

New Orleans Meetings – March 9-12, 2015

RANKING :

Discussion Item 151- R1

The committee felt rank advancement, especially at the beginning levels, encouraged play. The committee's opinion was that if new rank were to be added the use of names as opposed to adding levels or leafs to the existing ranks was more effective. Our concern was that adding levels might create the impression the one level was less prestigious, i.e. are you real Gold, 24 karat Gold, or fool's Gold. In examining existing ranks we found a natural progression between Silver at 1000 and Gold at 2500 where a new 1500 MP rank could be added. Accordingly the committee is committed to determining a name and colored point requirements which will be brought to the Chicago meeting in the form of a motion.

The committee did not feel as strongly about masterpoint levels above 2500. There were feelings that a 3500 MP rank may be beneficial but we were uncertain how this would be viewed by the players in that category. Our decision was to go back to our Districts and canvas the opinion of both club and tournament players. We are requesting the entire Board to help us with this. In early June we will be contacting all District directors to find out the feeling in their District. Based on this feedback we will make a decision on how we are to proceed.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION ITEM:

Our committee received a presidential request to examine an alternate ranking method to be used for tournament stratification. A submission from Ping Hu was examined. At times our current ranking methods have weaknesses. This is most evident when new players accumulate masterpoints too rapidly or with aging players who have accumulated a large number of masterpoints. Both these situations may result in those players being placed at stratification levels where they are not competitive. Ping's system used current performance, the level of the partner, and the level of your opposition when obtaining a current performance evaluation or level. The belief is that this would create a more accurate stratification tool. The proposal has merit but we had concerns. A system similar to this is used in chess where there is a disincentive for top players to play with beginning players. When a top player plays with a lower ranked player their ranking can only go down. In bridge mentoring has a high priority. It was felt that this system could be detrimental to the mentoring philosophy of bridge. A second concern was that in a system like chess the evaluation is based on individuals. Bridge is very much a pairs or team event. In this sense your ranking becomes very dependent on your partner selection. Ping's method made allowances for this but we felt it would not measure the true effects it had. As

much as the current method which relies on Masterpoints has weaknesses we felt we would simply be changing one set of weaknesses for an alternate set of weaknesses.

We are continuing to investigate alternate ranking systems. One alternative method mentioned was the use of a using various values for the different points a player has won. Points won at the club, silver points, red points, gold points and platinum points would all have different values. A player would now be stratified according to this rating. We are going to examine statistical data to see if this approach is a viable alternative. In Chicago we will be providing an update on this and any other alternate approaches.