



ISPA INFO

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Presidents and Fellow Members,

2020 has been the strangest year in Skat that I have ever seen. We basically just started the year playing only three tournaments in California, Nevada, and Texas when the world was hit with a deadly pandemic (Covid-19).

This pandemic forced people to distance themselves from one another and therefore made playing Skat a high-risk activity of spreading the virus. It was also known to be much more fatal to the senior population and our Skat membership consists of many senior members. Therefore, ISPA and their members needed to act quickly and responsibly. We canceled all our scheduled tournaments, the AGM in Montreal and weekly club play.

Thank you to all the Skat players. Due to all your efforts and safety precautions, I have not heard of a single death linked to Covid-19 within the Skat community. I am so glad to report I have not even heard of a Skat player getting infected, which means everyone did a great job in taking the pandemic seriously and caring about one another's health.

It has been eight months of this pandemic and it is still not completely safe to re-open. Therefore, I sadly must report that the WM 2020 in Edmonton Canada had been officially canceled. It was scheduled to be held in October of this year. The good news is that ISPA World has approved the 2022 WM, which will be awarded back to Edmonton, Canada. This will give us plenty of time to make the event even bigger and better with more fundraising. Also, the dates have been changed to August 12th to 20th, 2022, which is much better than October. The hotel has also agreed not to raise the prices on us either. So, plan for a great WM in 2022.

In the meantime, about 25 players have been playing a weekly game of Skat online @ Euroskat on Thursdays at 7:15 pm mountain time and Sundays at 6 pm. Cleveland and Ontario have been having online games on ISS (ask those clubs for more details on times and dates). A few smaller clubs have slowly started to reopen, using hand sanitizers and masks, new cards and disinfecting tables and chairs.

Alberta did host three tournaments in October, starting with Calgary, followed by Red Deer and finally Edmonton in the week of October 3 to 11. I am pleased to announce that 20 people attended each tournament, all players are safe, and no one

was infected. Everyone had fun and realized how much withdrawal we had experienced by not playing with people face to face, even though some faces were covered with masks.

On the lighter side, there will be no elections this year, so you will all have to put up with me as president for at least one more year.

As far as tournaments go, I was not greedy this year; I only won one tournament, but I do miss everyone's camaraderie.

Again, thank you all for staying safe, and caring about your fellow players. We all have Skat fever, but we must stay safe, as we consider reengaging in our Skat nights carefully. As we learn more about the virus, small groups can open with precaution with the main rule that if you are not feeling well, please stay home.

Ron Link

President ISPA Canada

FROM THE EDITOR

The weekend of November 1 marked the end of daylight savings time for 2020 and if you follow social media, you probably have seen and likely agreed to comments on the fact, that we really did not need an additional hour of this year 2020. In fact, most of us wish, we could fast forward to times of past pandemic, or at a minimum to the release date of the first effective and fully tested vaccine against Covid-19. There is no doubt in our minds that we will have to suffer tournament withdrawal for a while longer, as the second wave of infections already demonstrates that we better continue reducing our travel intentions to an absolute minimum. It is a shame really, knowing how much we all love this game.

We played, to the best of our knowledge, a total of six ISPA tournaments this year, of which the

first three were held before the Western hemisphere even realized there was a problem with the world. That however changed quite quickly when the World Health Authority declared the pandemic on March 11 and the airlines subsequently canceled flights en masse. We were all stopped dead in our tracks: No more tournaments, no annual general meeting, and, most devastatingly, no World Championship! We have, without a doubt, a particularly good reason for what is likely the shortest newsletter in the history of ISPA North America.

Nonetheless, we have been hearing that some clubs have started playing again, and as Ron mentioned, with great success in avoiding getting sick. In addition, some folks got together and built online clubs, such as Cleveland, Edmonton, Red Deer, to name the ones that we are aware of currently. One must after all continue to sharpen his/her Skat skills, so that when a certain level of normalcy returns, we do not have to pay too much in terms of bump money.

What do we know of 2021 so far? At this time, it is decided that the Las Vegas tournament, traditionally one of the first of each year, has been canceled, Bill Thompson, the ISPA US president, has confirmed as much as of today:

Dear members,

With a heavy heart, I must announce that we will not be holding our annual tournament in Las Vegas in January 2021 due to Covid-19. We hope to resume our tournament schedule when we can safely conduct our tournaments and the pandemic is past us. Meanwhile, stay safe and healthy, and Gut Blatt.

