

MINUTES OF THE ACBL LAWS COMMISSION
PITTSBURGH, PA
MARCH 12, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chip Martel, Co-Chairman	
Ralph Cohen, Co-Chairman	
Allan Falk	Eric Rodwell
Ron Gerard	Matt Smith
Dan Morse	John Solodar
Jeff Polisner	Roger Stern
Ray Raskin	Adam Wildavsky

ALSO PRESENT:

Gary Blaiss	Mike Flader
Rick Beya	Tzadashi Yoshida

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 A.M by Ralph Cohen.

The resignation, due to health, of Bob Friend was announced. The commission thanks Bob for his valuable service.

The minutes of the Orlando meeting were approved.

In accordance with its authority to regulate conventions (law 40 D), the ACBL (although not the concern of this commission, the WBF has done so also) has approved regulations that restrict the right of a player to psych specified conventional calls notwithstanding law 40 A. The commission was asked to clarify the relationship between law 40 A and D.

While the legality of the current practice, which for the ACBL has existed for over 15 years, was questioned by some, the consensus was to legitimize current practice. There was a consensus that the new laws should clarify the current ambiguity between laws 40 A and D.

ACBL Management asked that this commission clarify law 45 C 2. Specifically, if the director determines that a declarer detaches a card from his hand and places it touching or nearly touching the table, does it matter how long the card remains in that position?

The two phrases of law 45 C 2 are separate - i.e. ***Declarer must play a card from his hand held face up***, and either (1) ***touching or nearly touching the table*** or (2) ***maintained in such a position as to indicate that it has been played***.

The consensus of the commission is that, once the director determines that declarer's detached, face up card reaches the position of nearly touching the table or actually touching the table, it is a played card.

The fact that the Atlanta NABC schedule included 10 am and 3 or 4 PM starting times for the main sessions was raised. The consensus was to have a meeting the first Friday evening beginning at 8 PM with a dinner served (if it could be arranged).

It was mentioned that this commission should attempt to have e-mail discussions between meetings. This was not suggested as a way to eliminate face-to-face meetings but to clarify the various positions on an issue. No decision was reached.

Claims were discussed. The direction of the WBF drafting committee appears to be moving away from making any radical changes in the claims law.

A consensus exists in this commission that there remains a desire to allow play to continue after a claim under some defined guidelines and circumstances. In addition, there was a consensus that the new laws should address a defender's claim and a declarer's claim separately.

ACBL Management presented the concept of ACBL creating and offering a sanction to clubs under which the club would be given permission to make inoperative specific laws of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. It is envisioned that this would be done in a manner similar to that used in creating the ACBL screen conditions.

There was no consensus although there was a clear majority that believed that having in place a different set of laws for some levels of play was appropriate. Management stated that any proposal created would be submitted to this commission or to the co-chairmen.

Meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.