

MINUTES OF THE ACBL LAWS COMMISSION  
RENO, NEVADA  
MARCH 20, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chip Martel, Co-Chairman	
Karen Allison	Jeff Polisner
Bob Friend	Eric Rodwell
Ron Gerard	John Solodar
Dan Morse	Roger Stern
Beth Palmer	Bobby Wolff

ALSO PRESENT:

Gary Blaiss	Matt Smith
Marvin French	Adam Wildavsky
Olin Hubert	

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 A.M.

The minutes of the New Orleans meeting were approved.

The Commission requested that the draft minutes of its meetings be distributed to the members as soon as possible after their preparation.

Chip Martel announced that two meetings are scheduled for New York City in July. The first will take place on the first Friday at 10:00 and the second on the first Saturday at 10:00.

The Commission interpreted Law 53A such that when two defenders simultaneously express different preferences regarding acceptance or rejection of declarer's lead out of turn, the preference of the defender whose turn it is to lead or play takes priority. Law 55A was interpreted that when the same disagreement between defenders occurs when declarer has led from the wrong hand, the preference of the defender who is next to play to the lead out of turn takes priority.

The Commission addressed Jeff Polisner's memo of March 7, 2004 regarding issues discussed by the WBF Drafting Committee in Monte Carlo in November. The first item discussed was Law 64. As to penalties for revokes, the consensus of the Commission was that any tricks won prior to a revoke should not be affected by the revoke penalty. As to whether the penalty for a revoke should be changed from a maximum of two tricks to a maximum of one trick (notwithstanding the equity provisions of 64C), a majority of the Commission favored leaving the current penalty provisions of the law unchanged. Among the majority who preferred to leave the penalty provisions of the law unchanged, there was opposition to the idea that even if such penalties should result in the revoking side being penalized two tricks that the non-offending side should be limited to an award of one trick (unless the equity provisions of 64C indicate otherwise).

Chip Martel suggested that the Commission forward suggestions to the WBF Drafting Committee based on the following guidelines:

- a) Laws that the ACBL LC is opposed to changing;
- b) Laws that the ACBL LC believes need changing;
- c) Laws that the ACBL LC believes are reasonable to change, but has no strong feelings about.

Members of the ACBL LC were asked to prepare suggestions on law changes according to the listed guidelines.

Jeff Polisner's suggestion that Law 73F2 be amended to preclude score adjustments for players who draw a false inference from an opponent's deceptive action was discussed. A large majority of the Commission agreed that the law should be changed so that inferences may be drawn only at a player's own risk. As for the opponents, the Commission favors dealing with their deceptive actions through disciplinary action and/or procedural penalties. The Commission favors retaining Law 73D2.

The Commission is generally in accord with the suggestion to change the claim law to allow hands to be played out (though it was recognized that a number of details remain to be worked out).

The Commission expressed no strong feelings on the WBF Drafting Committee proposal to amend Law 42B2 to allow dummy to attempt to prevent an irregularity by defenders as well as declarer if he so chooses.

The consensus of the Commission was that the definition of when a card is played should be as objective as possible. The phrase “or nearly touching the table” should be deleted from Law 45C2 or, at the least, modified.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 A.M.