Warmest regards,

Bill Thompson

Pres. ISPA USA

Well, let us hope that we do not have to cancel too many tournaments this coming year so that we can enjoy each other's presence once again soon. Please do remember that Edmonton is going to be hosting the World Championship, but it will be in 2022, not next year.

To a better 2021 with lots of Gut Blatt! Until then, stay safe, consider playing online, and when playing in your club, wear masks. Remember wearing a mask protects others, so if all are wearing masks, all are protected.

Gerd Reiner

Webmaster ISPA North America

31. North American Championship and Master's in Anaheim, California

2020's Skat opener was the 31st North American Championship and the Master's Division A and B in Anaheim, California, starting January 7. 35 Players came together to battle out the title of North American Champion. The winner of the tournament was Jens Hemmann from Germany, but since Jens is not living in North America, the title was awarded to Frank Heuvelmans from Ottawa!



From left: 3. Frank Reuter, 1. Jens Hemmann, 2. Frank Heuvelmans

Top 10 Overall Individual Standings North American Championship Anaheim 2020:

Pos	Table	Total	Player #	Player	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3	Series 4	Series 5
1	1	6,445	205	Hemmann, Jens	1,248	1,414	1,167	1,605	1,011
2	1	6,136	101	Heuvelmans, Frank	1,339	942	1,140	857	1,858
3	1	5,758	207	Reuter, Frank	1,016	1,532	1,319	465	1,426
4	1	5,504	106	Huisman, Kristina	1,433	1,401	580	1,296	794
5	2	5,087	304	Helwig, Richard	908	807	1,060	1,079	1,233
6	2	5,066	105	Steinmetz, Hans-Juergen	980	625	1,067	1,251	1,143
7	2	5,047	406	Morlock, Richard	1,146	981	1,255	500	1,165
8	2	5,017	203	Thompson, Bill	1,298	1,197	551	663	1,308
9	3	5,017	402	Stewin, Hans	783	1,246	999	1,025	964
10	3	4,979	204	Eisenkolb, Bernd	847	1,302	1,521	561	748

Top 10 Overall Individual Standings Master's A:

Pos	Table	Total	Player #	Player	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3
1	1	3,780	301	Hemmann, Jens	1,591	920	1,269
2	1	3,542	403	Morlock, Richard	927	1,334	1,281
3	1	3,503	302	Reuter, Frank	1,404	1,211	888
4	1	3,155	101	Heuvelmans, Frank	906	1,466	783
5	2	3,146	402	Stewin, Hans	1,131	1,533	482
6	2	3,122	103	McCormick, Scott	951	764	1,407
7	2	2,686	203	Eisenkolb, Bernd	1,236	784	666
8	2	2,613	401	Klasen, Fred	381	1,587	645
9	3	2,357	201	Huisman, Kristina	896	666	795
10	3	2,353	303	Schindler, Dietmar	861	1,050	442

Top 10 Overall Individual Standings Master's B:

Pos	Table	Total	Player #	Player	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3
1	1	3,960	302	Hirsch, Mike	1,882	1,414	664
2	1	3,725	204	Dankemeyer, Eve	1,267	1,032	1,426
3	1	3,363	401	Kuen, Dan	925	1,523	915
4	1	3,135	304	Weiss, Uwe	1,505	631	999
5	2	2,969	301	Dankemeyer, Frank	1,349	746	874
6	2	2,877	303	Gipner, Gerhard	1,004	1,385	488
7	2	2,564	103	Beckermann, Roger	-103	1,227	1,440
8	2	2,535	201	Thompson, Bill	942	654	939
9	3	2,496	304	Leissner, Jim	660	933	903
10	3	2,494	203	Berger, Walter	648	1,013	833

Las Vegas Tournament 2020

Next up on the calendar was Las Vegas, Nevada on January 11/12, 2020. The organizers' idea of combining this tournament in the same week as Anaheim proves to be a successful endeavor, as we enjoyed 82 players at the tournament.



