

Unit 255 Board Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2025

Holiday Inn, St. Catharines



Present: Muriel Tremblay, Claude Tremblay, Wiebe Hoogland, Brian Jones, Kathy Morrison, Ginger Grant, Sheila Langstaff

Muriel called the meeting to order at 4:41

Minutes from July 14, 2025 – attached

Moved by Brian, Seconded by Kathy; approved

Business Arising:

Brian will follow up with contact from Brock to investigate using Brock Business students to devise a plan for increasing enrollment and involvement in our Bridge Community. Sheila will discuss this process with Brian. Brian will contact Patti Tucker to implement the Learn to Play Bridge in a Day program. With Ginger's help, they will be targeting 2026 for this.

Record of approved motions via email voting:

A motion was approved by email August 31, 2025 to provide financial support to BCON for their Rookie Master game.

Treasurer's Report - attached

Kathy has presented the financial statements to the end of September. Essentially, we are running a deficit which should be resolved after the Regional Tournament.

Tournament Co-Ordinator's Report - attached

Claude addressed the report for the **February Tournament** that Cathy Williams had created. Two action items were addressed for this tournament. – Change the stratification from 199 & 499 to 299 & 999 and the start times from 1:30 & 7:00 to 1:00 & 6:00 for the Friday games. Hospitality will continue to happen at 4:30 between games.

Muriel reported on the **August 750 Tournament**. She expressed concern about the lack of local participation in this tournament. She raised the question of the validity of holding the August tournament if locals were not going to take advantage of it. No change to the Unit's tournament plans for 2026. The start time for the Sunday Team game will be 10:00 & 2:00 rather than 10:00 & 2:30.

Review Budget and Plan for November Regional - attached

Kathy explained that the ACBL has increased the US/Canadian exchange rate to 39%. Niagara Bucks will continue to be used for prizes.

The Banquet Manager, Jon Figlioni, has agreed to some extras such as the room next to the hospitality to set up tables and chairs for two of the days for \$200. The board agreed to the extra \$200.

There will be a coffee station set up outside the main room each morning. Boxed lunches will be available to order. Cathy Williams will make up the boards and take care of awarding prizes. One Caddy per day will be paid.

Proposed Survey

Claude presented a survey to be completed by Unit 255 members to help us better understand our members' interest in participating in local tournaments. It was suggested that player's master point level be added to the survey so that Claude can do a more informed analysis according to responses and player's ability.

Wiebe asked if there was a special question that advanced players might need to be asked but the survey is open ended enough for them to write their opinions.

Claude hopes to have the survey in final form before the end of October and will personally deliver them to members.

Tournament Report - Claude

Unit 255 has signed a 10-year agreement with the Holiday Inn. Increases in prices will happen every other year. A new item that was added to the agreement for Sectional Tournaments in February: for every 35 rooms occupied, Unit 255 receives credit for a complimentary room.

Claude proposed an increase in pay for Local Directors as follows:

Restricted Tournaments: Director in Charge - \$250 per session; Assistant Director \$200 per session seconded by Kathy; Approved

Open Sectional Tournaments: Associate Directors - \$300 per session; seconded by Wiebe; approved

Sponsorship - Jackie Morrison will continue to sponsor the tournaments for \$7,000 per year, which will be divided between the three tournaments as follows:

\$3000 to February Tournament

\$1000 to Restricted Tournament

\$3000 to November Tournament

Claude moved to make these changes in distribution of the money; seconded by Kathy; approved

Member Benefit Program; it was suggested that these benefits be promoted more at the club level.

Tournaments have been sanctioned until 2031.

Membership

Wiebe informed the Board that our membership stands at 255. We lost 7 members and gained 2 new. Wiebe will follow up with emails to people who need to renew their ACBL memberships.

Planning and Budget – Draft to be reviewed at our January Meeting

Muriel prepared a budget format for 2026. The income and expenses were established by the Directors for each of their areas of responsibility. A deficit of \$12,000 is currently projected. It was suggested that we look at a two-year financial statement to include the profit from the Regional Tournament.

Club Support Review

BCON AC/BC Team Games

There was discussion regarding whether the AC/BC games continue to meet the objectives set out last year. We are not seeing new players participating in these games, and the social component has been reduced to coffee and dessert. Kathy said that she would address these concerns.

