

American Cribbage Congress

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

JW Marriott—Las Vegas, NV

November 15, 2024

Approved 2/22/25

1. Call to Order:

President James Morrow called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

a. Roll Call:

Jeanne Jelke read the roll call. In attendance were David Aiken, Rick Baird, Patrick Barrett, Joe Bowen, Betty Brumley, Tammy Gibbons, Opal Gunn, John Hazlett, Jeanne Jelke, Jennifer Johnson, Bob Joslin, Cy Madrone, Jason Matheny, James Morrow, Lana Newhouse, Sandy Sands, Todd Schaefer, Dan Selke, Rick Shea, Mark Soule, Vickie Soule, Terry Weber, and Keith Widener. 23 Board members were in attendance. We had a quorum. Excused Absence: Jason Hofbauer and Roland Hall. Also in attendance: Ivan Wells, Scott Harker, Brenda Nason, Marlene Lazachek, Kat Katsell, Troy Thorson, Bruce Satler, Spencer Morgan (from Grooper) and others.

b. Approve Agenda:

James M. made an amendment to the Agenda:

- Agenda Item 6.f.: Number of Games for Large Tournament Finals (James M.)

In addition, another agenda item was added later in the meeting:

- Agenda Item 2.f: Report on GN 2024 (Troy T.)

c. Approve Minutes of March 9, 2024:

Jeanne J. presented the draft minutes of the virtual of March 9, 2024. The updated draft minutes has been previously circulated with a few tweaks made. **Action:** James M. made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/9/24; seconded by Cy M. **Motion approved.**

2. Officer Reports:

a. Membership:

Brenda N. referred to her report. She noted that she has been referring new members to the nearest GR Club Director. If there is nothing nearby, they are referred to regional representatives. Tammy G. commended Brenda N. for the excellent job she is doing as Membership Secretary, a sentiment echoed by other BOD members.

b. Treasurer's Report:

Marlene L. referred to her written report which had been circulated to the BOD. Income of \$19,500+ included an extra \$10K from a previous GRNT that came in after the close of

the fiscal year. She noted that recently another \$3,000 was taken out of our investment account at the end of July when it exceeded \$53,000. We have taken \$27,000 out of our investment account since 2014. Marlene stated that we spent \$5,200 on bumper stickers, banners and new bracket boards. Income from Rule Book sales has covered postage. Marlene also said that the liability insurance policy was changed to another company and is now \$2,700 instead of \$4,500. The ACC had a checkbook balance of \$123,599 as of June 30, 2024

c. Grass Roots:

Ivan W. referred to his emailed report. He said that while the number of clubs is growing, overall membership is not. He announced that there were 106 participants in the GRTOC last night. He commended Scott H. for having the GR system running smoothly. He expressed concern that the membership is peaking due to its aging—we are losing members faster than we are gaining them. He also noted that the cost of jewelry (for awards) is going up and is being dealt with.

d. Internet:

James M. referred to the written report circulated by Sally Henderson.

e. Youth Program:

James M. said that we still need someone to take over as Youth Commissioner. He asked for suggestions. He also noted that no one applied for the Youth Scholarship. This might be because the application is not online. [Later, Dave A. found that it is online.]

f. Grand National 2024 Report:

Troy T. reported on Grand National 2024. The Midweek Main had 288 players, and its Consolation had 240 players. The Grand National has 386 people paid, and about 20 more are expected who will pay on site. Players are from 35 states and provinces.

3. BOD Committee Reports:

a. Promotions/Marketing:

Jennifer J. had nothing much to report regarding marketing. Ivan W. announced that Opal G. is spearheading marketing for Grass Roots.

