 teams in the Vanderbilt had byes.

Electronic Detection Devices Revisited

In presenting the minutes of the previous meeting, the use of electronic detection devices was re-discussed. It was thought that the use of “wands” would give the USBC a bad name. Also, such devices were thought to be expensive. Some thought that there should be specific penalties for failure to turn in an electronic communication device upon entering the playing area. It was proposed that a warning followed by a three IMP penalty followed by referral to a USBF C&E Committee was a reasonable course to follow for offenders. In the end, the matter was tabled. While the Conditions of Contest do not spell out a penalty for possessing an electronic communication device in the playing area, the DIC is empowered by the GCoC to take any action he deems necessary if a player runs afoul of this rule.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Wednesday, November 23, 2005 Denver meeting were approved.

Slow Play

In a match where a table has finished late, Quinn suggested that the DIC be able to compel the slow players to not replay each other in an effort to avoid future problems. No motion was made. However, teams that have finished late should consider the DIC’s suggestion that certain matchups be avoided. A team that does not follow the DIC’s suggestion does so at its own risk.

Woolsey led a ground breaking discussion on how to evaluate who is playing slowly in knockout play. He maintained that a player who takes extra time playing an easy hand for an overtrick is guiltier of slow play than another who takes extra time playing for his contract. In determining slow play, the quality of time taken can be a more important factor than the quantity of time taken.

In theory, (although unlikely in practice), it is possible that a table finishing late will not be penalized on a difficult set of hands, or a table finishing on time could be penalized if one pair took too much time on easy hands. (see Ladder of Penalties)

In effect, slow play is completely subjective rather than objective, contravening the approach taken by the ACBL and WBF. To determine who plays slowly, Woolsey thought we should place our faith in the subjective evaluation of trusted “Observers” (either a director or an expert

given some training to act as a monitor) to determine who is playing slowly.

As far as who to watch, an Observer should be stationed at a table where some or all of the players have already been warned.

If a pair is observed to be playing slowly, the Observer should designate (preferably in the first half of the segment) which side, if any, is at fault, and urged to speed up.

Monitors should be instructed on how to judge the quality and appropriateness of the time taken. Sol Weinstein said that directors often do not have extra time available to spend as monitors, particularly in early K/O rounds. Compton worried about the additional expense of having monitors available for K/O rounds. Joan Gerard promised that volunteer (no cost) expert monitors would be available in White Plains. So expense will not be a factor until at least next year.

If a pair is found to be slow, the DIC shall inform such a pair and their team captain.

Although Shenkin passionately pleaded that slow play rules parallel WBF rules, and Wildavsky mildly objected, Woolsey's suggestions were heartily approved by the committee.

Ladder of Penalties

It was agreed that:

1. The DIC shall endeavor to follow a ladder of warnings and penalties. Normally, the first time a pair is slow a director will issue a warning; the second time will result in a team's loss of seeding rights; the next and subsequent slow play offenses shall result in an IMP penalty of between 3 and 9 IMPS, at the DIC's discretion. Egregious slow play may result in accelerating this ladder. Chronic slow play shall be reported to the USBF C&E Committee. Benching and splitting pairs will no longer be a penalty for slow play.
2. An Observer need not be present for the DIC to warn a pair or table or remove a team's seeding right. However, in order to issue an IMP penalty for slow play, an Observer must have been present for a substantial part of that segment.
3. While there is no appeal of a slow play IMP penalty based on facts, an appeal based on faulty procedure is available to a pair suffering an IMP penalty.

Jan Martel will prepare and circulate amendments to the GCoC reflecting the above changes in slow play rules.

Long Term Slow Play

It was agreed that if the DIC found a player or pair guilty of chronic slow play, he should report such to the USBF C&E Committee, and that the C&E Committee shall send the offending player(s) a warning letter that continued chronic slow play will result in being barred from a future USBC.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 P.M.