



American Contract  
Bridge League

# **ACBL Handbook**

## **2015 ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations**

### **Foreword**

The American Contract Bridge League, known as the ACBL, is a not-for-profit membership organization for bridge players throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda. ACBL's primary goal is to serve the bridge-related interests of its members and to promote, grow and sustain the game of bridge.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide members, organizers of sanctioned bridge games, and elected officials responsible for the administration of bridge with details of the rules and regulations and policies and procedures of ACBL. The Handbook is updated after each meeting of the ACBL Board of Directors. The complete Handbook is available on the ACBL website at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

When changes are made within the Handbook, the changes usually result from policy decisions made by the ACBL Board of Directors. In the event of an inconsistency between this Handbook and specific actions of the ACBL Board of Directors, the latter shall prevail.

I believe the material in this Handbook will answer most questions concerning ACBL regulations and policies. If you feel any areas have not been explained adequately or are not fully understandable, please contact the ACBL for help.

Robert Hartman  
CEO ACBL

You can write to us at:

American Contract Bridge League  
6575 Windchase Blvd  
Horn Lake MS 38637-1523

You can contact us through our Customer Service line:

662-253-3100  
Email – [service@acbl.org](mailto:service@acbl.org)

Additionally, you can place sales orders by calling:

Baron Barclay at 1-800-274-2221

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## **Chapter 1 – ACBL GOALS, ORGANIZATION, AND ACTIVITIES**

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ACBL encourages bridge playing and develops and promotes bridge education by implementing a wide variety of activities. ACBL encourages the game of bridge as a social, recreational, and competitive activity, and strives to attract bridge players to membership in the organization. For example, it sanctions bridge games and related bridge activities, and it conducts or sanctions championship events at club, unit, and district levels, at North American Bridge Championship tournaments, and at the international level. It formulates rules for all tournaments and games conducted under its auspices, and it supervises and regulates all bridge activities over which it has jurisdiction. It develops and maintains standards of membership, conduct and ethical behavior. In addition, it maintains a relative playing performance rating of all ACBL members by awarding and recording the masterpoints earned by the winners and high finishers in all sanctioned bridge events.

ACBL publishes The Bridge Bulletin, a monthly magazine for ACBL members and produces many other publications that help advance bridge, including a current directory of ACBL-sanctioned bridge games.

ACBL encourages the use of bridge games as a means of raising funds for charity by conducting and promoting charity games. It assists the ACBL Charity Foundation and the Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund in the care and disbursement of charity proceeds.

ACBL promotes bridge education through an accredited teacher program, and various school programs. The ACBL Educational Foundation raises money for bridge education and disburses these funds through grants.

ACBL fosters bridge globally by working with other national bridge organizations and the World Bridge Federation in compiling the international code of the “Laws of Rubber Bridge” and the “Laws of Duplicate Bridge”, and by providing means for our members to compete in international bridge meets.

## **SECTION ONE: MEMBERSHIP**

### **I. ELIGIBILITY**

Any person may apply for membership in ACBL. ACBL may grant such application unless there is cause to refer the application to the ACBL Board of Directors. Causes for referral include, but are not limited to, previous expulsion from ACBL or previous expulsion or suspension from another bridge organization.

Any member, including a life or honorary member, normally shall be a member of the unit within whose jurisdiction he or she resides. For exceptions, see Chapter 3, Section Three, I. Every member in each category of membership shall be subject to regulations established by the ACBL Board of Directors requiring binding and compulsory arbitration to settle disputes involving ACBL and its members.

### **II. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. GENERAL MEMBER**

1. Will be a member as long as dues are current;
2. Will have the right to vote in any election in which the general membership is the electorate as long as he or she is a member in good standing;
3. Will have an obligation to adhere to the rules and regulations of the ACBL;

4. Will have such limitations as imposed by rules and regulations of the ACBL or actions of an ACBL disciplinary body;
5. Will be able to run for an elected ACBL position as long as he or she is 18 years of age or older, and there are no other age requirements for the position.
- 6.

#### **B. LIFE MEMBER**

1. Will be a member through the member's life time;
2. Will have the right to vote in any election in which the general membership is the electorate as long as he or she is a member in good standing;
3. Will have an obligation to adhere to the rules and regulations of the ACBL;
4. Will have such limitations as imposed by rules and regulations of the ACBL or actions of an ACBL disciplinary body;
5. Will be able to run for an elected ACBL position as long as he or she is 18 years of age or older, and there are no other age requirements for the position;
6. Will be required to remit an annual service fee in order to receive the following services:
  1. Receive official publication of ACBL.
  2. Participate in some ACBL-sanctioned events.
  3. Receive any subsidy or remuneration from ACBL.
  4. Participate in and receive recognition for achievement in masterpoint races.
  5. Have an article published on the ACBL website or in its official publication.

#### **C. HONORARY MEMBER**

The ACBL Board of Directors may elect honorary members according to guidelines adopted by the Board of Directors.

### **III. PROCESSING THE MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. NEW MEMBERS**

To become a member of ACBL, an applicant fills out a new member application, which is submitted with the appropriate fee to ACBL. ACBL mails the member a new member packet, which contains the permanent membership card and pertinent information about ACBL.

#### **B. NON-LIFE MASTER MEMBERS**

Currently ACBL prints and mails membership renewal invoices in a timely manner before each membership expires and again at the due date if it is still unpaid. Each member is sent a permanent membership card soon after first joining ACBL. If this card is lost, the member can get a new one for a fee by contacting the ACBL Club Membership Department. See Appendix G.

ACBL grants members a one-month grace period after their membership expiration date. If their dues are still not paid at that time, they are put on an "inactive" status. The return envelopes ACBL sends with the dues invoices are addressed directly to the bank that processes the payments (one in Canada and one in the United States). The bank deposits the checks and sends ACBL a computer record for updating the members' records.

#### **C. LIFE MASTERS**

Life Masters who are not Life Members are treated the same as Non-Life Master members.

#### **D. LIFE MEMBERS**

ACBL invoices Life Members for their service fees in a timely manner before they are due and again at the due date if they still are not paid. If the Life Member does not respond by the due date, ACBL puts him or her on an "unpaid" status. Life Members who do not pay their service fees are still active ACBL members, but they receive neither The Bridge Bulletin nor masterpoint confirmation notices. In addition, they are not eligible to have their names published in any of the masterpoint races, or be included on any Life Master upgrade list, or receive a free trip to any NABC or any event for which ACBL provides a monetary reimbursement, or receive discounted entries at ACBL-sanctioned tournaments or play in NABC+ events.

### **E. MULTI-YEAR, HOUSEHOLD, PATRON AND STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS**

ACBL offers multi-year memberships for three years at reduced rates. Household memberships are offered to two members living at the same address at a reduced rate for the two. Household members receive one Bridge Bulletin instead of two. Patron memberships are offered at a greatly increased rate, entitling such members to a number of additional membership benefits.

A Household Patron membership is also available. Student and Youth memberships are available at a reduced rate. See Appendix G for prices and fees

### **IV. DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

ACBL, its districts, and its units through an appropriate disciplinary body may discipline a member, providing the disciplinary procedures do not violate the member's rights as described in Chapter 11 and are in accordance with the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. See Chapter 11 and Appendix D.

An ACBL member shall be deemed to be in "good standing" when such member's dues, if dues are required, are current and such member is not:

- expelled,
- serving a term of suspension,
- serving indefinite probation,
- serving a probation the initial term of which was 24 or more months,
- serving a term of probation following a suspension, the initial term of which was in excess of 90 days. A member who is not in good standing as defined herein shall not be entitled to serve in any elected or appointed position in ACBL.

### **V. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

#### **A. REGULAR ANNUAL MEETING**

An annual membership meeting is scheduled to be held during the Summer NABC. Resolutions and motions adopted by a majority vote of those present and voting are referred to the Board of Directors and the Board of Governors for further review and possible action.

#### **B. SPECIAL MEETING**

The ACBL President, the ACBL Board of Directors or the membership (upon the written request of at least one per cent of the total membership) may call special membership meetings.

#### **C. QUORUM RULES**

A quorum at any meeting consists of at least 250 members representing a majority of districts provided that no more than 20% of the required 250 members present belong to any one district.

## **SECTION TWO: ACBL ORGANIZATION**

ACBL is the parent organization whose territory includes the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda. The members of ACBL are the base of the organization. Every ACBL member belongs to a unit, which is usually a defined geographical area. All units belong to one of the current 25 districts. These 25 districts encompass the geographic area of ACBL.

Units run sectional tournaments, and higher rated tournaments when given the right to do so by their district. Districts run regional tournaments and assist with NABC tournaments held within their region. The district may ask a member unit to run a regional tournament and/or assist with an NABC.

There are other entities (called clubs) which run ACBL-sanctioned bridge games. See Chapter 4. Two major types of duplicate bridge sanctions are issued by ACBL: those issued annually for regularly scheduled masterpoint games at clubs, club championships, charity game

championships, and membership tournaments; and those issued individually, as requested by ACBL affiliated districts and units.

Among the latter are: all unit-wide, district-wide, and ACBL-wide games; unit championships and charity events; sectional and regional championships; North American bridge championships; and special events such as team playoffs, pair trials, and international events. ACBL sanctions and promotes all of these games.

## **I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The ACBL Board of Directors is the legislative body of ACBL. The Board is composed of one member from each district of ACBL (there are currently 25 districts). There is only one vote per district which is cast by the District Director, or in his/her absence by the First Alternate Director, and in his/her absence by the Second Alternate Director.

### **A. ELECTION**

Each member of the Board of Directors is elected in accordance with the Regulations for the Conduct of ACBL Elections and Article V of the ACBL Bylaws.

### **B. MEETINGS**

The Board of Directors currently holds three regular meetings each year, subject to yearly review by the ACBL Board of Directors. Special meetings may be called by the ACBL President and must be called upon the written request of a majority of the members of the Board of Directors. A quorum at meetings of the Board of Directors is a majority.

### **C. ACBL OFFICERS**

The Board of Directors elects the ACBL officers. All officers serve until their successors take office.

**PRESIDENT:** The ACBL President is elected for a one-year term from among the members of the Board of Directors. The President's term of office begins on January 1 of the year following election.

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD:** On expiration of the term of office, the president automatically becomes chairman of the Board of Directors and has voting rights provided the chairman is an elected Director.

**TREASURER:** The treasurer is elected for a one-year term, which begins on May 1 following his or her election. The treasurer may attend all meetings of the Board of Directors but may not vote unless he or she is an elected Board member. The treasurer is a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** The Executive Committee consists of the ACBL president, the chairman of the Board of Directors, treasurer (non-voting member) and three other members of the Board (one from the Eastern Zone, one from the Central Zone, and one from the Western Zone). The other Board members of his or her zone elect each of the three Board representatives for a three-year term. If the treasurer is a Zonal representative, the Executive Committee will have five members. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to transact business of a time sensitive nature requiring action between Board of Directors meetings.

### **D. DUTIES OF THE BOARD**

The general duties of the Board of Directors are to manage, conduct, supervise and control the business and activities of ACBL unless such authority is specifically granted by statute, by the Certificate of Incorporation, by the Articles of Incorporation or by the Bylaws to a different specific body. Specific duties of the Board of Directors include, but are not limited to:



1. Sanction all ACBL-sponsored bridge events;
2. Approve tournament sites for the Spring, Summer and Fall North American Bridge Championships;
3. Approve budgets for the Spring, Summer and Fall North American Bridge Championships;
4. Determine masterpoint requirements for ranking of players;
5. Provide a mechanism for the awarding of masterpoints to members;
6. Establish Life Master requirements;
7. Provide for an annual audit of all funds of ACBL;
8. Provide written reports to the Board of Governors;
9. Employ personnel as necessary to carry out the programs of ACBL;
10. Adopt regulations establishing binding and compulsory arbitration to settle disputes between ACBL and its members;
11. Initiate and/or consider Bylaw amendments;
12. Designate those individuals who sign all checks or demands for money and notes of ACBL;
13. Adopt an annual budget; designate funds of ACBL for ACBL purposes in accordance with the Certificate of Incorporation, the Articles of Incorporation and the ACBL Bylaws;
14. Acquire, hold, administer, maintain, and dispose of all property of ACBL;
15. Establish regulations for the chartering of units;
16. Establish regulations for the payment of annual dues for members and annual service charges for Life Members;
17. Establish regulations for the selection of Honorary Members;
18. Establish guidelines for units and districts;
19. Perform such other duties as may be assigned in the ACBL Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, or as prescribed in the parliamentary authority.

## **II. BYLAWS AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS**

ACBL operates under a set of bylaws established by the ACBL Board of Directors and the ACBL Board of Governors and ratified by the ACBL membership. The Board of Directors or the Board of Governors at any regular or special meeting of either body may amend the Bylaws. (The Board proposing the amendment is hereinafter referred to as the initiating body; the Board reviewing the proposed amendment is hereinafter referred to as the secondary body.)

The proposed amendment must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the initiating body. It must then be published in The Bridge Bulletin at least 30 days prior to the second reading by the initiating body. If approved upon a second reading by the initiating body, the proposed amendment is then referred to the secondary body. If approved by a majority vote of the secondary body, the proposed amendment is then submitted to the membership at a regular or special meeting. Upon approval by the membership the amendment is adopted.

The Bylaws may also be amended by the membership by providing a petition as outlined in Article X of the Bylaws. The petition is submitted to the Board of Governors and the Board of Directors for review and recommendation. The proposed amendment and recommendations are to be published in the Bridge Bulletin and then included on the agenda for the next Annual membership meeting. If approved by 2/3 of the members present and voting, the amendment is adopted.

**NOTE:** Please refer to the ACBL Bylaws, Article X, for a more detailed explanation of how the Bylaws may be amended.

### **III. BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

The ACBL Board of Governors is composed primarily of five members from each ACBL district. Two of these five members are elected to serve as the first and second alternate district directors and the other three are elected as representatives per ACBL Bylaws. The term of office on the Board of Governors is currently three years, but at all times shall be in accordance with Article V of the ACBL Bylaws. All ACBL past presidents and all past Board of Governors chairmen are members-at-large of the Board of Governors.

#### **A. MEETINGS**

The Board of Governors currently holds a regular meeting at each of the three annual NABCs. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the Board of Governors and must be called upon the written request of a majority of the members of the Board of Governors.

#### **B. DUTIES**

The duties of the Board of Governors are:

- To receive and review reports of the actions taken by the ACBL Board of Directors at each of its meetings;
- To make recommendations to the ACBL Board of Directors and to receive reports on said recommendations;
- To initiate and/or consider amendments to the ACBL bylaws;
- To ratify changes in ACBL district boundaries;
- To elect the Board of Governors chairman and vice-chairman;
- To approve new ACBL Life Members and Life Masters;
- To consider matters originating at membership meetings for review and further disposition;
- To perform such other duties as may be specified in the ACBL Bylaws or as may be assigned by the ACBL Board of Directors.

#### **IV. ACBL DISTRICTS**

The territory under ACBL's jurisdiction is divided into as many geographical districts as the ACBL Board of Directors, with the approval of the ACBL Board of Governors, shall designate. There are currently 25 geographically defined districts within ACBL territory.

##### **A. DISTRICT BYLAWS**

Each district shall establish bylaws. The ACBL Board of Directors also empowers the district to exercise the prerogatives assigned to it by ACBL. The prerogatives given to the districts may increase or decrease in scope by the passage of new regulations.

##### **B. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Districts have certain rights and responsibilities which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A vacancy in the office of District Director shall be filled by the First Alternate Director for the unexpired remainder of the term. A vacancy in the office of First Alternate Director shall be filled by the Second Alternate Director for the remainder of the term. A vacancy in the office of Second Alternate Director shall be filled in accordance with regulations established by the affected district organization.
- In conjunction with a designated (non-home) district, the district may approve a member's joining a unit in the designated district rather than a unit in his or her home district.
- The district may make recommendations to the ACBL Board of Directors on the consolidation, division or dissolution of units within its boundaries.
- The district must have a tournament coordinator who is responsible for approving tournament dates and schedules of events for sectional and regional tournaments within the district, and for helping resolve tournament date conflicts within and outside the district.
- The district must have a designated electronic contact. ACBL may require business between ACBL and districts to be conducted electronically.
- The district serves as a clearinghouse for scheduling sectional tournaments in the district and for coordinating such schedules with neighboring districts. When an intra district dispute or misunderstanding occurs, the district, as empowered by its member units, may act as fact finder, arbitrator, or both.
- The district serves as the host organization for NABCs held within its geographical boundaries. It may, at its sole discretion, delegate such sponsorship to a unit(s) within its geographical boundaries.
- The district organizes and operates the regional tournaments assigned to it, but it may assign such tournaments to units within its jurisdiction.
- The district organizes and conducts district-wide contests to select winners to represent it in the various flights of the ACBL Grand National Teams finals and the ACBL North American Pairs finals.

- The district has control over its own disciplinary matters and must have a District Disciplinary and a District Appellate Committee. See Chapter 11 and Appendix D, *The ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations*.

## **V. ACBL UNITS**

An ACBL unit is an association of players to which the ACBL Board of Directors grants a charter. The charter defines the geographic boundaries of the unit and lists its powers and authorities. Only the ACBL Board of Directors may alter or revoke a unit charter. For additional information concerning units, See Chapter 3.

## **VI. SANCTIONED BRIDGE GAMES**

ACBL sanctions masterpoint games held at tournaments and in bridge clubs. These sanctions authorize the awarding of ACBL masterpoints. The quantity and color of the masterpoints awarded are determined by the type and size of the game. See Chapter 2.

### **A. TOURNAMENTS**

ACBL sanctions events at three levels of tournaments; national, regional, and sectional. See Chapter 6 for more information about tournaments. Events at these tournaments award platinum, gold, red, or silver points. See Chapter 2.

### **B. BRIDGE GAMES IN CLUBS**

ACBL sanctions bridge games run on a regular basis by entities called clubs. The regulations that govern the sanctioning and operation of club games appear in Chapter 4 of this Handbook.

## **VII. ADMINISTRATION**

ACBL Headquarters is located at 6575 Windchase Boulevard, Horn Lake MS 38637-1523.

This building houses all ACBL departments except the tournament director field representative offices.

### **A. ACBL ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS**

The administrative departments of ACBL are as follows:

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Accounting               | • Information Technology |
| • Club and Member Services | • NABC Meeting Services  |
| • Editorial                | • Office Services        |
| • Education                | • Tournaments            |
| • Executive/Administrative | • Warehouse              |
| • Human Resources          |                          |

### **B. EXECUTIVE PERSONNEL**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:** The Board of Directors employs and supervises a chief executive officer who is responsible for operating ACBL. In addition to carrying out his administrative duties, the chief executive officer attends all meetings of the ACBL Board of Directors, the ACBL Board of Governors, and the membership, but does not vote.

**ACBL COUNSEL:** The ACBL counsel attends meetings of the ACBL Board of Directors and the ACBL Board of Governors. The counsel gives opinions on points of civil or parliamentary law and may engage in debates but does not vote. The counsel handles the legal affairs of ACBL.

**AUDITOR:** An auditing firm appointed by the ACBL Board of Directors is responsible for preparing and certifying the annual financial statements of ACBL.

## **VIII. ACBL CHARITY FOUNDATION CORPORATION**

The ACBL Charity Foundation Corporation, a tax-exempt charitable organization, provides funding for various charitable programs through a variety of charity games which the Club and Member Services administer. See Chapter 8.

## **IX. ACBL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

The ACBL Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization that helps bring the challenge and enjoyment of bridge to people of all ages. Established in 1987 to support bridge education throughout North America, this Foundation is funded by tax-deductible contributions. The Educational Foundation uses its resources exclusively for promoting bridge. See Chapter 8.

## **X. ACBL LAWS COMMISSION**

The ACBL Laws Commission consists of a minimum of nine and a maximum of 15 members. The President of ACBL with the approval of the ACBL Board of Directors appoints the members and each serves for a five-year term. The Commission, in cooperation with the Laws Commission of the World Bridge Federation, prepares the Laws under which both duplicate and rubber bridge games are governed. These Laws are reviewed and revised periodically by the Commission, also in cooperation with the Laws Commission of the World Bridge Federation.

## **SECTION THREE: CONFERENCES**

An ACBL conference is a voluntary association of neighboring units and/or districts organized to advance the purposes of ACBL and its member units.

Since a conference is a voluntary association, its control over its own member units extends only to the authority relinquished to it by its member units and/or districts. A conference may be organized to:

- Schedule and supervise regional tournaments in the designated area, when authorized by the district to which the regional was allocated.
- Publish and distribute a newsletter that contains news, tournament schedules, and other matters of interest.
- Meet and work together with units, districts, and other conferences on matters of mutual interest.
- Reduce inter-unit and inter-district confrontations.
- Promote attendance at all tournaments in the conference area.

## **SECTION FOUR: INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

ACBL participates in international bridge activities through overseas clubs and through the World Bridge Federation.

## **I. OVERSEAS CLUBS**

ACBL issues sanctions in foreign countries to games in a few clubs, either on military installations or where there are heavy concentrations of U. S. citizens. Otherwise, ACBL does not encroach on the areas of other national bridge organizations. ACBL will sanction a game in the area of another National Bridge Organization (NBO), but only with that NBO's approval.

## **II. THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION**

### **A. PURPOSES OF THE WBF**

The World Bridge Federation is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to:

- Promote, foster and promulgate the game of contract bridge throughout the world;
- Federate national contract bridge associations in all countries;
- Devise methods and conduct competitions to award international or world championship titles;
- Establish standard laws for its contests adopting the International Code and supplementing it as may be required, but supplementary matter must be consistent with the Code.

### **B. ACTIVITIES OF THE WBF**

The activities of the World Bridge Federation include:

- The promotion, fostering and promulgation of the game of Duplicate Bridge throughout the world;
- The provision of a central organization for the co-ordination of necessary revisions to the laws and appeals;
- The organization of Championships on a world-wide basis;
- The promotion of a Masterpoints Scheme for recognizing achievement in World and Zonal contests;
- The provision of assistance and advice to NBOs on matters pertaining to the Laws and Appeals;
- The provision of a teaching program and teaching materials [www.wbfteaching.org](http://www.wbfteaching.org) free of charge to assist bridge teachers;
- The maintenance of necessary central records;

### **C. ACBL-WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION RELATIONSHIP**

The American Contract Bridge League's four member countries - Bermuda, Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. are charter members of the World Bridge Federation (WBF). With the exception of Bermuda which is in Zone 5, they form WBF Zone 2, one of eight world-wide Zonal Conferences, which is geographically coincident with ACBL.

Each member country (called a National Bridge Organization or NBO) may designate a Delegate to the WBF Congress. The Congress has all the powers in the WBF not delegated under its

Constitution or Bylaws to the Executive Council and serves as an advisory body to the Executive. Meetings of the Congress are held in even-numbered years at the World Championships.

Zone 2 is entitled to five representatives on the WBF Executive Council. The representatives are elected by the ACBL Board of Directors.

Membership in the Executive Council includes five representatives from each of Zone 1 (Europe) and Zone 2, one representative from each of Zones 3 through 8, and the WBF President. The management of the affairs, property and business of the WBF is vested in the Executive. Meetings are held each year in conjunction with the World Championships.

#### **D. WBF CHAMPIONSHIPS AND ACBL**

World Bridge Federation Championships are usually held sometime in September or October according to a four-year cycle. For more information on WBF Championships go to <http://www.worldbridge.org/>.

## **CHAPTER 2 — THE MASTERPOINT PLAN**

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## **Chapter 2 - THE MASTERPOINT PLAN**

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The masterpoint plan is the means by which ACBL ranks each member's accomplishments in sanctioned bridge play relative to other ACBL members. The winners of sanctioned events receive masterpoints in amounts consistent with the importance and size of the events. Members who achieve rankings lower than first place, both overall and within their designated comparison group, receive proportionately fewer masterpoints. Generally, the more masterpoints a member has, the more experienced and skilled he or she is assumed to be.

ACBL awards honor titles to members as they amass a sufficient number of masterpoints to achieve predetermined levels of bridge accomplishment. These titles range from the first plateau, Rookie, through Junior Master, Club Master, Sectional Master, Regional Master, and NABC Master, to the highest honor ACBL awards, the title and rank of Life Master. There are several levels of Life Master: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Diamond, Emerald, Platinum, and Grand.

There are formulas for computing masterpoint awards for all ACBL sanctioned events. These formulas take into account various factors, such as the class of the event, the size of the field, the number of sessions, and the level of competition, thus ensuring uniformity throughout ACBL in determining masterpoint awards.

### **SECTION ONE: RECORDING MASTERPOINTS**

#### **I. THE PLAYER NUMBER**

ACBL assigns a seven-digit player number to each member. The member retains this number for the duration of his or her membership. ACBL changes the first digit to an alpha character when the member achieves Life Master status.

Masterpoint awards are processed and recorded electronically at ACBL Headquarters.

#### **II. ISSUING MASTERPOINTS**

The result of every sanctioned event must be reported to the ACBL office (usually electronically), and ACBL directly issues the masterpoints won in club games, unit championships or higher-rated events. Clubs may issue Club Masterpoint receipts for masterpoints won in club-sanctioned games. First time new members may provide club rating point receipts and/or references to points won at tournaments. Upon verification, the points won, to a maximum of 20, at clubs and/or tournaments will be credited to the member's record upon joining ACBL.

Clubs must use a current version of ACBLScore to keep track of members' masterpoint winnings. All clubs must send their monthly report by email to ACBL for official recording to members' records. Reports sent in on hard copy may incur additional fees (applies only to existing clubs not currently using ACBLScore). Clubs may still issue Club Masterpoint receipts to non-members and newcomer members as well as any player who requests them. Club managers must record the masterpoint winnings accurately.

ACBL prints masterpoint confirmation notices every month in the member's copy of the Bridge Bulletin, reflecting masterpoint winnings that have been recorded and credited to their lifetime totals during the previous month. The confirmation notices indicate the previous balance, the new credits, the new total, and the tournaments, dates, events, and clubs in which the masterpoints were won. In addition, the non-Life Masters' notices show the red, gold, silver, and black point totals currently held and the points needed, by color, to earn Life Master status. See Chapter 2, Section Two.

### **III. REINSTATING MASTERPOINTS**

#### **A. NON-LIFE MASTERS**

Members whose ACBL memberships lapse are classified as “inactive” and do not receive monthly masterpoint confirmation notices or the monthly Bridge Bulletin and may not serve on unit or district boards. An inactive member may reinstate his or her membership by paying the current dues. There is no additional charge for membership reinstatement, nor must the member pay back dues. Such reinstatement includes reinstatement of the masterpoint record, as it was when the membership lapsed.

A former member who has not paid dues for over 90 days, and has become a non-member, is entitled to pay dues that were due and owing for whatever period of time he had non-member status (this payment may be for only those years in which the non-member won points and for which the non-member wishes to pay). Any former member who reinstates for a three –year period will have all unrecorded masterpoints credited at no charge. All masterpoints earned during the non-member period for which payment is received will be recorded to the extent possible.

Any member who pays his dues within 90 days after his membership paid-through date will have his masterpoints recorded free of charge. Such dues payment will be credited from the original paid-through date and no break in membership recorded.

#### **B. LIFE MEMBERS**

Life Members who do not pay their annual Life Member service fees are classified as “unpaid.” Unpaid Life Members are active members; however, like inactive members, they do not receive monthly masterpoint confirmation notices or the monthly Bridge Bulletin. Unpaid Life Members are not eligible for inclusion in any masterpoint race or to receive qualified reimbursements to an NABC or any event for which ACBL provides a monetary reimbursement. When unpaid Life Members pay the currently due service fee, they once again begin receiving monthly masterpoint confirmation notices and the Bridge Bulletin.

### **IV. MASTERPOINTS FROM NON-ACBL SOURCES**

New members that have had memberships in other bridge organizations or continue to hold membership in other bridge organizations MUST report both that affiliation and the rank achieved. Failure to report these may result in loss of any points or titles won that were not won in open events. Such new members will not be eligible for events or races that are below the comparable rank that they have achieved in other organizations.

**ABA masterpoints:** An American Bridge League (ABA) member who is also an ACBL member is given 10% of his total ABA points up to a maximum of 200 ACBL red points. This is a one-time award, normally done when the ABA member first joins ACBL.

**WBF masterpoints:** WBF masterpoints won at the following WBF world championship events not played within the confines of ACBL will be converted to ACBL points for overall placings:

The Bermuda Bowl; the Venice Cup; the Senior Bermuda Bowl; the Rosenblum Cup; the McConnell Cup; the Senior Teams; the Open, Women’s, Seniors and Mixed Pairs held at the World Championships; the Olympiad Open and Women’s Team World Championships.

### **SECTION TWO: MASTERPOINT AWARD PIGMENTATION**

Masterpoints are awarded in six colors: platinum, gold, red, silver, black and unpigmented. The color of each point indicates the difficulty of the event in which it was won, as well as the member’s relative achievement in that event. See Section Four. Color-coding makes it possible to ascertain a member’s performance record in high-rated games.

- **PLATINUM POINTS** are awarded for NABC+ events and include the national-rated senior and women's events with no upper masterpoint limit but not the junior, flight B or other restricted events.
- **GOLD POINTS** are awarded at North American Bridge Championships (NABCs) in national-rated events that have an upper limit of at least 750 masterpoints. Gold points are awarded for overall positions and for section firsts in all two-session regional-rated events with an upper limit of at least 750 masterpoints at NABCs and regional tournaments. No more than two strats or flights of the same event may issue gold points with the exception of bracketed knockout teams. Pairs filling in for one-session of a two-session event receive any gold points earned. Partial gold point awards are given for certain special events.
- **RED POINTS** are awarded for all regionally rated events at NABCs and for all events at a regional tournament when the masterpoints are not gold (see above). In addition, red points are awarded for certain special events.
- **SILVER POINTS** are awarded exclusively in all events at sectional tournaments and also at ACBL-sanctioned sectional tournaments held in clubs.
- **BLACK POINTS** are awarded for overall positions, section positions, and match awards in ACBL sanctioned club games; in all unit events; and in all other levels of tournament competition except those in which gold, red, or silver points or online points are awarded.
- **ONLINE POINTS** are awarded for Internet masterpoint events and are colorless.

### **SECTION THREE: MASTERPOINT AWARD REGULATIONS**

A sanctioned club game awards masterpoints to approximately 40% of the contestants in each session. Section awards for all games (open, invitational, restricted, and newcomer) are based on the number of pairs, teams, or individuals in each group. A complete listing of masterpoint awards available at club games is contained in the charts following Chapter 4.

For a unit championship or higher rated event, the magnitude of the masterpoint award is a function of a number of factors:

- The number of tables entered in the event.
- The classification of the event. The four classification ratings are: unit championship, sectional, regional, and national.
- The number of sessions in the event.
- The masterpoint limitations of the event.
- The type of event, such as individual, pairs, Swiss teams, board-a-match teams, etc.
- The masterpoint awards for knockout teams are based on separate formulas.
- Awards for NABC championship events are either computed from the general formula or are predetermined awards set by the ACBL Board of Directors.

In addition special regulations apply to the following:

**SPLIT REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS:** Awards for first and second overall in gold point pair-type events held at split regionals are based on total attendance at both sites (either 80% of the

award based on combined attendance or 100% of the award based on attendance at the individual location, whichever is higher).

