Preliminary

01/24/10
Updated: 07/01/11

For the New Director:
Problems & Pitfalls, Avoidance Measures, Remedies

by Bob Gruber

As a new director you may be a bit apprehensive about plowing new ground when you take the reins of your first game. The nervousness should diminish with time, but different problems will crop up now and then. This paper is intended to help you through some of those rough spots.

Note, not every problem has avoidance measures and not every problem has a remedy. The table below represents my knowledge of the subject matter at the time of this writing. Other directors may have additional information. New directors are encouraged to talk with "old hands" in their circle seeking revisions and additions to this material.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
1	**Feeling pressured to start the game before you're ready**	Tell the players it's important to get the movement correct from the very start and you need another minute or two to verify the # of pairs, wait for a specific pair, wait for a traffic jam, etc.	The remedy—if any—will depend upon the resultant problem—if any.
2	**Failing to put out boards for a ½ table** [If you fail to put out a Table Marker for the 1st round sit out—which is often the last table in play—it's easy to fail to put the boards on that table. Then, after Round 1, it's easy for Table 1 to pass the boards to the last table with players sitting at it rather than the proper table.]	Include in your opening Game Description that N-S 1 should pass their boards to Table X. If appropriate, you might also announce that Table (X-1) gets their boards from the sit out table, Table X. Go to the affected tables early in Round 1, and remind the Norths of the situation. Try to catch this error early by getting in the habit of walking the room at the start of Round 2. At each table verify that the proper boards are being played.	If you catch this error early, say before the start of round 3, insert the omitted boards at the proper table and put all the other boards at their proper tables. When scoring the game, you'll have to throw a few boards out when pairs encounter them for the 2nd time—probably entering NP (non play) for those boards—but that's the best you can do.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
3	**Bye stand 1 table too low** [Just past halfway, 2 E-W pairs (at the highest table & ½ highest) meet boards played in Round 1.]	Double check that the bye stand is equidistant from the 2 relay tables	Regardless of when the problem is discovered, the correction is done on the round just past halfway. As soon as the problem is discovered, announce an irregularity in the movement just past the halfway point, whatever round that happens to be. Tell the players to move normally for the round, but not to start play; not to even pull the hands from the boards. Then: *1.* Move the bye stand to its proper position (up 1). *2.* Exchange sets of boards between the bye stand & the table now directly below. (This keeps the boards in sequential order.) *3.* For this round only, have N-S at the table below the bye stand switch with N-S at the highest table. For scoring, the N-Ss retain their true pair #s. (These 2 N-Ss play E-Ws they met before & therefore miss an E-W pair. And, of course, ditto for the E-W pairs.) *4.* Announce for this round & forward, the relay is between the highest & 2nd highest tables (not the highest & Table 1). *5.* Resume play. *6.* After the round, remind the 2 displaced N-Ss to return to their original tables.
4	**Bye stand 1 table too high** [Just past halfway, 2 E-W pairs (E-W 1 & E-W = { ½ # rounds + 1 }) meet boards played in Round 1.]	Double check that the bye stand is equidistant from the 2 relay tables	Regardless of when the problem is discovered, the correction is done on the round just past halfway. As soon as the problem is discovered, announce an irregularity in the movement just past the halfway point, whatever round that happens to be. Tell the players to move normally for the round, but not to start play; not to even pull the hands from the boards. Then: *1.* Move the bye stand to its proper position (down 1). *2.* Exchange sets of boards between the bye stand & the table now directly above. (This keeps the boards in sequential order.) *3.* Announce for this round & forward (except for the last round), the relay is between Tables 1 & 2 (not the highest & Table 1). *4.* Resume play. *5.* The last round would normally see E-W 2 play N-S 1. Instead, E-W 2 switches with the E-W pair now sitting at the table that E-W 2 played at the round before the relay was changed. In practice, this will be the table # = [(# rounds/2) + 1] (i.e. for 8 tables, Table 5, for 12 tables, Table 7). Tables 1 & 2 no longer relay boards. Table 2 plays its normal last round boards without relay. Table 1 still relays boards, but now with the table E-W 2 is now sitting at.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
5	**Failing to call a skip at the right time**	In the opening Game Description, announce when the Skip occurs; the players will then tend to remind you when they think it's coming up. In addition to mentally flagging the Skip Round to myself, I note who E-W at Table 1 is. Then, with luck, when I see them at the "skip after" table, I'm reminded that the skip round is coming up. Use ACBLscore's *Set Configuration* menu (<F9>) selection 5[†] to set the skip as early as possible.	For 8 or more tables, there are at least 2 rounds when you can call the Skip. 8 tbls: rnds 3&4 10 tbls: rnds 4&5 12 tbls: rnds 3 - 6 14 tbls: rnds 6&7 16 tbls: rnds 5 - 8 18 tbls: rnds 4 - 9 If it's not too late, call the Skip as soon as possible. Then use ACBLscore's *Set Configuration* menu (<F9>) selection 5[†] to set the skip to the actual round after which the skip occurred. If it is too late—E-Ws fail to skip at the last opportunity—the E-Ws should recognize they've played the boards before. When you're notified of that, call an immediate halt and ascertain if any N-Ss have looked at their cards. If not, announce that all E-Ws should skip 1 table. If 1 or more N-Ss have seen their cards, move the boards a 2nd time in the normal rotation. If you fail to catch the problem as indicated above, you'll have to enter a score of NP when pairs encounter boards for the 2nd time.
6	**Wrong # of strata**	When setting up the number of strata, do not be misled by what seems to be choice #2. It's not saying, "yes, stratify;" it's saying, "I want exactly 2 strata."	If you inadvertently enter the wrong number of strats, you can fix things later (but not too much later) by using the <F9> key (*Set Configuration*) and choosing selection 10, *Set masterpoint rating*. You'll have to drill down a few levels to reach the entry for the number of strata. Be sure to correct the number of strata **before** entering the player names.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
7	**An incorrect player name won't clear**	?? improve your spelling & typing skills	Use the <F5> key repeatedly to clear out the entire N-S or E-W entry. Then enter the right name(s). May have to clear both E-W & N-S. Doesn't always work.