Unit 255 will continue to support the quarterly AC/BC team games at \$500 per event. This will be reviewed in January as part of the 2026 Budget finalization.

Membership Support

The Unit Board was very pleased with the results that Dena achieved using the free plays that Unit 255 provided to encourage people to play bridge and become members of both the club and ACBL. A budget of \$200 was approved for 2026

Rookie Master game at NOTL was very successful in bringing 40 “master” and 40 “rookies” to participate in this event. Unit 255 provided funding for the refreshments that were served after the game. A budget for \$600 was approved for 2026.

Rookie/Mentor game at BCON, as part of their celebrating 25 years, was also very successful with 32 “rookies” and 32 “mentors” participating. A budget for \$600 was approved for 2026.

Nominations for New Directors

Brian will send a message to Unit 255 members to inform them about opportunities to join the Board of Directors. Nominations will be accepted until November 30. If there are more than 2 nominees, an election will be held in December.

New Business

Brian asked the Board to approve BCON running a Local Sectional Tournament for 0-750 players on March 14/15 2026. Unit 255 will apply for the Sanction; BCON will pay all of the expenses. Seconded by Kathy; approved

Next Meeting January 5 at BCON to plan and confirm budget.

Meeting adjourned and Board members enjoyed a wonderful dinner at the Holiday Inn

Unit 255 Board Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2025.



Present: Muriel Trembley, Claude Trembley, Wiebe Hoogland, Brian Jones, Kathy Morrison, Ginger Grant, Sheila Langstaff

Muriel called the meeting to order at 4:30.

Minutes of January 13th 2025 Meeting - attached

Moved by Wiebe Hoogland, seconded by Kathy Morrison; Approved

Business Arising:

The 1500 point limit for the August Tournament were addressed. Although Claude had tried to get that limit increased, the appeal was denied and it remains a 750 point limit.

Minutes from the April 5th Annual General meeting – attached

Sheila moved to approve the minutes of the April 5th meeting, Claude seconded. Approved.

Treasurer's Financial Report – attached

Kathy stated that the \$3331 loss should be made up after the November Regional. The term deposit that came due generated \$316 interest which was reinvested. The Vince Oddy order for convention cards was a significant expense. Kathy moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; Brian Seconded. Approved.

Tournament Co-Ordinator's Report – Claude Trembley

No new information since the AGM report provided in April.

The August Budget remains the same. Brian stated that people who need silver points are more likely to attend these tournaments. Brian and Dena will organize the equipment needed for the August Tournament. Claude is a reviewer for the Master Point Press; he receives a number of bridge books which he is donating to the Unit as prizes for the August tournament. Jacqueline Morrison will continue to be a sponsor for this Tournament.

Brian has volunteered to run the 2026 August Tournament.

Kathy and Claude will look at the Regional Budget. Kathy has a team in place for the November Tournament.

Membership Chair – Wiebe Hoogland

Our unit has 276 members. Membership is only down 3 from a year ago. There were 281 members at the beginning of the year, but we had 2 new members join us. Sheila suggested contacting Brock Business College for help to increase our membership. Sheila has since acquired and given the contact information to Brian Jones.

Education Chair – Ginger Grant

There is a new ACBL Sapphire Program for beginning players. Sapphires are tokens that players receive for taking part in classes, club games and other activities for those new to the game.

We can write articles for CARP – Ginger to follow-up

Possible courses available in the fall:

- Play of the Hand series of lessons
- How to complete the Convention Card
- Advanced Defense Classes for players with more than 300

It was noted that the uptake from the Learn Bridge in a Day was 70% into Beginner Courses at the Bridge Centre of Niagara.

Brian will contact Patty Tucker to secure the license for Learn Bridge in a Day to offer to other parts of our community.

District 2 Report – Weibe Hoogland

District 2 has a new policy manual available on the D2 Website.

District 2 looks after 3 games: NAP, GNT and STAC

Players will need to qualify in order to participate in the NAP games held on November online. It will be a one day event. Our club should encourage people to participate.