**GENDER/AGE RESTRICTED EVENTS:** Awards for gender or age restricted events are reduced to 80% of an open event. If there are two such restrictions for one event, such as a senior women's pairs, the awards will be reduced to 70% of an open pair event.

**UNRESTRICTED EVENTS:** Two-session events at regionals and sectionals which are unrestricted by masterpoint holding, gender or age will be credited with all tables in play in totally concurrent events for the purposes of computing overall masterpoint awards, up to a maximum total of three times the number of tables in play in the unrestricted event. Two or more concurrent unrestricted events share equally the available tables as above, but not each other's tables.

Unrestricted events of more than two sessions supersede two-session events held on the first day of the multi-session event, and will be credited with the totally concurrent first-day tables of any type, as above. An unrestricted event with a lower limit and no upper limit is treated as an open even when there is no concurrent open event.

At a sectional tournament, one-session events which are unrestricted as above and are not concurrent with any session of a two-session or longer event shall be credited with all tables in play in concurrent same type events as above for the purpose of computing overall awards, up to a maximum total of three times the number of tables in play in the unrestricted event.

Unrestricted events and not similarly restricted events held at restricted regionals or sectionals award black points only. If these events are part of a sanctioned open sectional, concurrent with a restricted regional, silver points are awarded.

For further information about the awarding of masterpoints, contact the ACBL Tournament Department.

## **SECTION FOUR: MASTERPOINT HONOR TITLES**

To earn honor titles, such as NABC Master and Life Master, members must earn a specified number of masterpoints in various levels of competition.

### **I. MASTERPOINT PLAN**

ACBL's masterpoint plan appeals to members because it permits members to know their approximate overall ranking relative to that of every other member. Although a complete listing of the large number of ACBL members is impractical, the honor titles that members earn as they achieve various plateaus of masterpoint holdings serve as close approximations of their overall standing. Lists of the top players in some categories and masterpoint races are published in the Bridge Bulletin each year.

### **II. WALLET CARDS**

When members graduate from the rank of Rookie and are entitled to the honor title of Junior Master, they receive appropriate wallet cards from ACBL. The cards identify players as ACBL members with sufficient skill and experience to be titled Junior Master. Junior Master players may use this title as long as they are members in good standing or until they earn the right to a higher ranking title. When members who have earned the rank of Junior Master advance to the next plateau, they again receive wallet cards designating their new status. Members can print their own rank achievement certificates from the ACBL website under My ACBL (for ranks below Life Master). This step-by-step recognition continues until the members receive the title of Life Master. Then ACBL awards them Gold Cards (gold colored), which announce that they are Life Masters of the American Contract Bridge League. ACBL also sends these members Life Master Certificates.

### III. HONOR TITLES

The honor titles and the masterpoints players must acquire to gain them for players who joined ACBL before January 1, 2010 and maintained continuous membership after that date:

- **ROOKIE** – an ACBL member who has fewer than 5 full masterpoints recorded by the ACBL.
- **JUNIOR MASTER** – a member who has at least 5 but fewer than 20 masterpoints recorded by ACBL. A Junior Master is eligible for most newcomer events.
- **CLUB MASTER** – a member who has at least 20 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 5 must be black.
- **SECTIONAL MASTER** – a member who has at least 50 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 10 must be black and 5 must be silver.
- **REGIONAL MASTER** – a member who has at least 100 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 15 must be black, 15 must be silver and 5 must be red or gold.
- **NABC MASTER** – a member who has at least 200 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 20 must be black, 20 must be silver, 20 must be red or gold with at least 5 gold.
- **LIFE MASTER** – a member who has 300 or more masterpoints recorded by the ACBL, of which 150 must be pigmented, with 25 gold or platinum, 25 red, gold or platinum, 50 silver and 50 black.

**The honor titles and the masterpoints players must acquire to gain them for players who joined ACBL after January 1, 2010 or reinstated membership after that date:**

- **ROOKIE** – an ACBL member who has fewer than 5 full masterpoints recorded by the ACBL.
- **JUNIOR MASTER** – a member who has at least 5 but fewer than 20 masterpoints recorded by ACBL. A Junior Master is eligible for most newcomer events.
- **CLUB MASTER** – a member who has at least 20 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 5 must be black.
- **SECTIONAL MASTER** – a member who has at least 50 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 10 must be black and 5 must be silver.
- **REGIONAL MASTER** – a member who has at least 100 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 15 must be black, 15 must be silver and 5 must be red or gold.
- **NABC MASTER** – a member who has at least 200 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 20 must be black, 20 must be silver, 20 must be red or gold with at least 5 gold.
- **ADVANCED NABC MASTER** – a member who has at least 300 masterpoints recorded by ACBL, of which 50 must be black, 50 silver, 25 red or gold/platinum, 25 gold/platinum, no more than 100 from online play.
- **LIFE MASTER** – a member who has 500 or more masterpoints recorded by the ACBL, of which 75 must be black, 75 silver, 50 red or gold/platinum, 50 gold/platinum, no more than 165 from online play.

**Note:** The black point requirement does not apply for members who joined prior to January 1, 1999 and maintained active status from that date forward.

- **GOLDEN AGE MASTER** – a member who is age 70 or older and has at least 300 masterpoints of any color recorded by ACBL, or a member who is at least 80 years old and has at least 100 masterpoints of any color recorded by ACBL. On application to ACBL, an eligible member will be designated Golden Age Master and sent an appropriate certificate.

- **BRONZE LIFE MASTER** – A Life Master with 500 masterpoints (members who joined prior to January 1, 2010). A Life Master with 750 masterpoints (members who joined after January 1, 2010)
- **SILVER LIFE MASTER\*** – A Life Master with (a) over 1000 masterpoints, including (b) no fewer than a combination of 200 silver, red, gold, or platinum points.
- **RUBY LIFE MASTER** – A Life Master with 1500 masterpoints (at least 300 silver, red, gold or platinum).
- **GOLD LIFE MASTER\*** – A Life Master with (a) over 2500 masterpoints including (b) no fewer than a combination of 500 silver, red, gold, or platinum points.
- **SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTER** – A Life Master with 3500 masterpoints (at least 700 silver, red, gold or platinum of which at least 350 must be gold or platinum).
- **DIAMOND LIFE MASTER\*** – A Life Master with (a) over 5000 masterpoints, including (b) no fewer than a combination of 500 gold or platinum points and (c) no fewer than a combination of 1000 silver, red, gold or platinum points.
- **EMERALD LIFE MASTER\*** – A Life Master with (a) over 7500 masterpoints, including (b) no fewer than a combination of 750 gold or platinum points and (c) no fewer than a combination of 1500 silver, red, gold or platinum points.
- **PLATINUM LIFE MASTER\*** – A Life Master with (a) over 10 000 masterpoints, including (b) no fewer than 100 platinum points, (c) no fewer than a combination of 1000 gold or platinum points, and (d) no fewer than a combination of 2000 silver, red, gold or platinum points.
- **GRAND LIFE MASTER\*** – Win a North American Bridge Championship with no upper masterpoint restriction (excluding the Super Senior Pairs, the Wagar Women's KO won after 2013 and the Machlin Women's Swiss Teams won after 2013) or a United States Open or Women's Bridge Championship or a Canadian Open or Women's National Championship or any of the following WBF events: Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, Rosenblum Cup, McConnell Cup, Open Pairs, Women's Pairs, Olympiad, Women's Team Olympiad, WBF Mixed Pairs, WBF Senior Pairs, WBF World Swiss Teams, WBF World Mixed Teams or WBF Senior Teams.

\* These colored point requirements apply to all players who attained the rank of Life Master after 1989.

**NOTE:** A member who had red points prior to January 1, 1969 is required to win red or gold/platinum points in any combination.

ACBL gives official recognition to the winner(s) of the most masterpoints in a calendar year by members in the various masterpoint categories. These masterpoint races include the Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs, where recognition is given to players through the masterpoint category of 10,000+ who earn the most masterpoints in club games, and the Mini-McKenney, where players in each masterpoint category who win the most masterpoints are recognized. ACBL also keeps a record of the Mini-McKenney winners for each unit.

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## **Chapter 3 - UNIT REGULATIONS**

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Units are vital components of ACBL. Their jurisdictional areas range in size from single cities to large states. Unit memberships range from fewer than 100 members to as many as 10,000 or more. Each unit is chartered by the ACBL Board of Directors and must function within the bylaws and regulations of ACBL. ACBL retains the right to amend, alter, or revoke a unit charter. The relationship between ACBL and its chartered units is that of independent organizations.

### **SECTION ONE: JURISDICTION**

#### **I. BOUNDARIES**

A unit's charter describes the geographic boundaries of its jurisdiction. Within these boundaries the unit promotes and supervises all bridge activities that ACBL does not specifically allocate to the district or another entity. Although the unit has no authority beyond its boundaries, its cooperation with other neighboring units and within the district or conference permits the planning and scheduling of area tournaments to be carried out to the mutual advantage of all involved.

#### **II. TRANSFER OR DIVISION OF A UNIT**

To form a new unit there must be at least 100 current ACBL members in the geographical area of the proposed new unit, the area must contain satisfactory facilities for the hosting of at least one sectional tournament annually, and the area should not isolate any "islands" of other ACBL members. A petition must be submitted to ACBL Headquarters containing valid signatures with ACBL player numbers of a majority of the members of the proposed new unit. The approval of the appropriate district organization and the District Director will be sought. The ACBL Board of Directors will make the final decision.

In general, areas for transfer from one unit to another should follow county lines. An area seeking to transfer to an adjacent unit must include all counties between the proposed area for transfer and the existing area of the unit being joined. It is not permitted to transfer an area to a unit if such transfer would create an island.

A majority of the current ACBL members living in the area to be transferred must sign a petition expressing their wishes to be transferred. The petition must state the reasons for the proposed transfer and must include the addresses and ACBL player number of those members signing.

The boundaries of the proposed area of transfer must be included on the petition as well as all zip codes in the proposed area to be transferred. Upon receipt of the petition, ACBL will verify the signatures thereon in order to assure that a majority of the ACBL members in the proposed area of transfer have signed the petition requesting a transfer of Unit affiliation.

The ACBL will contact the parent unit, the unit of proposed affiliation, the district organization and the district representative to the ACBL Board of Directors seeking the opinion of each regarding the proposed transfer. Should all parties agree that it is in the best interests of all concerned to effect the proposed transfer, the ACBL will take the necessary steps to make the change including ACBL Board of Directors approval. All parties will be informed of the effective date of transfer and new Charters distributed. Should either the unit or the district organization disagree as to the proposed transfer, the matter will be referred to the ACBL Board of Directors for final disposition.

After the ACBL Board of Directors has denied a request to grant a Unit Merger, Unit Boundary Change, or Unit Change of District, the affected unit may not begin the circulation of another

petition for a Unit Merger, Unit Boundary Change, or Unit Change of District for at least six months.

## **SECTION TWO: REQUIREMENTS, PRIVILEGES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A unit functions as an organization chartered by ACBL, which, in accordance with its charter, supervises and promotes many, but not all, aspects of ACBL bridge within its boundaries. (See the [ACBL Unit agreement](#).) It has the exclusive right to conduct all sectionals held within its territory. In addition, it may obtain sanctions from ACBL to organize and conduct other games such as unit championships, unit-wide games, unit charity games and extended team events, and club games. The regulations that govern these events appear in Chapters 4 and 5.

### **I. MINIMUM UNIT REQUIREMENTS**

A unit must meet the following ACBL requirements to receive and maintain its ACBL charter:

- Hold an annual membership meeting.
- Produce a written annual financial statement and make it available to its district director and any of its members upon request.
- Adopt bylaws that are consistent with those of ACBL and file a copy with ACBL. On request, ACBL will provide copies of typical unit bylaws.
- Conduct at least one sectional tournament every two years. (A waiver, for cause, may be granted by the district.)
- Select a standing disciplinary chairperson and otherwise comply with Section 1.1 of the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. See Chapter 11.
- Elect a unit board of directors in accordance with its bylaws.
- Process reports of dishonest or unethical conduct by participants in sanctioned games at clubs under its jurisdiction, and discipline members guilty of such conduct in a manner fully consistent with the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. See Chapter 11 and Appendix D.
- Process reports of dishonest, unethical, or improper conduct by participants in sanctioned games at unit events or tournaments under its jurisdiction and discipline members guilty of such conduct in a manner fully consistent with the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. See Chapter 11 and Appendix D.
- Select a designated unit electronic contact (UEC).

### **II. UNIT PRIVILEGES**

As an organization chartered by ACBL, the unit has certain privileges. The Unit receives a share of ACBL membership fees as established by the ACBL Board of Directors and may:

- Conduct up to 24 unit championship sessions per year.
- Hold up to four sectional-rated Fund/Foundation sessions per year.
- Run games on behalf of ACBL and/or the district where there is a void.
- Participate in elections for District Director, First and Second Alternate Directors and Board of Governors Representatives.

### **III. UNIT ACTIVITIES**

A unit is encouraged to carry out the following:

- Conduct sectional tournaments and regional and/or NABC tournaments when authorized by the district.
- Perform basic marketing functions as established by the ACBL Board of Directors.
- Encourage people to conduct ACBL-sanctioned club games within the unit.
- Promote the development and enrollment of bridge players as members of ACBL.
- Promote interest in duplicate bridge by providing a continuous and attractive program of bridge events to supplement those offered by clubs with sanctioned games.
- Cooperate with the district and ACBL in the promotion of district-wide and ACBL-wide tournaments.
- Establish and maintain amicable relations with neighboring units, the district and conferences, thus fostering cooperation on matters of mutual interest.
- Select people to fill the positions of Education Liaison, Tournament Coordinator and Intermediate/Newcomer Coordinator.
- Conduct other activities in keeping with its purposes.

### **IV. LOSS OF UNIT STATUS AND PRIVILEGES**

Units must comply with the requirements set forth in I. above. Failure to do so will result in an initial penalty of the withholding of a Unit's share of membership dues and service fee rebates until it is in compliance with this regulation. Continuation of non-compliance may result in further action up to and including revocation of the Unit's Charter.

### **V. VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION OF A UNIT**

If a unit chooses to dissolve it should take the following steps:

- Notify ACBL and the appropriate District Director of the intent to dissolve.
- Apprise ACBL of all unit assets and liabilities.
- Apprise ACBL of one of the following:
  1. With which unit or units the dissolving unit wishes to merge.
  2. To which other units the unit members wish to be reassigned.
  3. There is no preference for reassignment.
- Assets of the unit will be distributed according to relevant law.

### **VI. UNIT SANCTIONED GAMES**

In addition to sectional tournaments, units may obtain sanctions for a number of different types of games. See Chapter 6.

**CLUB-TYPE GAMES:** When there is no regularly sanctioned club masterpoint game, a unit may obtain a sanction to operate club-rated games under the same regulations as a game sanction issued to a club. See Chapter 4.

**UNIT CHAMPIONSHIPS:** Each unit may obtain sanctions to conduct up to 24 sessions of unit championships annually.

Unit championships must be applied for by the appropriate unit or approved by that unit if applied for by other than the unit, before ACBL will sanction the game(s).

One of the purposes of conducting unit championships is to stimulate inter-club and intra-unit competition and fraternization. Although members of other units or localities usually are eligible to participate in a unit championship, the schedule need not be arranged for their convenience. The unit may, in fact, choose to allow only its own members to participate.

Since attendance primarily is local, the schedule does not usually interfere with the schedules of neighboring units. Therefore, the unit may schedule multi-session events and multi-session programs and does not necessarily have to conduct these events on weekends or on successive days.

**UNIT-WIDE GAMES:** A unit-wide game can be held simultaneously in three or more locations, each site with a minimum of five tables in play, using a unit championship session.

**UNIT FUND/FOUNDATION GAMES:** Each unit may conduct up to four sectional-rated fund/foundation game sessions annually. The fund games are the Grass Roots, International and Junior, the foundation games are the Charity and Educational. When held as charity games, see Chapter 5.

**EXTENDED TEAM EVENT:** Each unit may obtain a sanction to conduct up to three annual IMP-scored knockout team event or round-robin team-of-four event. See Chapter 5, Section Three, III., Table 5.1. A knockout may be run as a single or a double elimination. Either type of event must be run for at least three sessions. These team events are sectional-rated as long as they are open to all ACBL members in good standing of the unit. A unit may limit this event to members of the unit only.

## **SECTION THREE: UNIT STRUCTURE**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the ACBL belong to the Unit in which they reside. If a member desires to belong to a unit in which he/she does not reside, the member must specifically make this request in writing (email is permissible) to the ACBL stating the unit of preference and the reasons for the request. Further, if the unit is not in the same district as where he/she resides, both districts must approve the membership in the other district.

The following are some of the reasons why a member would be given permission to belong to a unit outside the district of residence.

To warrant consideration, a player should meet at least two of the six reasons listed:

- Plays at least once a month in a club in that unit.

- Attends STaCs or Sectionals in that unit at least twice a year.
- Attends the annual unit dinner and/or annual membership meeting.
- Participates in unit special events.
- Serves on the Unit Board and/or Unit committees.
- Serves on the District Board and/or District committees.

Note that a “snowbird” may choose permanent unit affiliation with either of the units in which the member resides.

The membership approval granted by a district in which the member does not reside may be reviewed by that district from time to time to assure the above criteria continue to justify non-residency membership.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP DUES/SERVICE FEES**

The ACBL Board of Directors establishes the annual membership dues and Life Master service fees as well as the means for collecting them. The ACBL Board of Directors also determines the portion of dues or Life Master service fees to be automatically rebated to the unit.

Membership dues are payable every 12 or 36 months. If dues are not paid within one month after their due date, the individual becomes an “inactive” member. Inactive members may reinstate their memberships by sending the current membership fees to ACBL. This reinstates their masterpoint totals as of the date they became inactive. See Chapter 2.

## **III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Unit members elect the unit board of directors for the terms of office defined by the unit bylaws. All unit board members must be active ACBL members and must belong to ACBL through the units they represent. The unit board manages and conducts the affairs of the unit. Should a board member leave office before his or her term expires, vacancies will be filled according to the unit’s bylaws.

Active, rated tournament directors and any other permanent ACBL employees may not serve as voting members of unit and/or district boards.

## **IV. UNIT OFFICERS**

A unit is allowed to elect its officers either by vote of the general membership or by vote of the unit board. Each unit should have a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer as provided by the unit’s bylaws. In units that have a small number of members, the same individual may serve as both secretary and treasurer simultaneously. Units may include in their bylaws provision for other officers. For example, large units may elect or appoint recording secretaries. Many large units find it convenient and necessary to employ salaried business managers or to pay their secretaries and/or treasurers regular stipends.

Unit bylaws should describe the duties and responsibilities of the unit officers. If they do not, the unit board must enact regulations that describe them. Whether in bylaws or enacted regulations, unit officers’ responsibilities should conform as closely as possible to the descriptions below.

### **A. PRESIDENT**

The unit president presides at all meetings of the unit board of directors and all general meetings of the unit membership. The president appoints all committees and serves on them as an ex-officio member (but not on the nominating committee), except when the unit bylaws or regulations specify otherwise. He or she exercises general supervision over the activities of the unit and performs other duties that are incidental to office, including those the unit board assigns.

#### **B. VICE PRESIDENT**

In the absence or incapacity of the president, the vice president assumes the president's duties and performs other duties that the president or board may assign.

#### **C. SECRETARY**

The secretary maintains a roster of unit members and sends meeting notices to the members and directors. He or she attends all membership and board of directors meetings and records and keeps the board minutes. The unit secretary keeps records of all tournaments and other unit activities and completes and files all unit reports that ACBL requires. The secretary also receives and files the reports of all officers and committees and usually is responsible for the maintenance of membership records. The unit board may delegate any of the secretary's duties to other employees or appointees.

#### **D. TREASURER**

The treasurer has custody of and is responsible for all funds, securities, and properties of the unit. He or she deposits such funds in the bank or banks designated by the board. From these funds the treasurer pays unit obligations as directed by the board, keeps accurate records, and makes financial reports as directed by the board. The treasurer normally is bonded, at unit expense, for the faithful performance of his or her duties and for restoration to the unit of all books, papers, vouchers, money, and other unit property in his or her possession or control in the event of his or her death, resignation, retirement, or removal from office. All units and districts are strongly urged to conduct an annual audit of their financial records. If an external audit by an independent professional is deemed too expensive, it is recommended that units and districts appoint an internal audit committee to, as a minimum, verify cash and cash equivalents and test major income and expense items.

#### **E. UNIT ELECTRONIC CONTACT (UEC)**

The UEC is responsible for sending and receiving electronic communications between the unit and ACBL.

### **V. STANDING COMMITTEES**

The unit bylaws or regulations should allow standing committees, as needed, to perform certain unit functions. The unit president may appoint ad hoc committees to supplement these standing committees. Typical standing committees are shown below.

#### **A. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

The Disciplinary Committee receives charges that involve the conduct or ethics of members of the unit. See Chapter 11 and Appendix D.

## **B. EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Each unit should have an Education Liaison and an Intermediate/Newcomer Coordinator to promote the development and education of bridge within the unit and work in cooperation with the district education liaison and newcomer coordinator. See Chapter 9, Section Two.

## **C. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Many units, especially those that cover large geographic areas, have an Executive Committee, which is usually composed of the unit officers, the immediate past president, and those board members who are available on short notice. The purpose of this committee is to advise the president on matters of immediate urgency. This committee may also be empowered to act for the board of directors when an emergency board meeting is not practical.

## **D. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The mission of the Membership Committee is to increase membership by seeking new members and encouraging present or former members to renew or reinstate their memberships. The booklet [\*Handbook for Membership Chairman\*](#) is available on the ACBL website.

## **E. PUBLICITY COMMITTEE**

The goal of the Publicity Committee is to publicize unit tournament activities and increase public awareness of ACBL and its charitable and educational activities. The pamphlet *Resource Guide for Planning Sectional and Regional Tournaments* has been developed for the tournament chairmen of all sectional and regional tournaments. This guide is available on the ACBL website.

## **F. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE**

The Tournament Committee plans, coordinates, and supervises all tournaments allocated to units. The Tournament Committee works with the unit and district tournament coordinators in scheduling dates for their tournaments.

# **SECTION FOUR: ELECTIONS**

## **I. DEMOCRATIC PROCESS**

Unit bylaws or regulations must provide for democratic elections by giving each unit member the opportunity to vote for unit board members. Unit regulations should permit only paid-up members and life members, who are members in good standing, to vote. A short waiting period before new members may vote is permissible.

ACBL recommends that the unit board appoint a nominating committee. Most committee members should not be board members. This committee prepares a slate of candidates to be placed in nomination for the election. The bylaws should provide for nominations that originate outside the nominating committee.

Democratic elections require secret ballots when there are two or more candidates in competition for an office, or when an issue has been submitted to the electorate for a decision. ACBL does not permit proxy votes in an election.

## **II. TYPES OF ELECTIONS**

A unit must conduct elections for unit board members in accordance with the provisions of its bylaws and/or election regulations.

#### **A. MAIL IN BALLOTS**

For unit members to vote by mail, the nominating committee must prepare by direct selection and/or by petition a slate of nominees. The committee then mails to each member a list of the nominees and a ballot. This ballot may be included in the unit publication. The committee must see that each qualified member receives only one ballot and that the balloting is secret. To keep the voting secret, it is advisable to use large and small envelopes. The member marks the ballot, places it in the small envelope, and seals it. The member then places the small envelope inside the large envelope, seals the latter, and signs his or her name across the flap, so that the person or committee appointed to receive the ballots can check the name against the membership roster. The committee opens the small envelopes only at the pre-designated ballot counting time.

#### **B. ELECTIONS AT MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

To elect board members at a membership meeting, the unit must provide a reasonably advanced notice of the meeting and the election to all members. The unit may advertise the election meeting in its own publication or send out a special mailing to all members. The unit may announce the election at its games and meetings or in the publications of clubs that hold sanctioned games. If the slate of candidates presented by the nominating committee is uncontested, it is then just ratified by the membership at the meeting. If there is more than one candidate for any position, the vote should be by secret ballot at the meeting.

#### **C. ELECTIONS AT CLUBS**

Ballots and ballot boxes may be installed at clubs in the unit to make it more convenient for unit members to vote. Boxes are then retrieved and ballots counted at a specific time and location.

A unit may also hold its election at a club headquarters, but it may not treat the election as a meeting of the club. Nor is it acceptable to have each club in the unit appoint or elect a board member, since some club members may not be unit members. Regardless, only unit members are allowed to vote.

#### **D. ELECTIONS AT TOURNAMENTS**

The unit may conduct the election during a sectional or regional tournament and at a site convenient to the majority of the members. The nominating committee presents a slate of candidates that provides for representation on the board from all areas of the unit.

One obvious disadvantage of this method is that a large percentage of the votes may be cast by residents of the immediate area, especially if the tournament is a sectional, and these voters may not be familiar with candidates from other areas. Another disadvantage is that it is more difficult to insure that only unit members vote. An advantage is that ballots can be counted and results announced or posted while the game is in progress.

#### **E. COMBINATION OF ELECTION METHODS**

Units may combine mail ballot with voting at its membership meeting, at a tournament, at a club or clubs, or any combination thereof. This can promote greater participation in the election.

The use or non-use of absentee ballots should be provided for in the unit bylaws and/or election regulations. ACBL regulations do not permit proxy votes. When election methods are combined it is important to insure that only unit members vote and that they vote only once.

### **III. PROPORTIONATE REPRESENTATION**



Units with jurisdiction over large areas, including locations with high population concentrations, should select an election procedure that provides proportionate representation on the unit board. Each member must have a reasonable opportunity to participate in selecting at least his or her own area representative, if not all board members.

When the unit is divided into a fixed number of areas, each of these areas should be able to elect the number of board representatives proportionate to its share of the unit membership as a whole. The size of the unit board is fixed by its bylaws, and the proportional representation may be included and reviewed periodically. Members in each area may elect only their own representatives or can vote for the entire slate of candidates.

In all cases, unit bylaws must (1) denote the number of members to be elected to the unit board, and (2) specify election procedures. No matter how the unit conducts the election, it should announce the results to the membership and send the results to ACBL as soon as possible.

#### **IV. ELECTION OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

##### **A. ELECTIVE OFFICES**

Unit boards elect members of the ACBL Board of Directors, their first and second alternates, and the ACBL Board of Governors representatives in district-wide elections.

##### **B. VOTES PER UNIT**

In all elections for district representatives to ACBL, each unit's membership is divided by one hundred to determine the vote of the unit. The size of the unit board determines the votes per board member. The sum of the board member votes will equal the total votes to be cast by the unit.

Election of the national representatives must be in accordance with ACBL bylaws and election procedures. A copy of the ACBL regulations that govern the election of national representatives can be obtained on the ACBL website.

#### **SECTION FIVE: UNIT BYLAWS**

All units must have bylaws that are acceptable to ACBL and must file a copy with ACBL. Units in the formative process and units that desire to update old bylaws may obtain a set of suggested unit bylaws from ACBL.

ACBL requires that unit bylaws provide for at least one annual membership meeting (with adequate advance notice), at which each member has the opportunity to speak. It is ACBL policy that changes in unit bylaws be approved by the unit's membership. Unit bylaws must clearly delineate methods for bylaw amendments and/or revisions.

ACBL recommends that unit bylaws or regulations provide for an elected board of directors that represents all unit members fairly, at least one annual audit of the unit's financial condition presented to the members, careful consideration of the rights of all members, especially those who were in the minority in some unit issue, and reliable safeguards for members when the unit considers disciplinary action.

#### **SECTION SIX: INSURANCE AND TAX STATUS**

##### **I. INSURANCE**

The ACBL National General Liability coverage protects against a claim of bodily injury or property damage arising out of operations emanating from any occupied premises by the unit or

district. The events covered are sectionals, regionals, district level NAP and GNT events, and NABCs. The National policy protects the unit or district in case someone is injured, and other claims such as false arrest, malicious prosecution, slander, or libel. For further insurance information contact the ACBL Accounting Department.

## **II. TAX STATUS**

Individual units and districts may be eligible for exempt status under 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. Each unit and district is responsible for establishing its own status as a business entity and therefore should acquire its own tax identification number. For further information and/or assistance with tax status issues, contact ACBL's Controller or Chief Financial Officer.

## **III. LOCAL TAXES**

Cities and states may impose various sales, entertainment or other taxes. Each unit and district is responsible for taking the necessary steps to address this issue.

## **SECTION SEVEN: MEMBERSHIP LISTS**

### **I. UNIT IN-AND-OUT REPORT**

Every month ACBL notifies the units as to which of their members are being sent renewal notices. If the member does not renew, the unit is notified that the non-Life Master is being placed on "inactive" status or that the Life Master service fee is "unpaid."

These monthly reports also contain the names of new ACBL members, address changes, rank changes, transfers into or out of the unit, and the names of deleted or deceased members. Units should notify ACBL of any discrepancies found on these reports so that official ACBL records can be corrected.

ACBL also sends electronic reimbursement reports to the units each quarter. These reports provide the units with the names of the members who have renewed their memberships, or paid their service fees. ACBL sends checks each quarter, giving the unit its share of its own members' dues.

### **II. ANNUAL ROSTER**

Once a year ACBL sends each unit a roster of the unit's active members by email to the UEC, along with a request that the unit notify ACBL of any members who are deceased. Units may access additional rosters throughout the year for free on the ACBL website.

## **SECTION EIGHT: DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Please refer to Chapter 11 and Appendix D, the [\*ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations\*](#), for information about unit responsibilities and correct procedures concerning disciplinary actions.

## **SECTION NINE: UNIT/CLUB RELATIONSHIPS**

The regulations that spell out the specific rights of units and clubs holding sanctioned masterpoint games, in addition to those that appear in Chapters 2 and 3, are detailed in Chapters

4 and 5. All unit board members and officials, especially those serving for the first time, should acquaint themselves with the duties, responsibilities, and rights of ACBL units.

## **I. OPEN COMPETITION AMONG CLUBS**

ACBL policy calls for open competition among sanctioned club masterpoint games, subject to reasonable controls imposed by ACBL.

## **II. UNIT SPONSORED CLUB**

A Unit Sponsored Club is a club which has any one or more of the following features: (a) a board which is the same as the unit board or which is appointed by the unit; or (b) a co-mingling of funds with those of the unit; or (c) a placement of funds in a unit owned account; or (d) the appointment of a club manager or director by the unit. The unit has authority over behavioral issues that arise at a Unit Sponsored club.

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I.

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## **Chapter 4 - THE CLUB SANCTIONED BRIDGE GAME**

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ACBL issues sanctions that authorize the holder to run duplicate bridge games at which ACBL masterpoints are awarded, thus permitting ACBL members and others to compete on a regular basis in their own community. This chapter presents ACBL rules and regulations pertaining to these sanction holders (clubs) running sanctioned masterpoint games.

It is the responsibility of the club to comply with all local, state and federal laws.

### **SECTION ONE: ACBL CLUB MASTERPOINT GAME SANCTION**

An ACBL club sanction grants the right to an entity to conduct bridge games at regularly scheduled times and locations and award masterpoints at those games in accordance with specific ACBL rules and regulations.

