

Point Taken

This was a very busy and productive week on several different fronts. District 141 and United Airlines presented their positions before a Grievance Mediator concerning the United dependability point system (d.p.s.) and its application. The issue concerned the provision of the d.p.s. that calls for an investigative review hearing when an employee accumulates a total of five to five-and-a-half points.

The company had been escalating employees to a discharge hearing without conducting the final warning hearing, if additional absences occurred before the initial hearing could be scheduled.

The Union's position has always been that the final warning hearing is a requirement of the system and could not be waived; the Company believed they were correct in accelerating discipline based on accumulated points.

The Mediator listened to testimony from both sides, reviewed our Contract and the d.p.s. policy and agreed with the IAM that the Final Warning hearing must be conducted before any further action could be taken.

Based on this decision, United has committed to conduct this necessary hearing for all affected employees in the future. In addition, discussions are being held to return previously discharged employees that did not receive this hearing to work.

Points in the mail

As reported last week, the company has developed a procedure that allows individual employees to receive status reports of their accumulated points in a secure way, using the company's email system.

Information will be published in the near future outlining this process and also explaining how employees can activate their email account within the United system.

A testing period will begin next week in order to insure the reliability and security of this system. It will then be brought to additional



Un-breaking our bank

Wages now stand alone issue in United talks

stations as the system and explanations can be expanded. The expectation is that the system will be available to all IAM members by the end of September.

Wages & Benefits: Sole focus

Negotiations between United and District 141 continued during the week.

We were able to come to tentative agreement on several areas of our contract that have been the subject of discussion for quite some time. These agreements now allow us to close the discussion on those issues and move to other proposed topics. These agreements will be reviewed again before an overall contract agreement is reached.

We then moved the negotiations into the very serious areas of wages and benefits.

While we have included these issues in other discussions we are now focusing on them as standalone proposals. Our intent is to aggressively negotiate for improvement in these crucial areas so that a final agreement may be reached and brought back for review and ratification by the entire membership.

While both sides have agreed to focus on these important elements of our contract we know that reaching an agreement on them will not be easily or quickly completed. These are the subjects of negotiations that are the hardest to reach agreement on – but they are also the most essential parts of a successful negotiation process.

We will continue to meet with United over the next several weeks in an effort to resolve these issues and improve the standard of living for our members and their families.