

Minutes of the C&C Committee

July 27, 2009

1. Meeting called to order.
2. Minutes from March 2009 meeting approved.
 - a. There was discussion about point 13c from the minutes:

“Long discussion of disallowing 2NT without game interest vs. opening bidder being allowed to bid past 3M. [e.g., 2S-(P)-2NT-(4H)-4S]. Committee was split on the issue, *but the majority felt that so long as some auctions exist that opener can bid above 3M (such as above), the psych is not risk free and therefore legal.*”

The italicized portion was disputed, but eventually the consensus agreed with the minutes as written.
3. Penalties for frivolous protests.
 - a. The original proposed change was a 1 position penalty in the event where the protest occurred. In general, the idea of having some sort of consequence for frivolous protests was popular however there was quite a bit of discussion as to what measures can or should be taken. Original proposal of 1 position was not generally accepted.
 - b. Different penalty options were discussed; the final decision of the committee was that 2 strikes (frivolous appeals) in a 3 year period would result in a 2 year probation on the ability to appeal. Passed unanimously to recommend to BoD.
 - c. Adam Wildavsky had some comments about this initiative, see addendum.
4. Update from Bridge Committee (Was #10)
 - a. Motion to move swap the scheduling of the Silodor Pairs and IMP Pairs (So that the IMP Pairs is opposite the new Platinum Pairs) was passed.
 - b. Vanderbilt teams will start on Mondays, from Sunday beginning in Spring 2010.
 - c. ACBL Masterpoints will no longer be awarded for non-ACBL events such as WBF events or Team Trials (USBF, CBF, etc.)
 - d. Whether or not to eliminate some pre-alert requirements (such as light 5 card weak 2 bids) has been deferred.
 - e. Handicap formula – BoD asking for guidance:
 - i. Teams currently get capped at a 5000 MP team average for themselves. That is, a team with an average of 6000 MPs playing a team with 10000 MPs will receive no handicap.
 - ii. The ambiguous question is this: does the cap also apply to lower teams? For example, if a team with 500 MPs are playing a team with 6000 MPs and a team with the 10000 MPs, do they get the same handicap (based on 5000 cap) or is there a greater handicap for playing the higher team (no cap).
 - iii. Recommendation of the Committee is to allow the bigger handicap for the lower teams. Passed.

- f. BoG suggests that there be clarifications in the alert charts, further explaining what is and is not alertable. This will fall under the Convention Chart refresh.
 - g. 3 concerns of Rich DiMartino, asking for opinions either in November or in 2010.
 - i. Cheating. Digital cameras in the playing area are a good idea, but it is an expensive task. Currently the focus is on suspect players.
 - ii. Slow Play. Directors frequently seem to feel that they would not be supported if they gave penalties for slow play. He would like ideas on how to either reassure the directors that we would back them and/or provide some teeth into slow play penalties. (There actually was a C&E Committee on slow play later this week from the Spingold. This may be a good starting point for future discussion.)
 - iii. ACBL convention cards. Existing rules state that all players must use the approved ACBL convention card or a facsimile thereof, however there are still instances where foreign players do not abide by these rules, only providing EBF or WBF convention cards. Rich would like to see discussion about this, what steps can be taken to make sure these rules are enforced.
5. Alert Procedures and updates to Convention Charts (was #4, Alert Procedures)
- a. Some issues tabled for convention chart updates.
 - b. Transfer openings.
 - i. At the time of the meeting, a 1H opener showing spades is legal under the MidChart (MC); however, a 1D opener showing hearts is not.
 - ii. A request was made to allow the 1D opener. However, the Committee felt that this is not appropriate for the MC level.
 - iii. A motion was made to remove the 1H opener for spades for consistency in this message. Motion passed.
 - c. "Modified Bergen" or 1st/2nd seat Drury.
 - i. A request was made to allow the use of 2C and 2D as Bergen style raises after a 1st or 2nd seat 1 Major opener under the General Conventions Chart (GCC). This was referenced as "Modified Bergen" by the requestors, but the Committee had also heard it by other names (All seat Drury, etc.).
 - ii. Some members felt that it is reasonable to liken these types of bids to other GCC conventions and perhaps this should in fact be GCC legal, but not enough support was gathered to pass the motion. Motion failed.
 - d. Transfers responses to natural 1C as GCC. Motion not seconded.
 - e. 2D over opponent's 1NT for H or S.
 - i. There was a request made to eliminate the need to pre-alert playing this defense against a 1NT opener. At the time, the Committee felt that this was a misconception, that no pre-alert was required.
 - ii. However, from the current MC:

"When using a method permitted by the Mid-Chart but not by the General Convention Chart, a pair is required to: 1. Pre-Alert the method(s)"

 It is true that no written defense is required.