There are approximately 3,200 clubs that conduct ACBL sanctioned games. Some operate only a monthly game, while others operate as many as 21 games a week. Altogether, over 3 million tables of sanctioned games in clubs are played annually throughout ACBL territory.

Games must be conducted in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of ACBL regulations as well as the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. The success or failure of games conducted by a club is the responsibility of the club manager. The club manager is free to operate the club as he or she sees fit, as long as the operation of ACBL sanctioned games falls within the limits prescribed by ACBL.

#### **I. ELIGIBILITY**

Any individual ACBL member, group of ACBL members, or nonaffiliated organization (such as a country club, a fraternal or industrial organization, or a church or other religious group) may apply for a sanction. When ACBL issues a sanction, the sanction holder is given the right to conduct bridge games and award club masterpoints in accordance with ACBL rules and regulations. Sanction application forms are available on the ACBL website and from the ACBL Club and Member Services Department.

#### **II. SANCTIONED GAME PROVISIONS**

##### **A. SCHEDULING MASTERPOINT GAMES**

A club may conduct one or more regularly scheduled games under one sanction at varying sites. The club must list all regularly scheduled games that will award masterpoints and all addresses where these games will be held on the sanction application. Once the sanction is granted, only those game sessions listed on the application may award masterpoints. If a schedule change is contemplated or proposed, two weeks notice must be given to ACBL before the change may be made. However, no notice is necessary if a club's regularly scheduled session falls on the evening (6:00 p.m. or later) of December 31 (New Year's Eve). The club may schedule two sessions of play that night – one to begin before midnight and the other after.

##### **B. ADDING GAMES**

A club may add or change game sessions on a sanction any time during the year, provided that it notifies in writing, the ACBL Club and Member Services Department and pays a fee for each game session changed. See Appendix G.

##### **C. CANCELING SESSIONS**

ACBL regulations permit the canceling of a specific session without penalty. See Chapter 4, Section Three, IV, E. The club manager or director must note the canceled game session on the Monthly Report Form. No fees are refunded for canceled game sessions.



#### **D. NON-EXCLUSIVITY OF SANCTION**

ACBL sanctions are not exclusive. ACBL encourages open competition among clubs and will sanction two or more club games simultaneously in the same community but usually not at the same location. When two or more club games do occupy the same quarters (as happens when a group of sanction holders cooperate to maintain a city bridge center), they may not operate simultaneously unless their games are of a different class. Units may not compete with existing club sessions. A unit may sponsor a club session or sessions when no existing club session(s) is in operation in a given area. Exception: Units operating a club-type session prior to a new session receiving sanction may continue to do so.

#### **E. CLUBS IN GOOD STANDING**

Clubs that operate in full compliance with ACBL regulations remain in good standing. On application, ACBL will renew their game sanctions for the following year. However, ACBL will not renew sanctions for clubs that have unresolved problems with monthly or special game reports until the problems are resolved. ACBL is not obligated to renew sanctions for clubs with significant violations of ACBL rules and regulations.

### **III. COST OF A SANCTION**

All fees and charges for sanctions are payable in U.S. funds or designated equivalent.

#### **A. NEW CLUB GAMES**

ACBL considers a club game new if it has not been sanctioned previously at the specific location for which it is applying, if it failed to renew its sanction by January 31, if it is on inactive status, or if it has not conducted regularly scheduled duplicate games during the preceding calendar year. However, if a club moves to a new location in the same area and retains its club number, ACBL does not consider it new. Should a new club game sanction be denied, a specific reason will be given.

#### **B. ANNUAL FEE**

When a club files its annual sanction application, it must include the fee for each regularly scheduled game session. This fee is paid once a year. See Appendix G. A regularly scheduled game session is held at the same time of day, on the same day of the week, either weekly, every other week (for example, every other Wednesday), twice a month (for example, the second and fourth Wednesday of every month), or monthly. Games that operate for a short time during the year (for example, during summer months) are subject to this fee, just as if sessions were held throughout the year.

#### **C. TABLE FEES**

A club must pay a fee for each sanctioned game session held plus a fee for each table in play. ACBL charges only one game session fee if different levels of games are held simultaneously. Clubs not using ACBLscore must show on the Monthly Report Form the number of game sessions played, as well as an exact listing of the number of tables in play at each game session. See Chapter 4, Page 5, Table 4.1. The club must send this report to ACBL along with the remittance to cover the fees due. Clubs will be charged an additional \$2 per game fee if they either mail a hard copy of the monthly masterpoint and financial reports or submit reports using an outdated version of ACBLscore. New clubs requesting sanctions will be required to report electronically using ACBLscore.

**NOTE:** Table and session sanction fees are waived for any game that a club schedules to recruit new members and for which it charges no entry fee.

### **IV. OBTAINING A SANCTION**

#### **A. WAITING PERIOD**

When ACBL receives an application for a new club game sanction or reinstatement of a lapsed sanction, there is a 30-day probationary period before the sanction is issued. During this period, copies of the application are sent to an official of the unit in which the club is located and, on request, to the district director for their assessment.

ACBL also requires a 30-day probationary period when a club game sanction is transferred. During that time the unit and/or district director may assess the club's new management.

The ACBL will waive the 30-day probationary period if the unit or the district director agrees in writing to the waiver.

## **B. ALLOWABLE OBJECTIONS TO A SANCTION**

A unit or district director may object to a masterpoint game sanction being granted on the grounds that: (1) the proposed quarters are not suitable, or (2) the applicant's record as an ACBL member indicates previous failures in meeting ACBL standards. ACBL may refuse to grant a new sanction because of the club manager's history of failure to adhere to ACBL regulations. If ACBL rejects an application because of an objection from the unit or district director, the applicant may appeal the rejection to the ACBL Board of Directors. The applicant must make the appeal within 30 days of the date he or she received notice that the application was rejected.

## **C. DURATION OF A SANCTION**

A sanction is valid until the end of the calendar year for which it was issued. See Chapter 4, Section One, V. C. ACBL will not renew a sanction if the club fails to observe regulations, including those that concern reporting and paying for special events sanctioned by the club.

If for some reason, such as remodeling playing quarters or location loss, a club must close a game for an extended period of time, ACBL will place the sanction on an inactive status. ACBL will not renew the sanction for the following year unless the club has a location and a specific date when games will resume.

## **D. CANCELLATION OF A SANCTION**

ACBL management has the right to cancel or suspend a club game sanction for cause upon 30 days notice to the club manager. Any one of the following shall constitute "cause" for cancellation or suspension: operation of a club out of compliance with ACBL regulations or unsuitable club venue. A cancellation is for a fixed period of time whereupon the club manager may apply for renewal or permanent without the possibility of renewal.

ACBL management may immediately suspend or cancel a club game sanction if the "cause" for cancellation is such that continuation of the sanction will result in substantial and immediate violation of ACBL Regulations; or increase the likelihood of lawsuit against the ACBL; or result in violation of state or Federal law.

The 30 day notice of suspension or cancellation shall provide the club manager with the option of providing ACBL management with reasons in writing why the suspension or cancellation should not take place, whereupon ACBL management, in its own discretion, may leave the suspension or cancellation in place, amend the suspension or cancellation or withdraw the suspension or cancellation.

The club may file a written appeal of a suspension or cancellation with the Appeals and Charges Committee of ACBL Board of Directors within 30 days of the effective date of the cancellation, provided however, that the suspension or cancellation will remain in effect until the appeal before the Appeals and Charges Committee has been decided. In order to be considered, such written appeal must include reasons why the cancellation is inconsistent with the terms of this Section D.

## **V. SANCTIONED CLUB GAME REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. MANAGER**

Every ACBL sanctioned masterpoint club game must designate an active ACBL member as its manager who is a member in good standing whose dues or service fees are current. The manager

may be elected, appointed, or hired. The club manager is accountable to ACBL for the enforcement of ACBL rules and regulations in all sanctioned games the club conducts. The club manager must supervise the following activities:

- Preparation and filing of the Monthly Financial and Masterpoint Report(s)
- Correspondence with ACBL on club game matters
- Application for sanction renewals and reporting any change of club managers or session changes on a form provided by ACBL. The signatures of the club manager or officer must be on the form when it is filed.

## **B. IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS**

### ***CLUB IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:***

Each club holding ACBL sanctioned games receives an identification number, which should be included on all correspondence with ACBL.

### ***GAME SESSION NUMBER:***

For identification in filling out the Monthly Financial and Masterpoint Forms, all game sessions are assigned identifying numbers as shown in the Table below:

### **GAME SESSION IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS**

GAME SESSION	NUMBER	GAME SESSION	NUMBER
Monday morning	1	Thursday evening	12
Monday afternoon	2	Friday morning	13
Monday evening	3	Friday afternoon	14
Tuesday morning	4	Friday evening	15
Tuesday afternoon	5	Saturday morning	16
Tuesday evening	6	Saturday afternoon	17
Wednesday morning	7	Saturday evening	18
Wednesday afternoon	8	Sunday morning	19
Wednesday evening	9	Sunday afternoon	20
Thursday morning	10	Sunday evening	21
Thursday afternoon	11	Other games, cruises, etc.	22

Games that start prior to noon are morning games; games that start from noon to but not including 6:00 p.m. are afternoon games; and games that start from 6:00 p.m. to but not including midnight are evening games.

## **C. SANCTION RENEWAL**

In the fall, ACBL provides every club manager holding ACBL sanctioned masterpoint games a renewal application. The manager should indicate corrections, additions, or changes on the renewal application. The manager should then submit the application form to ACBL headquarters with the appropriate fees. Noted changes become effective January 1 of the year for which the sanction is granted. Unless otherwise noted and approved, renewals for club games must have the signature of the club manager. If ACBL does not receive an application for sanction renewal before January 31 of the New Year, the sanction will be canceled.

## **D. ARBITRATION AGREEMENT**

An application for an ACBL club game sanction will not be accepted until the club manager signs the following arbitration agreement: SHOULD ANY DISPUTE, OF WHATEVER KIND OR NATURE, ARISE BETWEEN ACBL AND THE UNDERSIGNED CLUB, IT IS AGREED THAT SUCH DISPUTE SHALL BE RESOLVED BY BINDING ARBITRATION PURSUANT TO THE RULES OF THE AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION OR SUCH OTHER METHOD OF BINDING ARBITRATION AS MAY BE AGREED UPON MUTUALLY BY THE PARTIES.

#### **E. MONTHLY REPORT FORM**

The club must submit a report for each month by the sixth of the following month for the players' masterpoints to be included in the next issue of the Bridge Bulletin and must include the appropriate remittance. If a club's monthly report(s), with fees, are not received by the 10th of the following month, a late fee will be assessed.

### **SECTION TWO: TYPES OF CLUB MASTERPOINT GAMES**

There are four types of regular club games: open, invitational/restricted, newcomer, and Bridge Plus. One or more types of games may be listed on a single sanction.

For ease of identification, especially in filling out monthly reports, these games are assigned classes as follows:

Open	Class 4
Invitational/Restricted	Class 3
Newcomer	Class 2
Bridge Plus	Class 1

On written request to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department, the club may change the classification of a game.

#### **I. OPEN GAME**

This game is open to all ACBL members. Prohibiting or allowing non-members of ACBL to play does not affect open game status.

##### **A. ALLOWABLE MASTERPOINT RESTRICTIONS**

In an open game a club may stipulate that each participant hold a minimum number of masterpoints but cannot stipulate a maximum. For example, an open game could specify that all players must have no fewer than 20 masterpoints but could not refuse entry to a Life Master.

##### **B. ALLOWABLE RESTRICTION OF CONVENTIONS**

Club managers may regulate conventions in games conducted at their clubs. A complete list of conventions that may be used for club play is shown on the ACBL General Convention Chart/Mid-chart/SuperChart. See Appendix A.

##### **C. OPEN GAMES IN CLUBS WITH MEMBERSHIP FEES**

A club that charges a membership fee may conduct an open game, but the game must be open to all ACBL members. The club may however, allow its own members to play at a reduced fee. The entry fee for a non-club member may be as much as 100% more than a member's entry fee.

##### **D. NUMBER OF BOARDS**

An open pair game must have a minimum of two-and-one-half tables. A two-table individual with a one-winner movement or a two-table team game (match awards only) is allowed. In any open club game every contestant must be scheduled to play a minimum of 18 boards to receive full masterpoint awards. Sanctioned clubs may hold shortened regular open games with a minimum number of boards played of 12-17. Masterpoints are awarded at 60% of the award for open games. Sanction fees are reduced for games of 12-17 boards. See Appendix G.

### **E. MENTOR-NOVICE GAME**

A club may hold a Mentor-Novice game as an Open Game even if the club stipulates that one member of each partnership have fewer than a certain number of masterpoints. There must be no limit on the number of masterpoints allowed for the mentor player. The club may hold this game on a regular basis or as a special event. Any special game held in a club is eligible to be held as a Mentor-Novice game.

### **F. EIGHT IS ENOUGH**

A club may hold an 'Eight is Enough' team game as an Open Game. There must not be an upper limit on the number of masterpoints allowed for "A" team members.

## **II. INVITATIONAL/RESTRICTED GAME**

An invitational game is one that limits or places restrictions on who can participate in its events. Participation commonly is limited to:

- Members and guests of the organization that holds the sanction (such as country club or fraternal organization).
- Personnel (and their families and guests) of industries that are currently participating in commercial and industrial leagues
- Players who hold fewer than a stipulated number of masterpoints (when the maximum permitted is fewer than 20, the game is defined as a newcomer game)
- Sections or directions segregated according to strong and weak pairs
- Strong players forbidden to play as partners
- Husbands and wives only
- Life Masters excluded or required to play with non-Life Masters
- Members of one sex only

Eligibility may be restricted for any reason except those that violate ACBL bylaws.

An invitational/restricted game may have no fewer than two-and-one-half tables (except in the case of a two-table individual with a one-winner movement or a team game), and every contestant must be scheduled to play a minimum of 18 boards.

The following regulations should apply when an ineligible person or pair participates in a restricted club game:

- At no time should the director use a pseudonym, non-member, deceased member or similar to disguise the identity of an ineligible player or pair.
- If a player falls outside the masterpoint limits for the given game but has only recently gone over the threshold, for that one time a director may allow the pair to be eligible but club management or the club director should advise the player they will no longer be eligible to play in that game.
- Clubs always have the opportunity to raise the ceiling of their masterpoint-restricted games by submitting a request in writing to the Club and Member Services Department.

- If the club determines that having a director, manager, or ineligible player playing with an eligible player will serve the club's interests they may do so. This pair should be marked as ineligible, and as explained in III.B. below the rankings shall be affected accordingly.
- In the case where two ineligible players are asked to play so that the game will not have a half-table, this pair should remain a phantom pair with none of the scores recorded for this pair nor for their opponents.
- An ineligible pair (not the phantom pair) will still count for the club's monthly total of tables.

### **III. NEWCOMER GAMES**

A newcomer game is limited to players who hold fewer than 20 masterpoints, although a club can set a lower maximum, such as 1 masterpoint, if it so desires.

A newcomer game is conducted to acquaint new players with duplicate bridge and to encourage participation by inexperienced players.

A newcomer game must consist of at least two and one-half tables. However, there are masterpoint awards for two-table newcomer games conducted as individuals or team games. Participants must be scheduled to play a minimum of six boards.

Any club with a sanctioned game may conduct a newcomer game session. The game session may be run any time. The club must list the newcomer game session on the sanction application and the monthly report. When the newcomer game is run concurrently with another sanctioned game, only the table fees are due ACBL.

ACBL recognizes that some relatively skilled players, through failure to register their club masterpoints, retain masterpoint eligibility to participate in newcomer events inappropriate to their skill and/or experience. When the director or club management determines that the ability of a player is vastly superior to that of the other newcomer game participants, the club may refuse entry of that player in its newcomer events. In such a case, the director should advise the player, as diplomatically as possible, that he or she is too proficient to play in the newcomer game. The director should encourage the player instead to participate in the club's games with a higher masterpoint limitation or the open games.

#### **A. PLAYERS WITH 20 OR MORE MASTERPOINTS**

Subject to specified conditions, a club may allow one or two players who hold 20 or more masterpoints to play in a newcomer game. This would be the case when there is a single newcomer player available whose participation would eliminate a half-table movement. For example, if there were 13 pairs plus one single, there would be a 6½ - table game which, by adding a player, would become seven tables. In this instance, the club may allow one non-newcomer to play. In addition, when there is an odd number of newcomer pairs entered, resulting in a half-table movement, the club may allow two non-newcomer players to participate if each plays with a newcomer partner and if a Mitchell-type movement is used; that is, the two newcomer/non-newcomer pairs sit in opposite directions. These pairs are ineligible for masterpoint awards from the newcomer event. In no case may the two non-newcomer players play as partners.

A partnership, including one with a fill-in player (non-newcomer), may use only the conventions the club allows for that game.

#### **B. LOSS OF RANKING**

Pairs in which one partner is a non-newcomer will not receive masterpoints and will not be ranked. For example, if an ineligible pair earns sufficient matchpoints to have finished second, that pair is not ranked. Instead, the third-place pair is ranked second and receives the second place masterpoint awards. In such a case, all lower-ranked pairs move up one rank, accordingly.

### **C. TABLE TOTALS**

Ineligible pairs count in table totals. For example, ACBL considers as a three-table game one that consists of four pairs of newcomers and two other pairs, each of which is made up of one newcomer and one non-newcomer, even though the two mixed (non-newcomer and newcomer) pairs are ineligible for masterpoint awards.

### **D. THREE-MEMBER PAIRS**

At the discretion of club management, three-member pairs may participate in newcomer games. The club will apportion earned masterpoints among the three players in a ratio that approximates the number of boards each played. For example, a pair consisting of newcomer players A, B, and C finishes first in a newcomer game where each member of a two-member pair is entitled to .40 masterpoints, or .80 masterpoints for the pair. In this three-member pair, however, A, B, and C split .80 masterpoints according to the number of boards each played.

## **IV. SPECIAL FUND GAMES**

Clubs are allowed to hold games to benefit special funds. These include the Junior Fund, the ACBL Charity Foundation, CBF Charitable Fund, local governmentally approved charities, the International Fund, and the Educational Foundation. These games are charged an extra per table fee to be remitted to ACBL (except for games to benefit a local charity). Masterpoint awards for these games can be found in the Club Masterpoint Charts at the end of this chapter.

### **A. JUNIOR MONTH**

January is designated as Junior Fund month. In January a club may hold as many games as they have sessions to benefit the ACBL Junior Fund. During any other months, excluding April, May and September, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the Junior Fund.

### **B. Charity Month**

The month of April is designated as Charity Month. During this month, each sanctioned club game is authorized to run its regularly scheduled sessions Charity Games. All clubs may run as many charity games as they have games scheduled. During any other months, excluding January, May and September, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the Charity Fund. An extra per person fee is contributed to the ACBL Charity Foundation in the U.S. and the CBF Charity Foundation in Canada. See Appendix G.

Clubs may use their charity fund sessions to conduct one two-session charity fund championship. The same ACBL regulations that pertain to a two-session club championship apply to a two-session charity fund championship. This includes the right to schedule the charity event at a time and place that differs from that of the regular game.

The entire contribution must be made to an official ACBL beneficiary. See C. below. A club may charge any table fee that it chooses. Masterpoint awards for these games can be found in the Club Masterpoint Charts at the end of this chapter. Masterpoint awards for these games can be found in the Club Masterpoint Charts at the end of this chapter.

## **i. BENEFICIARIES**

**OFFICIAL ACBL BENEFICIARIES:** The first ACBL sanctioned charity game, if any, plus at least every other subsequent game conducted by a club in a calendar year must be for the benefit of the ACBL Charity Foundation or, in Canada, the CBF Charitable Fund. ACBL sanctioned charity games not required to be run for the benefit of the ACBL Charity Foundation or the CBF Charitable Fund may be for the benefit of any governmentally-recognized charity, charity foundation or charity fund.

Under exceptional circumstances and on written application, the ACBL Charity Foundation will permit a club to hold its first charity game of the year for a local beneficiary and its next game for an official ACBL beneficiary. Of the proceeds from the first charity game, a minimum amount per player must be contributed to the principal beneficiary.

**SECONDARY BENEFICIARIES:** A club that has selected a secondary beneficiary may make whatever contribution it chooses out of the surplus proceeds from the charity session. Some local charities provide playing space and publicity in exchange for a portion of the proceeds.

**LOCAL BENEFICIARIES:** The second charity club championship may be conducted on behalf of a local charity, if the Internal Revenue Service approves the charity as tax-exempt. Note: the ACBL Educational Foundation qualifies as a local or secondary beneficiary. A minimum amount per player must go to the beneficiary.

**TWO-SESSION EVENTS:** A club may divide the proceeds from a two-session event equally between an official ACBL beneficiary and local beneficiaries. If the sessions are unequal in size, the official ACBL beneficiary receives a minimum amount per player from the larger session and the local beneficiary a minimum amount per player from the smaller session.

Any club that, in any calendar year, runs one or more allowed special local charity games that are sanctioned for extra masterpoints must make available for public inspection an accounting of all funds raised in such games no later than February 28 of the following calendar year.

## **ii. CHARITY FUND GAME AWARDS**

A club conducting invitational games may hold allocated charity championships as open events in which all ACBL members are allowed to participate, rather than conduct them as invitational events. The club must adequately advertise the fact that the game will be open. The rules for awards for an open charity championship held by an invitational club are the same as those for an open club.

Except as provided in the preceding paragraph, awards for the first two allocated charity events held by an invitational or newcomer game may be found in the Masterpoint Award Charts.

## **iii. REPORTING CHARITY FUND GAMES**

Clubs must report on the monthly financial report games conducted for local beneficiaries, listing the name of the beneficiary and the net amount contributed. In this case, however, they should send the contribution directly to the charity

## **C. International Month**

September is designated as International Fund month. During September a club may hold as many games as they have sessions to benefit the ACBL International Fund. During any other months, excluding January, April and May, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the International Fund.

## **D. Educational Games**



During any months, excluding January, April, May, and September, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the Educational Foundation.

### **E. Grass Roots Fund Month**

May is designated as Grass Roots Fund month. During May a club may hold as many games as they have sessions to benefit the North American Pairs and the Grand National Teams. During any other months, excluding January, April and September, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the Grass Roots Fund.

Funds raised shall be returned annually no later than March 31 to the individual District in which those funds were raised, and shall be used by the District to help fund Grass Roots Events. Grass Roots Events are defined as the Grand National Teams and the North American Pairs. The ACBL shall not charge the Districts any fee for the cost of collecting and disbursing these funds.

## **V. OTHER CLUB GAMES**

In addition to regular and special fund games, ACBL designs several programs to stimulate bridge activity. If the sanctioned activities listed below do not meet the requirements of a group or organization, ACBL may be able to prepare a special program that does. Anyone interested may contact the ACBL Club and Member Services Department.

### **A. ACBL INTRODUCTORY GAMES**

A club may conduct ACBL introductory games without first obtaining sanctions, but the games must have ACBL approval. The purpose of these games is to acquaint members of nonaffiliated groups or organizations with duplicate bridge and the American Contract Bridge League.

Bridge teachers, club managers, or enthusiastic individual members are usually the ones who organize introductory games. Groups, such as luncheon clubs, religious organizations, or industries interested in the social or promotional possibilities of these games often sponsor them.

The individuals who direct these games should have reasonable qualifications. The director usually issues club masterpoint receipts, which are available from the ACBL Club and Member Services Department.

Each game must have at least three tables, and each player must be scheduled to play a minimum of six boards.

### **B. HANDICAP GAMES**

Handicapping of regularly sanctioned club games can encourage players with limited experience to attend the games by giving them more opportunity to win club masterpoints. Stronger players also may be freshly challenged by having to play better in order to win. The game may be organized in any of the following ways:

- Creating a new game at a time different from that of existing games (with the expectation of drawing players not now engaging in duplicate play)
- Converting one session per week from an existing game to a handicap game
- Converting an existing game to a handicap game for half of its sessions (for example, every other week there could be a handicap game)
- Where the clientele is large enough, converting a section of play to handicap format, keeping one section as regular duplicate bridge
- Creating a bridge team league in which all players have handicaps for a round-robin season
- Conducting Swiss team sessions at specified times with the teams handicapped

Clubs may establish handicaps by averaging a player's previous performances in comparable club game sessions or by considering the player's ACBL rank.

To establish handicaps for existing clientele, directors should use past recap sheets from recent game sessions. For example, to compute each participant's percent of possible score for the last three games in which each took part, the player's matchpoint score would be divided by the maximum possible score, and then a percentage average would be computed. The average is the sum of the three percentages divided by three. The handicap percentage would be determined by subtracting the average from 0.650 (par) and multiplying the result by 0.80 (or 0.90). This method would provide the player with a handicap of 80 or 90% of the difference between their "average" and a stated par of 65%.

A sample handicap determination follows: Scores were 0.510, 0.537, and 0.610, for a total of 1.657. Dividing the total by 3 yields an average 0.552. Then, subtracting 0.552 from 0.650 yields 0.098, which multiplied by 0.90 equals a handicap of 0.088, or 8.8%. To arrive at the handicap for a pair, the handicaps of both players are added together and divided by two. While the game is being played, the percentage handicap for each pair is converted to handicap matchpoints. This is accomplished by multiplying the percentage handicap by the possible matchpoints (for example, 156 average equals 312 possible). The handicap matchpoints for each pair are posted in a column in which they can be added easily to the raw score matchpoints. The after-game calculations are merely a matter of adding two matchpoint totals together. A sample calculation follows. Percent handicap times possible matchpoints equals the matchpoint handicap, which is to be added to raw score.

$$0.088 \times 312 = 27.0.$$

$$0.081 \times 312 = 25.0.$$

$$0.102 \times 312 = 32.0.$$

$$0.125 \times 312 = 39.0.$$

$$0.075 \times 312 = 23.0.$$

This calculation may be eased by subtracting the lowest matchpoint handicap from all the others. Thus the pair with the lowest handicap has nothing added to their raw score, and the other matchpoint handicaps are reduced appropriately. As an example, if the lowest handicap in the field is 15 matchpoints, subtract 15 from each pair's calculated total.

When a contestant has not played in three previous games, the club director may use any of the following options:

- Explain that the player cannot use a handicap until he or she completes three games at the club
- Establish the handicap based on only one game (at the conclusion of that game, or at the conclusion of two or three games)
- Base the handicap for the first game on the player's rank. See Table 4.2. For non-members, ACBL suggests that the handicap shown on the chart for the Club Master category be arbitrarily assigned

There are two methods of awarding masterpoints: split masterpoint awards or 100% awards for scratch winners and 50% awards for handicap winners. In the split masterpoint method there are two winner categories, or fields: raw score and handicap score. The first-place award in each field will be one-half of what it would be normally (maximum in each field for first place will be 0.75 club masterpoints). Players placing in both fields (which is what often happens) receive the total of the two awards added together.

In the other method the scratch winners receive 100% awards while the handicap winners receive 50% awards. Players receive the higher of the awards but not both.

Handicaps based on rank are easier to administer and maintain than any other form of handicapping. Using the rank format, each member's handicap is added to that of his or her partner to determine the size of the handicap. One board equals the maximum matchpoints possible on a board. For example, a Junior Master (1 1/4 boards) playing with a Sectional Master (3/4 board) would have a handicap equal to two boards.

For further information about handicapped games, the pamphlet "HANDICAPS" is available on the ACBL website.

**TABLE 4.2 HANDICAP BONUS TABLE (RANK)**

<b><u>Player Rank</u></b>	<b><u>Masterpoints</u></b>	<b><u>Percent Handicap</u></b>	<b><u>Bonus Board</u></b>
Rookie	0 - 4.99	25	1-1/2
Junior Master	5 - 19.99	22	1-1/4
Club Master	20 - 49.99	19	1
Sectional Master	50 - 99.99	16	3/4
Regional Master	100 - 199.99	13	1/2
NABC Master	200+ (not LM)	10	1/4
Life Master	Under 500	5	1/8
Life Master	500+	0	0

### **C. STRATIFIED PAIRS**

A stratified pair game is one that produces more than one set of winners. All pairs are ranked in the top strat; the pairs in the top strat are eliminated in determining the ranks in Strat B; both A and B pairs are eliminated in determining the ranks in Strat C. It is possible for Strat B and C pairs to place in the higher strat, but Strat A pairs are eligible for A awards only; and Strat B pairs are eligible for A and B awards only. The strat in which a pair plays is determined by the player who has the most masterpoints or by the average masterpoints of the two players. (No player may have more masterpoints than the maximum for the event).

Stratified pair games may be conducted with two or three strats. The lowest strat may have any upper masterpoint limitation suitable for the club. The lowest strat must have at least five pairs for overall awards to be issued and at least three pairs in a comparison group for section awards to be issued. There should be approximately the same number of pairs sitting N/S and E/W in each strat, so that the section awards will be equal.

The game is first scored on the total number of tables in play, and masterpoints are computed from the Open/Invitational point award chart. Awards for the second strat include tables in the remainder of the game (all but the top strat) and are computed from the appropriate point award chart.

In a Newcomer strat (0 to 20 masterpoints), only tables in this strat receive masterpoints, from the newcomer award chart.

The club issues masterpoints to each player based on the place of finish. If the player places in more than one strat, the player receives the higher of the two awards, not both.

For further information about stratified games, the pamphlet *Stratifying Your Club Game* is available on the ACBL website.

### **D. HOME-STYLE**

The purpose of the home-style bridge concept is to attract primarily the non-duplicate bridge playing public to ACBL clubs. Home-style bridge is an easy-to-run, fun game. Since cards are shuffled and dealt for each hand, social and rubber bridge players adapt to it easily.

The Swiss pairs format is the most popular among the clubs that have tried this program. Pairs are each assigned a different number and are seated at random for the first round. Players cut for the deal and, in most movements, play four deals per round. At the end of the round they total their scores and report the point difference (either plus or minus) to the game director. The game director converts the score to victory points and records this figure on the recap sheet. See Chapter 4; Section Seven, I., B. 2. Starting with the two highest victory point totals, the director assigns the seating for the next round so that pairs with the closest scores play against each other. The same procedure is used for all succeeding rounds. A record of the pair assignments for each round must be kept by the director so that pairs play against each other only once in the same session. After all the players receive their seating assignments, the next round begins.

Overall and match awards are issued for this type of contest. Match awards are based on total score before conversion to victory points. In the case of a tie, each pair receives one-half of the match award.

Match awards, which are based on the number of boards played in the match and the classification of the club, may be found in the Masterpoint Award Charts located at the end of this chapter.

Open clubs issue .04 club masterpoints to the winners of each four-board match, and invitational/newcomer clubs award .03 club masterpoints for each four-board match. Overall rank is based on the total victory points won in a complete session of play. Players receive either the overall award or the total of the match awards, whichever is greater. For overall masterpoint awards, refer to the charts at the end of this chapter. These games earn the same overall masterpoint awards as any other regularly sanctioned club game; that is, awards are based on the type of club (open, invitational/ restricted, or newcomer).

Home-style bridge may be used in club games only. It may be used in club championships and charity club championships but not for ACBL-wide events, district-wide events, or any other special events. Clubs must apply to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department to conduct home-style bridge games that issue masterpoints. The Alert procedure and skip bid warning are not encouraged for this type of event.