Spencer Morgan, of Grouper, gave a presentation at this point. See Agenda Item 5.a.

b. Rules:

1) Rule Book Changes:

Jeanne J. referred to the Rules Committee report circulated to BOD members and officers on 11/5/24. She indicated that the new Rules Committee, consisting of the three Tournament Commissioners, Rick Baird, Peggy Shea, Darlene Stier, Bob Joslin, and herself has been busy reviewing rules issues. We are running out of the 2020 Rules Book, and a new Rule Book needs to be printed and ready to

distribute by the end of this cribbage year. The Rules Committee first looked at all new rule suggestions that have been put forward since the last time any rule changes were adopted by the BOD. The Committee went through the suggested changes and put forward those deemed by consensus to be recommended for approval. Rule changes recommended by the Rules Committee that were discussed and approved by the BOD are attached in Addendum A .

In addition to the rule changes recommended by the Rules Committee, two other rule changes were proposed.

- i. Keith W. suggested that discretionary power be given to the Head Judge] to impose a penalty for persistent infringement of rules or Code of Ethics. Such discretion would be based on the circumstances. Concerns were expressed about the consistent application of this proposed rule. It was also pointed out that such situations might be referred to the Ethics Committee. During the following discussion, it was determined that a specific penalty of two points be applied in such situations. **Action:** Keith W. made a motion to empower the Head Judge or Club Director to impose a penalty of two points for persistent infringement of the Rules or Code of Ethics; seconded by Cy M. **Motion approved.** 15 for, 8 opposed. Keith W. will prepare the exact verbiage for this new rule
- ii. Secondly, it was proposed that the following phrase be added to Rule 7.3.c.: “The nonoffending player decides if the renege card(s) will be dead or played, **and has the right to see the first renege card.**” This additional phrase was approved by consensus.

Jeanne J. concluded the discussion on new Rule Book changes by requesting that any additional rule change suggestions be forwarded to the Rules Committee prior to the Virtual BOD meeting.

2) **Cross Checking Guidelines:**

Jeanne J. said that the Rules Committee is recommending an updated set of cross-checking guidelines based on the suggested revisions put forth by the Ad Hoc Committee on Cross Checking Guidelines. Rick S. stated that these are common sense, reasonable guidelines. **Action:** Rick S. made a motion to adopt the updated cross-checking guidelines recommended by the Rules Committee to be included in the new Rule Book; seconded by Dan S. **Motion approved.** These guidelines are included as Addendum B of these minutes.

3) **Doubles:**

Jeanne J. stated that not enough input had been given in time for the Rules Committee to put together recommended rules specific to Doubles. She said

that one suggestion was to prepare a supplemental insert for the Rules Book that was specific to Doubles, rather than adding a section to the Rules Book. One of the reasons given was that there are multiple variations of satellite events, including Doubles, so that the Rules Book should apply to sanctioned events only. Dave A. said that the ACC [BOD] controls all events and that the Rules Book should be used at any ACC event. He also noted that the Tournament Directors' Manual also controls satellite events and includes some Doubles specific rules. James M. said that the biggest problem he's encountered when judging doubles is when the hand decider deliberately gives too many cards to his partner so that a judge has to be called and declare a redeal. Given the popularity of Doubles [and thus the number of judging calls], the consensus was to add a section to the new Rule Book on Doubles-specific rules. Jeanne J. invited anyone with suggestions relating to Doubles-specific rules to send them to her, The Rules Committee will circulate the proposed new section on Doubles rules prior to the next BOD meeting for approval at that meeting.

4) New 2025 Book:

Jeanne J. said that the timeline for the new 2025 Rule Book is to complete and approve all changes and additions to the Rule Book by the Virtual BOD meeting. After that, the draft 2025 Rule Book will be compiled by Dave A in collaboration with the Rules Committee and Executive Committee. It will be reviewed by multiple people before going to press. Dave A. also invited people to make formatting suggestions to him. A suggestion by Tammy G. for adding tabs for easy reference was cost prohibitive. However, the cover will be sturdier than the current Rule Book. The goal is to have the 2025 Rule Book printed by the end of this cribbage year and ready for distribution no later than July, 2025.

c. Ethics:

Keith W. stated that the Ethics Committee will now be chaired by Todd S. and thanked him for taking this on. Members are Todd S., Tammy G., Jason H., Keith W., Mark S., Pat B., and Rick S. Todd S. reported on actions taken by the Ethics Committee since the last BOD meeting. These included:

- Several emails from the Ethics Committee Chair to players regarding about behavior and language
- Three upcoming suspensions, which will be in Cribbage World. One was Alfred Mazerolle, who was suspended for three months for leaving a tournament early even after being told. There was another incident in Minnesota where Todd Bullock was suspended for 1 month for fighting with another player. The other player, Brad Edstrom, received 9 months suspension for being more of the instigator and for not observing previous warnings.
- An expulsion is in the works pending receiving two signed affidavits. This individual will be given the opportunity to appear before the BOD to appeal his expulsion. In the meantime, this person is suspended indefinitely

Cy M. asked for clarification regarding Carol Williams' one month suspension. Keith W. explained that the Ethics Committee re-evaluated this situation and concluded that the one-month suspension she served was adequate. Todd S. noted that complaints regarding behavior need to be documented by at least two people for the Ethics Committee to act on them. Otherwise, if there is only one complaint letter, it could be perceived as a vendetta. Good documentation is needed to move forward.

d. Judges:

1) Electronic Judges Certificates:

James M. suggested that new judges be sent some kind of certificate. Tammy G. will email a wallet-sized card and an ACC Judge Certificate by for self-printing.

2) Other judging issues:

Keith W. stated that Ron Logan is retiring as a Senior Judge and has been replaced by Bryan Gurden. He noted that Troy T. has moved from the Western Division to the Central Division, so Rick S. will suggest a replacement for the intermountain area. Jeanne J. suggested greater emphasis on judges bringing Rule Books and red pens to use in making judging calls and correcting scorecards. There was considerable discussion on requiring a two-year period before someone who fails the judging test is allowed to take it again.

e. Tournament Commissioners:

Pat B. announced that tournament results reporting can now be done completely online, thanks to Scott H. He also said that the second batch of new bracket boards are printed. There were 192 sanctioned tournaments last year, with mains averaging 60 players and consolations 40 players. New scorecards need to be printed, and we have received a new bid that includes sturdier paper. Mark S. pointed out that these scorecards should only be used for sanctioned tournaments and not for Grass Roots.

Rick S. said that the only complaint he had heard several times was that there were too many tournaments, which is affecting attendance at tournaments. He suggested that this will sort itself out.

f. Social media:

Vicki S. stated that she scans a lot of platforms, but mostly Facebook. The "Question of the Week" seems to be working. Also, the live streaming of the finals went over well. Jason M. mentioned the podcast "Competitive Cribbage" by Terry Cushman. Scott H. noted that there is a defunct GR.org site that should be eliminated, and asked if anyone had information on its creator.

g. IT/Tech:

Scott H. said that he had not prepared a report, but noted that the new MRP system seems to be working. He invited any ideas and observations to be sent to him. He also credited Mark S. with helping get the new system up and running.

h. Awards:

Mark S. stated that all awards have been purchased and readied for the upcoming GN Awards Ceremony. He thanked Richard Frost for arranging for the jackets. He asked for everyone's patience that there was no meal nor a microphone at the Awards Ceremony, but the prices were exorbitant.

4. Executive Committee Reports:

a. President:

James M. apologized for the late agenda, but it was challenging due to everyone traveling. Jeanne J. requested that anyone submitting a new business agenda item also submit a brief report providing details in addition to any discussion on the Facebook chat room.

b. Executive VP:

Rick S. said that bids for the next Grand National in the West (2027) will be discussed later in the agenda. He asked for people to consider preparing bids for the 2028 Grand National in the Central division for presentation at the Grand National in Deadwood.

c. Ethics:

Todd S. said that there is potential for an expulsion hearing. He was receptive to input for how to proceed regarding the information provided to the BOD. After discussion, Todd S. will provide a summary of the charges and evidence to the members of the BOD (only), which are the only ones allowed at the hearing. Keith W. noted that the ACC is something you join and agree to its rules. Membership in the ACC is a privilege, not a right. Membership can be revoked.

d. VP Operations:

Mark S. reported that he is working on bids for printing the new Rule Books.

e. VP Competition:

Dave A. reminded everyone of the next Grand National in Deadwood, September 30 – October 5, 2025. He suggested making reservations at the Lodge at Deadwood now that rates are locked in. The flyer will be available soon. Contracts for both the GN 2025 and GN 2026 in Niagara Falls have been signed.