New Business

None

Next Meeting October 6th 2025 = Planning and Budgeting for 2026

Adjournment 5:05

UNIT 255 2025 FINANCIALS											
OPENING BALANCE	46,872.48	46,627.01	44,442.42	44,201.51	44,054.97	44,253.82	43,541.17	41,623.88	48,325.52		
TOTAL IN	3,065.40	(2,057.07)	(2.11)	2,223.84	398.46	316.58	8.78	6,704.34	274.22		
TOTAL OUT	\$ 3,310.87	127.52	238.80	2,370.38	199.61	1,029.23	1,926.07	2.70	843.85		
BANK BALANCE	46,627.01	44,442.42	44,201.51	44,054.97	44,253.82	43,541.17	41,623.88	48,325.52	47,755.89		
REVENUE											
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	TOTAL	
CBF				300.00						300.00	
ACBL MEMBERSHIP	537.19			459.44			278.86			1,275.49	
AGM				1,448.50	14.11					1,462.61	
MISC INCOME										-	
STAC MAY								174.88		174.88	
STAC OCTOBER										-	
TOURNMENT FEBRUARY	2,500.00	(2,074.85)								425.15	
TOURNAMENT JUNE										-	
TOURNAMENT AUGUST			(20.00)					1,514.81		1,494.81	
TOURNAMENT NOVEMBER							(287.33)	5,000.00		4,712.67	
INTEREST INCOME	28.21	17.78	17.89	15.90	384.35	316.58	17.25	14.65	274.22	1,086.83	
										-	
TOTAL INCOME	3,065.40	(2,057.07)	(2.11)	2,223.84	398.46	316.58	8.78	6,704.34	274.22	10,932.44	
OPERATING EXPENSES											
AUDIT				50.00						50.00	
ADMINISTRATION	100.00	-								100.00	
BANK CHARGES	2.70	11.40	1.05	1.65	2.70	1.20	4.20	2.70	2.55	30.15	
EDUCATION			237.75	(200.00)			200.00			237.75	
EXPENDIBLE SUPPLIES							1,131.87			1,131.87	
CLUB SUPPORT BCON	500.00			500.00			500.00		624.00	2,124.00	
CLUB SUPPORT NOTL						600.00				600.00	
NABC										-	
INSURANCE				270.00						270.00	
MEMBERS RECOGNITION						73.53	90.00			163.53	
KIBITIZER		116.12			122.41				217.30	455.83	
PIANOLA						354.50				354.50	
SPECIAL GAMES AGM				1,748.73	74.50					1,823.23	
SPECIAL ROOKIE GAME										-	
STORAGE	2,708.17									2,708.17	
WEBSITE										-	
TOURNAMENT EQUIPMENT										-	
										-	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 3,310.87	127.52	238.80	2,370.38	199.61	1,029.23	1,926.07	2.70	843.85	10,049.03	
TOTAL INCOME OR LOSS	(245.47)	(2,184.59)	(240.91)	(146.54)	198.85	(712.65)	(1,917.29)	6,701.64	(569.63)	883.41	

Unit 255 Tournament Co-ordinator Report October 6th, 2025

The attendance and associated financial results of U255 Tournaments for the past few years are shown below. Unit 255 has made \$79,880 from the tournaments since its formation in 2018.

Unit 255 Tournaments Summary																			
Year	Regional			Sectional															
	November			February				May				August				November			
	Tables	%	\$	Tables	%	\$	Member	Tables	%	\$	Member	Tables	%	\$	Member	Tables	%	\$	Member
2004																			
2005																			
2017	1,166	6	12,314	355	4	2,345						113	(10)						
2018				252	(29)	(2,391)						97	(14)	1,231		268		5,024	
2019	1,129	(3)	20,052	334	33	2,913		198		2,334		125	29	3,936					
2020				261	(22)	1,891													
2021			COVID			COVID								COVID				COVID	
2022	729	(35)	8,305			COVID		83	(58)	1,728		57	(54)	1,275					
2023	725	(1)	19,071	219	(16)	742		77	(7)	988		65	14	2,021					
2024				221	0	2,190	494	65	(16)	817	232	79	21	1,766	272	152		2,762	729
2025				191	(14)	425	684					71	(10)	1,501	167				
2026																			
2027																			
2028																			
Total			47,428			5,770	1,178			7,167	232			11,730	439			7,786	729
Grand Total			79,880																
Member's Benefit			2,578																

Unit 255 Tournament Schedule

In general, U255 will hold a Sectional in February (Open) at the Holiday Inn in St Catharines, August (750) and November (Open) at NOTL. We hold all our Regional in November and Sectional in February at the Holiday Inn in St Catharines. We have all our tournament sanctions approved up to 2031 inclusive except for our Regional in 2031.