Regular convention cards should not be used for home-style games. An inexpensive, specially designed home-style convention card is available from ACBL.

## **E. COLLEGE PROGRAM**

ACBL offers duplicate bridge activity on college campuses. On request, the ACBL Club and Member Services Department will send information to any student or faculty member who is interested in operating a sanctioned bridge game on any campus within ACBL jurisdiction. The sanction application should be completed in accordance with the regulations listed below and returned to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department.

- Games are to be open to students, faculty members, and their spouses only.
- No matter how many times a year a game is scheduled, an annual fee for each game session must accompany the application. The sanction year runs from January 1 through December 31.
- The college game is not required to operate on a regular schedule. The day of the week may be changed if the change does not interfere with the schedule of an existing open club on the campus.
- The game will be allotted one session with club championship rating for every 12 regular sessions played.
- The college game is rated as an invitational game.

- Each game must submit a Monthly Report of all game activity that occurred during the preceding month. Report forms are sent along with sanction approval. The Monthly Report must be submitted to ACBL no later than the 10th of the month following the month in which the reported games were played.
- A fee for each game plus a fee for each table must be sent with the report form.
- A faculty adviser must co-sign the sanction application and must agree to serve as the official ACBL contact.

## **F. HIGH SCHOOL GAMES**

A high school interested in adopting a program similar to that offered to a college should write to the ACBL Education Department for more information.

## **G. PUPIL GAMES**

A bridge teacher may apply for a special sanction to conduct a pupil game. ACBL will issue the sanction free of charge if: (1) the applicant is an ACBL member, (2) the game is restricted to bona fide students of the sanction holder, (3) the lessons run for a minimum of 45 minutes, and (4) at least six boards are to be played. A minimum of at least eight participating students is required. If there are only two tables, the game must be run as a team event, individual event, or Swiss pair game.

The game may be sanctioned as a regularly scheduled session or periodically, subject to ACBL regulations. The sessions may be run at different times and places from the lessons. A monthly report form is not required for pupil games, and there are no session or table fees.

The teacher who runs the game need not be an ACBL club director. The interests of both the teacher and the pupils are advanced substantially, however, if the teacher has such a rating.

## **H. BRIDGE PLUS+**

These games provide a transition from ACBL beginning bridge classes to newcomer games conducted at ACBL-sanctioned games. They may be operated by bridge teachers, club managers or ACBL club directors. Players are encouraged to ask for advice on bidding and playing the hands.

A sanction is required to conduct an ACBL Bridge Plus+ game. Bridge Plus+ sanctions are issued free of session fees if all of the following conditions are met:

- a) Only students with fewer than 5 masterpoints may participate in the game.
- b) The game must consist of a minimum of six boards.
- c) Monthly reports must be sent to ACBL by the 10th of the month following the month in which the game was held.

The teacher who runs the game need not be a club director. The teacher/director resolves all irregularities.

## **I. CRUISE SHIPS**

The ACBL sanctions duplicate games as part of the social program aboard cruise ships. Any ship that conducts sanctioned bridge games must pay an annual sanction fee. This fee permits the ship to conduct sanctioned games on all its cruises for the entire year. A letter of permission from the cruise line authorizing a director to conduct a bridge program on the ship for a calendar year must accompany the sanction application. The ACBL provides a free supply of club masterpoint receipt pads.

The ACBL will sanction games on a ship for a single cruise that does not exceed 14 days, charging a sanction fee. There is one sanction fee for cruises of one to seven days and a larger sanction fee for cruises of eight to 30 days. See Appendix G. Whoever receives sanctions for cruise ships are expected, within the constraints placed upon them by the cruise lines, to actively promote ACBL for the purpose of recruiting new members.

ACBL defines the duration of a cruise as the period from the time the ship leaves the port of embarkation until it either returns to that port or terminates the advertised cruise at a different port. A 40-day cruise to the Orient, for example, is a single cruise, even though it may involve 18 days going, 4 days in port, and 18 days returning.

Cruise ships need not hold club masterpoint games at regularly scheduled intervals. Since the games are part of the social activity, they must suit the convenience of the players. The technical operation of the games must follow the regulations set forth for most sanctioned club games, with the following exceptions:

- There are no table and session fees, and the director of the sanctioned cruise game does not have to submit a Monthly Financial Report form.
- When 18 or more boards are played, the awards will follow the scale of 80% of open games.
- When 12-17 boards are played, the current scale of 50% of open games will apply
- Directors also may hold Newcomer games if warranted.
- ACBL regulations require that these games have a club or higher rated director.

As a supplement to the cruise games authorized, cruise championships may be scheduled in accordance with the following regulations:

- A limit of one cruise championship event every 14 days may be held during the cruise. The event may be of one or two sessions. Typical cruise championship events are open pairs, men's and women's pairs, mixed pairs, and individuals.
- Masterpoint awards for cruise championships are 80% of an open game championship. Players who earn masterpoints in a cruise game receive their points from ACBL.

Directors or managers on cruise ships need not pay the per table session fees, but must submit club masterpoint reports to ACBL at the end of the cruise. The report should include the dates of the cruise, name of the ship, and the cruise sanction number. Send the report to [cruisepoints@acbl.org](mailto:cruisepoints@acbl.org).

## **J. LAND CRUISES**

The sanction fees for land cruises are the same as they are for ship cruises. The only difference is that the "cruise" is held on land. Land cruises that operate at a single site in an ACBL country for more than 14 days will be sanctioned as a club game and report as one. All other land cruises held in an ACBL country that are open to all ACBL members will be able to award masterpoints at full open club value. ACBL would consider, for example, a sanctioned bridge game held over a weekend at a vacation resort as a single land cruise.

## **K. SANCTIONED ONLINE COMPUTER GAMES**

Sanctioned online games award masterpoints that have no pigmentation. The total number of masterpoints available to be awarded in an online club game is the same as in a comparably sized face-to-face game.

Computer networks running ACBL sanctioned games must meet specific criteria including but not limited to: ease of use, clarity of presentation, availability of rated director online, ability to enroll ACBL members online, ability to transfer masterpoint information to ACBL electronically, and the ability to provide concise achievement records.

## **L. PENAL INSTITUTIONS**

ACBL will sanction games in penal institutions in North America. These games must be run by a club or higher rated director. ACBL may substantially reduce or eliminate charges to clubs in prisons or mental institutions.

## **N. AD HOC GAMES**

A club may run up to two ad hoc regularly sanctioned masterpoint games per calendar year at a date and time not currently sanctioned. These games are subject to the same rules and fees as a normal club masterpoint game.

## **V. GAME MOVEMENTS**

A movement is the method of progression during the game, indicating the seat to be occupied and the boards to be played by each player at each round.

### **A. PAIR MOVEMENTS**

A club may conduct pair games of any legal size (two and one-half or more tables) using either Howell or Mitchell movements. When 14 or more tables are in play, it is permissible to split the game into two sections, with each section containing at least seven tables. Duplicated boards are desirable but not mandatory.

The most commonly used pair movements are:

**MITCHELL:** This movement keeps the pairs in two groups, N-S and E-W, with the aim of having all N-S pairs meeting all E-W pairs and playing all the boards. Typically the boards move one table lower and the players one table higher each round. There is a winner for each section for both the N-S and E-W pairs with the highest score.

**HOWELL:** This movement produces one winner from a field in which all pairs play each of the boards in play, with comparison in direct competition with other pairs on approximately half of the boards, and adverse comparison on the other boards.

### **B. INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENTS**

A club may run individual games (two or more tables) with either Rainbow or Shomate movements:

**RAINBOW:** This is a movement in which contestants are divided into groups corresponding to their original starting directions, with separate instructions for progressing to each group.

**SHOMATE:** This movement (also called an irregular rainbow) does not keep the players in a particular group, thus allowing comparison across the field.

### **C. TEAM MOVEMENTS**

A board-a-match team game can be run with a regular board-a-match movement, a Mirror movement, or any other approved movement.

See Chapter 4, Section Seven for information on team events and team movements.

### **SECTION THREE: GENERAL CLUB GAME REGULATIONS**

#### **I. MASTERPOINTS**

The sanctioned duplicate game awards masterpoints to approximately 40% of the contestants in each session. The number of masterpoints the game awards depends on the number of tables in play and the conditions under which the club conducts the game. The club must submit to ACBL a monthly Club Masterpoint Report and ACBL issues these points directly to the player. A club's failure to submit the report can result in the suspension or loss of its sanction(s).

Masterpoints won in club games are as important as those won in any type of tournament. All masterpoints carry about the same weight in the ACBL ranking system.

The level of competition of events in which masterpoints are won is denoted by five color and one colorless variation: black, silver, red, gold, and platinum.

##### **A. NET POINTS**

Netpoints are awarded for online play and are colorless.

##### **B. BLACK POINTS**

Sanctioned club games and Unit games award black points.

##### **C. SILVER POINTS**

Silver points are awarded for events at sectional tournaments, including newcomer games and side events. Progressive Sectionals and Sectional Tournaments at Clubs also award silver points. See Chapter 6.

##### **D. RED POINTS**

Regional tournaments and regional events at NABCs award red points except for overall and section tops. See Gold Points below. Grand National Teams events and North American Pairs events afford players the opportunity to earn red points at their local clubs. See Chapter 6.

##### **E. GOLD POINTS**

Gold points are awarded for overall placings and section tops in regional and NABC events where the top masterpoint limit is at least 750. Gold points may be given for special games, such as the Instant Matchpoint Game, Grand National Team and North American Pair events. See Chapter 6.

##### **F. PLATINUM POINTS**

Platinum points are awarded for NABC+ events and include the national-rated senior and women's events with no upper masterpoint limit but not the junior, flight B, or other restricted events.

#### **II. INCENTIVE PROGRAMS FOR CLUBS**

##### **A. NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT**

Clubs can earn an upgraded club championship by recruiting 10 new members. The 10 new members need not be recruited within any specific time period (for example, you could recruit three new members in 2010, four in 2011 and three more in 2012). The club manager will be notified when the club has recruited 10 new members. Payment is at the same rate as regular club games. Masterpoints awards can be found in the Masterpoint Awards Chart at the end of this chapter.



A maximum of two upgraded club championship games per session may be held in one calendar year.

## **B. NEWCOMER GAME INCENTIVES**

Clubs holding newcomer games (an upper masterpoint limit of not more than 20) at the same time as an open, invitational or restricted game may include the newcomer game tables when computing awards for the open, masterpoint-restricted or invitational game.

If a club chooses to run a flighted game, tables in any restricted sections count toward club masterpoint awards for any unrestricted section in play at that club during that session, (subject to the usual restriction for a rating point game, that the maximum awarded shall be 1.50). If there are two or more unrestricted sections, they shall share the credit for any other tables equally.

## **C. CLUB HIGHLIGHTS**

ACBL is always interested in passing along helpful hints on club operations. If you have a program you believe would be useful for other clubs, send the idea(s) to us and we will consider publishing it in an ACBL publication or on our website.

## **D. REDUCED PRICE MEMBERSHIPS AND RATES**

Club officials can offer a reduced price one-year membership to new members. If an applicant is found to have been a member previously, the membership fee will be pro-rated at the current membership rate.

For every 10 new members recruited, a club earns an upgraded club championship. For every 25 new members you recruit in a calendar year, you will receive a \$100 gift certificate to Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies.

For every 100 new members you recruit (regardless of the number of years it takes to recruit them starting in 2002), you will receive a bonus check for \$500. In addition, for the first 100 new members recruited, the ACBL will send you a certificate recognizing you as an ACBL Star Recruiter. Only club officials submitting their Social Security number or Tax Identification Number with the application will be eligible for rebates and certificates.

## **E. COOPERATIVE ADVERTISING PROGRAM**

ACBL will subsidize teachers, clubs and units who wish to use advertising to recruit students for bridge lessons or to promote the game. This subsidy will be 75% of the cost of the advertising program up to a maximum of \$750 per program. Advertising must be for newcomer programs, beginner bridge lessons or ACBL membership. Eligible media are radio, television, newspapers, magazines, direct mail, outdoor, yellow pages, fliers, handbills and statement stuffers. Contact the ACBL Marketing Department for further information.

# **III. GAME DIRECTOR**

The person who conducts the games in the club is the director. All club games must be directed by a club or higher-rated director who must be an ACBL member in good standing with all service fees and dues paid to be eligible to direct an ACBL sanctioned game. ACBL regulations permit the use of a different director for every session.

## **A. CLUB DIRECTOR**

To become a Club director one must pass a written examination. A prospective director who wishes to take the examination must contact ACBL. ACBL then sends the examination to an appointed monitor for administration. To take the examination, the examinee must pay a fee to the monitor. The monitor retains a portion of the fee and sends the remainder to ACBL along with the completed examination.

While taking the test, the examinee may use any written material available. Examinees should have the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations, and a good director's handbook on hand during the examination. Club Directors Handbooks are available through Baron Barclay. You may order and charge these on your credit card by calling 1-800-274-2221.

On completion, the monitor returns the test to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department for grading. Please allow 14 days for grading the examination. ACBL sends cards to those who pass the examination. Applicants failing the exam are notified by letter of areas to study to prepare for retaking the exam.

Any club or higher-rated director must be an ACBL member in good standing with all service fees and dues paid to be eligible to direct an ACBL sanctioned game.

## **B. NON-PLAYING DIRECTOR**

It is preferable for a game to have a non-playing director. A non-playing director can give more objective rulings concerning disputes and infractions of bridge laws and regulations than one who is personally involved in the session. Even when no rulings are called for, the non-playing director can give more attention to maintaining the quality of the game. Some special games require a non-playing Club or higher-rated director.

Non-playing directors are encouraged, but not required for games having not more than one section of 17 tables or less for the following special events held at clubs: ACBL-wide International Fund Games, ACBL-wide Charity Games, Junior Fund Games, Club Appreciation Games, Senior Pairs, World-wide Pairs, Instant Matchpoint Game, Membership Games, NABC Fund Raisers, Canadian Olympiad, COPC, CNTC, NAOP Club and Unit qualifying stages and GNT Club and Unit qualifying stages, GNT Promotional Games, Unit Championships, Unit Charity Championships, and STACs.

## **C. CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION**

ACBL management has the right to cancel a club director's accreditation for cause upon 30 days notice to the club director. Either of the following shall constitute "cause" for cancellation of accreditation: direction of a club game out of compliance with ACBL regulations or unsuitable club venue. A cancellation of accreditation is for a fixed period of time whereupon the club director may apply for reinstatement of accreditation (a new examination may be required by ACBL management for reinstatement); or, a cancellation may be permanent without the possibility of reinstating accreditation.

ACBL management may cancel a club game director's accreditation without notice if the "cause" for cancellation is such that continuation of the club director's club activities will result in substantial and immediate violation of ACBL Regulations; or increase the likelihood of lawsuit against the ACBL; or result in violation of state or Federal law.

The 30 day notice of cancellation of accreditation shall provide the club director with the option of providing ACBL management with reasons in writing why the cancellation should not take place, whereupon ACBL management, in its own discretion, may leave the cancellation of accreditation in place, amend the cancellation or withdraw the cancellation

The club director may file a written appeal of a cancellation of accreditation with the Appeals and Charges Committee of ACBL Board of Directors within 30 days of the effective date of the cancellation, provided however, that the cancellation will remain in effect until the appeal before the Appeals and Charges Committee has been decided. In order to be considered, such written appeal must include reasons why the cancellation is inconsistent with the terms of this Section C.

## **IV. OPERATION OF CLUB GAMES**

ACBL grants a club game sanction on the condition that the club conduct all game sessions in full compliance with ACBL regulations. These regulations help maintain the technical level of all games and ensure that masterpoints are issued under approximately equal conditions everywhere. To retain a sanction the club manager must observe both the letter and the spirit of ACBL regulations. Within the limits they establish, there is ample room for the development of innovative, imaginative programs and services for club patrons.

## **A. SYSTEMS AND CONVENTIONS**

ACBL retains the right to approve or disapprove any bidding or defensive carding (lead or discard signal) convention for general use in ACBL-sanctioned tournament events. In exercising this right, ACBL has established convention charts that list conventions permitted in games having varying degrees of difficulty. See Appendix A.

A club manager can bar or allow specific conventions and can bar certain conventions in newcomer games but allow them in open games. The types of events for which this applies are club masterpoint games, club championships, club charity events, ACBL-wide events, unit championships, unit charity events, district charity events, and the first level of play in the North American Pairs event. The Alert procedure and the skip bid announcement are procedures used in tournaments and are optional (and strongly encouraged) in club games.

When masterpoints are awarded for overall positions in several locations, such as unit-wide games, STaCs, etc., all conventions in the ACBL General Convention Chart must be allowed unless the conditions of contest specify otherwise. Use of the Alert procedure is mandatory, and the rules that govern skip bid announcements are applicable.

Occasionally special games, such as the GNT event, may be held in clubs. In such a case the club manager must check the conditions of contest to be sure to conduct the game in conformity with the rules.

ACBL recommends that clubs which are inclined to permit patrons to test new or little known conventions or systems restrict such testing to one of several scheduled game sessions. If experience indicates that the majority of the club players welcome this policy, it can be extended easily to other sessions. In any case, players must have the approval of the director before using any convention not specifically authorized. ACBL recommends that each club post a list of approved conventions in a conspicuous place on its premises.

## **B. SEEDING**

Seeding means specifically seating strong pairs (or weak pairs) in a manner relative to the movement, so that every contestant plays against a group of opponents of approximately the same strength. In a one-section event, both directions should be balanced. In a multi-section event, all fields should be balanced. In two-session events, the balance should be maintained for both sessions.

If there is an active effort to seat all strong pairs in one direction and the weak pairs in the other, the session must be classified as an invitational/restricted game. Further, if all strong pairs are seated in one section and all weak pairs in another, the strong section qualifies as open, and the other section becomes restricted/invitational.

Seeding is not mandatory for any regular masterpoint games. All seating may be random by luck of the draw or on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **C. MARGIN FOR RANKING FINISHERS**

Score adjustments, carryovers and raw scores will be rounded to two decimal places, with .01 constituting a margin of separation for ranking and masterpoints. Any margin between contestants will be sufficient separation for purposes of qualification.

#### **D. CASH PRIZES**

Many clubs consider the club masterpoints awarded to winners as sufficient prizes. However, some clubs award free plays to future club events to winning players. A few clubs award suitable prizes such as ACBL Bridge Bucks, trophies, or cash. Cash prizes are not subject to any restrictions.

#### **E. SCHEDULING CONFLICTS**

When a sectional (excluding STaCs) or higher rated event is being conducted within 25 miles of a club game's playing site, the club is permitted to hold only its regularly scheduled club masterpoint games (i.e., no special games).

#### **F. CANCELLATION OF A REGULAR GAME SESSION**

Clubs must hold regularly sanctioned game sessions as provided on its approved application. A club may not change a regularly sanctioned game session to a different day or time, even temporarily, without prior ACBL approval.

A club may cancel a regularly scheduled game session because of:

- Unusual weather such as a snowstorm, hurricane, or tornado alert
- A conflict with a higher rated event (optional - not required, but only a regular club game may be held)
- Holidays such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day, and Christmas and other religious holidays
- Not enough tables for a legal game
- In the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda, all statutory holidays, as well as local, provincial, national and religious holidays

There are no game or table fees for sessions canceled for an approved reason. The club must note the reason for a cancellation on the Monthly Report Form. A club may not make up canceled games.

#### **G. CLUB RECORDS**

The club must post recap sheets for each game no later than the next session of that game. Travelers, if used, must be available for player review through the next session of that game. The club must retain the game records for at least three months. For other than regular club games, the club must retain the game records for at least six months.

#### **H. CLUB DISCIPLINE**

Club management should deal promptly and fairly with all cases of improper conduct that occur during an ACBL-sanctioned masterpoint game in the club, including cases of unethical practices. The club manager should either handle these situations personally or establish a standing

committee to review all disciplinary problems. Clubs holding non-sanctioned games may deal with problems arising in these games as they see fit.

The club manager can handle many behavior problems by discussing them with the offenders, by issuing a warning, or declaring a period of probation. In extreme cases or cases of repeat offenses, the manager can bar an ACBL member from the club game for a stipulated period of time, or permanently.

No open club may bar an ACBL member or members as a class, based upon the player's race, creed, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical handicap or on his proficiency at bridge.

Unless a non ACBL member is currently suspended or expelled from participation in ACBL sanctioned events, permission to play in an ACBL sanctioned event at that club is at the sole discretion of the club management and ACBL has no jurisdiction. Therefore, except for a barring alleged to be for the above discriminatory reasons, these regulations do not apply (i.e. the ACBL requirements and rights enumerated in this section do not extend to non ACBL members).

Except as detailed in the previous paragraph, a club may bar an ACBL member for whatever reason it deems proper and consistent with ACBL Rules and Regulations and the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. An obnoxious or incompatible partnership may be barred as a pair, but each may be permitted to play with other partners.

To bar an ACBL member, club management must notify the member in writing and send a copy of the notification to the ACBL Club Membership Department.

The notification must include the member's name and player number and the reason for the barring. An open club can bar members from its regularly scheduled club masterpoint games, membership games, club championships, charity and international fund club championships, and other special events specifically allocated to clubs as outlined above.

These regulations also apply to a club with an invitational sanction except that the club has the additional authority to refuse admittance to an invitational game to someone who does not meet the criteria upon which the invitational sanction is based (e.g. a member who has 500 masterpoints is denied admittance to an invitational game that is limited to members with less than 300 masterpoints).

If the member feels that his barring does not comply with these regulations prohibiting barring players as a class, religious or political affiliations, race, creed, sexual orientation, national origin, physical disability or proficiency at bridge, he or she may appeal the barring to the unit disciplinary committee. Appeals from the unit disciplinary committee may be filed in accordance with and under the authority of the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. Until the appeal is lodged and heard, the player remains barred unless reinstated by the club unless a stay is granted by the Unit Disciplinary Chairperson.

A club may extend the barring of an ACBL member from Grand National teams, North American Pair events, STaCs, qualifying sessions of a progressive sectional, ACBL-wide games, unit or district competitions, and/or unit-wide or district-wide championships held at the club. A member so barred may appeal the extension of the barring under the process described in the previous paragraph. In such cases, the written notice to the member barred must include the member's right to appeal the action to the Unit Disciplinary Committee in which the club is located within thirty days of the action taken by the club. Such written notice is required, otherwise the barring shall not be effective.

## **I. DISABLED ACBL MEMBERS**

An ACBL-sanctioned club game should make every reasonable effort to enable a physically disabled member to participate. The overriding philosophy is to accommodate the handicapped individual as long as such accommodation does not unreasonably disadvantage a substantial portion of the other players affected. The club should allow such players to use special equipment, such as card holders, bidding boxes, special playing cards, etc. Contact ACBL's Tournament Department for the approval policy for special playing cards. The club should also accommodate such an individual when the handicap requires special seating such as a stationary position.

## **J. PARTICIPATION IN CLUB ACTIVITIES**

To stimulate participation, a club may require that players participate in a specified number of previously held club masterpoint sessions to be eligible to play in its club championships. The participation requirement must be fully publicized in advance. A club may not impose participation requirements on events that have a sectional or higher rating; for example GNT, NAP, or ACBL-wide events. A club may not impose this requirement on events sanctioned to units, even though the games may be played in the club.

Visitors may be allowed to play in club championships without having met the participation requirement. The term visitor is defined by the governing body of the club and must be properly publicized.

## **V. OTHER CLUB INFORMATION**

### **A. INFORMATION FOR TRAVELERS**

ACBL members who intend to travel to other cities and want to play bridge in those locations can find a listing of bridge clubs on the ACBL website.

### **B. CLUB SUPPLIES AND DIRECTOR MANUALS**

Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies sells the supplies necessary for all types of tournaments and club games. A sales catalog is mailed each year to every club with their packet of supplies. Call 1-800-274-2221 for further information.

## **SECTION FOUR: CLUB MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

The size or denomination of a masterpoint award is determined by a formula that takes into account the level of competition and the number of tables. The club manager or the manager's authorized designee sends monthly Club Masterpoint Reports to ACBL for members who have won masterpoint awards.

### **I. CALCULATING THE AWARDS**

Section awards for all games (open, invitational, restricted and newcomer) are based on the number of pairs, teams or individuals in each group. For example, an eight-table Mitchell movement is two groups of 8 pairs. A five-table Howell movement is one group of 10 pairs. In a Mitchell movement, a 1/2 table will be treated as though it were a full table. For example, 7 1/2 tables would be eight pairs in each group while a 5 1/2 table Howell is 11 pairs in the comparison group. Depth of awards is 40% times the number of pairs in the comparison group, rounded to the nearest whole number with .5 rounded up. For overall awards 1/2 table is counted as a full table.

### **A. OPEN GAME AWARDS**

Open games award .10 MP per table for first place in each group. See Chapter 4, Section Two, I. The second place award is 70% of 1st, third is 50% of 1st, fourth is 35%, fifth is 1/5 and sixth is 1/6, etc. This applies to all open sections for pair, and individual games. Maximum award is 1.50 masterpoints. [Masterpoint Charts.](#)

## B. INVITATIONAL/RESTRICTED GAMES AWARDS

Invitational clubs award .08 masterpoint per pair for first place in each group. See Chapter 4, Section Two, II. Other placements are based on the same percentages as for Open clubs. The maximum award is 1.20 masterpoints.

The same awards are used for men's/women's, mixed, pro-am and senior games in both Open and Invitational clubs.

Awards for first place (per pair) in masterpoint restricted games are as follows:

Ranges between

0	-	20	MP	=	.05
0	-	100	MP	=	.06
0	-	200	MP	=	.07
0	-	200+ (*)	MP	=	.08

\* 0- to any masterpoint restriction greater than 200

Stratified pairs may be conducted with two or three strats. The lowest strat may have any upper masterpoint limitation suitable for a club. The lowest strat must have at least five pairs.

## C. NEWCOMER GAME AWARDS

First place section awards for Newcomer games per pair in each group are:

Ranges between

0	-	5	=	.03
0	-	10	=	.04
0	-	20	=	.05

Other placements are based on the same percentages as for Open clubs. The maximum award is 1.00 masterpoint. [Masterpoint Charts.](#)

## D. BRIDGE PLUS+ GAME AWARDS

Award .03 per pair for first place. Other placements are based on the same percentages as for Open clubs. Maximum Award is .50 masterpoint. [Masterpoint Charts.](#)

## E. AWARDS FOR TIED POSITIONS

When two pairs tie for the same position, the appropriate individual masterpoint awards are determined by adding the masterpoints for that position and the next lower position; the members of each pair then receive half of that total. If three pairs tie for a position, the masterpoints for that position and the next two lower positions are added, and the members of each pair receive one-third of that total. In the unlikely event that four or more pairs tie for the same position, this mathematical procedure continues to the appropriate level to determine the masterpoint awards for the members of each pair.

When there is a two-way tie for the last position awarding masterpoints, the next lower award is calculated. This is added to the last place award, and the sum is divided between the two pairs.

## **F. OVERALL AWARDS FOR CLUB GAMES WITH TWO OR MORE SECTIONS**

Club games with more than one section may issue overall awards comparing all the sections. Awards may not exceed 2.50 for Open clubs, 2.00 for Invitational clubs and 1.67 for Newcomer clubs. Second place would be 75% of first, third 75% of second, etc. through a maximum of six places. [Masterpoint Charts](#).

**PAIR AWARDS:** Pairs receive their section awards or the overall award, whichever is greater, but not both. For example, a pair whose section award was 0.50 and whose overall award was 0.65 would be credited with 0.65 masterpoints.

**HANDICAP GAMES:** Pair and maximum award regulations also apply to handicap games. An exception would occur if a pair earns only a section award in the raw score computation and earns an overall award in the handicap score. In this case the two would be added together.

**CLASS UNIFORMITY:** Pair and maximum award regulations apply only when both sections are of the same class.

**NUMBER OF POSITIONS:** Overall awards may not exceed six positions.

## **G. SERIES GAMES FOR CLUBS**

For Series games in clubs, four or more game sessions are required. The masterpoint bonus to the winning player shall equal .02 times the number of tables in play for all games in which he or she participated. This bonus cannot exceed 1.5 masterpoints for an open game or 1.2 masterpoints for an invitational game. Second place earns 75% of the award for first and third place earns 75% of the second-place award. Clubs may use their own methodology for determining winners. Examples are:

- a. The number of masterpoints earned at the series games
- b. The best percentage score for all series games
- c. Award 4,3,2,1 for 1st through 4th place scores for each game and total such awards for the series to determine the winning individuals

A club may run a series game over any reasonable period, except each club game may only be a part of one series. The club manager may specify a minimum number of game sessions played to be eligible. Clubs may wish to consider a proviso that eligibility requires participation with a minimum of two or more different partners.

## **H. BOARD-A-MATCH AND KNOCKOUT TEAMS**

Awards for board-a-match teams are 110% of awards for pair games. Awards for knockout teams with three or more sessions can be found in the enclosed charts. All match awards should be issued from the match award charts. [Masterpoint Charts](#).

## **II. ISSUING THE AWARDS**

ACBL issues all masterpoint awards to ACBL members. Clubs must report masterpoints won by its players on a monthly basis.

Masterpoint receipts should be given to new players who are not members of ACBL.

## **A. COMPUTERIZED SCORING**



For scoring club games and maintaining financial and masterpoint records, clubs (and units) use ACBLScore, a software program available on the ACBL website. This program can score any type of pair, individual, or team movement and perform all the computations necessary for running a duplicate game. For example, ACBLScore can keep track of games, game sizes, and masterpoints won by an individual over any period of time. It can print mailing labels and produce a report (printout or diskette) of all ACBL members who have won masterpoints in the club in any given month.

## **SECTION FIVE: CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

Every club that conducts its sanctioned games in full compliance with ACBL regulations is entitled to a number of annual club championship games. The number of such games depends on the number of regular games the club holds.

When a club conducts two or more levels of play at the same time (for example, open and newcomer games), it must conduct its club championships for all levels simultaneously. When a club recruits ten new members, one additional club championship may be run as a 100% sectional-rated game.

When a sectional (excluding STaCs or Limited/Restricted Sectionals) or higher rated event is being conducted within 25 miles of a club game's playing site, the club is permitted to hold only its regularly scheduled club masterpoint games (i.e., no special games).

## **I. ALLOCATION OF CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP GAME SESSIONS**

### **A. WEEKLY CLUBS**

Each regularly scheduled weekly game is entitled to four club championship sessions per year. These may be scheduled as four one-session club championships, two one-session championships and one two-session championship, or two two-session championships. See Chapter 4, Section Six, II. C. and D.

When a sectional (excluding STaCs or Limited/Restricted Sectionals) or higher rated event is being conducted within 25 miles of a club game's playing site, the club is permitted to hold only its regularly scheduled club masterpoint games (i.e., no special games).

### **B. NON-WEEKLY CLUBS**

A regularly scheduled club game held at a frequency other than weekly is entitled to one session with club championship rating for each 12 meetings of its regular game. In all other respects, ACBL regulations for the use of the club championship sessions by non-weekly games are the same as they are for weekly games.

## **II. SCHEDULING CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

When scheduling club championships a club must comply with a number of ACBL regulations.