5. Old Business

a. Grouper:

Spencer M. presented an update about "Grouper," the administrator for supplemental Medicare insurance's social activity benefits. It helps people keep socially connected. Grouper replaced "Element 3" The number of participating supplemental insurance plans with Grouper are increasing, and by 2025 more than 50% of supplemental health plans will participate with Grouper. The number of individuals receiving benefits through Grouper is

also increasing. Cribbage is still a recognized social activity. Grouper maintains a directory of clubs providing qualifying activities, including Grass Roots clubs. He also announced a new benefit (that replaces the reimbursement of membership dues. As of 2025, new people that sign up for Grouper will individually receive \$50 upon eligibility and another \$20 every three months thereafter when they report a social activity. This money will go directly to the individual, not to the Grass Roots club. He suggested that people check out their eligibility at the table that was set up at the Grand National. Grouper will help promote cribbage clubs, including the one in Las Vegas.

6. New Business:

a. Legacy Tournament Grants:

Keith W. initially proposed giving a grant of \$3,500 to the National Open, providing it with financial support in line with the other two Legacy Tournaments. He subsequently amended the proposal to grant \$5,000 to the National Open, matching the \$5,000 grant given to the Grand National, and noting that the ACC Open already receives financial support from the J Resort. He prefaced his proposal by stating that the BOD has already approved enhancements to the Legacy Tournaments to attract greater attendance, including adding 20% more MRP's to qualifying players. The purpose of this grant would be to encourage greater attendance by supporting expenses and increasing payouts. After some discussion and research through previous BOD minutes, it was determined that the BOD had only approved a grant of \$2,500 to the Grand National. The apparent \$5,000 he cited in the Policy & Procedures Manual was in error. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the perks and subsidies negotiated with the J Resort are only good for the remainder of the contract, and that it cannot be assumed that the ACC Open will continue to receive financial support after that. Therefore, the proposed \$5,000 grant for Legacy Tournaments would apply to all three. The ACC Open would receive any balance up to \$5,000 after the J Resort's subsidy is factored in. Keith W. implied that such expenditure was doable because we currently have a surplus of nearly \$20,000. When asked what would happen if we incurred budgetary difficulties in the future, he suggested that we might raise membership dues. **Action:** Keith W. made a motion to allocate \$5,000 to all three Legacy Tournaments for the purpose of supporting expenses and enhance payouts for players, effective immediately; seconded by Joe B. **Motion approved.** [An unknown majority raised their hands in favor. There was no request for opposed or abstained. At least 2 people did not raise their hand.]

b. VP of Ethics & Policy to VP of Policy & Procedures:

Keith W. proposed that the office of "VP of Ethics & Policy" be changed to "VP of Policy". The Ethics Committee will have a separate chair [Todd S.], but is aligned with policy issues. **Action:** Keith W. made a motion to change the office of "VP of Ethics & Policy to the VP of Policy"; seconded by Joe B. **Motion approved.** Keith W. also circulated policy manual updates, as well as reminded everyone that the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual is available online.

c. **Bonding for tournaments:**

Terry W. said that he had been approached by newer TD's about the ACC taking out insurance or bonding TD's for handling money if it is lost or stolen. A discussion followed as to whether such bonding was needed. There is precedence for how the ACC has handled such incidents in the past. Jeanne J. pointed out that in essence the ACC is self-insured for such situations. The consensus was to not take any action on this issue.

