

Board of Governors Motion Issue Sheet

- Subject Matter of Motion (insert a short phrase)

STaC tournaments may not include participation from clubs in more than one district.

- Statement of Issue (one or two sentences)

STaCs were originally planned to allow members in out-lying geographies to be able to win silver points, required to advance to Life Master, at their local club when the number of members in their area makes it difficult, if not impossible, to hold sectionals locally. The intent was never to create mega-tournaments with hundreds of tables.

- The motion itself:

All clubs registering to participate in a single STaC must all be located within one ACBL district. While multiple STaCs can combine, for directing and administrative purposes, the results cannot include combining games from clubs in different districts.

- Material impacts (what the change causes and who it affects)

While this would involve almost no administrative changes for the ACBL, it would be a significant change to ACBL policy, which now allows STaCs include clubs from many different districts.

- Reasons why the Board of Governors should adopt the motion (Please attach a succinct summary on a separate sheet of paper)

The Great Western STaC often includes clubs from 7 or more districts. It is also common for District 7, 9 (part of) and 10 to participate in a single STaC, District 14 and 15, and District 3, 24 and 25 (part of).

Because of the great variance in playing conditions at clubs, from very large clubs with daily (large) games, highly experienced directors, complete bridge technology services, etc., to small, rural clubs with limited technology and very small games, STaCs are the most unfair form of tournament bridge allowed by the ACBL. Also, the great breadth of ability at clubs all participating in the same STaC, including small clubs with very few, maybe no, A or even B level players means that playing conditions at different clubs are very dissimilar.

The benefit of STaCs, bringing silver point opportunities to all members of the ACBL, is highly admirable and should be maintained. But, the creation of mega-tournaments, with thousands of tables over a week and single events with more than 500 tables, particularly when held under such uneven and potentially incomparable conditions, creates a very unfair environment that is not beneficial to the players. It simply creates a “money machine” for sponsors to make thousands of dollars.

Even worse, it creates events that are not best for the players. While it is true that the winner of a 500-table event “hits the lottery” and wins gigantic number of points, very quickly the amount of points won decreases, so, for players who are not in the top 10 or so pairs, the points they win are greatly reduced. Yet, if they were participating in a STaC of just their district, they could be 1st overall in a small game and actually win many more points.

When I was DIC of STaCs, I did a number of off-the-cuff studies of STaC point awards. In every case, the total number of points that would be won was significantly greater if one large STaC, with one event of 100 or more tables per session, were split into two or three events, one for each participating district.

- Risk if the motion is not approved

STaCs will continue as they are now, awarding huge points to a few people and reduced points to most others and serve as “an ATM machine” for STaC sponsors to the detriment of the vast majority of their players.

- Existing ACBL Policies and Conditions

From General Conditions of Contest and Guidelines for Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs) (effective 08/01/2019) –

Page 1, Sponsoring Unit, Item # 2) –

Change:

While only Units may apply for a sanction to hold a STaC there is no objection to a Unit nominating a District or Districts to conduct the tournament. In District-wide STaCs all clubs within the District(s) must be offered the opportunity to participate. Participation is at the club level when sponsored by a District. If a Unit outside of the sponsoring District wants to participate, all clubs within that Unit must be invited to participate (The unit must receive approval from its district coordinator).

To:

While only Units may apply for a sanction to hold a STaC there is no objection to a Unit nominating a District to conduct the tournament. However, only clubs from units in one District may participate in the STaC. No STaC may include units, or their clubs, from more than one District. In District-wide STaCs all clubs within the District must be offered the opportunity to participate. Participation is at the club level when sponsored by a District.