From left: 2. Brendan Hunt, 1. Ron Link, 3. Frank Reuter

Top 10 Individual Standings Las Vegas Tournament 2020:

Pos	Total	Player #	Player	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3	Series 4	Series 5
1	6,596	120	Link,Ron	1,225	1,618	1,732	1,087	934
2	6,542	311	Hunt,Brendan	1,308	1,310	1,454	631	1,839
3	6,258	219	Reuter, Frank	864	1,656	1,526	1,199	1,013
4	5,812	307	Dorawa, Karsten	1,364	1,146	782	1,129	1,391
5	5,792	313	Pauly, Guenter	314	1,229	1,809	1,449	991
6	5,752	116	MC Cormick, Scott	1,538	888	756	1,489	1,081
7	5,749	107	Ohm, Bill	676	1,418	1,061	924	1,670
8	5,697	401	Kuen, Dan	1,534	1,308	993	1,585	277
9	5,575	110	Heuvelmans, Frank	1,361	1,338	846	1,348	682
10	5,563	213	Thompson, Kevin	1,004	986	732	1,812	1029

6th US Open Tournament, Houston, Texas

Following Las Vegas, the ISPA executive awarded Houston the honors to host the 2020 US Open Championship. The tournament was played at the Houston Liederkrantz, a beautiful club, where singing Shanties after the games was highly encouraged!



From left: 2. Scott McCormick, 1. Roger Beckerman, 3. Mike Kivlin

Top 10 Overall Individual Standings 6th US Open:

1003	Beckerman	Roger	626	1277	1564	904	1412	5783
1073	McCormick	Scott	956	1156	1494	960	862	5428
1047	Kivlin	Mike	818	885	1284	1462	842	5291
1065	Leissner	Jim	1247	1232	1089	829	863	5260
1111	Stewin	Hans	1503	498	1218	1400	636	5255
1114	Stolte	Steve	388	1292	1552	948	1042	5222
1048	Klasen	Fred	1321	824	518	927	1194	4784
1018	Eggers	Johannes	1355	1594	673	899	230	4751
1102	Schroeder	Juergen	1025	704	843	969	1143	4684
1093	Reiner	Gerd	520	1177	869	457	1609	4632

Texas Tournament 2020, New Braunfels, Texas

After the US Open in Houston, Texas played its tournament the subsequent weekend in New Braunfels:



From left: 2. Kevin Thompson, 1. Johannes Eggers, 3. Steve Stolte

Top 10 Individual Standings Texas Tournament 2020:

Overall Scores				
IDNO	Score	Table/Chair	Last Name	First Name
1018	5847	101	Eggers	Johannes
1121	5390	102	Thompson	Kevin
1114	5374	103	Stolte	Steve
1120	5198	104	Thompson	Bill
1046	5183	201	Kipp	Raymond
1073	5179	202	McCormick	Scott
1124	5005	203	Waak	Conway
1047	4800	204	Kivlin	Mike
1003	4739	301	Beckerman	Roger
1065	4682	302	Leissner	Jim

COVID-19 BREAK MARCH TO OCTOBER

After the Texas tournaments, the original schedule was to play the Edmonton tournament beginning of April, but the declaration of the pandemic canceled our Skat plans. All subsequent ISPA tournaments were canceled until further notice, and this included the cancellation of the World Championship in Edmonton, originally planned for October 2020.



Alberta Tournaments (October 3-11)

Not playing Skat tournaments for six months made people wanting to return to our beloved game. Some clubs started playing again within their clubs under special consideration for the Covid situation. Eventually, the idea was born to use the time we had planned for the WM to play an Alberta series of three tournaments, starting with Calgary, followed by Red Deer, and ending with the Edmonton tournament. While invitations were sent out, nobody really believed that people would travel to Alberta, given the imposed travel restrictions and the resurge in cases. The series became an Alberta competition, with a subset of players, who ensured that special Covid related considerations were adhered to. The ask was for people to only participate if they were not exhibiting any symptoms and had not been in contact with people that had traveled and experienced any symptoms either.

Here are the results.

Calgary Tournament 2020

Under the pandemic, Calgary hosted 18 Albertan players, and for the first time, Eric managed to win his own tournament. Here are the winners:



From left: 3. Danny Ridder, 2. Ron Link, 1. Eric Luz

Top 10 Individual Standings Calgary Tournament 2020:

Name	Club	Scarr#	ISPA#	Round1	Round2	Round3	Round4	Round5	Total
1 LUZ, Eric	CAL	101	11	1184	1627	1060	1327	1356	6554
2 LINK, Ron	EDM	402	33	1145	1394	1323	1055	1119	6036
3 RIDDER, Danny	EDM	204	40	1363	1328	1384	696	1084	5855
4 RIDDER, Peter	EDM	202	41	896	1242	1200	1811	667	5816
5 ROHRER, Joe	RD	301	263	1282	997	1150	1079	893	5401
6 WEISS, Uwe	EDM	201	872	500	1440	794	1712	824	5270
7 LUZ, Bernd	CAL	102	10	1271	938	761	528	1771	5269
8 FRUHEN, Christian	CAL	203	24	1029	1273	886	673	1079	4940
9 LAVOIE, Victor	EDM	104	851	353	836	2007	966	466	4628
10 LAVOIE, Joslyn	EDM	103	889	223	1063	1161	1145	955	4547

Red Deer Tournament 2020

Red Deer played in the middle of the week and had 21 players, which, all considering, was a nice turnout. Congratulations to the winners, especially to Kristina, who managed to leave the guys behind her:



From left: 2. Ron Link, 1. Kristina Huisman, 3. Peter Ridder

Top 10 Individual Standings Red Deer Tournament 2020:

HUISMAN, Kristina	EDM	301	446	1171	541	1936	1158	1221	6027
LINK, Ron	EDM	206	33	947	1223	931	949	1393	5443
RIDDER, Peter	EDM	204	41	895	1716	1234	523	1019	5387
SCHNEIDER, Oskar	CAL	105	808	1343	889	462	1587	1035	5315
LUZ, Eric	CAL	102	11	1346	972	362	1566	1014	5260
REINER, Gerd	RD	403	689	789	1120	1474	899	958	5240
SOMMER, Michael	EDM	202	49	954	219	1376	686	1531	4766
RIDDER, Danny	EDM	205	40	720	1269	1040	970	615	4614
SCHULTZ, Walter	EDM	203	46	1032	959	1361	1028	221	4601
BUCHMANN, Mike	CAL	106		-162	1450	1249	966	938	4441

Edmonton Tournament 2020

The Edmonton tournament marked the last in the miniseries with 20 players participating. Congratulations to Danny Ridder and all winners:



From left: 3. Ron Link, 2. Michael Sommer, 1. Danny Ridder

Top 10 Individual Standings Edmonton Tournament 2020:

RIDDER, Danny	EDM	203	40	1240	1430	780	1279	1346	6075
SOMMER, Michael	EDM	101	49	1133	559	1064	1757	1360	5873
LINK, Ron	EDM	302	33	1286	1217	1480	879	774	5636
LAVOIE, Victor	CAL	402	851	836	885	1193	1173	1299	5386
BUCHMANN, Mike	CAL	404	28	742	821	2209	313	1295	5380
POKRANDT, George	EDM	205	472	893	1250	744	1382	1105	5374
SCHULTZ, Walter	EDM	201	46	1128	971	1015	1397	844	5355
REINER, Gerd	RD	104	689	1087	1330	1015	705	1113	5250
RADKE, Bill	EDM	204	653	1148	1410	519	1128	1006	5211
WEHR, Kurt	EDM	102	893	770	1090	1201	573	1507	5141

Well, this wraps up the ISPA newsletter for reporting on the 2020 tournaments, we can all agree that we would not like to have a repeat of the cancellation of tournaments too deep into 2021. With Las Vegas already canceled as per Bill's note above, we will be off to a bad start, it is however the right thing to do to continue canceling tournaments for the time being.

Based on what I am hearing from my airline friends, the airlines are pushing the governments to consider changing the rule for self-isolation, at least here in Canada. With a bit of luck, one must

only self-isolate for 48 hours in the future, which would help with that side of the travel. In addition, some airlines are now offering free health insurance, which is another big deterrent when considering travel.

What will really mark the beginning of the return to a somewhat "normal life" however is when an effective, tried, tested and true vaccine becomes available, which, if you believe the experts, is going to take at least another six months. If that were true, we could at least play half of a season, whatever that would look like.

The editor is kindly asking the club contacts to continue reporting on a decision with a five-week advanced notice whether your tournament for 2021 is being held. That way, we can keep all players informed in a timely fashion.

Finally, if you are considering continuing play at your club, please remember that wearing masks is effective in preventing the spread of the virus, as you can see in this example from Red Deer:



The other behavior that helps is to not continue the use of the same card deck for a week, which should not be difficult, since most clubs do play once a week.

Whatever you decide, please stay safe, so that when we can travel again, we can enjoy each other's company in the future.

Gerd Reiner