



Charged Party(ies)  ACBL #  Hearing Date

Disciplinary Body  Hearing Location

Charging Party  ACBL#  Complainant  ACBL#

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO HEARD THE CHARGES**

Name	ACBL #	Name	ACBL #
<input type="text" value="A.J. Stephani"/>	<input type="text" value="Q368694"/>	<input type="text" value="Jeff Overby"/>	<input type="text" value="O879926"/>
<input type="text" value="Dennis Carman"/>	<input type="text" value="O828450"/>	<input type="text" value="Julie Smith"/>	<input type="text" value="J494848"/>
<input type="text" value="Margot Hennings"/>	<input type="text" value="N242118"/>	<input type="text" value="Jackie Zayac"/>	<input type="text" value="P386273"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**INDIVIDUALS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE HEARING** (excluding committee members)

Name	ACBL#	Via	Capacity	Name	ACBL#	Via	Capacity
<input type="text" value="Linda Dunn"/>	<input type="text" value="P197314"/>	<input type="text" value="telephonic"/>	<input type="text" value="In-House Counsel"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>

**EVIDENCE AND ARGUMENTS PRESENTED** (Summarize evidence and arguments presented including testimony. If additional space is needed, continue on page 3 of this hearing report.) (Note: provide new documentary evidence introduced during the hearing to the Office of National Recorder)

A Negotiated Resolution packet was provided by the Compliance Coordinator to the committee. It included the following: Negotiated Resolution, Exhibits A-D fulfilling the Negotiated Resolution Conditions, emails between the Advocates representing the Charging Party and Charged Party relating to the proposal phase of Negotiated Resolution, Recorder Complaint, Charge Letter, Notice of Suspension Pending Hearing, membership profile, and analysis reports.

Parties are not present during a Negotiated Resolution review. Therefore, arguments were not presented.

**COMMITTEE FINDINGS OF FACT** (based on the evidence, state the committee's conclusion as to what happened)

Sylvia Shi played in a club team series on BBO. Unlike other ACBL BBO events, kibitzing was possible in this event. The ACBL Recorder received a Recorder Memo in the form of a report from one of the club owners alleging that Ms. Shi was self-kibitzing. After an investigation analyzing the bidding and play on various occasions within the time frame, the Recorder believed the evidence persuasively demonstrated that Ms. Shi took a series of actions that could be explained only by the possession and utilization of Unauthorized Information, viz., viewing the full deal in real time by means of self-kibitzing. The investigation was also reviewed by the Anti-Cheating Commission, which concurred with the conclusion. A Charge was commenced by ACBL Management, and a proposed Negotiated Resolution was agreed to by the parties.

The Committee reviewed the terms of Negotiated Resolution, which consisted of a letter signed on August 17, 2020 and four Exhibits. The Committee approved the NR and incorporates the aforementioned letter and Exhibit A into this Hearing Report.

**DECISION** (click on the box next to Not Guilty or Guilty of violating the CDR to add a check mark.)

Not guilty (check here and skip the remainder of this page)  Guilty (continue by selecting the Grounds for Discipline which led to the finding of guilty. Note: A party may only be found guilty of a violation originally stated in the Charge Letter.

**CDR GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE** Type the section(s) and description(s) found in CDR 3 which led to the discipline).

3.1 Violation of Laws of Duplicate Bridge.  
3.20 Cheating and other Ethical Violations.

**DISCIPLINE** (Unless a discipline begins immediately, which requires you to complete a Notice of Immediate Discipline, all begin dates should start at least five days after you submit this hearing Report to the Office of National Recorder.

**Disciplined Party is convicted of premeditated or collusive cheating (or has admitted to such action), CDR 4.1.8 (a)** YES  NO

If yes, all masterpoints, titles and ACBL status ranks and other ACBL related awards earned by the disciplined party will be forfeited. These penalties also apply to the teammates and partners while playing with the disciplined party during the seven years preceding the date the Charges were brought through and including the date of this final decision.

	Start Date	End Date	Additional Requirements/Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> REPRIMAND		N/A	3-year Suspension and 3-year Probation. Ineligible to regain the status of Grand Life Master for a period of 5 years after suspension ends, and even then remain ineligible unless eligibility is restored by the Appeals and Charges Committee based on redemption achieved "through substantial contributions to the bridge community and the demonstration of exemplary behavior."
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PROBATION	07/23/2023	07/22/2026	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUSPENSION	07/23/2020	07/22/2023	

Is the disciplined party Suspended because of an Ethical Violation (CDR 4.1.8 (b))? YES  NO

If yes, the masterpoints and titles won in the event by the disciplined party, partners and teammates in which the offense occurred will be forfeited.

Is the Suspension imposed due to an Ethical Violation more than one year (CDR 4.1.8 (b))? YES  NO

If yes, the MPs, titles or other ACBL related award earned by the discipline party within twelve months preceding the date of the offense will be forfeited.

EXPULSION  N/A

SUSPENDED SENTENCE (only used in conjunction with an imposed Suspension from above that you have converted to Probation). State the condition of the sentence below

EXCLUSION from Events and Programs (list the exclusions and the dates of the events or activities), CDR 4.1.6

REDUCTION OR FORFEITURE of Masterpoints (MP) or Tournament Rank or Disqualification.

