

EUGENE HADDOCK AND MARIE LUCCI

ACBL Case No: 2023-ACBL-49

IBA Case No: IBA-23-04

Eugene Haddock Information

District: 16

Unit: 172

Marie Lucci Information

District: 16

Unit: 172

ACBL Information

ACBL Charging Party: McKenzie Myers

ACBL Co-Advocates: Jeff Edelstein and Justin Coniglio

Charge Date: October 16, 2023

CDR Version: August 1, 2021

THE INSTITUTE FOR BRIDGE ARBITRATION

American Contract Bridge League, Claimant

vs.

Case No. IBA- 23- 04

Eugene Haddock and Marie Lucci, Respondents

Final Award

I. INTRODUCTION

This Final Award arises out of an arbitration between the American Contract Bridge League (“ACBL”) and two players, Dr. Eugene Haddock (ACBL #N962668) and Ms. Marie Lucci (ACBL #N962641) (“Charged Parties”).

Neither of the Charged Parties responded to communications from the IBA Administrator, the Arbitration Panel (the “Panel”), or as far as we can determine, any attempt to communicate with the ACBL prior to the initiation of the arbitration proceeding. Despite the uncontested nature of this case, the Arbitration Panel cannot declare what amounts to a default judgment. Accordingly, the ACBL was simply required to present a *prima facie* case that a violation of its Code of Disciplinary Regulation (“CDR”) had occurred.

On November 20, 2023, the ACBL filed a Demand for Arbitration alleging that “Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci, while playing in ACBL-sanctioned games on BBO, had, at times, illicitly shared information about their hands and used this information to gain an unfair competitive advantage over their opponents,” a violation of CDR § 301(A)(2): Collusive Cheating, Online. The ACBL-sanctioned games in question were played on Bridge Base Online (“BBO”), the primary online platform for ACBL-sanctioned bridge games.

The ACBL requested that an arbitration panel award a discipline consisting of: (a) a suspension from all ACBL activities for a period of three years, (b) a probationary period of five years following the end of the suspension period during which time Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci will be excluded from playing in any ACBL-sanctioned online games as partners, and (c) a forfeiture of 50% of Dr. Haddock’s ACBL Masterpoints and a forfeiture of 50% of Ms. Lucci’s ACBL Masterpoints.

The Arbitration Panel (“Panel”) was selected through IBA procedures, all parties having an opportunity to object to any of the Panel members. No preference was expressed, and IBA-certified arbitrators Howard Engle, Ted Jarrell, and Hadi Abushakra (chair) were selected as the Panel.

The ACBL National Recorder, Mr. Jeff Edelstein, served as co-advocate on behalf of the ACBL and presented the case. Mr. Justin Coniglio, the ACBL Assistant National Recorder, served as ACBL co-advocate. Despite numerous attempts to contact Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci by both

the ACBL and the IBA, including sending them formal notice of the Demand for Arbitration and of the times and dates of the preliminary and evidentiary hearings, neither responded to any communication.

II. INITIAL DISCLOSURE

The ACBL submitted by email to the Panel a pre-hearing summary of its evidence on January 21, 2024 (the “Summary”). The Summary contains a background and case section on each of the Charged Parties, including the ACBL member detail report for both Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci, a copy of the sole convention card used by the Charged Parties and posted on BBO, a brief bio of the ACBL Advocates, a review of five full sessions of BBO games played during the period January 3, 2022 - December 18, 2022 (containing links to all 90 hands) and images of 29 selected hands during the period January 1, 2022 – February 5, 2023 (also containing links to all hands) demonstrating the alleged cheating. The Summary also features additional links to 47 hands, also demonstrating the alleged cheating, and a brief discussion of 52 out of a total of 156 hands presented in evidence that highlights suspicious decisions made by the Charged Parties.

The ACBL identified the Charged Parties through “Member Numbers” which are clearly indicated in the respective ACBL Member Reports as belonging to each of Eugene Haddock and Marie Lucci.

III. EVIDENTIARY HEARING

The Panel held an evidentiary hearing on February 1, 2024, via Zoom. All three panel members were in attendance, as were Messrs. Edelstein and Coniglio. Neither Dr. Haddock nor Ms. Lucci attended the hearing.

At the hearing, the ACBL summarized their evidence and discussed several of the 156 hands submitted in its initial disclosure. To support its allegation that Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci were collusively sharing information about their hands, Mr. Coniglio presented evidence that persons under the BBO User Names “barnabas24” (Dr. Haddock) and “olivia2223” (Ms. Lucci) illegally exchanged or transmitted information during numerous online bridge games.

Because neither Respondent appeared at the hearing nor presented any evidence in defense, no defense was presented. Under the standards that apply in unopposed hearings, the ACBL need only have presented a prima facie case that a CDR violation occurred.