We recently renewed our contract with the Holiday Inn for our tournaments. In general, it was agreed that we would keep the same price for guests' room and events space for two years and then increase the prices for the following two years. The price increase would be repeated for all following years. The increase for the guest's room will be \$10 and the event space will be raised by \$50. We now have in place a contract with the Holiday Inn that covers all our Regionals until 2035 (incl) and our Sectionals until 2035. We were able to negotiate similar concession for the Sectional as we had for the Regional such as complimentary room night for every 35 room nights, cumulative as well as two complimentary Suites for our Unit.

See attached list of status of current tournament until 2035.

Tournament Changes

Additionally, moving forward, we will **no longer use local directors for our tournaments**, except for the August tournaments, which will continue to be run by local directors. Given that ACBL tournament director charge is \$300 per session.

I recommend to raise the fee for the Director in Charge for the tournament to \$250 per session and for the Associated Director to \$230.

At our August tournament we had several players who thought that our start time for the second session should be shorten by 30 minutes. As a result, we will now have a 10:00 and 14:00 start time for our sessions.

Tournament Results

Our August tournament saw a 10% reduction in attendance from the previous year. The tournament made \$1,500 which includes \$1,000 sponsorship. You will find in attachment the financial report for our August tournament.

I recommend to conduct a survey from our membership to find out more about what they would like and what prevents them to attend our tournaments.

Sponsorship

I have contacted our only sponsor, Jackie Morrison, and she had committed to continue her support. Jackie will e-transfer every year starting in 2026, \$7,000 and it will be up to the Unit to distribute it amongst the tournaments.

I recommend that we assign \$2,000 each to the February and August tournament and \$3,000 for the November Sectional or Regional.

Membership Program

Our **Member's Benefit Program** has been well received and highly successful.

I recommend continuing this program for one more year and review it at our next meeting prior to our AGM.

Claude Tremblay
Tournaments

Unit 255 Tournaments List

	September 25, 2025							
	Month	Date	Tournament	Location	Venue	Sanction	Chair	Comments
2025	February	7-9	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2502316	Cathy	Contracted
	February	14-20	STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	15-17	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	2508302	Brian	Booked
	November	11-16	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2511103	Kathy	Contracted
2026	February	13-15	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2602304	Cathy	Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	14-16	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	2608303	Brian	Submitted
	November	6-8	Sectional Open	NOTL	Com Centre	2611304	Cathy	Submitted
2027	February	19-21	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2702303		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	13-15	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	2708301	Brian	Submitted
	November	9-14	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2711101	Kathy	Contracted
2028	February	18-20	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2802303		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	18-20	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	2808301	Brian	Submitted
	November	10-12	Sectional Open	NOTL	Com Centre	2811301	Cathy	Submitted
2029	February	16-18	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2902301		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	17-19	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	2908301	Brian	Submitted
	November	6-11	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	2911101	Kathy	Contracted
2030	February	15-17	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	3002301		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	16-18	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	3008301		Submitted
	November	8-10	Sectional Open	NOTL	Com Centre	3011301		Submitted
2031	February	14-16	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	3102301		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	15-17	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	3108301		Submitted
	November	4-9	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn			Contracted
2032	February	13-15	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	20-22	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
	November	12-14	Sectional Open	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
2033	February	18-20	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	19-21	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
	November	8-13	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted
2034	February	17-19	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	18-20	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
	November	10-12	Sectional Open	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
2035	February	16-18	Sectional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted
	February		STAC	CBF	Clubs			
	August	17-19	Sectional 750	NOTL	Com Centre	Submitted		
	November	6-11	Regional	St Catharines	Holiday Inn	Submitted		Contracted

