

## Job Description: Database Manager (DBM)

1. The DBM is not an official position. I volunteered to undertake downloading the roster from the ACBL every month and uploading it into a relational database for the purpose of generating targeted emails. At the time the ACBL did not offer a way to do this. By the time that they did I was using the database in many ways that were not possible with the ACBL's service. So, we never used it.
2. Purposes:
  - (a) To provide an accurate and timely source of information to be used for communication with the players.
  - (b) To provide an accurate and timely source of data for decisions about tournaments.
  - (c) To determine the winners of the Best in Class awards.
  - (d) To aid in other tasks as needed.
3. The database:
  - (a) The data is currently stored in two copies of a MySQL relational database:
    - i. The first database is on a local hard drive. It essentially serves as a test environment and emergency backup. Complicated or dangerous tasks are first performed locally.
    - ii. The actual data is located on a server rented from iPower. I pay about \$200 per year for access to the server. Since I use it for many other purposes I do not charge the district for this.
    - iii. The two databases are close to identical. Only information that is keyed in individually—nicknames, changes of email addresses, and membership in committees are entered only on iPower. The players table on the local server is periodically replaced with a copy of the official one on iPower.
  - (b) Formats:
    - i. Both databases use an Apache server and a MySQL database. The interactive scripts are written in php to produce web pages with HTML and JavaScript. All of these products are open-source with no charge for usage.
    - ii. There may be better ways to accomplish the same objectives. These products were free, and I was able to teach myself how to use them when I was still running my software company in the early teens. All of the products are extensively documented online.
4. Tables:
  - (a) Players: one record per ACBL number.
  - (b) Players\_date\_points: one record per active player per month.
  - (c) There should be a table for the sponsoring entities: unit number, D25, or NABC. Currently these are entered but not validated when tournaments are defined.
  - (d) Tournaments: one record for each D25 regional or sectional + all NABCs.
  - (e) Attendance: one record per player per tournament.
  - (f) Advancements: one record per player per rank achieved.
  - (g) Clubs: one record per active club in New England.
  - (h) D25\_points is used for the Best in Class award.
  - (i) Winners, winners\_link, and winners\_link\_players are used for the Winners Boards.
5. Detailed documentation: <https://nebridge.org/pages/85/>, which links to other pages.
6. Periodic Updates:
  - (a) Monthly: A new roster is posted on the ACBL site on or about the seventh of the month. The roster must be downloaded (probably in pieces) selected by zip code using an option on the

- MyACBL web page. Then the programs that update the players and player\_date\_points tables on the database with the new roster must be run. This takes about three or four hours of computer time.
- (b) A csv file with advancements in rank in the previous month is emailed to the Webmaster on or about the seventh of every month. The programs that update the database must then be run. These are informative in determining how active a player has been. This takes less than an hour.
7. Attendance updates:
- (a) Records must be requested from the ACBL when the tournament's final results have been posted. The files received are in LZH format. They must then be converted into csv files using ACBL score. The program that updates the database must then be run.
  - (b) In theory the same procedure could be run on the NABC tournaments, but I have never asked the ACBL for those files because I did not want to draw attention to the fact that we were sending emails to players in other districts. Instead, the program that updates the database must be run with different specs. This process takes a few hours of computer time, but it only is done three times a year.
8. Ad hoc updates:
- (a) The players table on the database has more fields than the roster. Sometimes these fields need to be updated using the maintenance screen. Examples are the “familiar name” field and the “Executive Committee?” checkbox field.
  - (b) If a player unsubscribes to a generic tournament promotion (as opposed to a type of email that has its own list), the “OK to email” field must be changed.
  - (c) If a player indicates that the email address is obsolete, the “email” and “email source fields must be changed.
9. MailChimp selections:
- (a) The phpMyAdmin program in the admin section on the iPower server is used to enter and execute SQL statements to create files to be transferred to MailChimp. This requires a good knowledge of the database structure and the ability to write SQL statement that accurately reflect the requirements for the mailing. Sometimes this is complicated. The results should be checked by someone, but they never have been in the past.
  - (b) The SQL statements are stored in folders on the local computer so that they can be used as a basis for future selections.
  - (c) D25 currently must reuse “audiences” in MailChimp. The process of defining a new audience and populating it is therefore rather complicated. Someone else might be able to concoct a different method. Perhaps a different service that allows an unlimited number of list should be considered.
10. Other responsibilities:
- (a) The DBM runs programs after every tournament to analyze attendance by unit and by range of points. The results are emailed to all members of the Executive Committee.
  - (b) Ad hoc requests are not infrequent.
11. Documentation of the programs: Since there has never been a second user, the php programs are NOT well documented.
12. Security: Access to the admin section of the iPower server has user id/password security. At present there is only one user.
13. Backup: I periodically back up the database onto my local system. I do not back up the programs or other files because there are duplicates on the local system.
14. Scope: The current approach is rather thorough, probably more thorough than that used

by other districts. Perhaps someone should decide whether some of the current objectives are worth the effort.

15. Requirements:

- (a) If the new DBM is more familiar with a different environment, someone must convert the programs or rewrite them
- (b) If the current structure is used, decisions must be made about where to store it. I don't really want to share my iPower account, and Megahertz Computer does not allow us to define our own database and write programs on NEBridge.org.

16. Compensation: The DBM currently is allowed to play for free in regional events. I have not used this for grassroots events—NAP and GNT qualifying tournaments.