### **A. CALENDAR QUARTERS SCHEDULING**

A club must hold each of the four club championship sessions for one weekly game during a different calendar quarter of the year, except for an event it conducts in two sessions. A club may not carry over a club championship from one year to the next for the purpose of conducting a two-session event. See E. following.

### **B. PLAYING SITE CHANGES**

A club may change the playing site of a club championship session from that of its regular game to accommodate increased attendance or the serving of refreshments. To change the site the club must obtain prior written approval from the unit that has jurisdiction over the area in which the championship is to be held.

### **C. PLAYING TIME CHANGES**

Once a year a club may hold a one or two-session club championship at a time other than that of the game it represents. To do so, the club must obtain written permission from all other clubs holding sanctioned games within a 25-mile radius that hold games on that day of the week.

### **D. NUMBER OF BOARDS**

Clubs are allowed to hold either regular club championship (18+ boards) or shortened club championships (12-17) boards played. The total number of club championships, including regular and shortened, will remain the same as currently allowed. The overall awards for shortened club championships are 60% of regular club championships.

The shortened club championship (12-17 boards) overall award is capped at 4.50 masterpoints and the regular club championship (18+ boards) is capped at 6.00 masterpoints.

### **E. TWO-SESSION CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Conducting a two-session club championship uses two of the four quarterly club championships allocated for the year, whether they are played in two consecutive sessions in different quarters (last session of the quarter and first session of the next quarter) or in one quarter (afternoon-evening play through). For example, a club game sanctioned for Saturday afternoon may operate a two-session club championship on two consecutive Saturday afternoons. When the consecutive days fall in the same calendar quarter, the club must forgo a championship event in some other quarter.

Once a year a club may schedule a two-session event on a day other than that for which it is sanctioned. For example, a club sanctioned for a Wednesday session may conduct the two-session event on Saturday afternoon and evening. The club must obtain written approval from all other Saturday clubs within a 25-mile radius, even if the club is itself sanctioned for either Saturday afternoon or Saturday evening. The club must forgo a club championship event in another calendar quarter if it makes use of this option.

If a club is sanctioned for Saturday afternoon and evening, it could hold a two-session club championship all in one day. One club championship session would be charged against each sanctioned game session.

### **F. REGULAR GAME WITH DIFFERENT CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP TIME**

If a club holds its club championship on a day for which it is not sanctioned to hold its regular sessions, and it has the written permission of other clubs holding sessions at that time, it may still hold a club masterpoint game on its regular day. The club must note the occurrence of both games on the Monthly Report Form, attach all written permissions to it, and submit appropriate payment with the form.

### **G. BACK-TO-BACK PLAN**

In areas in which two or more clubs are sanctioned to hold games simultaneously, attendance at some clubs may drop if one of the clubs stages a club championship. To prevent this, the unit having jurisdiction may adopt and enforce a back-to-back plan, under which all clubs in the

playing area holding games during the same session must schedule their club championships in direct competition with each other. Use of this plan is optional with the unit.

### **III. TYPES OF EVENTS**

A club may conduct a club championship as any type of standard individual, pair, or team event. An individual event can be run so that each compass direction is a distinct comparison group or can be run as an open individual. See Section Two, V.

Pair or team events can be run as regular open events (may be stratified or handicapped), or with the following gender, masterpoint, or age restrictions:

- **MEN'S PAIRS/TEAMS** - all participants must be male.
- **WOMEN'S PAIRS/TEAMS** - all participants must be female.
- **MIXED PAIRS/TEAMS** - all pairs must be composed of one male and one female player.
- **UNMIXED PAIRS/TEAMS** - all pairs/teams must contain either all male or all female players.
- **MASTER PAIRS/TEAMS** - at least one member of each pair/team must have a minimum number of masterpoints.
- **NON-MASTER PAIRS/TEAMS** - all players must have fewer than a specified number of masterpoints.
- **JUNIOR PAIRS/TEAMS** - all players must be under 26 years of age.
- **SENIOR PAIRS/TEAMS** - all players must be 55 years of age or older.

### **IV. SEEDING**

Regular masterpoint games generally are not seeded, but all events with club championship or higher rating should be seeded. For example, club charity championships, International Fund club championships, membership tournaments, ACBL-wide, district-wide, and unit-wide games should be seeded. See Section Three, IV. B.

A club seeding committee or the game director usually seeds club championships, normally at the time the entries are sold.

### **V. AWARDS**

The overall masterpoint awards in club championships are larger than those of a regular masterpoint game of the same size.

#### **A. COMPUTATION OF CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS**

To facilitate the computation of awards, charts of club championship awards for all open, invitational/restricted and newcomer events (overall) are shown in the masterpoint charts at the end of this chapter. Except when ties occur, the awards given in the charts need no adjustment and should be issued as shown. Second place will be 75% of first, etc. through a maximum of six places. Overall awards for invitational games, masterpoint limited games and newcomer games will use the same percentages of this chart as they do for regular club games. All section awards will be the same as they are for a regular club game. Bridge Plus+ games are not eligible for club championship games.

**FIELDS:** The overall award for a club championship is given for the top score in an event, without regard to the field (seating direction) in which the score was earned. For example, it is possible that all overall awards could be won by pairs seated in the same direction in a one-session Mitchell event.

In contrast, section awards are given for the highest scores in each field without regard to scores in any other field. Thus, in the above example, while the East-West field may have won all the overall awards, the scores that topped the North-South field still would earn their full quota of section awards.

There are two fields per section in pair events that use a straight Mitchell progression, but there is only one field when a Howell or scrambled movement is used. An individual event with a Rainbow-type movement has four fields per section (a separate field for each position or direction), but only one field per section if a Shomate-type (single winner) movement is used. As noted above, section awards are issued for all four fields.

**ONE-SECTION EVENTS:** A one-section event that uses a one-winner movement may award points for more positions in the section than it does for the overall award. For example, in a 13-table open pair club championship that uses a scrambled Mitchell movement, there is only one field. Six pairs earn overall awards but 10 pairs earn section awards. In this case, the first six pairs receive awards as shown on the overall scale, and the seventh through 10th place pairs receive awards as shown on the section award scale.

**NEWCOMER CHAMPIONSHIPS:** Awards for newcomer club championship games are determined from the appropriate Newcomer awards chart.

**INVITATIONAL AND POINT RESTRICTED CHAMPIONSHIPS:** Invitational and point-restricted club games must issue masterpoints according to the appropriate award charts for club championships, even though the particular event may have been open to all players invited to participate (such as the members of a country club, a women's club, or an industrial league).

**INDIVIDUAL EVENTS:** As noted in "Fields" (above), section awards are earned by all four fields in a Rainbow movement but only by one field in a Shomate movement. Overall awards remain consistent and are based on the total number of tables in the event and the level of competition.

**TWO-SESSION EVENTS:** In a two-session club championship a player receives the sum of his or her section awards for both sessions, or the overall award, whichever is greater, but not both. When a player receives an overall award, the number of tables shown on the award certificate is the number entered in the event, followed by an explanatory 2S in parentheses; that is, Tables 10 (2S). A two-session event with 10 tables playing in each session would be shown as 10, not 20, tables.

When the sum of the section awards is greater than the overall award, the player is issued a separate certificate for each session in which the points were earned. For example, a player ranks second in his or her section in the first session and fourth in the second session. Two masterpoint certificates must be issued: the first one filled in with the section box checked and ranking listed as second, and the second one with section box checked and ranking listed as fourth. All other blanks are filled in, with the type of event, such as master pairs or open pairs, entered in the open space following event.

The overall awards for two-session events are 50% greater than the overall awards for one-session events. If for any reason a two-session event has a different number of tables in each session, the smaller size session becomes the basis of the overall awards.

## **VI. MEMBERSHIP GAMES**

The number of one-session Membership Games a club is allotted is proportionate to the overall club activity. A club may hold one membership game per year for each regularly sanctioned

session. (If a club runs one game a week, it may hold one Membership Game per year; if a club runs 10 games a week, it may hold 10 Membership Games per year.) Only Life Members and paid ACBL members are eligible to win masterpoints in these games.

The point awards for an open game are 100% sectional-rated black points and the session designated for the game must be one for which the club is sanctioned.

#### **A. SCHEDULING A MEMBERSHIP GAME**

A club may schedule a membership game any time during the year, as long as the dates do not conflict with the dates of sectional or higher-rated tournaments or qualifying games for the NAP or the GNT that are being held in the same community. The session designated for the game must be one for which the club is sanctioned. A club entitled to hold more than one membership game must schedule each one on a different session (for example, not two Friday nights).

A club may change the playing site of a membership game from that of its regular playing site to another location by obtaining prior written approval from the unit that has jurisdiction over the new site.

Club managers should publicize the dates and locations of their membership games in advance.

#### **B. TYPE OF EVENT**

A membership game must be a one-session event. Usually it is an open pair contest. However, a club may conduct any type of standard event it deems appropriate for its players. See Chapter 4, Section Six, III.

#### **C. ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY**

Only Life Members and paid ACBL members are eligible to play in membership games. Before the game begins, the director should make it clear to all participants that if an ineligible player enters, neither the player nor his or her partner will receive point awards.

#### **D. MEMBERSHIP GAME DIRECTOR**

Only a club or higher rated director may conduct a membership game (a playing director is permitted, but not recommended for a game of 17 tables or less in one section). The membership game is operated exactly the same way as a club championship.

#### **E. POINT AWARDS**

Point awards in the membership game are sectional-rated. Only ACBL may issue the awards. Open games receive full sectional rating, invitational/restricted games receive 80% of sectional rating, and newcomer games receive 50% of sectional rating.

#### **F. CONFLICTS IN SCHEDULING**

A membership game may not be run at the same time as an ACBL-wide event, a sectional tournament (excluding STaCs and I/N Sectionals), or a regional tournament if its playing site is located within 25 miles of the playing site of the higher-rated tournament.

### **IX. OTHER FREQUENT CLUB EVENTS**

Events that are not specific club games are often held in clubs. Club managers should be familiar with the general operation of these events. For example, unit championships and ACBL-wide events often are held in clubs, as are the initial qualifying stages of the NAP and GNT, which are unit and district events. See Chapter 6.

## **A. GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS**

Throughout ACBL the Grand National Teams is divided into four flights: Championship Flight (open), Flight A (0-6000), Flight B (0-2500 masterpoints), and Flight C (non-Life Master with fewer than 500 masterpoints). The district has the option of conducting any fair bridge competition it chooses to select a winning team for each flight, which is then entitled to play in the National Finals at the Summer NABC. A district may choose not to name a district champion in Flight A (0-6000).

District and Unit GNT Coordinators work with the clubs. Sometimes a GNT club round qualifying is scheduled, but participation by an individual club is optional.

A district may permit each club within its area to hold one sectional-rated event (for as many game sessions as the club has sanctioned) as a fundraiser for the Grand National Teams or the Canadian National Team Championship. Each district sets the amount its clubs remit to it, to a maximum of \$6.00 per table.

## **B. NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS**

The North American Pairs is divided into three flights: Flight A (open), Flight B (0-2500 masterpoints), and Flight C (non-Life Master with fewer than 500 masterpoints). The club qualifying rounds for all NAP flights are held in June, July, and August. A club may conduct two qualifying events in each flight for every weekly game sanctioned during these months. A game may be held as a stratified event. If there is a separate Non-LM qualifying game, it may be stratified as 0-20, 20-100, 100-500 (non-LM).

A club may move the site of its NAP qualifying game to accommodate increased attendance, but the club must hold the event at the same time as one of its regular sanctioned game sessions.

Clubs hosting NAP games must return the financial report and fees due by the 10th of the following month. Each club must schedule its NAP game on one of its sanctioned sessions (exceptions can be approved by the unit) within the specified month for qualification.

ACBL recommends that games of 18 or more tables be divided into two or more sections. Duplicated boards across all sections are desirable but not mandatory. A minimum of 21 boards must be played, and all games should be seeded.

ACBL issues all masterpoints earned at NAP events. A club level-qualifying event must be a one-session open pair event. A club-stage event must have a club or higher-rated director. ACBL recommends a non-playing director, but games of one section with 17 tables or fewer (at the club or unit stage only) may have a playing director.

In emergencies, substitutes may play up to 50% of the boards. Substitutes who play more than 50% of the boards acquire the rights of the original contestants. Masterpoint awards are 100% sectional rated, 1/2 red, 1/2 black.

An invitational club may participate and may qualify players for the unit level competition. Masterpoint awards for invitational flights are all black and can be found in the Masterpoint Award Charts found at the end of this chapter. With prior unit approval, an invitational club may open its games to all ACBL members, with players earning the same masterpoint awards as they would at open clubs. Before approval is granted, however, the unit must be satisfied that the club will adequately advertise the fact that the game will be open. If a unit refuses permission for an open game, a club may appeal the unit's decision to the district organization.

Players may participate in club level NAP competitions outside their home districts. These players will receive any masterpoints earned and any qualifications earned are for the next level of play in their home district.

At a club level qualifying game, all eligible individuals who earn masterpoints or finish in the top half of the field, and any individuals who score 50% or better, earn qualification to play at the unit level.

For the unit level competition, both members of the pair must play in their home district. No player may enter more than one unit level competition.

All participants at the unit level must be ACBL members in good standing and be current in payment of dues or Life Master service fees. Non-members may join ACBL at the time they register to play. To accommodate non-members and others who do not wish to play in the NAP event, a club may conduct a regular game at the same time as the qualifying event.

### **C. UPGRADED CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

A club which recruits 10 new members earns a club championship that awards black points per the Masterpoint Award Chart found at the end of this chapter in addition to regularly allowed club championships.

### **D. NORTH AMERICAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP PROMOTIONAL GAMES**

ACBL allocates to each district one sectional-rated NABC fund-raising game in each of the three years prior to a North American Bridge Championship held within the district. The district schedules a week for the event, and ACBL notifies all clubs within the district advising them that the events may be held during their regular meeting times. Clubs may hold the same number of these sessions as their allocated number of membership games. A participating club must remit a sanction fee per table to ACBL with the report form. The District establishes the additional fees for this event, which are submitted directly to the District.

These events award sectional-rated black points, with session and overall awards at each site based on the number of tables in play at that site. Open games earn full sectional rating. Invitational/restricted games earn 80% of sectional rating, and newcomer games earn 50%. If the club chooses, these events may be stratified.

### **E. SECTIONAL TOURNAMENTS HELD AT CLUBS**

Clubs may also participate in Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs) and the qualifying rounds of a Progressive Sectional when these are sponsored by the club's unit. See Chapter 6.

### **F. CLUB APPRECIATION GAMES**

October has been designated as Club Appreciation Month. During this month, club managers may run one Club Appreciation Pair Game and one Club Appreciation Team Game in place of a regularly scheduled session.

The pair game pays black points, and the team game pays per the Masterpoint Award Charts found at the end of this chapter, with 5% gold. (A player can win a maximum of .25 gold.)

### **G. STATE, PROVINCE, COUNTRY (SPC) CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This is an event in which each participating ACBL SPC may name a champion in each category by means of a fair competition that is not necessarily the same from SPC to SPC. The type of event and conditions of contest must be submitted to and approved by the ACBL Tournament Department. There will not be a national final. The event may be flighted. With ACBL Management approval, this event or any portion may be run through an on-line service. At SPC option, each flight may be played at three or fewer levels. ACBL Rules and Regulations apply to all play in the event and supercede special SPC conditions in cases of conflict.

## **H. INTER-CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES**

Clubs may use their quarterly club championship sanction to hold combined games including two or more clubs not necessarily within the same unit. Each participating club must use their club championship allotment and clubs may schedule as many of these games as they have allotted. Overall awards are based on the entire field and the same hands are to be used by participating clubs. This game is to be coordinated by the unit(s) in which the clubs are located and all clubs in the unit(s), sanctioned for the session the game is held, must be allowed to participate. This game must be sanctioned by ACBL at least 60 days in advance of the event.

ACBL Management is authorized to sanction and conduct inter-club championships, which are administered online but played “live.” ACBL may sanction and conduct the event or ACBL may hold the sanction and sublet the administration of the event. If requested by a group of clubs, ACBL may authorize (grant a sanction to) a qualified person to administrate such an online-administered, inter-club championship for those clubs. ACBL may also authorize (grant a sanction to) a qualified person to conduct an online-administered inter-club championship or sanction the event.

In addition to a club’s regular club championships, the club may participate in an additional four (4) inter-club championships administered online. A club may not use one or all of its regular quarterly club championships to participate in inter-club championships administered electronically. The masterpoint awards for this event are the same as inter-club championship administered manually.

## **I. CANADIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION SIMULTANEOUS PAIRS**

There is a one-session Canadian Bridge Federation Simultaneous Pairs that will run annually and awards sectional-rated masterpoints. In addition to overall Canada-Wide awards there will be overall awards in each of the six CBF Zones.

## **SECTION SEVEN: CLUB TEAM EVENTS**

Four types of team events have proven popular at clubs: board-a-match, Swiss, round-robin, and knockout. Clubs may use all of these team events as part of their regular masterpoint game schedule and for club championships.

A club may not conduct more than one session during a given play period (morning, afternoon, or evening). The only exception is a club that is sanctioned to hold a session on New Year’s Eve (December 31). It may schedule two sessions of play that night: one to begin before midnight and the other after.

## **I. TYPES OF TEAM EVENTS**

### **A. BOARD-A-MATCH TEAMS**

Any number of teams may play in board-a-match events. While board-a-match games are better suited for single-session events, clubs may use them for two-session club championships.

The term board-a-match refers to a method of scoring. However, through common usage board-a-match has come to refer to the movement used. The overall winner in a board-a-match contest is the team that wins the most matches in which each board played is a match, with one matchpoint available on each board. Ideally, each team should play against all the other teams. Thus, the number of boards played in each round is determined by the number of teams in the event.



The usual board-a-match movement is similar to the Mitchell movement used in pair games. However, there are significant differences because each team has an E/W and a N/S pair. Club directors should become thoroughly familiar with board-a-match movements before undertaking the operation of such games.

The event is structured so that the boards played by the N/S pair of Team 1 versus the E/W pair of Team 2 are subsequently played by the E/W pair of Team 1 versus the N/S pair of Team 2. The team with the best raw score on a board earns one point. On a board in which there is a tie in the raw score, each team earns one half a point. For example, if the N/S pair of a team is +120 on a board and its teammates are -110, the board is scored as a win (1 point) for that team.

## **B. SWISS TEAMS**

The Swiss team game is probably the most popular team event. The Swiss movement may be used in single-session regular masterpoint games or in one or two-session club championships. The term Swiss refers to a type of movement in which contestants with similar records play against each other as the event progresses.

Although clubs may use a Swiss team movement when as few as five teams participate, ACBL recommends a round-robin movement when fewer than eight teams participate.

A Swiss team game may be scored in one of three ways:

1. **WIN/LOSS:** This scoring method determines the net raw scores of each board and then these scores are converted to International Matchpoints (IMPs), in accordance with the internationally approved conversion scale see Law 78 in “Laws of Duplicate Bridge” or the ACBL Convention Card).

To determine the winner of the match, the IMP results on all boards are added. The team that emerges with a net plus wins the match and is awarded the appropriate masterpoints. A margin of as little as 1 IMP is sufficient for winning the masterpoints for the match. If the net result after adding the IMPs is zero, the match is a tie and the masterpoints for the match are divided equally between the two teams.

A slight variation in the win/loss scoring method considerably reduces the potential for ties. Using this win/loss scoring variation, a team is not credited with a full win unless it wins its match by at least 3 IMPs. A team that wins by 1 or 2 IMPs is credited with 3/4 of a win, with the other 1/4 going to the losing team. Pairings and overall standings are based on this scoring - 1, 3/4, 1/2, 1/4 and 0 per match. However, the winning team gets the full allotment of masterpoints for winning the match, even if it wins by only 1 or 2 IMPs. The losing team receives no masterpoints.

2. **VICTORY POINTS (VPS):** Victory point scoring uses the net result in IMPs translated to victory points according to a predetermined scale (the two approved scales appear on the ACBL convention card and in the file MPSWISS.)

Victory point scoring has some unusual factors. Teams that lose two matches in win/loss Swiss teams have little chance of placing overall; teams that lose two matches in VP Swisses still have a chance to win the event. The team that has the best win/loss record in win/loss Swisses is the winner; the team with the best win/loss record in VP Swiss teams is not necessarily the winner - it is not even guaranteed a place in the overall standings. This is possible in a situation where the team with the best win/loss record wins its matches by small margins and thereby earns fewer victory points than another team that wins its matches by wide margins and earns lots of victory points.

Pairings for the first round should be random irrespective of the scoring method used. In subsequent rounds pairing should be done in such a way that teams with similar records play

each other, always taking into consideration that teams may not compete against teams they have played in an earlier round.

Using victory points, first-round pairings still are random. However, pairings for subsequent rounds are based on the victory point holdings of the teams, not on their win/loss record. The team with the net plus in IMPs still is the winner of the masterpoints for each match. However, overall standings are based on total victory points, not wins and losses.

**3. BOARD-A-MATCH (BAM):** Board-a-match scoring compares the net raw score on each board and gives a win, tie (identical scores), or a loss for each one. These scores are accumulated with the winner of each match receiving the match masterpoint awards, and the overall winner is the team with the most points. This method of scoring is rarely used, since it resembles a matchpoint pair event but requires the formation of a team.

### **C. ROUND-ROBIN TEAMS**

Round-robin events are especially suitable for a small number of teams (as few as three) and for contests that may run over several sessions. In a complete round-robin each team plays against all other teams entered in the event.

To qualify for overall awards, each team must play against at least 75% of the other teams in the event. If the event runs for more than three sessions, the club uses the appropriate multiplier. See File MPSWISS. If all teams entered in the contest play simultaneously, each such period (as in a pair game) is a session. There can be no more than one session of play during a given time period (morning, afternoon or evening).

A club may allow two teams to play their match at a time convenient to both if the club is sanctioned to hold a game at that time. In such cases, a session is based on the number of matches a typical team plays. For example, a club has a round-robin event in which each team is scheduled to play a 28-board match against all other teams in the contest. Ten teams enter. The club has ruled that all first-round matches must be completed by April 1, second-round matches by April 15, and so forth. The captains of the opposing teams may arrange to play their matches at convenient times sanctioned by the club. Since each team will play nine matches, although all teams may not be playing at the same time, this is considered a nine-session event. Thus overall awards are based on the six-session point award charts. Many clubs find it convenient to conduct this type of event simultaneously with their regular weekly games. There are some patrons of almost every club who prefer team play to the more usual pairs competitions. By scheduling round-robins to run along with their regular games, clubs can provide varied programs for their clientele.

Any scoring method discussed for Swiss teams may be used to score and determine overall winners in a round-robin team event. ACBL recommends the use of IMPs, with or without victory points. The method the club uses for determining the overall winner must be the same as that which it uses to decide the winner of each individual match. The club reports these points along with all others earned on the Club Masterpoint Report.

### **D. KNOCKOUT EVENTS**

A knockout event consists of a series of matches in which the winners advance and the losers are eliminated. This progression continues until only one team remains-the winner.

This type of competition works best when the original entry is a power of two-2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc. Such fields permit all head-to-head matches between two teams-the best kind of match possible. However, any number of teams can be accommodated through the use of three-way matches. (At one time a system of byes was used to reduce the field to a power of two, but this method is rarely used today.)

Three-way matches can be utilized in either of two ways-either two teams advance or one is eliminated or one team advances and two are eliminated. Consider an original entry of 18 teams where it is desired to reduce the field to eight teams for the next session. Six head-to-head matches would be set up, each producing one team for the next session. In addition there would be two three-way matches, with only the winner to advance. The two survivors plus the six victors in head-to-head competition provide eight teams for the next session.

Now consider an original entry of 14 teams where it is desired to reduce the field to eight teams. Four head-to-head matches would be set up, each producing one winner. In addition there would be two three-way matches, each of which would produce two winners. Once again this produces an eight-team field for the next session.

Since a team is out of the event when it loses a match, the number of boards per match should require approximately the same time for play as a regular club session. ACBL recommends the use of IMP scoring. However, the club may use total points (raw score not converted to IMPs).

The club bases masterpoint awards for knockout events on the number of teams entered in the event, the class of the game, and the number of boards played.

## **E. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

**MATCH AWARDS:** In an event in which a team plays at least five boards against another team, the winner receives awards that are based on the number of boards played in the match and the level of play (open, invitational, newcomer). The point value of the awards is shown on the Masterpoint Award Charts.

**OVERALL AWARDS:** Overall awards for Swiss team games are the same as for pair games. For board-a-match teams the awards are 1.10 of a pair game. Awards for knockout and round-robin teams are shown on the Masterpoint Award Charts. Players eligible to receive overall masterpoint awards are entitled to the sum of their match awards or the overall award, whichever is greater, but not both.

In events of one or two sessions, eligible players of five or six member teams each receive awards based on percentage of participation. In events of three or more sessions, all eligible team members receive full awards.

## **F. CONDITIONS OF CONTEST**

Complete conditions of contest should be prepared for all team events. For extended (three or more sessions) round-robin and knockout events, the club should submit the conditions of contest to ACBL for approval at least 45 days before play begins. Once ACBL approves the conditions of contest, the club may use the same conditions of contest for subsequent events of the same type without further approval.

The conditions of contest must include but are not limited to the following:

- In a one-session event with a board-a-match-type movement, there must be four members on a team. In other approved team events, the sponsoring clubs may allow as many as six members on a team.
- ACBL recommends that sponsoring clubs permit teams to have four, five, or six members.
- Each team member must play at least 40% of the boards and participate in at least 50% of the matches played by the team to be eligible for overall masterpoint awards.

- A substitute may not be a member of another team.
- A player may be a member of only one team in an event.

## **II. SCHEDULING CLUB TEAM EVENTS**

A club may hold round-robin and/or knockout events simultaneously with its regular club games. These events may be concluded in a single session or they may extend over several sessions.

A club may conduct single-session Swiss and/or board-a-match events during any sanctioned game session. Some clubs schedule these events at regular intervals to add variety to their programs. For example, a club that meets on Monday evenings may announce that a Swiss team event will replace its regular pair game on the last Monday of the month in those months in which there are five Mondays. It is proper for a club to devote its entire program, or any portion thereof, to team play.

If a club conducts a team game or a series of team games at a different time from that of its regular games, the session or sessions must be sanctioned by ACBL and the appropriate fees and information forwarded to ACBL before the games are held. Under such circumstances, the team game becomes a separately scheduled regular game (or session) of the club and qualifies for club championships, as does any other regularly scheduled game.

When a club conducts a team game simultaneously with its regular game, there is no additional game fee for the team game; however, the per table charge still applies. When a team game does not run simultaneously with the regular game, the per game and per table fees both apply.

The club issues all masterpoint awards. Players receive either the sum of their match awards or the overall award, whichever is greater, but not both.

### **A. OPEN CLUBS**

Team events sponsored by open clubs must be open to all ACBL members in good standing who fall within eligibility rules established by the club for the event. An open club may restrict participation in an event to a limited number of teams, in which case it must advertise that fact and accept entries on a first-come first-served basis. An open club may allow participation only by players who hold more than a stipulated number of masterpoints. The magnitude of the masterpoint awards is not affected by these limitations. An open club also may allow only those players who hold fewer than a stipulated number of masterpoints to participate, or it may place masterpoint restrictions on the makeup of teams. For example, a club could decide that no more than two Life Masters may be on the same team, that at least two members of each team must have fewer than 50 masterpoints, or that a partnership may not be comprised of two Life Masters. When these or similar restrictions are imposed, awards are based on those for Restricted games.

### **B. INVITATIONAL CLUBS AND INTERMEDIATE OR NEWCOMER GAMES**

Regulations for invitational clubs and restricted or newcomer games are the same as those for open clubs, with two exceptions: (1) the sponsoring club may set its own rules for eligibility, and (2) awards for one and two session events are as noted on the appropriate point award charts.

### **C. INDUSTRIAL LEAGUES**

The same rules that regulate invitational clubs regulate team games sponsored by industrial leagues, except when matches are played at approximately the same time but in several locations. In that case, only a single sanction is required.

ACBL allots an industrial league one club championship session for every 12 regular sessions it conducts, to a maximum of four such championships annually for each sanctioned session.

The nature of an industrial league may warrant variations from the accepted standard forms of bridge competitions. ACBL will help a group design a program that fits its needs. Groups should direct inquiries to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department.

### **III. CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM GAMES**

Each regularly scheduled and sanctioned club game may use one of its allocated club championships to conduct an IMP-scored knockout or round-robin team event, even though the club may normally conduct only pair games. Although IMP-scored events usually require several sessions to complete, they are charged against the club's club championship allocation as only one session. When planning its club championship schedule, a club should consider the possible negative aspects of round-robin and knockout play. Normally, round-robin games require several sessions of play. Often it is difficult for team members to commit themselves to play for an extended time. A disadvantage of knockout games is that losers are automatically eliminated from the event.

For these reasons, a club may prefer to run one-or two-session club championships as Swiss or board-a-match team events. In these cases, each session used counts as a session of the club's club championship allocation.

If the event has masterpoint restrictions (except restrictions that limit participation to players who hold more than a stipulated number of masterpoints), or restrictions on the composition of partnerships or teams, the masterpoint awards are computed on the basis of a restricted masterpoint game.

At the conclusion of the event, the sponsoring club issues all awards. Players are entitled to either their overall awards or the sum of their match (or session) awards, whichever is greater, but not both. Masterpoint awards for club championships are given in the appropriate point award chart.

A club that conducts only round-robin or knockout team games during a specific session is eligible to conduct four club championship sessions annually. They may be held as one-session pair games or as a team game with club championship rating. Each such session is chargeable against the club's club championship allocation. The club may designate a round-robin or knockout team event completed during a calendar quarter as a club championship. In this case, the event is charged as one session of the club's club championship allocation even though the event was run over several sessions. In no case may a club complete more than one club championship during the same calendar quarter of the year.

Per game session and per table sanction fees are assessed. If the club championship is conducted simultaneously with another game at the club, the club pays only one game fee, regardless of the number of different games being held. ACBL charges the table fee for every table in play in all games conducted during a game session. The club must report sanction fees on the regular Monthly Report Form and must include payment when submitting the form to ACBL. When a club conducts an event in which matches are played over several game sessions, it must list each session under the proper session number on the form.

#### **A. ROUND-ROBIN AND KNOCKOUT TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The minimum number of teams required for a round-robin team championship is three; for a knockout team championship, five.

With nine or more teams, a club may conduct one or two qualifying sessions of Swiss or round-robin competition. The use of qualifying rounds is subject to the following regulations: when

there are fewer than nine teams, qualifying is not permitted; with nine to 31 teams, at least eight must be qualified; with 32 to 63 teams, at least 16 must be qualified; and with more than 63 teams, at least 32 must be qualified.

When a Swiss or round-robin team competition is used to qualify teams to a further competition, overall masterpoint awards are based on the greater of a) Swiss award based on the number of original entries and the number of sessions, or b) the knockout award based on the number of qualifying teams. These awards are issued from the appropriate charts. There are no overall awards for qualifying rounds; however, the club does issue appropriate match awards.

