

Tournament News July 2016

To: Tournament Chairs and Tournament Coordinators

Pianola – The ACBL has made the Pianola email product available to Units and Districts. This will allow the tournament staff to do direct email marketing of tournaments to their target audience.

Pianola is easy to use, it has attractive templates and we can expect to see additional improvements.

With the additional responsibility, TC's should avoid situations that might be considered an abuse of Pianola. For Sectionals and Regionals, our target audience lives within 200 miles of the tournament. Sending broadcast emails beyond that range, should only be done when there is an identified marketing objective.

Yes, other districts are sending emails to players that are nowhere near their tournament. Let's be practical in defining our target marketing areas.

Fast Results – Most tournaments are using the Fast Results tool to send out results, shortly after the end of a session. Our players have come to expect Fast Results, so let your DIC know that you want to sign up.

Tournament Surveys and Daily Bulletins – These two tools are available from the same group that provides Fast Results. In our District, we have used the Tournament Surveys for the 2015 Wichita Regional and the 2016 Topeka Regional. Both TC's felt the survey information was very helpful.

The surveys can be done for Sectionals as well as Regionals. Please consider adding Tournament Survey for your tournaments.

Daily Bulletins can be done at a simplified level and gets good comments from players. It becomes even better when a tournament staff member takes photos and writes short narrative to be inserted into the bulletins. The Topeka Regional used Daily Bulletins.

I/N events – In past messages, I indicated that TC's might want to change their upper MP range on 299er games to make them 499er games. Based upon input I've received from players in several Units, I was wrong with my advice.

With successful new player programs in some Units, the demand for 0-20 MP games and 0-199 games has increased. Therefore, please consider your tournament's

proximity to those locations and please manage your tournament schedule to meet the changing need for I/N events.

This also means that the Club Managers will want to encourage newer players to attend tournaments.

Swiss Team Attendance – Many TC's have noticed that the attendance at Sunday Swiss Team games has declined. It has been difficult to figure out why this is happening. In chatting with Jan Tillery (Topeka) she felt that newer players were confused by the event.

Maybe the electronic scoring devices (ESD) have changed the experience for players. Before ESD, players would compare scores with their teammates, discuss a few of the hands and then confirm the results with the other team. Players learned to use the IMP tables and understood IMP strategy vs matchpoint strategy.

Now there is a big rush to get to the next round; with little time to review the results. While the use of ESD's has reduced the time between rounds, it has also hidden the process of IMP scoring, victory points and team standings.

The Swiss veterans (pre-ESD) understand the mechanics of the event. But our newer players must feel like livestock being herded around the room.

This is probably a situation where our Club Managers can fill the education gap for our newbys. If you have further ideas on Swiss team attendance or solutions, please let me know.

The Data – Attendance at Sectionals (ACBL-wide) was down in 2015. Comparing 2013 data with 2015, Sectional attendance was down by 7.2%. Regional attendance was down 1.5%. However, there was an increase in the number of tournaments, so the average attendance per tournament was even lower; with Sectional table counts down 8.6% and Regionals down 3.8%.

In D-15, Sectional attendance was down 3.7% (still using 2013 and 2015), but Regional attendance was up 5%. Our growth in Regional attendance was due to the Tulsa and Wichita TC's efforts to promote their tournaments in 2015.

NLM Regionals – In 2015 there were three NLM Regionals (ACBL-wide). Our district held one in OKC, D-10 held one (as they have for several years) and there was one other NLM Regional. Other districts are not as excited by this new tournament offering as we are.

Split Regionals seem to be filling a need. In 2015, there were five districts holding Split Regionals – a total of ten tournaments.

STaC – ACBL-wide participation was up 1.8%; based upon table count. However, the number of STaC weeks increased, so the number of tables in play per week declined by

19.6%. No real conclusions can be drawn from this data sample. But it does need some additional analysis.

ACBL membership remains flat. The number of regular Club games is down slightly. Special games at the Clubs are up about 5% (2015 vs 2014).

Good Luck with your Tournaments.

Len Fettig

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