- Remove MPs earned in the event in which the offense occurred
- 25% removal of total MPs earned.
- Reduction of rank in the event in which the offense occurred
- Disqualification in the tournament
- Disqualification in the event in which offense occurred

The teammates and partners will also receive these penalties in the event in which the offense occurred.

**STATE THE OFFENSE(S) FROM APPENDIX B, CHART 1 and/or CHART 2 OF THE CDR**

The Committee accepted the terms of the Negotiated Resolution as agreed upon by the Charging Party and Charged Party. Therefore, an offense was not cited from Appendix B of the CDR

The discipline imposed above is **SELECT** the recommended guidelines of Appendix B, Chart 1 and/or Chart 2. If it is **OUTSIDE** the guidelines, a reason must be stated below.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED (CHAIR)**

/s/ A.J. Stephani

Date: 8/21/20

Electronic Signature (type name above)

Wet Signature (sign above)

July 31, 2020

Sylvia Shi

Dear Ms. Shi:

ACBL Management (Management) desires to fully resolve the pending disciplinary charges without the necessity of a full hearing before the Online Ethical Oversight Committee. Capitalized terms not specifically defined herein shall have the meaning ascribed to them in the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations (CDR).

Management makes this offer of a Negotiated Resolution pursuant to CDR 5.2.14 according to the following terms:

1. You must submit a written statement, admitting your use of prohibited sources of information during online bridge play;
2. The written statement must detail, fully and accurately, all methods you utilized to obtain information not allowed by Law 16, whether in online play or face-to-face play, and whether such misconduct is the subject of pending charges or has hitherto escaped detection;
3. You may include any explanation, excuse, or justification you wish in an effort to mitigate your wrongdoing.
4. You agree ACBL may make such use of your statement, at any time and for any purpose, as it chooses.
5. You acknowledge you will be suspended for 3 years, and thereafter placed on probation for 3 additional years; additionally, 25% of your accumulated masterpoints, will be forfeited.
6. You acknowledge that, pursuant to ACBL Codification, Chapter I Part B §§1.6.2 and 1.6.3, you will be ineligible to regain the status of Grand Life Master for a period of 5 years after your suspension ends, and even then remain ineligible unless eligibility is restored by the Appeals and Charges Committee based on redemption achieved "through substantial contributions to the bridge community and the demonstration of exemplary behavior."
7. You acknowledge you will not be a "member in good standing" until your probationary period ends.
8. You acknowledge that, if the Appeals and Charges Committee approves this Negotiated Resolution, its report will be published on ACBL's disciplinary web page.
9. You waive all rights of appeal and all rights to initiate arbitration in relation to these charges.

By signing this Negotiated Resolution, the Charged Party accepts all the foregoing terms.

THIS NEGOTIATED RESOLUTION IS SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE BY THE ACBL APPEALS AND CHARGES COMMITTEE.

Agreed to and accepted by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Jones, ACBL Executive Director as Charging Party

Date: 8/17/2020



\_\_\_\_\_  
Sylvia Shi, ACBL # N420105

Date: 8/17/2020

## **Exhibit A**

### **Written Statement Of Sylvia Shi Admitting Use of Prohibited Sources of Information During Online Bridge Play**

In the months of April, May, and June, 2020, I improperly obtained and used prohibited sources of information while playing Bridge online. The majority of this occurred in a weekly team league I played which was an ACBL club game. There were two other times I used prohibited sources of information, once in a private Imp Pairs game run by Walt Schafer, and another time in a two-day OCBL Mixed Swiss event held June 13-14.

To obtain the prohibited information, I would open my phone and use the “Watch Anonymously” feature to view my own table, a technique commonly referred to as “self-kibitzing”. In some instances, I would use a separate browser window rather than my phone. This was done privately with no one else’s knowledge. Though I live in the same house as my husband, another bridge player, when we do play online we play in different rooms and do not have any interaction. There are absolutely no other methods that I have enacted or considered in either online or face to face play.

I have had some time to think about my actions. I don’t have any excuses or justification for what I did. I knew what I was doing was wrong. I am filled with shame and regret about how I let this happen and have severe guilt for the pain and disappointment I have caused. I love bridge, and at age 32 have a significant history of teaching, mentoring, and promoting the game. And yet, somehow, I allowed this to happen. During the time since July 23 I have begun seeing a psychologist to try to help me work through my thoughts and possible motivations. Submission of his letter (Exhibit B) is not as an attempt by me to excuse my illegal conduct nor does his letter offer any diagnosis or excuse for my conduct. Rather I am trying to show my clear recognition that I need to seriously examine my actions.

I posted a public confession and apology on the BridgeWinners forum on July 23 very soon after admitting my guilt to BBO. I cannot undo the past, but I can work hard to ensure that I don’t continue these actions in the future. I have started working with Boye Brogeland’s anti-cheating commission and offering my services to try to clean up the online game. I recognize my wrongdoing and am willing to do whatever I can to make it better. I am readying myself to attempt to return to Bridge. I am contrite, ashamed, humbled, remorseful, and apologetic.