

2012.1 NABC – Memphis, TN
ITT COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING
Memphis Marriott Downtown
Monday, March 19, 2012 - 10:30 a.m.

Michael Becker, ITTC Chairman, conducted the International Team Trials Committee Meeting.

14 others were present: David Berkowitz, Peter Boyd, Chris Compton, Mark Feldman, Joan Gerard, Rena Hetzer, Debbie Hyatt, Chip Martel, Jan Martel, Steve Robinson, Billy Rosenbaum, Michael Rosenberg, Howie Weinstein and Kit Woolsey.

Becker called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Wednesday, November 30, 2011, Seattle meeting were approved.

2012 CoCs

Becker noted two changes since the November meeting: USBC session fees increased from \$120 to \$150, and the wording about PPs earned from previous USBCs was clarified. These minor amendments were approved. The 2012 Conditions are finished, subject to some tweaking of Appendix C after entries close April 9, 2012.

2013 CoCs

Becker reported that there were a record number of emails (at least a thousand) over the last 3 months devoted to the 2013 CoCs.

J. Martel began a discussion of whether the event should be lengthened to avoid having matches end mid-day or to make the matches longer.

Berkowitz mentioned the difficulty that arises if a USBC K/O round ending mid-day resulted in a tied match. Ties are rare. While in a one-team year, one match ending mid-day might be delayed 80 minutes because of the playoff, during a two team year, if the tie occurred in the USA1 bracket, more matches might be delayed. No solution was put forth, other than not ending any matches mid-day, or just ending some match segments later in the tied day. Robinson and others suggested some random tie-breaking procedures that could be used in lieu of a playoff, but none were greeted enthusiastically, and the discussion moved on.

Rosenberg suggested lengthening the USBC but playing fewer boards each day. Becker mentioned that the current policy was to maximize the time spent at the trials and playing fewer boards per day would defeat that policy. Howie said that the issue of the number of boards played per day was polled several years ago, and playing 60 boards per day in K/O's easily won out over playing 56 boards per day. No motions were made.

A straw poll was taken to see if the 2013 USBC should be lengthened. Four members

thought the event was the proper length; eight members thought the event could be one day longer, and three members thought the event could be two days longer. (Some voted for two of the three choices.) Format B (the 2009 format, amended by having a 1.5 day R16 [with most size entries] and 1.5 day R8), was approved subject to tweaking by the TAC (the new acronym for the Technical and Advisory Committee). But the TAC was asked to create an alternate proposal with the event being lengthened by about a day.

Becker reported that 59% of those voting were in favor of the ITTC Google Group's "Package Deal" on amending the bye and PPs structure of the USBC, effective with the 2013 USBC. The amendments increased the PPs awarded for performance in the Reisinger and Vanderbilt, increased thresholds needed for a bye to the R16, R8 and R4, and amended PPs tie breaking procedures for byes and seeding. The Committee approved the "Package Deal," (with two No votes). The No voters were disappointed with the large increase in the R8 bye thresholds.

ACBL, WBF, and USBF Update

The Committee looked to Joan Gerard who retired from the ACBL BoD after an amazing 26 years of service. She was admired, appreciated and applauded. Joan continues on as USBF President and a member of the WBF Executive Council.

Joan reported that for 2012 the ACBL BoD continued its policy of providing \$50,000 a year in Junior Fund money to the USBF to send our junior teams abroad, but that future disbursements will be made year-to-year (subject to ACBL BoD approval). In any two year period, the USBF sends seven or eight junior teams to play in WBF sponsored events, and supplemental fund raising has always been needed to send these teams abroad, even with the ACBL's stipend.

Joan mentioned that the:

2012 World Bridge Games (Olympiad) would be in Lille, France, August 9 to 23

2013 Bermuda Bowl would probably be in Bali, Indonesia, September 16 to 29

2014 World Bridge Series (Rosenblum) would be in Luca, Tuscany, Italy

2015 Bermuda Bowl might be in Poznan, Poland, Monaco, or Turkey

2016 World Bridge Games would be in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

Jan Martel mentioned that the WBF adopted a stricter eligibility code requiring that a country's representatives be bona-fide residents, and that anyone who changes countries must wait ten years before again changing countries (no doubt there will be some exceptions to that! - MB). Also the WBF has adopted a dress code requiring teams to play in their "country" uniform. Medals will now be awarded after each event rather than at a victory banquet at the end of the tournament.

Joan reported that the 2013 USBC will be held at the Buena Vista Hotel in Disneyworld, Orlando, from May 30 to (about) June 11. The USSBC and the USWBC are tentatively scheduled for July 11 to 17 at the same location.

Policy if a WBF Event is Cancelled

Rosenberg asked what the policy was if a WBF event was cancelled. A discussion ensued about the complications this would cause if the WBF event were cancelled after the hotel was booked, or before the USBC was held or after the USBC was held, or when it

occurred during the four-year USBC cycle. It was agreed that creating such a policy in advance would be too difficult, but that, if at all possible, the winner of a USBC should be entitled to represent the U.S. in a future WBF championship. The USBF BoD would determine the policy if the situation arises (it never has arisen).

Split USBC?

Rosenberg began a discussion of whether to hold a split USBC, where the end stage of the USBC would be held either in conjunction with the Spring NABC or separately. Difficulties of holding the end stage of the USBC at either end the Spring NABC were reviewed. It was pointed out that holding a split USBC away from the Spring NABC would be prohibitively expensive. A straw poll indicated only one person favored holding a split USBC.

ITTC Google Group Expands

Becker reported another increase in the size of the ITTC Google Group. There are now 75 voting members and another 30 non-voting members.

Retirement of Chairman and Appointment of New Chair

After 16 years, the time came for Becker to pass the gavel to the new chair, Jonathan Weinstein. Becker was warmly congratulated by the Committee. A cake inscribed in honor of the moment was on hand for all to enjoy. Rena and Jan manually exploded 16 balloons tied to Becker's chair, in a "16 burst salute" to honor Becker's 16 years of service. And Joan, Jan, on behalf of the USBF BoD, presented Becker with a framed golden gavel, with a supporting inscription, "USBF," followed by "Presented to Michael Becker for exemplary service as Chairman of the International Team Trials Committee 1996-2012." Becker expressed his appreciation to all the Committee members, especially those who were by his side down this long road, adding that the ITTC was a team effort. Becker thanked Compton for being the catalyst that enabled him to resign (by offering to chair the Committee). "I am delighted to retire and I leave the chair in very good hands." Becker said.

Adjournment and Notice of Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20. The next meeting may be in Philadelphia, and the consensus was that if there was an NABC ITTC meeting, it should be on Monday, July 16, at 7:00, after the "evening" session ends. [But after the meeting it was noticed that K/O round 1 of the Spingold would end about 7:45, so the new chair will determine whether and when there should be a meeting then or at some other time.-MB]