

## 2015 - Year of the C-word

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But the Fisher-Schwartz partnership was only the first domino to fall. Soon thereafter similar allegations were made against the world's top-ranking partnership, Fulvio Fantoni and Claudio Nunes of Monaco, German champions Josef Piekarek and Alex Smirnov, and Cezary Balicki and Adam Zmudzinski of Poland (who have been winning major titles as a pair for over 30 years).

At this point in time only Piekarek and Smirnov have confessed to their guilt (to their credit I suppose). Official investigations of the other 3 accused pairs are ongoing and it is difficult to predict where they might lead. For whatever its worth, my sense is that the vast majority of the world's leading players find the evidence against all of those accused to be both clear and compelling.

The implications of all of this are both shocking and tragic for bridge: the results of dozens of major national and world championships, possibly going back for decades, have been so irretrievably tainted that they have been rendered all but meaningless.

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One thing that has certainly changed is that a group of world class players, led by Boye, took the initiative to try to clean up the game they love. Rumors about all 4 of the accused pairs had been swirling around for years, but the relevant authorities either refused to investigate or were incapable of seeing the light. Boye decided that someone had to do something and he bravely took it upon himself to be that someone.

But most likely Boye would not have got very far had it not been for relatively recent changes in technology. Only in the past few years have tournament organizers began to present video streams of their premier events on the Internet. Those videos, along with the bidding and play records produced by BBO vugraph, were the primary sources of information used by Boye and company to crack the codes that were being used by the alleged cheating pairs.

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Money likely had something to do with it. Nowadays the most successful professional players can earn hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Their jobs consist of travelling the world to high-level tournaments often in luxurious style. Some work no more than a few months each year. Not a bad life if you ask me.

However, as we unfortunately see on BBO, there has to be more to it than that. On BBO (and of course in live bridge clubs and tournaments) there is little if any money awarded to the winners yet people still cheat. Why is that? I can only assume that ego, status, and the quest for masterpoints are sufficient motivators for some of our fellow bridge players to act in a way that would be unthinkable to the rest of us.

As I would like to go into 2016 on a more positive note, I will share some good news with you:

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While I believe that Boye Brogeland's initiative was unfortunately necessary (due to the long term failure of administrators to adequately police our game), it should be said that his actions violated a cardinal rule for proper behavior at bridge: that public accusations of cheating are completely inappropriate.

So please do not take my admiration and appreciation of Boye as a license to launch your own public anti-cheating campaign on BBO. If you think your opponents might be cheating, the only proper channel to go through is to e-mail [abuse@bridgebase.com](mailto:abuse@bridgebase.com). We have highly-trained professionals on our staff that will investigate any cheating allegations on our site and take action if we find that the evidence leaves no doubt as to guilt (the bar is set this high in order to ensure that no innocent person is ever convicted).

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#### 2015 - Anno del C-word

Il mondo di bridge tende a cambiare molto lentamente, ma 2015 sicuramente ricordato come un anno veramente importante nella storia del nostro gioco.

Nel mese di agosto, superstar norvegese Boye Brogeland si fece avanti con le accuse che Lotan Fisher e Ron Schwartz, una giovane coppia israeliana che aveva vinto diversi eventi importanti nel corso degli ultimi anni, sono stati barare. Naturalmente Boye presentato prove a sostegno della sua affermazione e, nei mesi a seguire, ulteriori prove emerse.

Ma la partnership Fisher-Schwartz è stata solo la prima tessera del domino a cadere. Poco dopo le accuse simili sono state fatte contro di partnership di alto livello del mondo, Fulvio Fantoni e Claudio Nunes di Monaco, campioni tedeschi Josef Piekarek e Alex Smirnoff, e Cezary Balicki e Adam Zmudzinski della Polonia (che hanno vinto titoli importanti come coppia per più di 30 anni).

A questo punto nel tempo solo Piekarek e Smirnoff hanno confessato la loro colpa (a loro credito suppongo). Sono in corso le indagini ufficiali delle altre 3 coppie accusati ed è difficile prevedere dove potrebbero portare. Per qualunque il suo valore, la mia sensazione è che la stragrande maggioranza dei giocatori più importanti del mondo trovare le prove contro tutti coloro che sono accusati di essere sia chiara e convincente.

Le implicazioni di tutto questo sono sia scioccante e tragico per il ponte: i risultati di decine di grandi campionati nazionali e mondiali, forse risalenti per decenni, sono state così irrimediabilmente contaminato che sono stati resi del tutto priva di senso.

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Scandali barare nella parte superiore del ponte di mondo sono stati molto pochi e lontani tra (ricordo solo due altri da quando ho iniziato a giocare a bridge nei primi anni 1980). Niente neanche lontanamente vicino agli eventi del 2015 si è mai accaduto prima. Cosa è cambiato?

Una cosa che ha certamente cambiato è che un gruppo di giocatori di classe mondiale, guidata da Boye, ha preso l'iniziativa per cercare di ripulire il gioco che amano. Voci su tutti e 4 le coppie accusati erano stati turbinano intorno per anni, ma le autorità competenti o hanno rifiutato di indagare o non erano in grado di vedere la luce. Boye deciso che qualcuno doveva fare qualcosa e lui coraggiosamente si assunse il compito di essere quel qualcuno.

