

Introducing Edgar

Continued from the D17 National Board Report

Spring 2022

Instead of identifying single hands that look suspicious in a vacuum, EDGAR will be able to identify whether funny-looking bridge decisions are representative of a larger pattern or constitute a one-off aberration. Inspired by the work of Nicolas Hammond, Kit Woolsey, and others in the field, EDGAR will finally show us the forest through the trees. The ACBL believes that players will have confidence in EDGAR's ability to identify cheaters without raising suspicion of innocent players.

While refinements to EDGAR continue, the ACBL is considering how to best balance concerns around transparency, accessibility, validation, maintenance, and control. Goals include:

- * Providing everyone the information needed to understand how it works, which gives bridge players important security in being evaluated by a machine;
- * Providing access to the cheating algorithm and operational details, which means it can be verified by statisticians, programmers, mathematicians, and anyone else who wants to "look under the hood" to see if it works as intended;
- * Inviting contributions of the brightest minds in the bridge world towards improvements and refinements;
- * Making EDGAR available to all bridge organizations at little to no cost. This project has been a labor of love and goodwill for the benefit of bridge (running the algorithm at scale will provide entrepreneurs an important opportunity here).

The project has been managed by AJ Stephani, Chair of the ACBL Appeals and Charges Committee, as part of a comprehensive transformation in the way cheating cases are handled by the ACBL. However, the ACBL is hopeful that EDGAR will prove to become a critical tool in both detection and prosecution methods around the world.

In January, the ACBL Board approved the creation of the Institute of Bridge Arbitration (IBA) -- an independent, impartial body of volunteer bridge experts who will make final decisions on questions regarding high-level ethical bridge violations. The IBA will streamline the adjudication of major cheating cases. In addition, it will remove the need for ACBL Board of Director involvement in making final decisions in charges of this level, allowing the Board to focus on strategic directives.