[†] After drilling down a few levels to the *Select player board duplication option* window, you'll probably have to select *Other* to enter the round after which the players should or actually have skipped. Earliest to Skip: # rounds – (# tables/2); latest to Skip: # tables/2.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
8	**Wrong strat for a pair**	Make a mental note of the proper strat for the future	Go back to the *Names* entry, reselect that pair, go to the 2nd member of the pair, and repeatedly hit the <F5> key to delete the 2nd name. Reenter that person and select the right stratum for the pair.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
9	**Wrong strat for lots of pairs**		Select the *Edit* pull-down menu (2nd from the left) and then Strata (ST). This selection brings up a table of N-S and E-W names accompanied by the currently selected strata and the Masterpoints of either the pair member with the most points or the average of the pair. You may either hit <F6> or use the arrow keys to enter the stratum (STR) column. When finished with a pair, use the Up/Dn arrow keys to move within a column. The <Tab> key toggles the cursor between N-S and E-W. If you don't need to override ACBLscore's automatic stratification, the simplest thing to do is use the <F3> key to stratify the entire table.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
10	**Tried to change strata designation letters**	Never select this option.	If you were testing the Configuration menu options and drilled down to Set config menu (<F9>), #11 Assign/change/show STRATA letters/field sizes, #2 Change strata designation letters, you found yourself in an endless loop. If you select this option and can't exit via either OK or CANCEL, try the <Esc> key.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
11	**Masterpoints out of date**	Be aware that ACBL tries to update masterpoint totals by the 6th of each month; get in the habit of doing an update around the 8th of each month	Since this is not an urgent problem, it should suffice to refer you to the *Updating Masterpoints in ACBLscore* article that you may have seen at www.vcbridge.org.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
12	**Too few boards per table noted after some boards have been played** [If boards have already been played, you can no longer rearrange the boards so you have a continuous flow of board numbers. Perforce, the last board of each round will be out of sequence from the rest.]		First, if needed, use <F9> (*Set Configuration*) selection 5 to drill down to correct the number of boards per round. Then, click the *Edit* pull-down menu (2nd from left). Select *Edit Movement (EDM)* (last selection). Select option 1: *Display or reassign board sequencing* and click *OK*. A matrix for *Board Setup for round one* will pop up. Go through the matrix substituting the actual last board of the round for the normal board that ACBLscore assumed you'd placed at each table. (Typically, you'll be changing the last board in each column.) When done, hit <F9> or click *OK*.
13	**Need to assign Average Plus (A+) or Average Minus (A-) for both N-S and E-W**		When entering the scores, first hit the "S" key (for special scoring). For average plus, next enter A+, first for N-S and then for E-W. For average minus, next enter A-, first for N-S and then for E-W.

ID	Problem / Pitfall	Avoidance Measures	Remedies
14	**Need to adjust the matchpoints for a pair**		Click the *Edit* pull-down menu (2nd from the left). Click *Adjustments* (about ⅔ of the way down), which brings up the N-S and E-W pair names in a table very similar to the one used to enter the player names. One difference is an ADJUST column has been added to the right of each column of names. <**F6**> starts with N-S 1 and allows sequential entry of adjustments (via the **Enter** key). Alternatively, use the arrow keys to select a specific pair, then press the **Enter** key. Enter the adjustment for the pair and press the **Enter** key. When finished, press <**F9**>. Adjustments may be upward as well as downward. For a negative adjustment, you may press the **Minus** key at the start of the numeric amount or at the end.
15	**Wrong Club Number discovered after scores have been entered**		You may continue with the <F9>, selection 10 solution and then carefully check all the scores—they'll probably be correct—or you can try the Import/Export feature of ACBLscore as discussed next.

	[When using <F9> to change movement parameters, ACBLscore warns that any scores entered may not be correctly retained.]		(1) Rename the game file. (2) Create a new game file using the proper Club #, and set up the Section appropriately. (3) Click the *File* drop-down menu, and then *Import / Export*. (4) Click on *From another game file* and specify the game file, the one with the scores in it, newly renamed in step one (1). (5) Generate an on-screen report to verify the results were as previously given. (6) Delete the old, renamed game file.

If you've encountered any of the problems & pitfalls, i.e. any of the moments, covered by this paper, I hope the possible actions to prevent and/or recover from them seem workable. Some of these problems are discussed in greater depth, including the reason they might occur, in the paper titled *Working with ACBLscore, Director's Dialog*. Look in the alphabetized which is available at www.vcbridge.org via the path: *Writings*, table labeled *Aids for the Director*. The *Updating Masterpoints in ACBLscore* article cited in entry #11 is also in that table.