At the conclusion of the evidentiary hearing, the ACBL modified its request for a discipline stated in its Demand for Arbitration, dated November 20, 2023, by asking for: (a) a suspension from all ACBL activities for a period of five years, (b) a probationary period of five years following the suspension during which time Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci will be excluded from playing in any ACBL-sanctioned online and in-person game as partners, (c) a forfeiture of 50% of Dr. Haddock’s ACBL Masterpoints and a forfeiture of 50% of Ms. Lucci’s ACBL Masterpoints, (d) a payment to the ACBL of \$900.00 to reimburse it for the IBA filing fee, and (e) the inclusion in the Panel’s Final Award of hand diagrams supplied as evidence by the ACBL, as the Panel may find appropriate.

IV. PANEL DELIBERATIONS AND FINAL AWARD

The Panel deliberated and had no trouble concluding to a comfortable satisfaction that Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci illicitly exchanged or transmitted information during numerous online bridge games. A sample of hands demonstrating the Charge Parties' alleged cheating is set out as Exhibit A to this Final Award.

V. CONCLUSION

The Panel has ample evidence to support a finding that Eugene Haddock (ACBL Member #N962668) and Marie Lucci (ACBL Member #N962641) engaged in illicit behavior that likely constitutes some form of cheating under ACBL regulations.

Accordingly, Eugene Haddock and Marie Lucci are suspended from all ACBL activities for a period of five years, and will remain under probation following their suspension for a period of five more years during which time Dr. Haddock and Ms. Lucci will be excluded from playing in any ACBL-sanctioned online and in-person games as partners.

Each of Eugene Haddock and Marie Lucci will forfeit 50% of his/her total ACBL Masterpoints, and they are jointly and severally liable to the ACBL for an amount of \$900.00 to reimburse it for the IBA filing fee. It will be the responsibility of the ACBL to obtain court confirmation of this Final Award and/or to take any other actions necessary to enforce the \$900.00 payment.

The Panel expects that the ACBL has the means to ensure that Eugene Haddock and Marie Lucci are unable to participate in ACBL online games on BBO or any other platform under any alias or User Name.

/s/ Howard Engle

Howard Engle, Arbitrator

/s/ Ted Jarrell

Ted Jarrell, Arbitrator

/s/ Hadi Abushakra

Hadi Abushakra, Panel Chair

Dated: February 6, 2024

EXHIBIT A

January 3, 2022

Highlighted hands: 3, 8, 9, 14, 17

Bd. #	Hyperlink
1	https://tinyurl.com/2p9ehf3j
2	https://tinyurl.com/yk4unpvh
3	https://tinyurl.com/mw59cwtf
4	https://tinyurl.com/mrypfz9c
5	https://tinyurl.com/mpvts8zp
6	https://tinyurl.com/hxs9bfdu
7	https://tinyurl.com/2p93f6ms
8	https://tinyurl.com/mr34dtsx
9	https://tinyurl.com/3jh7fu93
10	https://tinyurl.com/29pjaj9v
11	https://tinyurl.com/3xty7dyw
12	https://tinyurl.com/2byp5zaw
13	https://tinyurl.com/5a8b6utk
14	https://tinyurl.com/24yk73ht
15	https://tinyurl.com/mr3x742f
16	https://tinyurl.com/y67z5rvd
17	https://tinyurl.com/5n88574m
18	https://tinyurl.com/5ajmkrxn

June 2, 2022

Highlighted hands: 2, 7, 13, 15, 17

Bd. #	Hyperlink
1	http://tinyurl.com/2fvc5a9s
2	http://tinyurl.com/2l4rvkdq
3	http://tinyurl.com/2n4x9usg
4	http://tinyurl.com/2oymjojp
5	http://tinyurl.com/2ka78nu4
6	http://tinyurl.com/2pqwjern
7	http://tinyurl.com/2oa8hp3f
8	http://tinyurl.com/2q5wn8v9
9	http://tinyurl.com/2ftf9fa9
10	http://tinyurl.com/2nq3lo32
11	http://tinyurl.com/2ncfkyl
12	http://tinyurl.com/2kzss9yu
13	http://tinyurl.com/2z6petnj
14	http://tinyurl.com/2e5xjf7a
15	http://tinyurl.com/2on3v9cx
16	http://tinyurl.com/2kwowc33
17	http://tinyurl.com/2ohbvpzw
18	http://tinyurl.com/2hk9p5hy

