

Internet Committee

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Bruce Blakely, vc

Paul Janicki

Craig Robinson

Bill Arlinghouse

Claire Jones

Jeff Taylor

Staff:

Butch Campbell

Vicki Campbell

Paul Ryburn

Millard Natchway

Agenda:

(1) Current sanctioned online play at Bridgebase Online, OKbridge and Swan Bridge:

In 2009 there were 584,000 tables in play with an income of \$221,000. 10,500 players participated. Over the last 5 months of 2009 table count averaged 55,000 tables/month, and over the first five months of 2010 table count averaged 57,000 tables /month. Year to year (2009/2010), from January – May, table count increased from 42,000 tables/month to 57,000/month, the majority of the increase due to robot play on Bridge Base Online. Online play has appeared to stabilize at a 4% growth rate.

Year to year (2009/2010), from January – May, face-to-face club play decreased slightly from 19,150 tables/month to 19,000 tables/month.

For the first five months of 2010, sanctioned online play averaged 33 tables/game. Face-to-face club play averaged 8.2 tables/game (9.0 for special games and 8.1 for regular games).

(2) Masterpoint awards

Almost all online games are 12-board games with a 20% reduction in masterpoint awards. The maximum award possible is $.8 \times .1/\text{table} \times 25 \text{ tables} = 2.0$

Is 80% award too great for a shortened 12-board game? YES. This might be reduced to 60%, 65% or 2/3.

Is a maximum tables counted toward overall awards of 25 too little for online play? YES. Club play averages 8 tables per game compared to 33 tables per game for online play. The maximum tables allowed to count might be raised to 35, or 40 or unlimited on a sliding scale as in tournament play.

(3) Possible future of online play

The online clubs are always working on ways to attract more players and more play. The recent introduction of robot play at BBO is a good example of this.

Stratified and stratiflighted games might be considered in the future. These games will attract more players. Data bases need to be updated to include players' masterpoints, and/or stratification/flight rank. Foreign players who join the ACBL in order to play in ACBL sanctioned online play would be assigned an equivalent flight rank.

Including player ranking will also allow for (near) perfect seeding, which rarely occurs at clubs.

(4) Management goals for 2010 and beyond:

The ACBL can greatly help to increase the growth of online play through promoting the game in the Bridge Bulletin and the ACBL website. We have suggested that at least one full page in the Bridge Bulletin be devoted to focusing on free internet activities (especially if the site promotes the ACBL). These sites should include: the many free teaching sites (devoted to different levels of players, including beginners); viewgraph shows of major national and international events; explanations of all modern conventions; bridge columns; informational sites (again, looking for reciprocal linking). Possibly every other month the Bridge Bulletin 'net' page would be devoted to sanctioned online play. Articles could include the mechanics of online play. This will make potential new players feel at ease in trying their hand at online play. Articles to inform, such as discussions of the big "C", cheating...frequency and how it is often detected. Educating the public will go a long way in increasing the integrity of our game.

An extensive internet section on our website would be both informative and educational, by including and archiving links and explanations of the above mentioned activities, and also contain an online section with player achievements and articles (summaries and full length) on all aspects of online play.

(5) Addressing some online concerns:

(a) Should online masterpoints be limited per year? No: 7-0

(b) Should all online masterpoints count toward rank advancement? Yes 4; No 3 (keep current 1/3 of total rank requirement).

(c) Should all points count toward strat and flight advancement? Yes 2; No 5 (some weighting factor should be used).

2009 online ACBL sanction fees

Club	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
BBO	\$2,013	\$10,578	\$11,743	\$11,123	\$11,524	\$11,256	\$16,547	\$15,707	\$14,921	\$15,705	\$15,562	\$16,058	\$162,738
OK	\$4,287	\$3,964	\$4,423	\$4,205	\$4,457	\$4,092	\$4,290	\$4,244	\$4,115	\$4,394	\$4,166	\$4,326	\$50,962
Swan	\$708	\$608	\$677	\$639	\$643	\$627	\$612	\$604	\$571	\$587	\$676	\$689	\$7,643
Total	\$17,008	\$15,150	\$16,844	\$15,968	\$16,624	\$15,975	\$21,450	\$20,556	\$19,606	\$20,685	\$20,404	\$21,074	\$221,342

Table Count

Club	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Swan	975	821	941	859	925	957	779	767	729	766	901	1,433	10,853
Okbridge													
BBO													
Jan	11,364						33,078						45,417
Feb	10,506						29,122						40,451
Mar	11,729						32,329						44,999
Apr	11,145						30,617						42,621
May	11,142						31,721						43,788
Jun	10,837						30,986						42,780
Jul	11,336						36,512						48,627
Aug	11,243						43,341						55,351
Sep	10,900						41,165						52,794
Oct	11,649						43,337						55,752
Nov	11,043						42,945						54,889
Dec	11,466						44,314						57,213
total	134,362						439,467						584,682

10,539 different members earned masterpoints

12-board online games are identical to 12-board regular club games, with awards at 80% of regular games (19+ boards)

Depth of section awards is identical to regular club games (at 70%).

For games of 19 or more tables, overall awards are given with a maximum overall award of 2.50.

Calculation and depth of overalls is the same as regular club games and tournaments.

The online clubs are not charged a per game fee. They are charge for three sessions (if held) per day.

No special games have been held.

		2010 online ACBL sanction games											
Month	Swan			Okb			BBO			Total			
	Tables	Fees	Tables	Fees	Tables	Fees	Tables	Fees	Tables	Fees	Tables	Fees	
January	966	\$703	12,630	\$4,755	47,522	\$17,213			61,118	\$22,670			
February	847	\$627	11,041	\$4,159	42,335	\$15,335			54,223	\$20,120			
March	908	\$684	11,594	\$4,433	45,031	\$16,316			57,533	\$21,433			
April	828	\$691	11,219	\$5,273	44,119	\$18,367			56,166	\$24,330			
May	842	\$724	11,577	\$5,442	45,477	\$18,932			57,896	\$25,098			
	4,391	\$3,428	58,061	\$24,061	224,484	\$86,162			286,936	\$113,652			

Online Games	5	286,936.0	859	32.06%	Online Games	5	217,276.0	644
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D. TOTAL ALL GAMES (CLUB + ONLINE)

	2010	#Months	# Tables	# Games	% Gain	2009	#Months	# Tables	# Games
Club, no additional	5	731,951.2	90,417	-6.88%	Club, no additional	5	786,079.6	96,122	
Additional Fees	5	219,190.6	24,324	27.07%	Additional Fees	5	172,492.7	19,509	
Sub-Total	5	951,141.8	114,741	-.77%	Sub-Total	5	958,572.3	115,631	
Online Games	5	286,936.0	859	32.06%	Online Games	5	217,276.0	644	
Total - All	5	1,238,077.8	115,600	5.29%	Total - All	5	1,175,848.3	116,275	