**ROUND-ROBIN OVERALL MASTERPOINT AWARDS:** These awards are based on the number of sessions played or on the following, whichever is less: three teams, maximum awards from the two-session chart; four teams, maximum awards from the three-session chart; five teams, maximum awards from the four-session chart; six teams, maximum awards from the five-session chart; seven or more teams, maximum awards from the six-session chart.

**KNOCKOUT OVERALL MASTERPOINT AWARDS:** These awards are based on the number of teams that enter the event and the number of boards they play per match. If individual matches consist of fewer than 18 boards, the club computes the awards as though the event were a round-robin. Overall masterpoint awards for knockout events are shown in the appropriate chart.

## **B. BOARD-A-MATCH TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The minimum number of teams required for a board-a-match team championship event is three. The event may have one or two sessions.

## **C. SWISS TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The minimum number of teams required for a Swiss team championship is three; however, if there are fewer than eight teams, ACBL recommends the use of the round-robin team format. The duration of the event is one or two sessions. There are several special regulations that apply only to two-session Swiss team club championships-they do not apply to any other type of event.

**TWO-SESSION SWISS TEAMS BY CLUBS SANCTIONED FOR TWO OR MORE GAMES:** A club holding two or more games per week, and entitled to one or more sessions of club championship events for each game, may conduct a two-session Swiss team club championship at different sessions (game times), with one session of club championship charged against each game session. For example, a club operating both a Saturday afternoon (session 17) and a Saturday evening sanctioned game (session 18) may conduct a two session Swiss team club championship with one session on Saturday afternoon and the other on Saturday evening. One session is charged against game number 17 and the other against game number 18. Thus, a club could operate a number of two session Swiss team club championships each year if it is willing to forgo the various pair event club championships for those game sessions.

**TWO-SESSION SWISS TEAMS CO-SPONSORED BY TWO DIFFERENT CLUBS:** Two separate and distinct clubs may band together to co-sponsor a two-session Swiss team club championship, with one session of club championship charged against each club. For example, a Tuesday night club and a Friday night club decide to co-sponsor a two-session Swiss team club championship. The first session is run in the Tuesday club's quarters, and the second session in the Friday club's quarters, with both sessions held at regular club times. Both clubs are mutually responsible for issuing all awards. Each club reports the session held in its quarters on its Monthly Report Form and remits the standard game payment plus a per table fee.

## **SECTION EIGHT: CLUB-UNIT RELATIONSHIPS**

### **A. UNIT RELATIONSHIP TO THE CLUB**

The primary concern of ACBL management is the welfare of its members as it relates to the game of bridge. Thus, regulations have been established by ACBL to protect the interests of its members. However, these regulations are only in force during ACBL sanctioned masterpoint games. Except at a Unit Sponsored Club as defined below, units, districts and ACBL have no original jurisdiction over *behavior at* club sponsored games. Only ACBL can assess discipline against a club for a violation of ACBL regulations.

## **B. UNIT SPONSORED CLUB**

Unit Sponsored Club: A club which has any one or more of the following features: (a) a board which is the same as the unit board or which is appointed by the unit; or (b) a co-mingling of funds with those of the unit; or (c) a placement of funds in a unit owned account; or (d) the appointment of a club manager or director by the Unit.

[Masterpoint Charts](#)

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## **Chapter 5 - SPECIAL UNIT GAMES**

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In order to furnish ACBL members with a continuous program of interesting, competitive bridge events, ACBL has provided each unit with a variety of bridge activities for single or multiple sites.

### **SECTION ONE: UNIT CHAMPIONSHIPS**

ACBL has allocated 24 unit championship sessions per year to each unit. Units may schedule these sessions at their discretion. Units prepare bridge competitions that are suitable for their membership size and for the size and location availability of their playing areas.

Clubs that conform with ACBL regulations that have proved reliable in submitting Monthly Report Forms and fees, and that have an adequate number of tables may participate in these unit championships. Clubs not sanctioned to meet at the times of unit events must be allowed to participate in these events with unit approval.

#### **I. SCHEDULING**

##### **A. TYPES OF EVENTS**

ACBL permits considerable latitude in scheduling unit championship sessions. For example, a unit could hold a one-session unit championship each month, thus utilizing 12 of its 24 sessions. The unit could hold a two-session game, such as an election party or a new members party, several times a year. Units could also schedule a portion of their unit championship allocation as four-session unit championships each calendar quarter. The various events may consist of any schedule of games that might appeal to the unit membership. For example, the events could be mixed pairs, master pairs, open pairs, or Swiss teams.

##### **B. FREQUENCY**

Any schedule that does not interfere with higher-rated championships scheduled nearby is acceptable. However, in order to offer a well-rounded annual schedule, ACBL recommends that the events be spread throughout the year.

##### **C. CONFLICTS WITH HIGHER-RATED CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Regional and sectional tournaments have priority for weekend dates. Therefore, if there is a schedule conflict with a tournament being held in the same or an adjacent unit area, the date of the unit championship must be changed. In areas where many sectionals are held, units often can avoid schedule conflicts by holding unit championships on weeknights in cooperation with regularly scheduled club games.

As soon as the regular tournament schedule is complete, unit officials should prepare a schedule of unit championships. Units should schedule these events early to help affected clubs avoid time conflicts when preparing their schedules.

##### **D. GAME SITES**

A unit may elect to hold its unit championships in one central location. This highlights the fact that the games are unit activities. It also gives the unit and its board of directors an identity insofar as newer members are concerned.

Alternatively, a unit may schedule one or more unit championship sessions to be played simultaneously in several different unit locations, with each game site scoring as a

separate event. There is no unit-wide overall masterpoint award, but the entire game counts as only a single session of the unit's allocation. This is called a "split" unit championship.

## **II. SANCTION APPLICATION AND FEES**

The unit must complete and submit the on-line application for ACBL sanction of a unit championship, to ACBL at least 45 days in advance of the event. On completion of the event, the unit must remit sanction fees and masterpoints to ACBL.

## **III. DELEGATION OF SESSIONS**

In some cases, cost or location considerations may make it necessary or advantageous for a unit to delegate some or all of its allocated unit championships to individual clubs or groups of clubs. A large unit, for example, which may include playing areas that are remote from the main concentration of its members, may allocate one or more of its championship sessions to various clubs throughout the unit. The unit would obtain the sanction, but the clubs would physically conduct the game. If such a cooperative plan is not feasible, the unit may allocate specific events to specific clubs, distributing them in such a way that every club desiring to participate may sponsor or co-sponsor at least one unit championship event annually. PRECAUTIONS MUST BE TAKEN TO INSURE THAT NO ONE CLUB IS TREATED EITHER MORE OR LESS FAVORABLY THAN ITS COMPETITORS.

## **IV. STAFFING**

The unit must have a club or higher-rated director to run a unit game. A playing director is permitted for games of no more than 17 tables in one section.

## **V. SCORING**

Scoring by ACBLscore computer program is preferable but not mandatory. Traveling scores or pickup slips may be used.

## **VI. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

Unless submitted with a club's month-end report, the director must report the results on the form provided as soon as possible. He or she must list the names, player numbers, and place of finish of all participants entitled to overall or session awards.

For information purposes only, masterpoint award charts appear on the Open Pairs Report Form. When championships are held simultaneously at different sites, ACBL issues overall and section awards separately for each site.

## **VII. SYSTEMS AND CONVENTIONS**

A unit must allow unit championship participants to use all conventions shown on the General Convention Chart. If other conventions are to be allowed, this information must be advertised prior to the event.

## **SECTION TWO: UNIT FOUNDATION/FUND GAMES**

ACBL allocates to each unit up to four sessions of sectional-rated Foundation/Fund games per year. The units may operate these events as single-session or multiple-session games. Included are Charity Championships, Junior Fund, International Fund, Educational Fund, and Grass Roots Fund games. Any of the four allotted sessions may be held as a Junior Fund game, Charity game, Educational Foundation game, Grass Roots Fund Game or International Fund game, except

January is reserved for Junior Fund games, April is reserved for Charity Fund games, May is reserved for Grass Roots Fund games and September is reserved for International Fund games.

## **I. TYPES OF EVENTS**

Units may hold any type of event that can be completed during the allotted sessions. In general, one or two-session open pairs or two-session Swiss teams attract the most participants.

## **II. CHARITY GAME BENEFICIARIES**

A unit must conduct its first and third (if any) charity event of the year on behalf of the ACBL Charity Foundation or the Canadian Bridge Federation (CBF) Charitable Fund. Also it may conduct its second and fourth (if any) unit charity event on behalf of one of these two beneficiaries or on behalf of a local IRS approved tax exempt charitable organization. The number of sessions a unit holds per year on behalf of local charities cannot exceed the number it holds for the ACBL Charity Foundation or the CBF Charitable Fund. All events that units conduct on behalf of ACBL's Charity program carry full sectional rating. (See Chapter 8 of the handbook).

## **III. SANCTION APPLICATIONS**

The unit must complete and submit the on-line sanction application for charity events. The unit must specify beneficiaries on the sanction application.

## **SECTION THREE: ANNUAL EXTENDED TEAM GAMES**

In order to foster International Matchpoint (IMP) play, ACBL grants each unit the right to hold a maximum of three annual sectional-rated, extended round-robin or knockout team-of-four events. These three games are included in the allotment of 24 unit games that each unit is allocated per calendar year. The events must run for three or more sessions.

## **I. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

An IMP event awards sectional-rated black points when the event is truly extended (no fewer than three sessions of 24 or more boards each). Otherwise, the event carries only unit championship rating.

## **II. SANCTION APPLICATION AND FEES**

To apply for a sanction for an annual IMP game, the unit must complete and submit the online application for an extended team game at least 45 days in advance of the event.

There is a per table per session sanction fee which must be remitted with the tournament report.

## **III. CONDITIONS OF CONTEST**

Units must submit proposed conditions of contest to ACBL for approval together with the sanction application.

## **SECTION FOUR: UNIT-WIDE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

A unit-wide game can be held simultaneously in three or more locations, each site with a minimum of five tables in play, using a unit championship session. Morning and afternoon games are deemed to be the same session when there is not more than a three and one-half hour difference between the starting times of the games.

Two or more units may combine to hold a unit-wide game, also at three or more locations but within the joint area of the units conducting the game. This game is deducted from the unit-wide allocation of each unit.

## **I. SANCTION APPLICATIONS**

The unit receives, collates, and forwards complete reports from all game sites along with appropriate fees. The reports and fees must be forwarded as soon as possible after conclusion of the game.

## **II. UNIT-WIDE CHAMPIONSHIP PLANNING AND COORDINATION**

The unit supervises all preparations for unit-wide championships. It must provide for the staff to run the championship and, at sponsor option, furnish the necessary computer-dealt hands (provided by the ACBL Club and Member Services Department) and other supplies. The computer-dealt hands will only be sent electronically. The unit should arrange for the game sites to be in clubs. In every respect, the quality of the game must meet unit standards. The unit determines overall ranking and reports the results to ACBL.

All clubs within the unit area are eligible to participate in unit-wide championships that are scheduled on sessions for which the clubs are sanctioned if they meet the following criteria: (1) anticipate having at least five tables, and (2) conform to all ACBL regulations.

## **III. REPORTS AND SANCTION FEES**

The unit receives, collates, and forwards complete reports from all game sites along with appropriate fees. The reports and fees must be forwarded as soon as possible after conclusion of the game.

## **IV. COMPUTER-DEALT HANDS**

Units may use computer-dealt hands (sent electronically), purchased from or authorized for use by ACBL for play in unit-wide games. At sponsor option, all sites will be required to use identical hands.

## **V. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

In unit-wide championships ACBL issues all masterpoint awards. ACBL bases these awards on the total number of tables played throughout the unit. Section awards vary according to the number of tables in play in each section.

Each site director must list on the tournament report form the names, player numbers, and scores of all session winners and possible overall winners. The site director must then submit the completed form to the unit-designated chairman within 48 hours of the conclusion of the game.

## **VI. TECHNICAL REGULATIONS**

Generally, the same ACBL regulations apply to unit-wide championships that apply to other types of unit championships. If there are any differences, ACBL notes them and sends that information to the units along with the sanctions for the games.

## **SECTION FIVE: ACBL-WIDE EVENTS**

An ACBL-wide event is a one-session game that has a sectional open pair rating. Most of these games utilize computer-generated hands. When computer-generated hands are used they are played simultaneously at numerous sites through out the entire ACBL territory. Non-participating

bridge experts study these hands (but do not alter them) and predict the probable results from playing them. ACBL publishes these predictions and the analyses on which they are based. This information is available to all contestants upon completion of the game. All open games receive sectional-rated masterpoints.

ACBL-wide special games may not be conducted during any month that is designated as a special fund month. Currently, the months of January (Junior), April (Charity), May (Grass Roots) and September (International) are designated as special fund game months.

## **I. TYPES OF GAMES**

Currently there are eight ACBL-wide and two Canada-wide games per year, most of which are held at club sites.

### **A. INTERNATIONAL FUND GAMES**

Three ACBL-wide events and two Canada-wide events are conducted to benefit the ACBL International Fund and the Canadian Olympiad Fund. The proceeds of these games help defray the expenses of players who represent their countries in international competition.

The games are reported with a club's monthly report with fees and masterpoints included.

### **B. CHARITY GAMES**

Two ACBL-wide events are conducted to benefit the ACBL Charity Foundation, one in the spring and one in the fall. They are separate and distinct from unit charity championships. Conducting an ACBL-wide charity game does not qualify a unit or a club to run a charity championship for a local beneficiary.

Proceeds from Canadian games are mailed directly to the Canadian Charitable Fund. Proceeds from all other ACBL-wide charity games go to the ACBL Charity Foundation.

### **C. SPECIAL GAMES**

Three other ACBL-wide special events are held each year: the Senior Pairs game in March, the Worldwide Pairs game in June and the ACBL Instant Matchpoint game in October. ACBL allocates all of these events to the clubs. Additional information on these special events is available from the ACBL Special Events Department.

Overall masterpoints will be awarded in ACBL-wide Charity Games and in ACBL-wide International Fund Games that use hand records and for which National and District winners are determined and published in the ACBL Bulletin. In addition to District overall awards, Continent-wide overall winners will be determined and overall masterpoints awarded. Overall point awards will be red.

## **II. SANCTIONS**

The ACBL Club and Member Services Department processes and approves sanctions for ACBL-wide charity and International Fund games. On approval, this department sends instructions for operating ACBL-wide games to the officials listed on the sanction applications.

A club need not be sanctioned for the night of an ACBL-wide game in order to participate. If it is not, the ACBL will automatically send a permission request to the unit secretary. ACBL will

approve sanction applications for clubs already sanctioned to operate at the time the ACBL-wide games are scheduled, unless the clubs are delinquent in the submission of ACBL reports.

#### **A. GAME CONDUCTED BY THE UNIT**

When no local club is holding a special game, the unit may conduct the game. The unit must apply for the sanction.

#### **B. JOINT SPONSORSHIP BY TWO OR MORE CLUBS**

In the members' interest, a unit may request that two or more clubs jointly sponsor an ACBL-wide event. However, no club may be forced to cooperate in such a joint venture. When joint sponsorship is undertaken, the unit must obtain the sanction and is responsible for forwarding the receipts and tournament report to the ACBL office.

### **III. GAME REGULATIONS**

#### **A. GAME SECURITY**

**HAND RECORDS:** In addition to full instructions and a copy of the game regulations, the director receives copies of the hands to be played. The copies are enclosed in a sealed envelope, which must remain sealed until game time. At game time the director opens the envelope in the presence of a witness who verifies the envelope was not previously opened and it was opened at game time.

**HAND ANALYSES:** A second sealed envelope contains the hand analyses. This envelope is plainly marked and must remain sealed until the conclusion of the game. A witness must verify this opening.

#### **B. DIRECTOR**

The ACBL-wide game must be conducted by a club or higher-rated non-playing director. A playing director is allowed for games of one section with 17 or fewer tables.

#### **C. NUMBER OF TABLES**

For the participants to be eligible for district and ACBL-wide recognition, at least five full tables must be in play.

#### **D. HALF TABLES**

To help avoid half tables, each game should have a stand-by pair available. If necessary this stand-by pair may play free, but ACBL permits only one such free entry. It allows half-table games if the sponsoring club or unit submits a copy of the recap sheet with the report.

#### **E. DONATIONS**

ACBL requires a minimum donation per player to the appropriate ACBL Fund for whose benefit the ACBL-wide game is held.

#### **F. NEWCOMER SECTIONS**

A newcomer section (a newcomer is a player with 20 or fewer masterpoints) may be run in conjunction with open or invitational sections or as an independent section. Awards for newcomers are 40 percent of those issued in the open game. Other regulations, including minimum donations, are the same as for open games.

## **G. INVITATIONAL SECTIONS**

Invitational sections may be conducted independently or in conjunction with the open sections in ACBL-wide games. Other regulations, including minimum donations, are the same as they are for open games.

## **H. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

ACBL issues all masterpoint awards in accordance with the sectional formula for open pairs. It bases the awards on the class of the game and the number of tables in which the participants played. The game should be reported with a club's month end report. If ACBLscore is not being used, the game director must complete the report forms and return them to ACBL. He or she must include on the report form the scores and player numbers for all ranked pairs as well as the percentage score for the two highest ranking pairs.

## **IV. NON-PARTICIPATING CLUBS**

A non-participating club may operate its regular club masterpoint game, even if an ACBL-wide game is being held elsewhere in its area. However, a club championship or a higher-rated game may not be scheduled for the same time as an ACBL-wide game being held within a 25-mile radius of that club.



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## Chapter 6 - TOURNAMENTS

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ACBL sanctions three levels of tournaments - North American Bridge Championships, regionals, and sectionals. This Chapter describes each level of tournament and the corresponding rules and regulations which apply.

### SECTION ONE: NORTH AMERICAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS (NABCs)

Each year the American Contract Bridge League sponsors and conducts three North American Bridge Championships. Sites are selected by ACBL management with the approval of the ACBL Board of Directors. These tournaments are rotated around the United States and Canada. ACBL runs one tournament each year in each of three zones, Eastern, Central and Western, and tries to arrange that each zone has a spring, summer and fall tournament within a three-year period.

#### I. OPERATIONS

Once an area has been selected for an NABC, the district organization is assigned the responsibility of arranging for volunteers and hospitality. The district, at its option, may assign the responsibility to a local unit, but the district organization retains overall accountability to ACBL.

The ACBL Headquarters Meeting Planner coordinates all aspects of the tournament and is the liaison for ACBL with the host organization. *The NABC Operations Manual for Tournament Chairpersons* is available from the ACBL Meeting Planner. The purpose of the manual is to delineate the various areas of responsibility and financial obligation for the host organization and ACBL Headquarters in order to provide ACBL members with an enjoyable and memorable NABC. The division of responsibility for an NABC is as follows:

- ACBL Headquarters provides the staff and equipment necessary for the technical operation of the tournament.
- The host organization is primarily responsible for arranging all entertainment and hospitality and for providing volunteers.
- Funds are provided by the ACBL to the host organization based on ACBL's estimate of attendance for the implementation of the activities and services provided by the host organization. Additional funds may be provided by the host organization to enhance the hospitality or provide special events.

#### II. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Each day of the tournament there are at least two National Championship sessions scheduled. In addition, every day has a schedule of various two-session regional events as well as Intermediate/Newcomer events. There are also non-championship one-session events.

##### A. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

The schedule of national events is established by the ACBL Board of Directors. The following chart is a listing of the National Championship events by NABC.

#### ***SCHEDULE OF NATIONAL-RATED EVENTS AT NABCs***

	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
Wednesday	NAP – Flight A	GNT – Championship Flt GNT – Flights A/B/C	
Thursday		GNT – Championship Flt	

	NAP – Flight A	GNT – Flights A/B/C	
Friday	Platinum Pairs IMP Pairs 10K Swiss Teams	GNT – Championship Flt GNT – Flights A/B/C LM Pairs Mini LM Prs (LM-5000) Mini LM Prs (LM-1500)	LM Open Pairs Senior KO Teams
Saturday	Platinum Pairs IMP Pairs 10K Swiss Teams	GNT – Championship Flt GNT – Flights A/B/C LM Pairs Mini LM Prs (LM-5000) Mini LM Prs (LM-1500)	LM Open Pairs Senior KO Teams 0-10K Swiss
Sunday	Platinum Pairs Silver Ribbon Pairs NAP – Flights B & C	GNT – Championship Flt GNT – Flights A/B/C LM Pairs Mini LM Prs (LM-5000) Mini LM Prs (LM-1500)	Open BAM Women's BAM Senior KO Teams
Monday	VANDERBILT Silver Ribbon Paris 10K KO Teams NAP – Flights B & C	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO Senior Swiss Teams	Open BAM Women's BAM Super Senior Pairs Senior KO Teams 0-10K Swiss
Tuesday	VANDERBILT Mixed Pairs 10K KO Teams	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO Senior Swiss Teams	Blue Ribbon Pairs Senior KO Teams Mini Blue Ribbon Women's Pairs 0-10K IMP Pairs
Wednesday	VANDERBILT Mixed Pairs 10K KO Teams	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO Open Pairs Mixed BAM	Blue Ribbon Pair Mini Blue Ribbon Senior KO Teams Women's Pairs
Thursday	VANDERBILT Open Pairs Women's Pairs 10K KO Teams	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO Mixed BAM Teams Open Pairs	Blue Ribbon Pairs Mini Blue Ribbon Senior Mixed Prs 10K Fast Pairs
Friday	VANDERBILT Open Pairs LM Women's Pairs 10K KO Teams	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO North American Swiss Red Ribbon Pairs	REISINGER Open Swiss Teams Senior Mixed Prs 10K Fast Pairs
Saturday	VANDERBILT Open Swiss Women's Swiss	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds Women's KO North American Swiss Red Ribbon Pairs 10K Mixed Swiss	REISINGER Open Swiss Teams Mixed Swiss Tms
Sunday	VANDERBILT Open Swiss	SPINGOLD/Mini-Spingolds North American Swiss 10K Mixed Swiss	REISINGER Open Swiss Teams Mixed Swiss Tms
Note: In order to participate in a National-rated event, you must be an ACBL member whose service fees or dues are current.			

## **B. REGIONAL EVENTS**

ACBL management is responsible for scheduling all events except charity and national-rated events which are set by the ACBL Board of Directors. For regional-rated events, input from the host organization is requested to ensure that local preferences are considered. The regional schedule must include an Open Pair event opposite any Swiss Team event, except for the final Sunday.

Sessions including gender-restricted pair events must contain events in which any combination of genders may play. This means that a Mixed or Open Pair event must be scheduled concurrently when both a Men's and Women's Pair event are scheduled, and an Open Pair event must be scheduled concurrently when either a Women's or Men's Pair event is scheduled.

## **C. INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER EVENTS**

The ACBL Education Department in conjunction with the host organization is responsible for developing a complete Intermediate/Newcomer schedule of events. ACBL Headquarters has the primary responsibility for this program including fliers, ads, special club or teacher incentives, mailings, newcomer program speakers, etc.

The North American Bridge Championships Operations Manual for Tournament Chairpersons provides guidelines for host organization input to help ensure a successful program.

## **III. CONVENTION CHARTS**

The ACBL Super Chart is authorized for use in all sessions of National championship events with no upper masterpoint limit (NABC+) when at least 12-board segments are played.

The ACBL Mid-Chart is authorized for use in:

- All NABC+ events
- All unrestricted Flight A regional-rated knockout events conducted at an NABC
- Any bracket of a bracketed knockout event at an NABC which contains no team with a bracket designator (average masterpoints for the entire team or the top two players) of less than 1500 masterpoints.

In all other events conducted at an NABC, unless otherwise specified, only conventions on the ACBL General Convention Chart are authorized. See Appendix A.

## **IV. SMOKING POLICY**

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted during bridge play or within playing areas at an NABC. Distinctly separate smoking areas will be provided at NABCs as allowed by state and local ordinances. These areas will not be the hallways immediately outside the playing area, near rest rooms or snack bars or in any area where non-smokers may be exposed.

All pair events at an NABC will have two hospitality breaks per session of at least five minutes.

## **V. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

The purpose of the Zero Tolerance (ZT) policy is to create a much more pleasant atmosphere in our NABCs. This is an attempt to eradicate unacceptable behavior in order to make the game of bridge more enjoyable for all.

The following are some examples of behavior which will not be tolerated: badgering, rudeness, insinuations, intimidation, profanity, threats, or violence; negative comments concerning opponents' or partner's play or bidding; gloating over good results; constant and gratuitous lessons and analyses at the table; and loud and disruptive arguing with a director's ruling.

If a player at the table behaves in an unacceptable manner, the director must be called immediately. Annoying behavior, embarrassing remarks, or any other conduct which might interfere with the enjoyment of the game is specifically prohibited by Law 74A. Law 91A gives the director the authority to assess disciplinary penalties.

## **VI. ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

The following applies to all events at an NABC other. Except for health-related equipment, or by permission of the Director-in-Charge of the tournament cell phones, audible pagers or similar equipment may not be operated or operable in any manner in the playing area during a session of play. Any such equipment must not be visible during the session. Sponsoring organizations of other ACBL-sanctioned events are encouraged to adopt a similar policy.

These restrictions apply to all pairs, team members, captains, coaches, play recorders except those designated by ACBL and spectators and are in force throughout any actual playing session or segment of play.

A violation of any of the restrictions above will result in a disciplinary penalty of one full board (12 IMPs at that form of scoring) for the first offense. A second offense will result in disqualification from the event for the pair/team. Spectators violating this policy will be removed from the playing area for the remainder of the session.

## **SECTION TWO: REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

### **I. TOURNAMENT ALLOCATION**

Regionals are allocated to ACBL Districts. A District may conduct its Regionals or allocate them to Units within the District. Additionally, the WBF, the CBF and the USBF may be awarded a Regional according to regulations occurring later in this document.

- Each District is allocated four annual Regionals which may be open or senior. Each District is allowed to split one Regional. In addition, a District is allocated the following tournaments annually:
  - a. One Junior Regional
  - b. One Youth Regional.
  - c. One 0-199er Regional, or one 0-299er Regional, or one Non-Life Master Regional or one Non-Life Master Regional with an upper limit of 500 MPs.
- Upon request and verification, a District with 9,000 to 12,000 ACBL members is allowed one additional Regional each year; a District with 12,000 to 15,000 members is allowed two additional Regionals each year; a District with 15,000 to 18,000 members will be awarded three additional Regionals each year, and a District with 18,000 or more is allowed four additional Regionals. Membership qualifications for such additional Regionals will be based on a calendar year's average of the four QUIP reports of 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, 12/31. For example, a District earning a qualification based on 2010 QUIP reports may schedule the additional Regional beginning 2012.
- Any annual Regional held at, or near, the same site that reaches 3,000 tables for the tournament three out of four consecutive years will be awarded to its District and this will not count against the District's base allocation. This tournament must remain in the same locality unless there are extraordinary circumstances verified by Management. Any additional Regional earned by consecutive table counts in excess of 3,000 will entitle the qualifying District to conduct the additional Regional in the year immediately following the qualification.

- If a District fails to maintain the requirements for an additional Regional (either by a drop in total membership or by the failure of a 3000 table-plus tournament to maintain such size), the District will be entitled to keep its additional Regional(s) for two years. If, within the two-year period, the District again meets the requirements, the additional Regional (s) may continue to be scheduled without interruption.
- In addition, the following Off Shore and Special Regionals are allocated:
  - a. Alaska – D19
  - b. Bermuda – D2
  - c. Hawaii – D20
  - d. Mexico(2) – D16
  - e. Arizona Seniors – D17
  - f. Cape Cod Seniors – D25
  - g. New England Individual – D25
- The following Regionals are not allocated to any specific District:
  - a. Canadian Bridge Federation (one per year)
  - b. United States Bridge Federation (one per year)
  - c. World Bridge Federation, when a WBF championship is held in Zone 2, such regionals to be held at the site where the championship is being held.
- An annual Regional is awarded each year to the USBF for the purpose of supporting teams representing the United States in international competition, and to the CBF for the purpose of supporting teams representing Canada in international competition. Depending on the location the affected District and the USBF or the CBF must agree on the specifics (e.g. date, schedule and fund-sharing). The normal conflict rules shall apply to the scheduling of the tournament.
- No District may be awarded more than nine Regionals in a calendar year under this allocation formula.

## **II. REGIONAL TOURNAMENT CONDITIONS**

- The minimum/maximum number of days a Regional may be held is as follows:
  - a. Open or Senior Regional – minimum of three days.
  - b. Youth Regional, Junior Regional and masterpoint limited Regionals – minimum of two days.
  - c. Individual Regional – no more than two and one-half days. In addition one-session charity or fund game may be held the afternoon of the first day
- A Regional may not be more than seven days in duration.
  - a. A regional tournament may start on any day of the week and (with the exceptions of Regionals at Sea) must be scheduled on consecutive days until its conclusion; provided that a tournament that starts on Sunday must end no later than the following Friday.
  - b. A two-session event that is run for the ACBL Charity Foundation, the ACBL Educational Foundation, the ACBL Junior Fund, the International Fund, or the Canadian equivalent of

these may be held the first day of a seven day Regional. The current formulas will be used to determine the minimum monetary contributions for these games.

- A Regional running concurrent with a World Bridge Championship may be of a length equal to the WBF Championship.
- Only events scheduled for two or more sessions at Regionals may award gold points.
- A District may join with other Districts to co-sponsor a Regional or to hold a split Regional. If co-sponsored, but held at one site, the tournament will count against one District's allocation. If co-sponsored but held at two different sites the tournament will count against both Districts' allocations. A District may, with permission, hold a Regional in a contiguous District.
- Exclusive of Knockout Teams and Side Game Series events, a Regional may schedule up to four gold point sessions per day. For purposes of this regulation overlapping schedules are deemed to be the same two sessions since participation in one of the events preclude entry into the other. For example 10:00 a.m./3:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m./7:30 p.m. Management may, with cause, disallow more than two gold point sessions per day.
- A District may move a Regional from the calendar year in which it hosts an NABC to any of the three prior years or any of the three succeeding years providing the Regional meets with all requirements under "Scheduling of Regional Tournaments." This regulation extends to include Acts of God or hotels canceling contracts. Other unforeseen circumstances may be included as determined by the Arbitration Panel.
- Whenever the ACBL Board of Directors, or the Executive Committee, is considering holding a special event at a Regional, or any other District function, that District's president and District Director must be notified, and such event(s) must not be scheduled without permission of the District through such notice from the District Director.
- The Regional Tournament Allocation Plan will be reviewed at least every five years.

### **III. SCHEDULING OF REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

- A sanction application to hold a Regional must be submitted to the ACBL Tournament Department three years in advance in order to protect the dates. If a sanction is not submitted at least three years in advance, the District may lose its claim to the dates.
- A District that holds a Regional on the same dates and at the same sites/areas two out of three years will be placed on the traditional date list for Regionals. The tournament schedule is available on the ACBL website. Easter week and other fluctuating holidays are noted as exceptions.
- The dates are protected except for one day at either the beginning or end of the tournament. A tournament with a two or more day encroachment on a traditional date tournament will not be sanctioned.
- If a District has a traditional annual date but the site/area does not remain constant, it is no longer a traditional date.
- Regionals in the schedule for a specific date and location that move their location more than 50 miles within one year from this date will be subject to the "New Tournament Rules" (in other words this move will be treated as a new tournament).
- A list of scheduled tournaments can be found on the ACBL website.