Ma molto probabilmente Boye non avrebbe ottenuto molto lontano se non fosse stato per relativamente recenti cambiamenti nella tecnologia. Solo negli ultimi anni hanno organizzatori del torneo hanno cominciato a presentare i flussi video dei loro eventi premier su Internet. Quei video, insieme con i record di offerta e di gioco prodotte da BBO vugraph, sono state le fonti primarie di informazioni utilizzate da Boye e società per rompere i codici che venivano utilizzati dai presunti coppie barare.

Giochiamo ponte, perché è così bello, stimolante, e divertente gioco e per le tante persone meravigliose si arriva a interagire e competere con chi pensano allo stesso modo. Il solo pensiero di aver dissacrato il nostro grande gioco attraverso barare è così ripugnante la maggior parte di noi che il concetto stesso è abbastanza per farci sentire male. Com'è possibile che tanti talenti ponte sorprendenti hanno apparentemente caduto in disgrazia?

Il denaro probabilmente aveva qualcosa a che fare con esso. Al giorno d'oggi i giocatori professionisti di maggior successo possono guadagnare centinaia di migliaia di dollari ogni anno. I loro lavori sono costituiti da viaggiare per il mondo

style. Some work no more than a few months each year. Not a bad life if you ask me.

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per tornei di alto livello spesso in stile lussuoso. Alcuni funzionano non più di un paio di mesi l'anno. Non una brutta vita, se mi chiedete.

Tuttavia, come purtroppo vediamo su BBO, ci deve essere qualcosa di più che. Su BBO (e, naturalmente, nei club bridge dal vivo e tornei) non vi è poca o nessuna denaro assegnato ai vincitori ma la gente ancora barare. Perché? Posso solo supporre che l'ego, lo stato, e la ricerca di masterpoints sono motivatori sufficienti per alcuni dei nostri giocatori di bridge colleghi ad agire in un modo che sarebbe impensabile il resto di noi.

Come mi piacerebbe andare in 2016 su una nota più positiva, voglio condividere alcune buone notizie con voi:

- 1) Contrariamente all'opinione popolare, è molto possibile identificare coloro che barare al ponte di linea. I nostri strumenti principali per individuare i possibili codici sono di natura statistica (Boye e delle società tecniche simili per aiutare a identificare quali coppie meritato un esame più approfondito).
- 2) Tali statistiche suggeriscono fortemente che la percentuale di giocatori che barano BBO è molto più piccolo di quanto si possa pensare.
- 3) Le sanzioni per coloro che sono catturati barare su BBO, soprattutto nei nostri giochi ACBL (in cui abbiamo la responsabilità di essere vigili) sono gravi. ACBL viene inviato un rapporto dettagliato circa uno dei suoi membri che vengono catturati barare su BBO. Ci piacerebbe fare lo stesso per qualsiasi altro ponte Federazioni Nazionali che erano disposti a masterpoints premio sul nostro sito.
- 4) Noi certamente potevamo fare meglio in questo settore. Mi auguro che gli scandali barare del 2015 contribuirà a ispirare e motivare coloro che gestiscono e lavorano per BBO (me compreso) a migliorare.
- 5) BBO offre varie forme di ponte online in cui è o molto difficile o del tutto impossibile barare. Il nostro software comprende anche strutture che lo rendono facile per

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anche strutture che lo rendono facile per voi per tenere traccia di quali membri BBO sono onesti e piacevole e per evitare quelli che si trova ad essere disonesti o maleducato. Si prega di e-mail [support@bridgebase.com](mailto:support@bridgebase.com) se volete maggiori informazioni su come funzionano queste cose.

Mentre io credo che l'iniziativa di Boye Brogeland è stato purtroppo necessario (a causa del fallimento a lungo termine di amministratori di sorvegliare in modo adeguato il nostro gioco), va detto che le sue azioni hanno violato una regola fondamentale per il corretto comportamento in ponte: che le accuse pubbliche di truffa sono completamente non appropriato.

Quindi, per favore non prendere la mia ammirazione e l'apprezzamento di Boye come una licenza per lanciare la propria campagna anti-truffa pubblico su BBO. Se pensate che i vostri avversari potrebbero essere barare, l'unico canale corretto per passare attraverso è a e-mail [abuse@bridgebase.com](mailto:abuse@bridgebase.com). Abbiamo professionisti del nostro personale che sarà indagare eventuali casi sospetti sul nostro sito e intervenire se troviamo che le prove non lascia dubbi sulla colpevolezza altamente qualificato (il bar si trova questo alto, al fine di assicurare che nessuna persona innocente è mai condannato).

Per molte migliaia di persone oneste e dignitose che giocano e guardano ponte sul BBO, spero che tu abbia un grande 2016! Per il piccolo numero di membri BBO che ingannano, si prega di dare un'occhiata da vicino allo specchio - non credo che vi piace quello che vedi. Si prega di rendere il vostro risoluzione del nuovo anno per iniziare a giocare il nostro gioco meraviglioso con l'onore e il rispetto che merita.

Fred Gitelman, Presidente  
Ponte in linea di base, Ltd.

PS Noi di solito parla di cambiamenti imminenti software in nostri messaggi di fine anno, ma questa volta abbiamo giudicato che fosse più importante

concentrarsi invece sugli eventi straordinari del 2015. Per la cronaca, ci sono alcuni grandi ed emozionanti modifiche software in arrivo presto 2016. Stick in giro - Penso che vi piacerà ciò che si vede!