September 23, 2022

Highlighted hands: 1, 8, 9, 11, 15

Bd. #	Hyperlink
1	http://tinyurl.com/2k6zztrg
2	http://tinyurl.com/2nysu2d5
3	http://tinyurl.com/2exgjuwn
4	http://tinyurl.com/2zjdbdgc
5	http://tinyurl.com/2ffh27ex
6	http://tinyurl.com/2zd672db
7	http://tinyurl.com/2kzyzm3
8	http://tinyurl.com/2pwzyucg
9	http://tinyurl.com/2lbuoyzt
10	http://tinyurl.com/2g5eueov
11	http://tinyurl.com/2p6r7ssd
12	http://tinyurl.com/2pdmjg25
13	http://tinyurl.com/2hntzrg4
14	http://tinyurl.com/2jjkobav
15	http://tinyurl.com/2f39sw96
16	http://tinyurl.com/2fa57jfv
17	http://tinyurl.com/2lxptuk9
18	http://tinyurl.com/2zakavve

December 13, 2022

Highlighted hands: 6, 8, 9, 10, 13

Bd. #	Hyperlink
1	http://tinyurl.com/2pgayp9w
2	http://tinyurl.com/2l2bx2lt
3	http://tinyurl.com/2q8qqcpr
4	http://tinyurl.com/2f2n7svc
5	http://tinyurl.com/2hpsqrk7
6	http://tinyurl.com/2fqnfh5h
7	http://tinyurl.com/2nsgjws4
8	http://tinyurl.com/2o2bvkyt
9	http://tinyurl.com/2f7sx2s6
10	http://tinyurl.com/2jjtcv53
11	http://tinyurl.com/2pu7rdoo
12	http://tinyurl.com/2z4xkvzr
13	http://tinyurl.com/2fzwr6qq
14	http://tinyurl.com/2j3jqk9m
15	http://tinyurl.com/2p7v65rh
16	http://tinyurl.com/2gal944m
17	http://tinyurl.com/2h8gsczj
18	http://tinyurl.com/2n9e24gz

December 18, 2022

Highlighted hands: 9, 10, 12

Bd. #	Hyperlink
1	http://tinyurl.com/2nsuoruk
2	http://tinyurl.com/2pj6zxa8
3	http://tinyurl.com/2j4zlxvp
4	http://tinyurl.com/2ju9f2fs
5	http://tinyurl.com/2zxmwsq2
6	http://tinyurl.com/2ntfedh7
7	http://tinyurl.com/2n5f6pa2
8	http://tinyurl.com/2r3ptd6f
9	http://tinyurl.com/2eeny68k
10	http://tinyurl.com/2jata2zu
11	http://tinyurl.com/2ohc3cms
12	http://tinyurl.com/2qbcmg7o
13	http://tinyurl.com/2l4tt63q
14	http://tinyurl.com/2gt9m4dp
15	http://tinyurl.com/2nr75ekm
16	http://tinyurl.com/2qhcod9h
17	http://tinyurl.com/2hgxe8t2
18	http://tinyurl.com/2m7yuv9z

Mr. Haddock's underlead of ♦AQT8 in LHO's bid suit finds partner with the ♦K. Below that are further examples of contraindicated ace underleads versus suit contracts.

<http://tinyurl.com/2o3swnc>

<http://tinyurl.com/2p4wjipz> April 30, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2fwrcbfm> May 11, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ohbvpzw> June 2, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2mjopwqz> June 14, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ow2e4s6> July 6, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2g3wohgq> July 9, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2k8y6n75> August 1, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2mbgt9o> September 20, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2o78274z> September 21, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2k6zztrg> September 23, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ksyphkn> October 22, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2hzgyjyu> October 24, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2oddsyuy>

<http://tinyurl.com/2r3ks85b> November 8, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2nlqrc5k> November 16, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2qv6wb75> December 9, 2022

The Charged Parties are adept at finding partner's singleton or void, often with the lead of an unsupported ace, and even when the lead is clearly contraindicated. Below are further examples.

<http://tinyurl.com/2h8g5j5o> March 15, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2gs7r49b> April 1, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2r3ylhkd> April 7, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2kycfuk4> May 30, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2on3v9cx> June 2, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2qyboepy> June 17, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2eyxru4q> June 24, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2lhpy9tw> July 5, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2nv735mb> August 9, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2f8xgb3h> September 30, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2qmvucgt> October 19, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ozlqs5c> October 23, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2hdpe77j> October 28, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ow3m9pj> November 16, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2z3au7v3> November 19, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2fua7a9l> November 22, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2e97lrqe> December 16, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2hh2qd29> December 27, 2022

The Charged Parties' leads from doubletons almost invariably find partner with strength even when different leads are indicated. Further examples are below.

<http://tinyurl.com/2pcf87md> April 2, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2lpujwsb> April 21, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2pefzjlm> May 2, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2hy67auv> June 5, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2nzkwxlk> July 11, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2qzsw2s> July 30, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2mxulaqp> August 15, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2kqkrbo6> August 19, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2zkyzmk3> September 23, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2kafolhr> October 10, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2ezxv6je> October 20, 2022

<http://tinyurl.com/2g4vbuqw> December 11, 2022