

## **ACBL Unit 255**

### **2024 February Open Sectional Tournament**

**Feb 9 – 11, 2024 at the Holiday Inn, St. Catharines**

#### **General Notes**

On February 9, 10 and 11, Unit 255 held a Sectional Tournament for Open, 499 and 199 bridge players. The actual table count was only 2% short of the budget, so we did quite well considering the post-Covid tournament situation. Our volunteers ensured that bridge players from BCON and NOTL DBC, as well as many other clubs from the US and Canada, enjoyed the competitive games and the great hospitality our Unit 255 tournaments provide.

#### **Venue**

St. Catharine's Holiday Inn once again proved to be an excellent venue for our tournaments although we did experience some issues.

- Unfortunately, the hotel was under extensive construction.
- With the Coffee Shop closed due to construction, the hotel should have had a coffee station set up outside the playing area. This was corrected on Saturday and Sunday. There were a lot of complaints from the Catering Manager when people brought outside drinks into the playing area but in fairness they were allowed to on Friday.
- As well, the Catering Manager did not allow Cheryl to use the hotel's large refrigerator on Friday which she had used previously. That made it very difficult for Cheryl as she had to store the sandwiches in her hotel room until the Hospitality room opened at the end of play.
- Billing Overcharges – Cheryl's suite was overcharged by \$20 per night; the storage room should have been free, but we were invoiced at \$325, and we were charged for use of the Brock Room (hospitality) on the 11<sup>th</sup>. All these overcharges were corrected.

Boxed lunches were provided on Saturday and Sunday at a cost of \$12. Many players opted to buy the boxed lunches.

#### **Partnership Desk**

Margaret Dykstra did a very good job as the Partnership Chair. She arranged a total of 16 partnerships – Friday 2, Saturday 9 and Sunday 5.

#### **Logistics**

Keith Burkell rented a truck and Steve Williams arranged for more volunteers to assist in loading/unloading and setting up of the tables and equipment at the hotel. A total of 7 free plays were given to the volunteers.

With the assistance of Kathy Morrison, promotional emails were sent to ACBL members living within a 200 mile radius of the Niagara Region. The emails were sent on 2 separate occasions – late November and early January.

#### **Directing**

Martin Hunter was the Director in Charge for this Sectional Tournament. Claude Tremblay, Muriel Tremblay and Jerry Smee were the Associate Tournament Directors.

## **Prizes**

Kathy Morrison was in charge of the Prize desk. A total of 104 Niagara Bucks were awarded at \$7.00 each.

## **Hospitality**

Cheryl Loisel was the Hospitality Chair and once again did an excellent job. On Friday night Cheryl and her team of volunteers provided sandwiches, cheese and crackers, veggie trays and dessert trays. Pizza was served on Saturday along with the leftover sandwiches and more of the veggies, etc. Wine, beer and soft drinks were also provided free of charge. The total food expenses were \$1237.28 which was just slightly over budget.

## **Satisfaction of the Players**

Judging from the verbal feedback from the players, it was clear that they were satisfied with the efforts and the commitment of the Unit 255 in planning four tournaments, every year.

## **Sponsorship**

Generous sponsorship of \$1,500 from Greg Sykes Real Estate helped cover the costs of hospitality etc.

## **Financials**

Steve Williams was the Tournament Treasurer. The net revenue of \$15,961 was 5% short of the budget. Overall, we were able to make a profit of \$2190.31 which exceeded the budget by almost 17%.

## **Special Thanks**

I would like to extend many thanks to all the volunteers, without whom our Unit would not be able to host all these tournaments.

## **Future Considerations**

- Pre-Dealing – the budget is set at \$6 per case however that amount may not fairly cover the work involved and the time it takes to complete. I would recommend \$10 per case.
- To alleviate the issue of incorrect billing by the Hotel, we should have our current contract modified to clear up the inconsistencies (room used for Hospitality not used on the Sunday, no charge for the room used for storage). If it is already plain in the contract, then the hotel should acknowledge this prior to every tournament.
- Request the Hotel to provide separate invoices for the venue rooms used for the Tournament and the guest rooms booked for the ACBL Directors. This just keeps the accounting of the costs easier.
- The 199er game finished about 30 minutes prior to the end of the other sections so the Hospitality room was not prepared for this early finish. In the future we can monitor this more closely and be prepared for the expected finish time.
- Ask the hotel management if we can use any available refrigerator space.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Williams, Tournament Chairperson March 14, 2024