

ACBL Laws Commission
Grand Sierra Resort, Reno NV
March 13, 2010

Members Present:

Chip Martel, Chairman
Adam Wildavsky, Vice Chairman
Allan Falk
Ron Gerard
Georgia Heth
Matt Smith

Howard Weinstein
Jeff Polisner
Chris Compton
Eric Rodwell
Peter Boyd
Gary Blaiss

Also Present

Mike Flader, Tournament Director and Scribe
Matt Koltnow, Tournament Director
Al Levy, ACBL Board of Directors
Michael Farebrother, Tournament Director

The meeting was called to order at 10 AM.

A motion was made by Allan Falk to approve the San Diego minutes. Seconded by Georgia Heth. Motion carried.

Peter Boyd suggested considering a new meeting time as he was unable to attend in San Diego due to a conflict with the Senior Teams.

Laws 7B1 and 6c were discussed next. There was a consensus that no player should remove his cards from the board before at least one member of the opposing pair arrives. The Commission recommended that this be added to the ACBL Condition of Contest. Georgia Heth volunteered to make such a recommendation to the Board.

The Commission then discussed a proposed addition written by Matt Smith to the ACBL TechFiles. The addition provided guidelines for the correct application of Law 82C1 (Director Error). Issues discussed included:

1. Does 82C apply whether director makes an incorrect judgment or only when he errs in applying the Law?
2. What time period applies to the application of 82C. Is it the appeal period or the correction period?
3. If changing a judgment ruling, can the other side still appeal?

Jeff Polisner felt that, with regard to correcting errors in applying the Laws, the correction period rather than the appeals period should apply. Chris Compton agreed, but said there had to be a line beyond which corrections could not be made. There was no agreement about what this line should be. The consensus of the group was that an incorrect ruling refers to an error in applying the Laws, not poor judgment.

Chip Martel supported making sure that the offending side gets no score better than the score they were entitled to had the Laws been properly applied. The Commission approved the addition of this article to the Tech Files. Peter Boyd suggested a further online discussion of this issue.

The Commission then discussed some clarification of Laws 21B3 and 40B4 in the context of an auction such as 1♦ - Dbl - 3♦ where 3♦ is explained as limit (misinformation “MI” since the actual agreement is weak).

Advancer passes with a 17 count and misses a superior contract. To what redress is he entitled?

Matt Smith: Non-offenders are not entitled to redress if the director judges that the MI was not the cause of the damage. He feels we should not adjust the score of the offending side if the director rules that the damage is not the consequence of the irregularity. Adam Wildavsky did not agree with this approach. Eric Rodwell suggested that the non-offenders might keep their score, and the offender be given a procedural penalty. Jeff Polisner suggested that Law 90 does not apply to misinformation.

Al Levy felt a penalty should be levied against the offenders even if there is no connection between the damage and the irregularity. Boyd prefers to side with Smith in cases where the director judges that MI was not the cause of damage. Smith pointed out that if the director judges that the MI was not the cause of the damage, then, law 12 does not get applied. He suggested we publish some articles to create some guidelines for what should be done.

Rodwell differentiated between subsequent and consequent. Consequent means as a result of the irregularity. Subsequent does not. Wildavsky suggested putting something on the agenda for New Orleans.

Allan Falk's motion on law 20 was discussed next.

Polisner thought that the proposal did not have much practical application. Falk said that the issue was the extent to which you are required to disclose the fact that you know partner had made a mistaken bid. Gerard suggested that Falk is asking the players to say what is in their hand rather than disclose their agreements. Falk feels that what is wrong with the current situation is that opponents are not being allowed insight into what is going on at the table. He would like to see the benefits of screens extended to non-screen situations. Martel suggested this issue be revisited next time.

Chip Martel brought up the issue of what constitutes a logical alternative. Suppose someone with UI makes a call that is not considered to be a logical alternative but that works out for the offenders (e.g. in a competitive auction N makes a slow double of 4S; South now bids 6C making when 5C and Pass are considered to be his logical alternatives). Have we the right to penalize this? Martel moved that the call actually chosen by a player is considered to be a logical alternative with respect to application of law 16B1. Seconded by Wildavsky. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.

TD TechFile Item

When after a director error it is necessary to apply Law 82C, please be careful not to give either side a score greater than would have been expected without the director error. Rather, the score assigned to each side should be that which would have been a reasonable consequence of the correct ruling (allowing for the fact that each side is considered a non-offending side for the purposes of Law 12C1(e)[i]). Too often in these cases directors tend to let the side that benefited from the erroneous ruling keep the score achieved as a result of that ruling while adjusting the other side's score upward. But by taking this approach the benefiting side's score is often much greater than could have occurred had there been no director error at all (even allowing for the fact that it is considered a non-offending side), so that is not a correct application of Law 82C. Please note also to be particularly careful when giving insufficient bid rulings involving 27B1(b) to mention when making the ruling that the result may be reviewed by the director at the end of the hand as per 27D. If at that point the director judges that the non-offending side was damaged by the infraction, then in law no director error has occurred so it is not permissible to apply 82C. Law 27D itself instructs the director how he should adjust the score in such a case.