- A Regional appearing on the traditional date list which is not held for two years within a three year period will be removed from the list.
- A Regional may be scheduled and sanctioned at any time provided the tournament can be included in the tournament listing in the Bridge Bulletin at least two months prior to the tournament and all rules and regulations regarding conflicts are met.
- A Regional scheduled and sanctioned more than a year in advance takes precedence over a Sectional regardless of when the Sectional was sanctioned.
- All tournament sanction applications must be submitted electronically.
- A sanction application to hold a Regional will automatically be forwarded through TourneyTRAX to the District Tournament Coordinator (DTC). Once the DTC approves the tournament it is automatically forwarded to the ACBL Tournament Department.

#### **IV. TOURNAMENT CONFLICTS**

- If the ACBL Tournament Department anticipates a possible conflict with a tournament already sanctioned or a Traditional Date tournament the Department should immediately notify the person applying for the sanction, and the District Tournament Coordinator.
- If a District Tournament Coordinator believes that a tournament request is in conflict with one of its tournaments, he must first notify ACBL Tournament Division and endeavor to resolve the conflict with the District in question. The District Director(s) from the Districts involved in a possible conflict will be notified by Management of the possible conflict as soon as Management is aware of it.
- An Arbitration Panel is established. All panel members will be District Directors or their designees.
  - a. The Panel will consist of five people, two from each zone without the conflict and one from the zone with the conflict. No one from the Districts involved may sit on the Panel.
  - b. If there is a conflict between two Districts or more in different zones, three people from the third zone and one from each of the two zones with a conflict will be on the Panel. Again, no one from the Districts involved may be on the Panel.
  - c. For the selection process, the zonal representatives will pick the members of the Panel from their zones as long as their zone is not involved. The ACBL President or Chairman of the Board will appoint the person from the “conflict” zone. Since the list of District Directors is updated each year, the list will be automatically current.
  - d. For timely sanction applications, if the parties involved cannot resolve the conflict, both applications will be sanctioned with the following proviso: the timely application of a traditional tournament date will take precedence over the timely application of a non-traditional tournament date.
    - 1) In cases where there are a timely and an untimely application: If the District with the timely application claims there is a conflict, the Arbitration Panel agrees there is a conflict and the conflict cannot be resolved, the untimely application will not be sanctioned.
    - 2) For equally untimely sanction applications, both applications will be sanctioned. For the purpose of defining “equally untimely,” applications received that would be listed on consecutive bi-weekly updates will be so deemed.

- 3) The cases where there are non-equal untimely applications will be treated the same as timely/untimely with the earlier application being timely and the other untimely.
- e. The Arbitration Panel will make a determination that a conflict exists after a request from Management or a District holding, or applying for, a sanction. Decisions will be reached after consulting internal resources, demographics of tournament attendance (if available), usual tournament size, data from involved parties, etc. The decision of the Arbitration Panel will be FINAL.

## V. SANCTION FEE

There is a per table fee due ACBL (for a listing of fees charged for each type of tournament, See Appendix G).

## VI. CONVENTIONS

The ACBL General Convention Chart applies unless it is noted on the sanction application that additional conventions may be used. See Appendix A. Tournament sponsors may apply to use the SuperChart or a part thereof for any event with no upper masterpoint limit when at least 12-board segments are played, provided notice is included in the tournament advertising.

Tournament sponsors may use the Mid-Chart or a part thereof for any unrestricted Flight A event or any bracket of a bracketed knockout event which contains no team with a bracket designator (average masterpoints for the entire team or the top two players) of less than 1500 masterpoints, provided notice is posted at the tournament.

## VII. REGIONAL TOURNAMENT TYPES

**OPEN:** Any ACBL member or any non-member may participate in an open tournament unless expressly prohibited from doing so by a judicial body of the ACBL.

**SENIOR:** Only players born before January 1, 1959 may participate.

**OPEN/SENIORS:** Permits the scheduling of only senior events for days of an otherwise open regional.

**JUNIOR:** All participants must be 25 years of age or younger.

**LIMITED:** Limited regionals may be held specifically as a 199er, limited to players with fewer than 200 masterpoints; 299er, limited to players with fewer than 300 masterpoints; or Non-Life master, limited to players who are not Life Masters. The upper limit for a Non-life Master Regional can be no more than 750 masterpoints.

- A Non-Life Master Regional with an upper limit of 750 MPs shall award 10% gold for overall awards and section tops in the top bracket, flight or strata of two-session or longer events. All other masterpoint awards shall be red points.

**SPLIT SITE:** A District may split one of its Regionals and hold it at two sites on the same dates.

- The same events will be played simultaneously at both sites and will be played throughout. Upon request, management may approve different starting times for the same session at the two sites for the same events.
  - a. Knockout Teams will be the only championship event to have first and second overall positions at both sites. There must be at least three teams for there to be an event, and if there are fewer than eight teams, there will be at least a three session round robin. If entry consists of five, six or seven teams, only the team finishing in first place will earn Blue Ribbon

qualification. If fewer than five teams enter the event, none will earn Blue Ribbon qualification.

- b. Masterpoints shall be awarded as follows: All awards shall be multiplied by .80. For all events other than KO, overall masterpoints for first and second (and ties for second) will be awarded based on the total attendance at both sites. Overall awards for other than first and second (and ties) will be made at both sites based on attendance at the respective sites (the depth of the awards shall be similarly based).
- c. Identical hand records must be used at both sites, for all events with one overall winner unless Management authorizes the use of different hand records due to significant differences in starting times or other special circumstances.
- d. At Split Regionals, Swiss Teams events will be separate and overall winners will be declared at both sites. Only first place overall winners at each site shall earn Ribbon qualification.

#### **REGIONALS AT SEA:**

- The ACBL and only the ACBL shall be permitted to sponsor Regionals at Sea (“RAS”).
- The ACBL may sponsor up to four RaS per year.
- Three of the four RaS should depart from different geographic “areas.” The areas are defined as East Coast (Atlantic other than Florida), West Coast (Pacific) and Gulf Coast (Gulf of Mexico plus the entire Florida coast.) ACBL Management shall, to the best their ability, attempt to avoid conflict with land-based Regionals.
- Except as specified in this motion, RaS must conform to the same rules and regulations as land-based Regionals.
- RaS are exempt from the rules regarding maximum tournament sessions and days. The tournament schedule will be determined by the tournament manager subject to the approval of the ACBL staff.

#### **VIII. TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR DUTIES**

Every district must have a Tournament Coordinator. Sanction applications must be submitted by the District Coordinator to the ACBL Tournament Department using the online sanction application. An example sanction application form with instructions for completion is provided at the end of this Chapter.

##### **A. Sectional Applications**

- Prior to approving, check the tournament schedule posted on the ACBL’s website for possible conflicts, including adjoining district(s). If there is a possible conflict with a tournament in an adjoining district, contact their District Tournament Coordinator for approval. Any intra-district conflicts should be resolved internally.
- Check sanction applications for valid dates, unit number, unit coordinator, city and state.
- Once the DTC approves the tournament in TourneyTRAX it will be sent to the ACBL Tournament Department for approval.
- Approve date change for previously approved applications (check for conflicts).

##### **B. Regional Applications**

- Check the tournament schedule available on the ACBL web site for a possible conflict with any regionals in neighboring districts.
- Approve the tournament.

## **IX. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

Masterpoints at regionals are red except for overall and section tops in certain events. Refer to Chapter 2 for masterpoint information.

## **X. STARTING TIMES**

Selection of tournament event starting times are routinely approved unless they are unrealistic, out of the ordinary or violate the four gold point events per day rule (exclusive of knockouts and side game series). The sponsor should take care to choose times which accommodate the majority of their players and consideration should be given to out-of-town as well as local players.

## **SECTION THREE: SECTIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

### **I. TOURNAMENT ALLOCATION**

Sectional tournaments are allocated to units. Units are required to hold a sectional tournament every two years, unless exempted from this requirement by the district. While there are no restrictions on the number of sectional tournaments a unit may conduct, a district must approve the Sanction Application before it can be acted upon by ACBL.

- Sectionals must be at least two days and no more than five days in duration, with the following exceptions: Limited/Junior Sectionals and Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs). Limited/Junior Sectionals must be at least one day and no more than five days in duration. A Limited Sectional is defined as a sectional with a masterpoint limit of no more than 0-500. A Unit may not schedule more than three Limited Sectionals in any calendar year. STaCs must be at least two days and no more than seven days in duration. A unit may not attempt to circumvent this rule by scheduling back-to-back sanctions that run consecutively.
- With Management approval, a Sponsoring Organization may run a Limited Sectional with a maximum of 500 Masterpoints using directors who are not ACBL employees.
- The Las Vegas Unit 373 is grandfathered permission to run:
  - a. Two, and only two, Sectionals per year which may be up to six and one half days in length; or
  - b. One six and a half day Sectional and up to two Sectionals not to exceed five days; or
  - c. An unlimited number of standard Sectionals.
- Sectionals may be Open, Senior, Limited by masterpoints (specifically, 0-100; 0-200; 0-300 or 0-500, Junior, Youth, Progressive Style or STaC. Sectional senior, youth or junior tournaments may be combined with limited-by-masterpoint tournaments. In these instances the higher sanction fee will apply.
- A Unit may join with another Unit(s) to run a Sectional or a STaC. A Unit may, with permission of the Unit and District(s), hold a Sectional in a contiguous Unit.
- A Sectional may schedule up to four sessions of championship rated events per day with no decrease in masterpoint awards. Management may, with cause, disallow more than two (2) championship

sessions per day.

- Sectionals at Sea are allocated only by the ACBL.
- An open Sectional may be run concurrently with a Regional restricted by age or masterpoints, with the permission of the Unit in which the Regional is being held.

**NOTE:** A sectional sanction may be awarded to a non-ACBL sponsor to conduct a tournament in other than ACBL territory under special circumstances. Contact the ACBL Tournament Department for further details.

## **II. SCHEDULING OF SECTIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

- A Sectional may be scheduled and sanctioned at any time provided the tournament can be included in the tournament listings in the Bridge Bulletin at least one month prior to the tournament and all rules and regulations regarding conflicts are met.
- If a sanction application is submitted less one year in advance, the Unit loses its claim to the dates.
- All Sectionals have the same status and the same rules and regulations apply.
- A sanction application to hold a Sectional will automatically be forwarded through TourneyTRAX to the Unit Tournament Coordinator (UTC). Once the UTC approves the tournament it is automatically forwarded to the DTC. Once the DTC approves the tournament it is automatically forwarded to the ACBL Tournament Department.
- Approval of Sectional sanction applications will be made one year out, or immediately upon approval if received less than one year out.
- Questions concerning scheduling and other conflicts for Sectionals will be resolved by the Unit(s) and the District Organization involved.
- Districts and Units perceiving a conflict with other Units or Districts must notify Management or the Arbitration Board within 30 days of the tournament posting on the website.
- When a Unit perceives a conflict between its Sectional and a tournament in another District, the Unit Tournament Coordinator shall work through his District Tournament Coordinator to initiate the processes of conflict resolution in the same manner that Regional conflicts are resolved.

## **III. SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT TYPES**

**OPEN:** Any ACBL member or any non-member may participate in an open tournament unless expressly prohibited from doing so by a judicial body of the ACBL.

**SENIOR:** Only players who were born before January 1, 1959 may participate.

**JUNIOR:** All participants must be 25 years of age or younger.

**UNIVERSITY:** Only registered college students and ACBL juniors may participate. Each University may hold one such tournament per year.

**LIMITED:** Limited sectional tournaments may be held specifically as 0-100, 0-200, 0-300, or 0-500 masterpoints. The per table sanction fee for a limited sectional will be \$1 less than the fees for an open sectional.

**PROGRESSIVE:** A progressive tournament consists of one week of qualifying sessions in participating clubs, with a single-session final held at a central site after completion of club play. The sponsoring unit

should hold the one-session final within two weeks after completing the last club qualifying game. Two separate qualifying events may be held, with the single-session final of each event held on the same day.

### **SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT AT CLUBS (STaC):**

- A STaC may be scheduled for up to seven consecutive days, but may include only one weekend -- however, Management may grant an exception to the weekend requirement for cause. A sanction application must be sent to the appropriate District Tournament Coordinator at least 12 months prior to the scheduled tournament date. The ACBL may sanction a STaC when it receives the sanction application with fewer than 12 months advance notice if there are no scheduling conflicts and the STaC can be advertised in the Bridge Bulletin calendar schedule at least one month prior.
- While only Units may apply for a sanction to hold a STaC there is no objection to a Unit nominating a District or Districts to conduct the tournament. In District-wide STaCs all clubs within the District(s) must be offered the opportunity to participate. Participation is at the club level when sponsored by a District. If a Unit outside of the sponsoring District chooses to participate, all clubs within that Unit must be invited to participate.
- The organization receiving the sanction (sponsoring organization -- 'SO') is responsible for the collection of any fees due from a participating ACBL sanctioned game.
- A sponsor may schedule morning, afternoon and/or evening sessions. For the purpose of determining in which session a club should participate, use the standard club session designations. Many STaCs schedule only two sessions per day. The local sponsor must designate the sessions to be scheduled. As an example: Morning games would be those starting prior to 12:00 local time, afternoon games start prior to 18:00 local time, and evening games 18:00 and later. Morning and afternoon games may not be combined as day games.
- When a club wishes to participate in a STaC for a session other than their regularly scheduled game, the unit may decide these cases. This authority to disallow a club from participating in a STaC extends only to games which conflict with another game for that session and only to games being conducted at other than their regularly scheduled time. Any club desiring to participate at their regularly scheduled time must be permitted to do so.
- In order to be eligible for overall awards in a STaC, or any event that is scored across more than one club, the minimum number of boards played is set at 20.
- Playing directors in STaC games and their partners are ineligible to receive overall STaC masterpoint (silver point) awards, but are eligible to receive section awards.

**NON-CHAMPIONSHIP SECTIONAL:** A unit of 200 or fewer members or a sectional tournament which averages 15 or fewer tables per session may run up to three non-championship sectionals a year.

- a. This sectional is not required to use a tournament director.
- b. A club or higher rated director may be used.
- c. This sectional will award silver points.
- d. The M value will be no more than .65 of an open sectional.
- e. This sectional must have a sanction and meet all other requirements.
- f. This sectional will be listed in the Bridge Bulletin with an \* that it is non-championship with silver points at .65 of an open sectional award.
- g. The sanction fees will be the same as for an open sectional.

**o-99ER SECTIONAL:** A Unit not running at least two 99er Sectional tournaments per year is encouraged to grant approval to any club within its jurisdiction that applies for a sanction to run such a tournament. Sanction notification/application per existing regulations will be forwarded to the District's tournament coordinator for his or her approval.

## **SECTIONAL AT SEA:**

- All Sectionals at Sea (SAS) shall be subject to the following regulations:
  - a. An application for sanction should be submitted through TourneyTRAX to the ACBL at least three months in advance.
  - b. The application will contain the following information:
    - 1. Ship's name and Cruise Line, departure/arrival dates, and ports. Plus the Sponsor or Unit/District name, address and email.
    - 2. A schedule of all ACBL events with scheduled lectures.
    - 3. The schedule must meet the criteria as for a land-based Sectional.
    - 4. The schedule and any advertising must be approved by ACBL.
    - 5. A list of directors who will be operating the games.
    - 6. Directors must be approved by ACBL.
    - 7. ACBL may require the director(s) to take a certification test.
- Masterpoint awards
  - a. 80% of Open Sectional if an active tournament director is requested and assigned.
  - b. 65% of Open Sectional (non-championship) if an active ACBL tournament director is not utilized.
- There should be adequate playing space for all sessions scheduled and expected attendance.
- The SAS bridge package may be purchased in advance or on board, albeit at different prices, subject to available playing space and staffing.
- Sectional at Sea sanction fees can be found in Appendix G.
- If an active tournament director is assigned, the tournament director per-session fee will also be payable to the ACBL. There will be no sectional surcharge. The sponsor will be responsible for the director(s) transportation costs.
- Sectionals at Sea will be subject to the same general conflict rules as land-based Sectionals. Currently, no SAS may depart from a port within 25 miles of a concurrent land-based Sectional or Regional.

## **OTHER SPONSORSHIP**

- Management is authorized to award a sectional sanction to a non-ACBL sponsor to conduct a tournament in other than ACBL territory as long as:
  - a. the NBO (if no NBO, the appropriate WBF zonal representative) gives written permission,

- b. tournament directors meet ACBL standards,
- c. normal per table sanction fees are paid to ACBL,
- d. the sponsoring organization will abide by all ACBL regulations then in effect,
- e. the host country's laws are not contrary to ACBL regulations then in effect.

#### **IV. TOURNAMENT SANCTIONING**

Every unit must have a Unit Tournament Coordinator who approves sanction applications for Sectional Tournaments.

##### **A. UNIT TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR DUTIES**

###### **1. Sectional Tournaments**

- The Unit Tournament coordinator is the recipient of Sectional applications for tournaments to be held in the unit.
- Check the tournament schedule found on the ACBL website for possible conflicts within your district and any adjoining district.
- Approve the application. The form is automatically forwarded to the appropriate District Tournament Coordinator for approval.
- Submit applications for special requests, such as, but not limited to, Senior Olympic Games scheduled in your unit.

##### **B. SANCTION REGULATIONS**

Sectional sanction applications must be submitted one year in advance to be timely. However, a sectional may be scheduled and sanctioned at any time provided the tournament can be included in the tournament listing in the Bridge Bulletin at least one month prior to the tournament and any rules or regulations regarding conflicts are met.

Sectional sanction applications received are issued a sanction number.

A sectional tournament scheduled and sanctioned one year in advance takes precedence over other sectional and regional tournaments not sanctioned one year in advance. Any unit attempting to obtain a sanction for a sectional tournament less than one year out must abide by the rules and regulations governing conflicts. See C. following.

All sectional tournaments of five days or less have the same status and the same rules and regulations apply.

Only units may apply for a sanction to hold Sectional Tournaments. However, there is no objection to a unit nominating another organization to conduct the Sectional, provided that it does so in writing and provided there is no objection (for cause) by ACBL Management to the sponsor nominated. If the district within which the unit is situated is the nominated sponsor, the foregoing right of objection by management does not apply.

A unit not running at least two 99er Sectional tournaments per year is encouraged to grant approval to any club within its jurisdiction that applies for a sanction to run such a tournament and forward the sanction notification/application to the District tournament coordinator for approval.

##### **C. TOURNAMENT CONFLICTS**



When a sectional tournament is in conflict with another sectional or regional tournament within the same district, that district is the final authority as to whether any or all tournaments thought to be in conflict will be sanctioned.

In situations where more than one district is involved, ACBL management will make a determination that a conflict exists, either on its own initiative or after a request by a party holding a sanction or applying for one. This determination will be reached by consulting internal resources, demographics of tournament attendance (if available), usual tournament size, data from involved parties, etc. If there is a disagreement with management's determination of conflict, either party may request arbitration for the purpose of determining conflict. The arbitrator's decision will be final.

For information regarding the arbitration of tournament conflicts and the effect of the timeliness of tournament sanction applications as it applies to the sanctioning of tournaments, See Section Two, IV.

#### **D. SANCTION FEES AND SURCHARGES**

For all sectionals, except progressive, STaCs and Sectionals at Sea, there is a surcharge in addition to a per table sanction fee due ACBL. For the amounts of these fees and charges, see Appendix G.

#### **E. CONVENTIONS**

The ACBL General Convention Chart applies unless it is noted on the sanction application that additional conventions may be used. See Appendix A. Tournament sponsors may apply to use the SuperChart or a part thereof for any event with no upper masterpoint limit when at least 12-board segments are played, provided notice is included in the tournament advertising.

Tournament sponsors may use the Mid-Chart or a part thereof for any unrestricted Flight A event or any bracket of a bracketed knockout event which contains no team with a bracket designator (average masterpoints for the entire team or the top two players) of less than 1500 masterpoints, provided notice is posted at the tournament. They may apply to use the Mid-chart for all events.

#### **V. MASTERPOINT AWARDS**

All masterpoint awards at sectionals are silver. For further information on masterpoints, See Chapter 2.

#### **VI. STARTING TIMES**

For sectional tournaments, selection of tournament event starting times is almost 100% within the purview of the sponsor. Unless the starting time for an event is unrealistic (second session scheduled to start before the first session could be reasonably completed) or out of the ordinary (3 p.m. and midnight), starting times are routinely approved. The sponsor should take care to choose times which accommodate the majority of players.

### **SECTION FOUR: EVENTS AND RESTRICTIONS**

Formulating a tournament schedule is one of the most important functions of the tournament committee. A successful tournament needs a well thought-out schedule. Events must be included for players of greatly different abilities, levels of experience, and objectives while keeping in mind the delicate balance between the number of events and anticipated attendance.

Events may be held as either playthrough or qualifying. In a playthrough event all participants are expected to play for the duration of the event. The total scores of the participants determine the overall rankings.

Qualifying events reduce the field after specified sessions. In general, the carryover scores of the qualifiers are reduced after each elimination.

Consultation with the ACBL Field Supervisor for the district and/or the tournament director in charge of the tournament is highly recommended in the planning of the tournament schedule. Other resources available to the tournament committee include the ACBL Tournament Department, the area intermediate/newcomer coordinators, and *The Resource Guide for Planning Sectional and Regional Tournaments* found on the ACBL web site.

A chart containing complete information on permissible events (including restrictions and scoring methods) is provided at the end of this Chapter.

## **I. TYPE OF EVENT**

The event types and restrictions authorized for ACBL-sanctioned tournaments are listed in the “Permissible Event Types and Restrictions” chart found at the end of this Chapter.

## **II. KINDS OF EVENT**

Following is a description of various events which may be held. Events not specifically listed may be approved on an experimental basis by the ACBL Tournament Department.

### **A. OPEN EVENT**

There are no restrictions on age, gender or masterpoint holding on players either individually or collectively as members of a pair or team in open events.

For the purpose of computing masterpoints, open events may receive credit for tables entered in a concurrent same type event that is restricted. See Chapter 2, Section Three.

### **B. FLIGHTED EVENT**

Individual, pair or team events may be subdivided into two or three “flights” having designated upper masterpoint limits. Approved masterpoint limits are listed at the end of this Chapter.

Participants may enter any flight for which they are eligible, playing only against players in their own flight. Masterpoints are awarded based on the number of tables in the flight entered added to the number of tables in all lower flights. These events may be playthrough or qualifying. However, it is recommended that only the top flight be run as a qualifying event. Flight C events may also be stratified.

### **C. STRATIFIED EVENT**

Individual, pair or team events may be subdivided into two or three strats with specific lower and upper masterpoint limits. Participants enter the lowest strat for which they are eligible as they compete for awards in their own strat and all higher strats. Awards are based on the number of tables in the strat entered added to the number of tables in all lower strats. Stratified events may be run as playthroughs only.

In stratified events, the stratification level of a team or pair may be based, at sponsor option, on the average masterpoint holding of the team or pair. This option may be exercised in both club or unit games, and tournaments but not in qualifying events.

### **D. STRATIFLIGHTED EVENT**

A stratiflighted event is a combination of flighted and stratified. The first group would have no masterpoint restrictions, unless the sponsoring organization chooses to stratify the top flight into strats (up to three, A-1, A-2, A-3). When the top flight has two or three strats the A-1 strat will have no masterpoint restriction while the A-2 or A-3 strat would have no lower masterpoint limit and an upper masterpoint limit of 1250, 1500, 2000, 3000 or 5000 (at least 500 points higher than the lower flight) at sponsor option.

The second group would be subdivided into two or three strats with specific lower and upper masterpoint limits. Participants may enter either the unrestricted group or the lowest strat for which they are eligible in the second group. Only the unrestricted group may be run as a qualifying event. At a sectional tournament the A and B flights can be combined into a group to play together with the C flight playing separately.

In stratflighted and limited pair and team events, once the flight of the pair or team is determined, stratification within each flight may be based, at sponsor option, on the average masterpoint holding of the team or pair.

#### **E. HANDICAP EVENT**

Matchpoints or IMPs are given to participants as handicap points based on a predetermined scale for the type of event. Information for methods of computing handicaps may be obtained from the ACBL Tournament Department, the area Field Representative, or the director assigned to be in charge of the tournament.

#### **F. BRACKETED EVENT**

Knockout Team and Swiss Team events are divided into groups based on either the average or total masterpoints of the top two masterpoint holders or on the average masterpoints of the entire team. The tournament director-in-charge may be consulted for further information.

#### **G. MASTERPOINT-RESTRICTED EVENT**

All masterpoint-restricted events having an upper masterpoint limit require that all entrants be below that masterpoint limit. If an event has a lower masterpoint limit, one member of each partnership must meet or exceed the minimum limit. In an event designated as a Life Master event, all entrants must have attained their ACBL Life Master status. Exceptions may be made for entrants from other recognized organizations.

#### **H. SIDE GAME SERIES**

A side game series may be held as a pair game only. It is a series of at least three one-session games which may not be restricted by age, gender or masterpoint holding. The event may be stratified for side game session awards only, and may not be flighted. Participants may enter as many scheduled sessions as they wish, playing with the same or different partners each session. Overall ranking is done on an individual basis by computing the sum of each participant's two best games. Awards are computed on the average number of tables entered in the two largest sessions. Gold points are awarded at regionals to overall winners at 80% of an open pair event. Gold points are awarded for section top placing only to participants who enter at least two sessions of the same event. Each session of the side game series will award single session side game overall awards (red points only). Each individual session may be stratified.

#### **I. CHOICE PAIRS EVENT**

A Choice Pairs event may be held as a pairs event only. It is an event scheduled for three sessions during one calendar day (morning, afternoon and evening) and a pair must choose to play in only two of the three sessions.

#### **J. COMPACT KNOCKOUT EVENT**

A bracketed knockout event in which each match is half the normal length (i.e., at least twelve and probably not more than fourteen boards) is an approved tournament event. This event is permitted at sectionals, for silver points, and at regionals for red and gold points (a minimum of nine teams is necessary to award gold points).

### **SECTION FIVE: TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS**

#### **I. FACILITY**

Comfortable playing conditions at a tournament are essential for all participants. Handicapped players must be allowed to use any special equipment they require, such as Braille cards, bidding boxes, or special chair. However, the tournament is not required to supply such equipment.

#### **A. PLAYING SPACE**

The floor space required is 64 to 81 square feet per table. Estimates when calculating the amount of space required should be very optimistic. Additional space will be needed for scoring tables, water stations, supplies, etc. Office and/or supply storage rooms near the playing area are highly recommended. For example, if the expected attendance is 100 tables in any one session, the minimum amount of space required would be 6600 square feet. This leaves some amount of space in the playing area for the items mentioned above.

#### **B. LIGHTING**

The facility must have acceptable lighting for all tables. At least 10 foot-candles of illumination 30 inches above the floor is necessary for all tables.

#### **C. VENTILATION**

The sponsoring organization must see that the playing areas are well ventilated with proper heating or cooling available. Designated smoking areas should be located away from the playing areas.

#### **D. SERVICES**

The sponsoring organization must see that adequate drinking water is provided and that the playing area is cleaned between sessions. Caddies can help keep the room clean during play. Trash bags attached to tables and/or trash receptacles conveniently located will prove very beneficial. The facility must have adequate rest rooms.

### **II. EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES**

#### **A. TABLES AND CHAIRS**

The sponsoring organization must arrange for sufficient tables and chairs. Tables are usually provided by the sponsoring organization, but hotels and convention centers usually have a sufficient number of chairs. However, arrangements to rent chairs may be necessary. If the space used is uncarpeted, rubber-tipped chairs should be used.

#### **B. SUPPLIES**

All essential supplies such as playing cards, boards, conventions cards, etc., are the responsibility of the tournament sponsor. The sponsor can make arrangements with the DIC to order supplies.

#### **C. HAND RECORDS**

Hand records are routinely provided by the Director in Charge for a fee. They are brought to the tournament by the director in charge. There will be a charge on the tournament invoice for only those hand records used.

#### **D. PRINTOUTS OF THE HANDS**

Copies of the hands, available for distribution to the players at the end of the session, are almost universally expected by tournament players. Printouts are routinely provided by the Director in Charge for a fee.

#### **E. COMPUTERS**

ACBL will provide the computers and printers used at tournaments through the tournament directors. There are no additional fees for the provision of this equipment.

## F. BIDDING BOXES

ACBL encourages units and districts to provide bidding boxes. Bidding boxes are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization. They are not included with ACBL supplies. Units or districts wishing to have bidding boxes available for use at their tournaments may purchase them from Baron Barclay. Bidding boxes are used in all events at NABCs with the exception of the Intermediate/Newcomer Program where they are optional.

Handicapped players requiring bidding boxes will have preference when availability is limited. Non-handicapped players may use bidding boxes, if available, in events where such use is not mandated as long as no player at the table objects.

## G. TIME CLOCKS

Any clocks available at regionals or sectionals for the convenience of the participants are the property of individual units or districts. They are available for purchase from Baron Barclay.

## III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECTIONAL/REGIONAL TOURNEYTRAX APPLICATION

Sanction applications must be submitted by the appropriate coordinator and must include the following information:

**BASIC TOURNAMENT INFORMATION:** *Enter the* start and end date, tournament name, category, type, MP Restrictions, conventions allowed, and unit or district.

**TOURNAMENT SITE:** *Enter the* name, address, city, state, zip code, and telephone number of tournament location.

**TOURNAMENT APPLICANT:** *Enter* the ACBL number, name, email and phone number of the person submitting the application.

**REQUESTED DIRECTOR-IN-CHARGE (DIC):** This information is mandatory.

**TOURNAMENT CHAIR:** Enter the name and player number of the person in charge of the tournament. Note if this person is to be listed in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin and on the ACBL web site for players to contact regarding tournament information.

**TOURNAMENT CORRESPONDENT:** Enter the name, player number and email address of the person who will receive all correspondence (electronically) from ACBL concerning the tournament (must have email access. Note if this person is to be listed in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin and on the ACBL web site for players to contact regarding tournament information.

**APPROVAL:** The completed Sanction Application will be transmitted to the appropriate Unit and/or District Tournament Coordinator for approval and then forwarded to ACBL for sanctioning.

## PERMISSIBLE EVENT TYPES AND RESTRICTIONS

The following event types and restrictions are authorized for ACBL sanctioned tournaments. Management is authorized to sanction other events on an experimental basis.

### EVENTS and RESTRICTIONS

- I.       **TYPE:**  
          INDIVIDUAL  
          PAIR  
          TEAM (SWISS, B-A-M, KNOCKOUT or any combination of these)

PAIR/TEAM (one-session event with masterpoints to be the greater of the pair event or team event)

**II. GENDER:**

OPEN  
MEN'S  
WOMEN'S  
MIXED  
UNMIXED

**III. AGE:**

OPEN  
JUNIOR (25 years and younger)  
SENIOR (55, 65 or 75 years and older)

**IV. EVENTS:**

**OPEN:** (No masterpoint restriction.)

**FLIGHTED:** (By masterpoints only.) Three flights event. Each flight may have two strats. Note: Flighted KO events at Regionals may be bracketed (but may not be randomly grouped) to finish in 4 sessions. **NOTE:** Only flights/strats with 750 masterpoints or greater in two session regional events are eligible for Gold points.