0-750 Sectional Budget & Actual

August 15-17, 2025

28-Aug-2025

Open
2025

Probability of Table Count

100%

\$US

Budget

Actual

No.Tables.	86.00
Entry Fee	\$ 15.00
Student Fee	\$ 10.00
Exchange Rate	37%
Sanction Fee per table \$US	\$ 2.50
Equipment Rental & Supplies	
Per Diem (Local)	\$ 50.00
Per Diem (ACBL)	\$ 109.45
Director Fee/session	\$ 200.00
Associate Director/session	\$ 180.00
Pre-Dealing	\$ 10.00
Caddies	\$ 55.00

86.00

71

Income

Tables	86.00	71	\$ 5,160.00	4,260.00
Non-ACBL members				20.00
Students. EXTRA FEES				
Free Entries (Volunteers)		7		(45.00)
Niagara Bucks Redeemed				(87.00)
Niagara Bucks Member's Benefit				(167.00)
Free Fill-ins				
Sponsorship 1			\$ 1,000.00	1,000.00
Sponsorship 2				

Total Income

\$ 6,160.00

4,981.00

Expenses

Honorarium \$200/day			\$ 500.00	500.00
Hospitality Honorarium			\$ -	0.00
Hospitality Room			\$ -	0.00
Director fees/session	5		\$ 1,000.00	1,000.00
Associate Director/session	3		\$ 540.00	720.00
Accommodation			\$ -	
Transportation			\$ -	
Per Diem (ACBL)			\$ 328.35	
Per diem	6		\$ 300.00	

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Directing ACBL (US)	\$ -	\$ -		
ACBL sanction fees: \$3.56/tab	\$ 177.50	\$ 294.55		243.18
Surcharge (US)	\$ 35.50	\$ 48.64		48.64
ACBL duplicated hands (US)	\$ -	\$ -		
Non Member Fees (US)	\$ 2.92	\$ 4.00		20.00
Sub-Total (US)	\$ 215.92			

Venue			\$ 491.01	465.35
Equipment Rental & Supplies cube Van			\$ 200.00	0.00
Hand records and Printouts				
Pre-dealing	12	0	\$ 120.00	120.00
Caddies	0	0	\$ -	
Volunteers (Exclusive of Free Entries)			\$ 135.00	
Prizes			\$ 168.00	
Publicity			\$ 150.00	
Hospitality			\$ 600.00	326.96
Entertainment				

Credit Card Charge			\$ 25.00	36.06
Miscellaneous (see UTC)			\$ 500.00	0.00

Total Expenses

\$ 5,404.54

3,480.18

Profit/(Loss)

\$ 755.46

1,500.82

ACBL Unit 255

2025 February Open Sectional Tournament

Feb 7 - 9, 2025 at the Holiday Inn, St. Catharines

General Notes

On February 7, 8 and 9, Unit 255 held a Sectional Tournament for Open, 499 and 199 bridge players. 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 exceptional hospitality our Unit 255 tournaments provide. Unfortunately, the snowstorm which was predicted for late Saturday afternoon kept many players away. As well, the usual group from Kitchener Waterloo didn't attend as they were in the Barbados at a tournament. Our Tournament made a small profit of \$284.69.

Venue

The newly renovated St. Catharine's Holiday Inn once again proved to be an excellent venue for our tournaments although we did experience some issues. Many of the staff were new and weren't aware of our specific needs. Even though we have been dealing with Bhas Pilakki for many years, he was less than helpful in making sure things were set up properly. Such as:

- Doors to the Main room as well as the rear outside doors were not opened first thing in the morning
- They double booked the Brock Room on Friday
- They were not prepared to sell the boxed lunches before the Saturday game
- The parking lot was not cleared of snow on Sunday morning

Despite these problems, the Hotel recovered very quickly. They had the Brock Room set up for our Hospitality within 15 minutes of the room being vacated. They allowed Cheryl to store the beer and wine in their large refrigerator. They provided a lunch menu for the boxed lunches in time for the orders to be placed prior to the game.

In years past they forbid outside food and drinks in the main room and often gave our players a hard time. However this year, this was not even mentioned.

Partnership Desk

Margaret Dykstra did a very good job as the Partnership Chair. She arranged a total of 13 partnerships – Friday 2, Saturday 6 and Sunday 5.