d. **Hall of Fame:**

Jennifer J. stated that nominations for the HOF will be accepted between 12/1/24 and 1/21/25. She will get the voting website set up and emails sent out by January 26, 2025. Voting will close on the day of the Virtual BOD meeting [2/22/25.] She and Keith will pull the results at the Virtual BOD meeting. She noted that we have decided to utilize electronic versions of the photos of HOF members going forward, and the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual needs to be changed to reflect this. **Action: Jennifer J.** made a motion to update the language in the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual regarding electronic HOF photos, seconded by James M. **Motion approved.**

e. **Grand National 2027 – West:**

i. **Portland:**

Erik Locke withdrew his bid for Portland, OR.

ii. **Canada:**

Terry Hatto presented a proposal for Edmonton, Alberta, at the suggestion of his mother Audrey Hatto. Although they don't have exact numbers yet, the venue will be a casino about 30 miles from the airport. The casino has 249 rooms, enough space in the Gand Ballroom. The casino is undergoing upgrading that will be finished before 2027. They want \$7K per day for the Grand Ballroom, but that will be offset by food. He also mentioned fund-raising opportunities. Gambling winnings are tax-free. The Grand National would be held mid to late September, 2027, when the weather is still nice in Edmonton. U.S. citizens will need a passport. James M. thanked Terry for his presentation.

iii. **Spokane:**

Kat K. made a presentation that included a handout and a promotional video about the Spokane, WA, area. The presentation included a 10-day schedule of tournaments and satellite events culminating in the Grand National on November 6 and 7, 2027. It will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton in Spokane. Rooms there will be government rate, currently \$127 per night. There are plenty of eateries at the hotel and nearby, as well as other hotels for overflow. Co-Directors are James M., Rick B., and Kat K.

Action: Jason M. made a motion to make an exemption [outside of the September/October window] for the Grand National in 2027 to be held November 1-

7, 2027, and to be held in Spokane, WA; seconded by Mark S. **Motion approved.** 21 for; 2 abstentions.

f. Number of Games for Large Tournament Playoff Finals:

James M. suggested that the number of games in the final match of large tournaments, including the Legacy Tournaments and the TOC, be standardized to the best of 7. **Action:** James M. made a motion that the final match of any tournament of 257 or more be the best of 7 games; seconded by Cy M. **Motion approved.**

7. Announcements:

There were no more announcements.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Next BOD meeting: Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 5PM PST, Online

ADDEUNDUM A

BOD APPROVED NEW RULE CHANGES (November 2024)

The following represents the BOD approved rule changes that were recommended by the Rules Committee and put forward to the BOD at the November 15, 2024 BOD meeting:

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE:

Add **“Page 33”** to the Quick Reference guide on the first page referring to false claim of game.

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 1.5.e.(2):

Add to the end of the paragraph: **“Go” should be called verbally, not gestured.”**

Discussion: The original recommendation said that a “Go” *must* be called verbally. The rationale was that this rule prevents a player from inadvertently or falsely signaling a nonverbal “go” and then gaining knowledge of whether the opponent has a playable card. After discussion, it was decided to change the word “must” to “should.”

Determination: **Action:** Cy M. made a motion to approve the recommended addition to Rule 1.5.e.(2) with the substitution of the word “should” for “must”; seconded by Rick B. **Motion approved.** 14 for, 9 opposed.

RULE 1.7:

Add to the * under the Scoring Chart in Rule 1.7 **“See Rule 7.2.a (parts 6.7.8) for further explanation.”**

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 4.4.c (Line 5):

On page 24, In the 5th table entry where Pone's hand is correct, Dealer's hand too many, Crib too many under situation B (after starter turned), change action 4 to action **9**.