- iii.* (Suggestion: revisit the issue in Nov 2009 meeting.)
 - f. Asking players to not alert – opinion gathering.
 - i.* Committee felt that this request should not be accommodated.
 - ii.* Motion to not allow “Please no alerts” passed.
- 6. Seeding points (Was #5, Seeding points for foreign players)
 - a. There was a difference in the way the decay formula worked for seeding points (SP) for foreign players as compared to other methods of gaining SPs. Foreign players decayed at a rate of 5% per year, as opposed to 10% per year for normally gained through the course of play.
 - b. The BoD updated this at the Summer 2009 meeting (3 days prior), so no motions required of the Committee.
 - c. Discussion of using Platinum MPs to augment current SP formula (given 10+ years of data).
 - d. There will be data gathering and analysis to see if using Platinum MPs would impact seeding.
- 7. Precision 2C opener (Was #6)
 - a. Question about whether this is legal under the GCC.
 - b. Unanimously agreed that this is GCC legal. (Section 1, Definitions. This is a natural call since it shows clubs.)
- 8. Time of CnC Meeting (Was #7)
 - a. Suggestion to move the meeting to Sunday morning failed, this conflicts directly with the BoG meeting.
- 9. Screens for Quarterfinals of GNTs (Was #8)
 - a. Screens should be used for the Quarterfinals, space permitting.
 - b. Need to follow up with Jeff Johnston about logistics.
- 10. GCC Clarifications (Was #9)
 - a. (1NT)-2NT as a general good hand.
 - i.* This was not explicitly stated as legal under the section referencing NT defenses. (Competitive, Section 7b)
 - ii.* However this should be okay under the GCC by acknowledging that this is a cuebid. (Competitive, Section 6. A good hand wouldn’t be fewer than 10 HCP and therefore does not need a known suit.)
 - b. If a 2D opener as weak in hearts or strong in spades is GCC legal.
 - i.* Not GCC legal. (In fact, even just 2D as weak in hearts is not legal.)
 - ii.* This would be legal in MC and higher events.
- 11. Improved wording on #12 of MC to include 5M and add that 5H + 4S is allowed.
 - a. Current wording of #12 (under ALLOWED): “Opening two hearts or two spades showing a weak two bid with a 4-card minor”
 - b. Committee felt that the wording was not incorrect, that the intent to disallow 5H + 4S was in fact intentional. Currently the both majors convention is not legal under MC. No action taken.

- c. There is a lot of confusion surrounding this convention; there was a committee case involving this exact situation at the end of the week where some players & directors thought the convention was legal when others [correctly] felt it was not. (See attached NAC case.)

12. "Playing up" in Bracketed KO teams

- a. There was a request for guidance about "playing up" in bracketed teams: should it be allowed and if so, under what circumstances.
- b. Committee felt that allowing teams to "play up" is acceptable when the bracket in question is unfilled. (Less than 16 teams in the bracket for 4 session events, less than 8 teams in a 3 session event.) If a bracket is already filled, the request should not be accommodated. (*Note: I do not recall a specific vote about this issue being called to the floor, I believe there was discussion and consensus but no formal vote.*)

13. Allowable "battlefield tactics"

- a. A few examples were given about different situations.
- b. Consensus was that light openers were fine, "mildly" off-shape hands were also fine (e.g., 1S opener on 4-1-6-2 shape). The question really is when do these tactics leave the realm of judgment or even psychs and enter the realm of partnership agreements.
- c. Example of the latter, commonly opening a 15-17 NT on a balanced 12 count.
- d. Law 16A2 may apply. "Players may also take account of their estimate of their own score, of the traits of their opponents and any requirement of the tournament regulations."
- e. No specific actions taken, although the possibility of rewording the definition of "psychics" in the various Convention Charts may be addressed with the updates in November 2009.

Addendum

Email from Adam Wildavsky and Bruce Reeve regarding proposed changes to frivolous appeals.

We understand that in D.C. the C&C committee voted to recommend to the board a change in policy for Appeal Without Merit Warnings. Apparently a player who has accumulated two AWMW warnings in a period of two years will be prohibited from appealing any more rulings for an additional two years.

We would like to see fewer meritless appeals, so we appreciate the intent of this change. However, we'd like to request that you put off sending your recommendation to the board pending further discussion among our two committees. We have a few reasons.

- Any changes to AWMW policy will have a substantial impact on the National Appeals Committee, and we'd always like to be consulted before any changes are made.
- While we haven't seen the details, the policy seems to lack nuance. ACs are far from perfect and not all AWMWs are created equal. Some are well deserved, while others are assessed when the case, properly decided, would have gone the other way! The current policy requires review by a committee before any penalties take effect. That seems sensible. It gives players a chance to explain why they appealed, and the committee can take into account comments from the casebook commentators regarding the appeal's merit or lack thereof. That seems a reasonable amount of due process before curtailing a right guaranteed to every player under the laws.
- It's not clear that the proposed policy is legal. The laws give every player the right to appeal a ruling. If you decide to retain your recommendation then it probably should be run by the Laws Commission as well.
- We're curious how you propose to handle the case where only one member of a pair, or a team, is under the "no appeal" sanction.
- When automatic penalties ensue it's not clear that "Warning" is an appropriate term to use.
- With penalties so severe, committees may hesitate to hand out an AWMW even when it is well deserved.

One possibility would be to forward your recommendation from the C&C committee to the board along with a separate recommendation from the National Appeals Committee. We don't favor this approach because it would require the board to deal with details that are best left to committees. If our committees consult on this matter we're confident we can come up with something we'll both be happy to propose to the BOD.

Regards,
Adam Wildavsky - Chairman, National Appeals Committee
Bruce Reeve - Director, National Appeals Committee