Logistics

Keith Burkell rented a truck on Friday and Steve Williams rented it on Sunday. Steve 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.

Promotional emails were sent to ACBL members living within a 160 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 80 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 as well as more of the veggies, etc. Wine, beer and soft drinks were also provided free of charge. The total food expenses were \$1100.52 which was under 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 Unit 255 in providing excellent Hospitality and a beautiful venue with reasonable prices. The Member's Benefits were much appreciated by the Unit's BCON and NOTL players. A total of 228 vouchers at \$3.00 each were redeemed at the tournament.

Sponsorship

Generous sponsorship of \$1,500 from Aspira Retirement Living and \$1,000 from Jaclyn Morrison of iA Private Wealth helped cover the costs of hospitality etc.

Financials

Steve Williams was the Tournament Treasurer.

Special Thanks

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

Future Considerations

- Provide either 0-750 or 0-999 level for players with more that 499 MPs but don't feel comfortable playing in the Open. In comparing the table counts from Nov 2024 to Nov 2025, the 0-199 group is up 75% and the 0-499 group is down 87%. Opening up the 499 game to at least 0-750 could make a big difference.
- Meet with Hotel Management a day or 2 prior to the Tournament to ensure all our requirements are understood
- Consider changing the game times on Friday. Many people left on Friday due to the length of time between the afternoon and evening game.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Williams, Tournament Chairperson February 13, 2025

Unit 255 Member Survey



Purpose: We want to hear from you! The future of our tournaments depends on member participation. Please share your honest opinions so the Board can make decisions that best reflect the wishes of Unit 255 members.

Please indicate your Masterpoint Level

- ☐ 0-199
- ☐ 200 – 499
- ☐ 500 – 750
- ☐ 750 – 999
- ☐ 1000 +

1. Participation

1. How often do you currently play in Unit 255 tournaments?
 - ☐ Always (every tournament)
 - ☐ Often (2–3 times per year)
 - ☐ Occasionally (1 time per year)
 - ☐ Rarely
 - ☐ Never
2. If you do **not** attend regularly, what are your main reasons? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ Scheduling conflicts
 - ☐ Tournament format doesn't interest me
 - ☐ Too costly
 - ☐ Too competitive / intimidating
 - ☐ Prefer regular club games
 - ☐ Travel or transportation issues
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

2. Tournament Preferences

3. Which tournament(s) are most valuable to you? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ February Open Tournament
 - ☐ May Restricted (<750 MP) Tournament
 - ☐ August Restricted (<750 MP) Tournament
 - ☐ November Open Sectional Tournament (even years)
 - ☐ November Regional Tournament (odd years)

4. Do you want Unit 255 to continue offering **restricted tournaments (<750 MP)**?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ No preference
- ☐ No, discontinue them

5. Do you feel the current **table fees** are reasonable?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (too high)
- ☐ No (too low, could be higher)

3. Member Benefits & Incentives

6. Are you aware of the **Member Benefit Program** (discounted table fees for Unit 255 members)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Would additional **incentives** encourage you to attend more tournaments?

- ☐ Yes (please specify what might help): _____
- ☐ No

4. Final Input

8. What do you value most about Unit 255 tournaments?

- ☐ Earning silver/red/gold points locally
- ☐ Hospitality and social atmosphere
- ☐ High-quality tournament management
- ☐ Opportunity to meet players from other regions
- ☐ Other: _____

9. What changes would make you more likely to attend future tournaments?

10. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the Unit 255 Board?



Education Report

Programming

We applied for a New Horizons for Seniors Grant through the Bridge Centre of Niagara on September 17, 2025. We have since been contacted by NHSG personnel regarding our latest tax filing for BCON. I would now put our ability to obtain the grant at over 50% as we have made the first cut of applications submitted. We will receive notification in February of 2026. If awarded, funds will be shared with NoTL regarding updating our equipment.

If we are successful in our application, I would suggest that we submit a Trillium Seed Grant for 2026 (funding range from 10k-100k over 6months to 1year). That would allow us to expand our programming and continue with the Trillium Grow grant (funding range from 50k-200k over 3 years).

In order to grow both clubs in the Unit, we need to develop a strategic marketing plan inclusive of advertising/promotional activities. There is some interest in education but it is sporadic. Members ask for beginner and intermediate lessons and then do not sign up or show up. That is not sustainable. I would suggest a minimum class size and if not reached, cancel the offering.