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 5.2.c.:

To the end of Rule 5.2.c. add: **“Both the dealer’s hand and crib are counted after pegging has been completed.”**

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 6.1.a.:

Reword the second sentence in Rule 6.1.a. to read **“If the starter card is turned face up by the dealer before one or both players have discarded to the crib, the starter card must be returned to the pack. After both players have discarded to the crib, the dealer reshuffles the pack, and the pone cuts the starter card.”**

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 7.1.b:

Add the following fourth sentence to 7.1.b.: **“Likewise after a “go,” or 31, if the player that received the point for the “go” leads the next card, it is out of order and the same rules in the section apply.”**

Discussion: The rationale was that this additional phrase accounts for the possible “out of order” play after the 31 count is completed.

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 9.3.a.

Instead of “The starter card must remain segregated from the hands and crib while they are being counted and scored,” reword as follows: **“The starter card must remain segregated from the hands and crib until all of the hands have been counted and scored.”**

Discussion: This makes it clear that the starter card must be segregated at all times.

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

RULE 10.1.d.:

Add new rule 10.1.d. **“When muggins is in effect, it cannot be optional between two players. It is played by all players.”**

Discussion: Jennifer J. clarified that this rule is fine with the National Open organizers.

Determination: **BOD Approved** by Consensus.

ADDENDUM B

BOD APPROVED CROSS-CHECKING GUIDELINES (November 2024)

The following represents the BOD approved Cross-Checking Guidelines update that was recommended by the Rules Committee and put forward to the BOD at the November 15, 2024 BOD meeting:

General considerations:

1. Whenever possible, establish individual tables of less than 30 players avoiding serpentine seating when possible.
2. Director will assign table captains before the end the qualifying round who shall enlist a minimum of one helper for cross-checking tables of 24 or less, and at least two helpers for tables of more than 24. The minimum number of cross checkers shall be 2.
3. 3. When possible, a table captain may encourage an inexperienced person to serve as an additional cross-checker.
4. In the event that ‘significant others’ team up to cross-check a table of less than 24, they should do so at a table that neither played at. If this is not possible, an additional helper should assist.
5. Prior to the last game, the Director will remind players of their respective table captains, emphasizing the need to turn in all scorecards to them.
6. Whenever possible, find a private location and use red ink for crosschecking.

Method:

7. Table captains will collect and count scorecards from their assigned table to make sure they have all of them.
8. Cross-checkers initially check the game point & games won columns of all cards, making sure they are accurate and making any corrections in red.
9. Separate probable qualifiers.
10. With multiple tables, Director and/or table captains may consult to roughly determine the total number of probable qualifying cards to cross-check.
11. Check math of game point, plus and minus spread and spread point totals of the probable qualifiers. Make any needed corrections and then indicate that the card has been checked by initialing with a red pen.
12. The non-qualifying cards shall then be divided up among helpers and placed face up on the table in some logical manner, such as odd and even, or numerical order.
13. Prior to cross-checking, all the apparent non-qualifying scorecards shall be re-examined by the helpers to make sure that there are no potential qualifiers.
14. Cross-check with the captain reading to the other checker/s what should appear on the non-qualifying card (e.g. “ seat 5, game 8, lost by 15”).
15. Captain to make a red slash mark next to the game number to indicate that a game has been checked with corrections made in red ink.
16. Refer to rule 12.2 to resolve scorecard, discrepancies during crosschecking.

17. Not until cross-checking is completed for a qualifying card, shall the score be written in the appropriate boxes at the top of the card.
18. In the event that a qualifier is disqualified (e.g. both players recording a win) an attempt should be made to contact that player with an explanation.
19. Arrange the qualifiers score cards from all the tables, in order by:
 - a. Game points
 - b. Games won
 - c. Net point-spread
 - d. Plus points
 - e. Head-to-head result from tourney qualifying round (if applicable)
 - f. A one game playoff (cut for deal)
20. Director or their assistant shall then double check the order of qualifying and verify that there are no non-qualifying cards higher than the lowest qualifying card. The qualifying cards shall then be numbered in qualifying order.
21. Announce the low qualifiers score prior to posting the names of the qualifiers.