



B's Needs Committee Meeting Sunday, 1/5/2014 Newton, MA

The B's Needs Committee met on Sunday, 1/5/14, in Newton. In attendance were: Mark Aquino, Bob Bertoni, Bob Derrah, Bob Eachus, Ausra Geaski, Joyce Stiefel, Mike Wavada, Carolyn Weiser, and Sarah Widhu

Mark Aquino, President of D25, kicked off the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation on the committee. He stressed the importance of this group to help promote bridge attendance among Flight B players and made a personal commitment to support the initiatives of this committee towards that goal.

Ausra Geaski, Chairperson for the Committee, also, thanked the group for their support. Unfortunately, a number of committee members were not able to participate because of a schedule conflict with the Providence Nationals Committee. A. Geaski indicated that every effort will be made to prevent conflicts for future meetings.

The B's Needs Committee over the past year has recommended a number of ideas for increasing attendance of Flight B bridge players at D25 regionals. These ideas were documented and reviewed in Mansfield with the group and then published on the D25 website. As part of the group's effort to action the items suggested, A. Geaski selected 6 of the recommendations and brought them forward to the Tournament and Scheduling Committees in Newton. These included;

- 1) Feasibility of inviting a professional guest speaker to attend a D25 regional and conduct some guest lectures. This was done a number of years ago in South Portland with Mike Lawrence. If the district is in a financial position to do this it could be a great way to attract players.
- 2) Photograph event winners and post prominently at the regionals, i.e. winner board at regional, daily bulletin, D25 website.
- 3) Leader board displayed at regionals. This was being done for a while which players enjoyed seeing. Can it be set up again?
- 4) Set up a suggestion box at the tournament and publicize in the daily bulletin.
- 5) Greet players arriving at the tournament. Provide a small gift such as stickers which players have enjoyed in the past, i.e. Cromwell.
- 6) Consider a Pro-Am game during an evening session with a reduced entry fee; need to determine logistics of matching players.

The Tournament and Scheduling Committee agreed with the above suggestions and asked that the B's Needs Committee discuss these in detail. Some items are 'quick hitters' which can be implemented at the next tournament and some will require more analysis which should be brought back to the Tournament and Scheduling Committees at a later date.

Bob Bertoni, Chairperson for the Scheduling Committee, and 2013 member of the B's needs Committee stated that he agreed with the recommendations stated above and will support these and other initiatives of this group in his new role. Due to his other responsibilities B. Bertoni announced he will be stepping down from this committee. The Committee and D25 want to express their appreciation to him for all of his past efforts and continued support. B. Bertoni volunteered to work on the Pro-Am game recommendation and bring this forward to his Scheduling Committee.

The Committee discussed the other recommendations and solicited volunteers to help drive each effort. The group agreed to the following:

- 1) Joyce Stiefel volunteered to head up the effort to investigate bringing in a Pro to a D25 regional with support from the rest of the committee. This is one of the longer term efforts to determine what Pro to invite to a D25 regional, which regional, and the costs and logistics associated with

this. A suggestion from the Tournament Committee was to consider setting up a dinner event with the Pro which would include the meal and a lecture. It was suggested that we should look at upcoming Pro schedules in the New England area to leverage the cost if a Pro may already be planning to be in this area.

- 2) The group discussed the feasibility of taking photographs of event winners and displaying in the daily bulletin, D25 website or some other form of promoting the winners of the D25 events. The group agreed that the B's Needs Committee Members would be willing to take photographs for regionals that are in their home locations. Mike Wavada offered to start this in Cromwell if the details could be worked out for posting the photos. A. Geaski will follow up with the Editor of the Daily Bulletin to discuss the feasibility of posting the photos.
- 3) Helen Pawlowski, D25 Tournament Manager, has the displays for the Leader Boards. She will have them available at the tournaments. Peter Marcus, D25 Director-in-Charge, agreed to provide the list of players for the Leader Board. The B's Needs Committee said they would be willing to get the list from P. Marcus and display on the Leader Board for the tournaments near where they live. Bob Derrah offered to start this for the Cromwell tournament.
- 4) H. Pawlowski offered to set up a Suggestion Box and prominently display it in Cromwell. We will need to publicize this in the Daily Bulletin and on the D25 website.
- 5) Sandy DeMartino, the ACBL Goodwill Committee Chairperson, has offered to help set up the Hospitality Table and provide greeters for the Cromwell Tournament. She will work with the Cromwell Chairpersons, David Rock and Sonja Smith, on the logistics for this which will set up the process that can be followed at the other regionals.
- 6) B. Bertoni volunteered to head up the Pro-Am event.

Based on a suggestion from M. Aquino that the B's Needs Committee should be recognized for their efforts and, also, provide a point of contact to our players for any suggestions on other opportunities to improve D25 tournaments the group adopted a logo for the committee (see top of page). This logo will be on name tags Committee members will wear and displayed in other ways to promote the efforts of the B's Needs Committee. The group agreed on goals for the group as follows:

- **Help make D25 regionals more player-friendly for all players**
- **Increase attendance at the D25 regionals particularly among the Flight B players**
- **Facilitate the transition of the Gold Rush players to the next level of play**

The B's Needs Committee will be meeting at all of the regionals with the exception of the Seniors. Check the daily bulletin for the day and time. Each committee member is encouraged to bring a new volunteer to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra

Ausra Geaski
B's Needs Tournament Chairperson