The NHSG grant would allow us to begin marketing activities once we find experienced individuals who are willing to do the work on a marketing committee. I would suggest we put out a call to both memberships to obtain a joint marketing committee that will benefit the unit. I would suggest that plan should include deliverable action items with target dates for those experienced marketing/advertising people we can locate.

In conversation with a couple of schools, there is some interest in bridge for middle and senior secondary students, usually for those students who are resident at the school (on going conversations with Ridley). The difficulty is that there is little or no expertise at the educational institution, necessitating a volunteer from one of our clubs to coordinate a bridge club. In the public school system, teachers are paid only to teach (9am-3pm) and extra-curricular activities are on a volunteer basis. Currently, there is considerable turmoil in education in Ontario so extra unpaid work is not a popular ask.

New Games

We have had some success with a new Saturday evening game followed by a gathering at Boston Pizza. The table count is slowly growing and has included both BCON and NoTL members.



A suggestion has been made to hold a Sunday afternoon game, similar to the Saturday evening social game. A discussion will be held at the next BCON meeting to see whether an attempt should be made to increase our game offerings. I would suggest an afternoon game and avoid an evening game for safe driving purposes.

CBF

There has been limited uptake on the online Maple Leaf Games offered by Real Bridge in the UK on Friday evenings. The cost is reasonable at \$5 Cdn with some of the proceeds being returned to the designated home club. As some of our members requested, the fee is in Canadian dollars. I do not see this game as being a significant revenue stream but I am ever hopeful.

Proposal for a Local Sectional

A proposal to for BCON to hose a local sectional in March of 2026 has been submitted to the Unit for approval.

Ginger Grant
Education Chair

Bridge Centre of Niagara



Report on the Rookie-Mentor Game

Prepared by: Muriel Tremblay, Project Liaison

Overview

The Bridge Centre of Niagara (BCON) hosted a Rookie-Mentor game on September 20, 2025, as part of the Club's 25th anniversary celebrations. Our goal was 16 tables; we exceeded it slightly with 16.5 tables. Mentor recruitment was straightforward, while Rookie recruitment required additional effort, with valuable support from Laura Beck, Peggy Sue Verkerk, and Al Utz.

Highlights

- **Positive feedback:** Rookies appreciated playing in a supportive environment and asked about future events.
- **Enhanced social time:** Lunch was extended to 2 hours, with Rookie-Mentor pairs seated together, a trivia quiz, and opportunities to meet Founding Members.
- **Prizes:** Adjusted to include free plays for lowest N/S and E/W pairs, encouraging continued play at BCON.
- **Founding Members:** Honoured for their contributions during lunch.

Financial Summary

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Lunch	$\$7 \times 64 = \448	$\$7 \times 66 = \462
Prizes	$10 \times \$9 = \90	$18 \times \$9 = \162
Total	\$538	\$624

Conclusion

The event was an outstanding success, attracting players from both BCON and NOTL clubs. The additional time before the game allowed Rookies to meet other players and learn more about their club, fostering a stronger sense of connection. Players at all levels expressed how much they enjoyed both the social gathering and the Rookie-Mentor game. Unit 255's support was acknowledged on each free play and will be further recognized in the upcoming article to members.

On behalf of the Bridge Centre of Niagara, I sincerely thank you for your support.

Muriel Tremblay
Project Liaison

A short overview of the membership numbers.

The Unit had 281 members on January 1, 2025. This was reduced to 274 as of April 1, 2025 and has been holding steady with 273 members currently.

I have attached the latest ACBL report (QUIP) showing the position of the Unit over the last 36 months.

I have been possibly lacking in responding to the retention of members spreadsheet issued by the ACBL on a quarterly basis.

I have sent e-mails to 6 members in September and 2 members this month.

The member summary report submitted by ACBL indicates that of the 273 members, 64 will need to renew their membership by the end of this year, 130 by the end of 2026, 45 by the end of 2027, 26 by the end of 2028 and 8 by the end of 2029.

The question is should be approached some of these members or let it runs its course by ACBL. (see in and out report attached)

Wiebe