**STRATIFIED:** (By masterpoints only.) Two or three strats. Up to five strats are permitted in a one-session event which has an upper limit of 300 or fewer masterpoints - specifically an IN event. Note: At sponsor option, the stratification level of a team in an Open Stratified Swiss Event may be determined by the average masterpoint holding of all team members.

**STRATIFLIGHTED:** (by masterpoints only): Two flights with up to three strats in each flight. **NOTE:** Only flights/strats with 750 masterpoints or greater in two session regional events are eligible for Gold points.

**HANDICAPPED:** Based on masterpoint holding of entrants.

**BRACKETED:** (KO and Swiss Teams) Based on masterpoint holding of entrants.

**MASTERS:** One member of each partnership must meet minimum limit.

**NON-MASTERS:** All entrants must be under maximum limit.

**LIFE MASTERS:** All entrants must meet Life Master requirement.

**RESTRICTED:** (Upper masterpoint limit) All entrants must be under maximum limit.)

**SIDE GAME SERIES:** (Open Pair game only) May not be restricted by age, gender, or masterpoint holding. (May be stratified for single side game session awards only.)

**CHOICE:** (Pair game only) An event which is scheduled for three sessions during one calendar day (morning, afternoon and evening), and a pair must choose to play in only two of the three sessions. Concurrent event rule does not apply to any pair in this event during their unplayed third session.

**NOTE:** SIMULTANEOUS SPLIT REGIONALS SHALL HAVE THE SAME CHAMPIONSHIP PAIR EVENTS PLAYED SIMULTANEOUSLY AT BOTH SITES. THESE GAMES CANNOT BE QUALIFYING EVENTS.

**V. SCORING METHODS:**

**INDIVIDUAL:** Matchpoint, IMP

**PAIR:** Matchpoint, IMP

**TEAM:** Win-loss, victory point, total points, board-a-match

**PAIR/TEAM:** Matchpoints/board-a-match (must be a one-session event only)

**VI. REGIONAL STRAT/FLIGHT UPPER MASTERPOINT LIMITS**

FLIGHTED

PAIRS

FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY, or two strats (lower strat must be at least 500 above B top to 5000)
	B	Up to two strats using 0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000, with at least 500 above C top
	C	Up to two strats using 0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000

STRATIFIED

PAIRS

STRAT	A	TOP "B" -UNLIMITED
	B	TOP "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
	C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
STRAT	A	Both over 300, LM, 500, 750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
	B	One over & one under
	C	Both under

STRATIFLIGHTED  
PAIRS

FLIGHT	A	UNLIMITED - Up to three strats with bottom strat at least 500 higher than upper limit of B, Max 5000
FLIGHT	B	TOP OF "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 2000, 2750, 3000
STRAT	C	TOP OF "D" -300, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
STRAT	D	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500)

FLIGHTED  
KNOCKOUT TEAMS

FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY
	B	0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
	C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000

BRACKETED  
KNOCKOUT &  
SWISS TEAMS

Must be bracketed by:  
Average MP's all team members  
Average or total of top two masterpoint holders

FLIGHTED SWISS  
TEAMS

FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY, or two strats (lower strat must be at least 500 above B top to 5000)
	B	Up to two strats using 0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000, with at least 500 above C top
	C	Up to two strats using 0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000

STRATIFIED  
SWISS TEAMS

STRAT	A	TOP "B" -UNLIMITED
	B	TOP "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
	C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000

STRATIFLIGHTED  
SWISS TEAMS

FLIGHT	A	UNLIMITED - Up to three strats with bottom strat at least 500 higher than upper limit of B, Max 5000
FLIGHT	B	TOP OF "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 2000, 2750, 3000
STRAT	C	TOP OF "D" -300, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
STRAT	D	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500)

**VI SECTIONAL STRAT/FLIGHT UPPER MASTERPOINT LIMITS**

FLIGHTED



<u>PAIRS</u>	FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY, or two strats (lower strat must be at least 500 above B top to 5000)
		B	Up to two strats using 0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000, with at least 500 above C top
		C	Up to two strats using 0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
<u>STRATIFIED PAIRS</u>	STRAT	A	TOP "B" -UNLIMITED
		B	TOP "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
		C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
	STRAT	A	Both over 300, LM, 500, 750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
		B	One over & one under
		C	Both under
<u>STRATIFLIGHTED PAIRS</u>	FLIGHT	A	UNLIMITED - Up to three strats with bottom strat at least 500 higher than upper limit of B, Max 5000
	FLIGHT	B	TOP OF "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 2000, 2750, 3000
	STRAT	C	TOP OF "D" -300, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
	STRAT	D	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500)
<u>FLIGHTED KNOCKOUT TEAMS</u>	FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY
		B	0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
		C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000 Note: may be bracketed to end in 3 sessions.
<u>BRACKETED KNOCKOUT &amp; SWISS TEAMS</u>			Must be bracketed by: Average MP's all team members Average or total of top two masterpoint holders

FLIGHTED SWISS  
TEAMS

FLIGHT	A	0-INFINITY, or two strats (lower strat must be at least 500 above B top to 5000)
	B	Up to two strats using 0-750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000, with at least 500 above C top
	C	Up to two strats using 0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000)

STRATIFIED  
SWISS TEAMS

STRAT	A	TOP "B" -UNLIMITED
	B	TOP "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 1750, 2000, 2500, 2750, 3000
	C	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000)

STRATIFLIGHTED  
SWISS TEAMS

FLIGHT	A	UNLIMITED - Up to three strats with bottom strat at least 500 higher than upper limit of B, Max 5000
FLIGHT	B	TOP OF "C" -750, 1000, 1250, 1500, 2000, 2750, 3000
STRAT	C	TOP OF "D" -300, NLM (max 500), 500, 750, 1000
STRAT	D	0-100, 200, 300, NLM, NLM (max 500)

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## **Chapter 7 – GENERAL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION**

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This chapter deals with the general rules and regulations that govern the operation of sectional and regional tournaments, from tournament organization through tournament and post-tournament management. For more details on the operation of tournaments, see the *Resource Guide for Planning Sectional and Regional Tournaments* on the ACBL website.

### **SECTION ONE: ADVANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Some items must be addressed well in advance of a tournament. Proper care in selecting both a site (geographic location) and a facility (hotel, convention center, etc.) is necessary in order to host a successful tournament.

#### **I. SITE SELECTION**

In selecting a site for your tournament, some items to consider are:

- Ease of access, mainly by car but for some tournaments air travel is also important
- Food service, both proximity and suitability to various budgets and lifestyles
- Lodging, both at the facility (if applicable) and nearby
- Other local attractions
- Playing facilities available
- Sufficient restrooms
- Adequate accommodations for players with physical handicaps

More information about the playing facility may be found in Chapter 6.

#### **II. TOURNAMENT BUDGET**

A budget, outlining anticipated revenue and expenses, should be drawn up well in advance of the tournament. Your site and facility selection may depend on availability of budgeted funds. A preliminary working budget should be established prior to making any firm arrangements with a facility.

#### **III. TOURNAMENT DATES**

Before considering dates for a tournament, it is often helpful to check the tournament schedule on the ACBL website to note tournaments scheduled throughout the ACBL as well as your immediate area. Specific dates need to be cleared by unit and district coordinators and ACBL.

### **SECTION TWO: TOURNAMENT ORGANIZATION**

#### **I. TOURNAMENT CORRESPONDENT**

The tournament correspondent is the person designated to receive and distribute all written information from ACBL Headquarters. A sponsoring organization should designate a correspondent who will remain constant over a period of time and must have email access.

## **II. TOURNAMENT CHAIRMAN**

The tournament chairman is, among other things, the liaison with the Director-in-Charge (DIC) and the sponsoring organization. The ACBL Tournament Department is available to answer any pertinent questions. The tournament chairman should discuss specifics with the DIC at the proper times. It is important for the tournament chairman to put together an effective team of volunteers for committees such as publicity, entertainment, and prizes.

### **A. PRE-TOURNAMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The tournament chairman directs all pre-tournament arrangements for the sponsoring organization and is responsible for the sponsor's compliance with all ACBL rules and regulations. The tournament chairman may delegate duties and authority but has final responsibility for all decisions regarding the tournament.

### **B. SITE MANAGEMENT**

The tournament chairman works with facility management to make sure the facility fulfills all contractual agreements and provides all services in a timely, satisfactory manner. Liaison between the DIC and the tournament facility manager is the responsibility of the tournament chairman.

### **C. HOSPITALITY**

Any hospitality arrangements which affect the tournament playing area or timing should be discussed with the DIC to make sure that these arrangements mesh with the orderly progress of the tournament. Food and beverage services (snack bars and cocktails) are hospitality items that some players view as necessities.

### **D. SPONSOR OPTIONS**

Some of the sponsor's options are listed below (for more information consult the *Resource Guide for Planning Sectional and Regional Tournaments* on the ACBL website).

- Staff - request DIC (and sometimes also request specific staff members)
- Finances - receive and disburse funds throughout the tournament or settle with the DIC at the conclusion
- Caddies - hiring arrangements, training and payment
- Approval of player's checks
- Free plays, if any - how they are to be handled
- Number of boards to be played in newcomer/intermediate games and special novice promotions, if any
- Prizes and section top awards - provision and distribution
- Daily Bulletin

- Post-tournament publicity - request needed information from DIC
- Hospitality breaks
- Swiss team scoring (Victory point or win/loss)
- Seeding - directors or seeding committee

The tournament chairman should discuss these options and other areas of responsibility with the DIC prior to the tournament.

### **E. TOURNAMENT RECEIPTS**

The tournament chairman should consult with the DIC about decisions that deal with the financial aspects of the tournament operation. The DIC will be responsible for the collection and disbursement of money during the tournament and will be responsible for tournament funds for the duration of the tournament unless the tournament chairman informs the DIC that the sponsoring organization will appoint someone to receive funds after each sale and disburse funds as necessary. In either case, selling shortages are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.

Routine sale shortages will not be replaced by ACBL; however, substantial shortages from theft or criminal negligence will be covered by ACBL. The funds will normally be stored in the hotel safe deposit facility. Unless the sponsoring organization has assumed the handling of funds, the DIC must:

- Be the custodian for all funds collected
- Pay all staff
- Make all authorized disbursements
- Give the tournament chairman (or other designated person) a complete financial report and any funds due the sponsor immediately after the tournament is over
- Get a check from the tournament chairman (or other designated person) for the amount due ACBL

If another person has been given the responsibility for tournament finances, this person must arrange to:

- Receive the funds collected by the entry sellers
- Pay for all staff costs and expenses
- Ensure the security of the receipts
- Have a check for the funds due the ACBL ready for the DIC at the conclusion of the tournament
- Sign the tournament balance sheet

### **III. TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS**

Active tournament directors rated by ACBL are ACBL employees. ACBL has the following ranks listed in ascending order: Local, Associate Tournament Director, Tournament Director, Associate

National and National. Each tournament director has a Field Supervisor as immediate supervisor. ACBL management and the tournament department manager are next in the chain of authority.

Each tournament needs a director-in-charge and sufficient staff to support the tournament. See Section Two.

#### **IV. DIRECTOR-IN-CHARGE (DIC)**

The director-in-charge (DIC) of the tournament is, among other things, responsible for ensuring that the tournament is conducted within the rules and regulations of the ACBL. The DIC assigns or delegates duties, runs scheduled events according to regulations, and works with the tournament committee in conducting the tournament. He is also an additional link in the chain of authority placed just before the Field Supervisor.

If a question arises on interpretation of an ACBL regulation, the DIC's interpretation prevails for the duration of the event. If, for example, there is a question about whether a particular procedure is mandatory or optional, the DIC interprets the regulation and makes the decision.

##### **A. SELECTION**

Whenever practical, the DIC of a sectional tournament must hold the rank of Tournament Director or higher and be a full-time ACBL employee. Exceptions are made for some tournaments with low upper masterpoint limits or under extraordinary circumstances. The DIC of a regional tournament must be of National or Associate National rank and must be a full-time ACBL employee. Any exceptions must be approved by the Field Supervisor and ACBL management. The DIC is assigned to a tournament on the basis of the sponsor's request, proximity to the tournament site, employee status (salaried or part-time), prior assignments to a particular tournament, general tournament schedule, expertise, and personal workload. DIC assignments are reviewed by the appropriate Field Supervisor, prior to sponsor notification.

##### **B. TOURNAMENT OPTIONS**

The DIC must discuss all options for the tournament with the tournament chairman and come to agreement on what the procedures will be. The DIC should get these instructions in advance of the tournament whenever possible, but certainly in advance of any event where they may arise. Many sponsoring organizations establish standing instructions that apply to all of their tournaments.

A sponsor who wishes to make a major departure from previously recognized tournament methods should notify ACBL (usually through the DIC) of that desire well ahead of the event. ACBL welcomes new ideas and suggestions for improvement. Thus, ACBL may permit a tournament to try a new event experimentally which the DIC could not allow without having written permission from ACBL before arriving at the tournament.

##### **C. ENFORCEMENT OF ACBL REGULATIONS**

The DIC is responsible for enforcing all ACBL regulations and seeing that all staff members conform to ACBL standards of conduct. Some important considerations are choice of movements, conditions of contest and maintaining order.

**CHOICE OF MOVEMENTS:** ACBL permits some variation in the physical setup of games and in the selection of movements at sectional and regional tournaments. The DIC usually runs the game(s) using common, proven methods. When no standout choice exists, the DIC should explain the pros and cons of each possible choice to the tournament chairman and make a recommendation. The chairman makes the decision from the menu of choices offered.



**CONDITIONS OF CONTEST:** Conditions of contest are set by ACBL regulations. Once the DIC announces the conditions of contest and the event begins, neither the players nor the tournament chairman may revise conditions of play. The Tournament Committee may modify or revise conditions only under extraordinary circumstances.

**MAINTAINING ORDER:** “The Laws of Duplicate Bridge” specifically empower the DIC to suspend a player for the current session, or any part thereof, or to assess penalties in points as necessary to maintain order and discipline. The DIC’s decision in such cases is final.

The DIC may not abridge or modify ACBL regulations by request or instruction of the tournament chairman. If any deviation from ACBL regulations occurs, purposeful or otherwise, the DIC must report the deviation and the circumstances to the ACBL management. The report must state the reasons for the deviation and must accompany the tournament report sent to the ACBL office at the conclusion of the tournament.

**FLIGHT AND STRAT ELIGIBILITY:** The Director-in-Charge of an ACBL sanctioned tournament may require an ACBL member to enter a Flight, Strat or Bracket above that dictated by his ACBL masterpoint holding if the member is deemed to have equivalent bridge experience. The DIC may require a non-member to enter a Flight, Strat or Bracket equivalent to that non-member’s past bridge experience. The DIC may require any entrant who is a member of another NBO to play in Flight A if a lower status is not confirmed by the other NBO.

Units and Districts have the same authority regarding NAP and GNT participation at any level under their jurisdiction.

#### **D. STAFF VOUCHERS**

The DIC is responsible for approving all staff vouchers. Any disagreements between the DIC and staff as to expenses or charges will be resolved according to the DIC’s interpretation of regulations. Unresolved disputes will be settled by ACBL.

#### **E. REPORTS AND MONIES**

An important responsibility of the DIC is to send the tournament results and funds to headquarters in as timely a fashion as possible. In addition to sending in the financial report and the actual tournament results, DICs must include any other information (such as hotel statistics) requested by ACBL management. Refer to Appendix G for information on fees and charges.

#### **V. TOURNAMENT STAFF**

##### **A. TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS**

Units or districts, through their tournament chairman, may request specific directing staff for their tournaments. However, since tournament directors are ACBL employees, the final authority for assigning staff remains with the ACBL. In the event of staffing conflicts among tournaments (for example, two requests for the same tournament director at the same time), the ACBL Tournament Department will give priority to tournaments that have met the time guidelines, set forth in Chapter 6, for entering sanction applications.

All staff requests by the DIC are subject to review by the tournament chairman. Units or districts may have specific requests for the ACBL Tournament Department to assign or not assign particular individuals to staff their tournaments. Units or districts should send such requests and the reasons for making them to the ACBL Tournament Department in writing.

The DIC is responsible for the proper conduct, appearance and demeanor of the tournament directors assigned.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** The DIC requests tournament staff based on the number of tables anticipated, the proximity of the proposed director's residence to the tournament location, expertise or rank of the proposed director, overall staff harmony, sponsor request, employee status (salaried, full or part-time), and general workload of specific tournament directors. Matters not related to any of the foregoing should not be considered.

The DIC submits a staff request to the ACBL Tournament Department indicating which tournament directing personnel he/she would like assigned to the tournament and the sessions each director would be working. After a review of the staff by the appropriate Field Supervisor, the Tournament Department makes the assignments. When more than one tournament requests a particular director, the DICs involved, the requested tournament director, the tournament director Field Supervisor, the local tournament committee, and the ACBL Tournament Department work together to resolve the problem.

**SESSION FEES:** Tournament sponsors pay a set fee to ACBL for each session a tournament director works at a tournament. These fees are based on the tournament director's rank.

ACBL is directly responsible for paying tournament directors.

**PER DIEM:** Tournaments in the continental United States (conUS), including Alaska and Hawaii, will pay the tournament director the IRS allowable per diem. The per diem rate charged for all non-conUS locations of the US will be equal to but not greater than the highest conUS rate.

Per diem rates in Canada can be found at <http://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/doc.php?sid=3&lang=eng>

**TRANSPORTATION:** Tournament directors residing more than 150 miles from the tournament site will be reimbursed the cost of a supersaver air ticket plus reasonable ground transfers at each end when they fly to the tournament. Tournament directors residing more than 150 miles from the tournament who choose to drive will be reimbursed actual mileage multiplied by the current IRS rate, plus tolls and parking. This sum is limited by the amount it would have cost the director to fly to the tournament (this includes supersaver airfare plus reasonable ground transfers).

Tournament directors who reside within 150 miles of the tournament site will be reimbursed actual mileage multiplied by the current IRS rate, plus tolls and parking.

Commutation mileage at the tournament site is also reimbursed at the current IRS rate.

Except for sectionals that are charged a surcharge. See Appendix G, the tournament sponsor is responsible for tournament director transportation expenses at all other tournaments. Whenever a surcharge is required, ACBL pays the transportation expense of the "nearest director of highest rank" (usually the DIC), and the sponsor pays all other transportation expenses.

**LODGING:** Tournament directors who live more than 25 miles from the tournament site may qualify for individual rooms at the tournament site. If the site is not a hotel, the sponsoring unit houses the tournament directors at the nearest hotel or motel and provides ground transportation where necessary.

Tournament DICs may stay at the tournament hotel and be compensated for lodging, even if they live within 25 miles of the tournament site. The DIC is also entitled to a room the night before the tournament whenever the tournament starts in the morning or afternoon. Staff directors must notify the DIC if rooms are needed the night before the tournament starts.

Any director who resides more than 150 miles from the tournament site may be reimbursed for lodging for the last night of the tournament. This applies to a hotel room while in transit on the last night of the tournament. This sum shall not exceed the rate at the tournament hotel. In no case shall reimbursements exceed the director's actual lodging costs.

After the directing staff has been assigned, the staff assigned and hotel requirements (if any) will be sent to the tournament correspondent. ACBL regulations require that tournament directors be provided single rooms at the playing site (when the tournament is held at a hotel) or similar rooms in a nearby hotel.

## **B. TOURNAMENT ASSISTANTS**

Tournament sponsors may choose to hire a tournament assistant to work at their tournament. He or she must have passed the ACBL tournament assistant accreditation exam and meet the approval of the tournament DIC. All employment issues such as compensation, payroll taxes, insurance, etc. are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization. A form must be submitted to ACBL acknowledging acceptance of these employment issues.

## **C. CADDIES**

The number of caddies required and other special caddy considerations should be worked out prior to the tournament.

A pamphlet on the management of tournament caddies is on the ACBL website. The sponsor will provide a local volunteer to organize and train caddies prior to and/or during the tournament.

## **D. VOLUNTEERS**

There are many members of the tournament committee staff who are usually volunteers but they may be paid by the sponsor or given benefits such as a complimentary room or free plays. Some of these positions are:

- Daily Bulletin editor
- Partnership desk
- Caddy organizer
- Prize desk
- Registration desk
- Information/Hospitality desk

A complete listing and discussion can be found in the *Resource Guide for Planning Sectional and Regional Tournaments* on the ABL website.

# **SECTION THREE: TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES**

## **I. TOURNAMENT ENTRY SALES**

Signs listing the event(s) being sold and cost of entry should be prominently displayed. There should be sufficient room to accommodate a “crush” of players. Since money will be changing hands the area should offer a measure of security (should not be easily accessible to outside exits, etc.).

## **II. TOURNAMENT SEEDING**

To allow players an approximately equal chance to win masterpoints, each field of play and/or comparison within an event should be roughly equal. To accomplish this, either a seeding committee or the directing staff places entrants so that approximately the same number of strong

and weak players, partnerships or teams play in each field. If a seeding committee is employed, they will have the authority for seeding decisions unless the DIC determines that the committee's exercise of its authority is detrimental to the orderly progress of the event or tournament.

Usually Swiss team events at tournaments are not seeded (opponents are randomly chosen) for the first match of the event. Subsequently teams are matched according to their record.

The tournament chairman, in consultation with the DIC, will determine the procedures for seeding. Guidelines for seeders, if seeding is done by other than the tournament directing staff, are as follows:

- Seeders should arrive in a timely manner
- Seeders should accept advice from the director selling entries
- Seeders should keep the lines moving (avoid lengthy deliberations)
- Seeders must not handle money

### **III. STARTING EVENTS ON TIME**

Events should start at the scheduled time. In order to accomplish this, the DIC must close the sale of entries. This does not mean the DIC may arbitrarily refuse to accept a late entry. However, after play has begun a director may not restart the game under any circumstances to enable a late entry to play.

The tournament chairman and the DIC should make starting time changes only in cases of emergency, since some people may arrive based on the published time, unaware of any change.

When a starting time change affects the second session of a two-session event, the DIC must announce the new time just before the first session ends, explaining the reasons for the change and asking that all players start the next session at the new time.

### **IV. DUPLICATION**

Duplication of boards is required for all championship matchpoint events at regional and sectional tournaments unless some exceptional circumstance makes duplication impractical or impossible.

Duplication of boards can be accomplished using hand records supplied by the ACBL. It is recommended that all tournament events use hand records for duplication so that the players can be provided with printouts of the hands following the session.

### **V. OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Announcements should be made at the start of each session welcoming the players to the tournament and detailing any specific conditions of the events being played. It is especially important to be very clear about any masterpoint requirements for each event to ensure that all players are in the proper event.

In particular the DIC or his/her designee should announce the eligibility rules for participation in each event, the top on each board, Zero Tolerance if applicable, and other pertinent information. In a qualifying session the DIC must also announce the conditions of qualification for the final session or sessions. This announcement should be made as soon as possible, usually not later than halfway through the session.

### **VI. LENGTH OF SESSIONS**

Tournament participants usually play 24 boards per session. Regulations allow some exceptions for pair, novice, and teacher's games in secondary events at tournaments. ACBL regulations state that no fewer than 18 boards may constitute a session. In addition, introductory games (e.g. Bridge Plus+) have a 10-board minimum.

In team events with IMP scoring, participants sometimes play more than 30 boards per session. However, ACBL regulations permit no more than 36, except when a two-session Swiss team game is played as one long session. Any departure from ACBL's length stipulation requires the approval of the tournament chairman and the DIC. At the beginning of every session the number of boards to be played should be announced.

In a pair game, ACBL generally requires participants to play at least two boards per round. However, one-board rounds are permissible in one-session board-a-match team events, individual events, and introductory games.

The international time limit is seven and a half minutes per board (except under special circumstances such as the use of screens). Participants are usually allowed 15 minutes to play a two-board round and 20 minutes for a three-board round in pair games. For Swiss teams, the commonly allowed time for a seven-board match is 45 minutes. The DIC should enforce whatever limits are set. Specific regulations on slow play can be obtained from the Tournament Department or the DIC.

## **VII. CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Near the end of each session the DIC should announce the starting time of the next session. If the next session is a continuation of the event, the director should caution the players that the Laws of Duplicate provide penalties for tardiness. The DIC must regulate this situation in a firm but objective manner.

## **VIII. INTERMISSIONS AND BREAKS**

### **A. INTERMISSIONS**

There are no regulations governing length of intermissions between sessions of the same or different events. Care should be taken to allow participants sufficient time to relax and/or eat as appropriate. In situations where there is to be either no intermission or only a short one, advertisements should make this point clear.

### **B. BREAKS**

During the course of a session of pair type play, it is customary to give one or two short breaks in order that players may have some non-playing time to attend to personal comfort or just to relax for a moment or two. These have come to be referred to as hospitality or smoking breaks. Swiss or Knockout teams have natural breaks at the end of rounds or segments of play.

## **IX. SPECTATORS**

Spectators (kibitzers) may attend all ACBL tournaments except those at which the privilege of watching is specifically curtailed. The DIC may impose restrictions on spectators, as necessary, to preserve the orderly conduct of the game. He or she should, for example, disallow standing spectators. The DIC may limit the number of spectators at a given table, may forbid spectators from moving from one table to another, and may remove any or all spectators from a room.

Tournament players must extend the same reasonable privileges to spectators that the tournament officials grant them. While a player may not bar all spectators from the table, he or she may bar one spectator (excluding tournament officials, the recorder or his designee, or officially approved members of the press) without having to state any reason. If a player objects to the presence of other spectators, he or she must tell the DIC the reason(s) and request their removal from the table. If the DIC considers the request justified, appropriate action will be taken. The player must accept the DIC's ruling on the matter for the session in question.

## **X. RULINGS AND PENALTIES**

All ACBL events are run under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. Chapter X of the Laws discusses the Tournament Director (DIC) responsibilities generally and then specifically in regard to such items as rulings and penalties. A director should have in his or her possession a current copy of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge.

The director should make a ruling at the playing table only when necessary for play to proceed or when the ruling is clearly stated in the Laws. In other cases, the director should defer the ruling in order to consider the facts and consult with other staff. The director should make the decision as soon as possible, but oftentimes it is appropriate to allow participants some "cooling off time".

The director should inform the participants in contested rulings or rulings which involve an adjusted score of their right to appeal.

## **XI. PLAYER'S RIGHT OF APPEAL**

Law 92 A. of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge states, "A contestant or his Captain may appeal for a review of any ruling made at his table by the Director."

The remainder of Law 92 addresses timing of appeals, lodging of appeals, and concurrence of participants when necessary.

## **XII. APPEALS COMMITTEES**

### **A. APPOINTMENT**

The tournament chairman, in consultation with the DIC, appoints the Tournament Appeals Committee unless the sponsoring organization has a standing committee. In the absence of an official tournament committee or chairman, the DIC should appoint an Appeals Committee, if needed.

### **B. MEMBERSHIP**

The Appeals Committee should consist of an odd number of respected, knowledgeable members who represent all classes of players and all geographical areas of the sponsoring organization. The committee is the sole judge of its membership.

### **C. TIMING**

The Appeals Committee should meet at the earliest possible time to hear a case. However, the DIC is responsible to see that committee meetings do not interfere with the orderly progress of the tournament or event or impose any undue hardship on the committee members. Normally, most Appeals Committees meet following the evening session. For qualifying events and for Swiss teams, the committees should meet prior to any subsequent sessions of play.

### **D. PROCEDURES**

Once the Appeals Committee convenes (a committee chairman is usually named by the tournament chairman), it follows the procedures outlined in the *ACBL Guidelines for Tournament Appeals Committees*, which appears as Appendix B of this Handbook.

The DIC must inform the committee of its rights or powers as well as its limitations. Law 93 B.3 of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge defines these items.

The Appeals Committee must hear every case that is brought before it. However, if the committee judges the grounds given for the appeal are substantially without merit, it may and should assess a matchpoint penalty or other discipline upon the appellant, partner and teammates.

The Appeals Committee must give the DIC a written report of its official action on an appeal. The DIC must submit the decision with the tournament report. The tournament appeal form should be used for this purpose and a complete write-up of the situation should be included on the form.

Law 93 of The Laws of Duplicate Bridge addresses appeals procedures and committees.

### **XIII. CONDUCT AND ETHICS MATTERS**

The Tournament Disciplinary Committee at each tournament has jurisdiction over all cases that involve conduct and/or ethics (all forms of impropriety).

The DIC is responsible for bringing cases before this committee (the tournament recorder may suggest that cases be heard).

The Tournament Disciplinary Committee may assess disciplinary penalties in conduct and ethics cases. Further information concerning sanctions can be found in the *ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations*. See Appendix C.

Tournament Disciplinary Committee members need not tolerate any form of verbal or physical abuse from players. ACBL defines as gross misconduct all derogatory statements to a committee member and all disrespectful statements about a committee, its members, or its rulings.

Refer to Chapter 11 of this handbook for more information. Additional copies of disciplinary materials are available at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

### **XIV. CORRECTION AND APPEAL PERIODS**

#### **A. KNOCKOUT TEAMS**

In knockout team play, the score correction period for player and scorer errors expires 30 minutes after the completion of the match, at the start of play at either table of a playoff, or at the announced starting time of the next match, whichever is earlier.

The appeal period for or of a director's ruling in knockout team events expires 30 minutes after the completion of the segment, at the start of play at either table in the next segment, or at the start of play at either table of a playoff, whichever is earlier.

A segment of a match is completed when the teams have agreed upon a score.

#### **B. SWISS TEAMS**

In Swiss team events, the score correction period for players' errors is as follows; no increase in score will be granted unless the director's attention is called to the error prior to the announced starting time of the next match or 30 minutes after the completion of the match, whichever is earlier.

For scorers' errors, decrease in score due to players' errors and mis-reporting the agreed result of a match: expires one hour prior to the announced starting time for play on the next day of the same event, 24 hours after completion of the event, or 30 minutes after completion of the last event of the tournament, whichever is earlier.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the tournament director may decline to amend the overall rankings if the team could have known at the time that one or more pairings were made based on an incorrect cumulative total. In any case, all matches played prior to correction of an error stand as played.

The appeal period for or of a director's ruling expires 30 minutes after the completion of the match or at the start of play in the next match, whichever is earlier. When an appeal will not be heard prior to the playing of one or more matches, each of the teams will be credited, for pairing purposes, with a score reflecting a favorable ruling.

A Swiss team match ends for a pair when all boards scheduled for play are completed and they leave the table or meet with their teammates.

### **C. INDIVIDUAL, PAIR, BOARD-A-MATCH TEAM, AND TEAM-OF-TWO PAIRS EVENTS**

For players' errors: for play-through events, no increase in score will be granted unless the director's attention is called to an error prior to completion of play of the session following the one in which the error occurred and, for the last session, 30 minutes after that session.

For director errors, the correction period expires 24 hours after the completion of the event or 30 minutes after completion of the last event of the tournament, whichever is earlier. The DIC in consultation with ACBL management, however, may in unusual circumstances elect to make a correction of a director error at a later time.

Qualifying events (other than final session[s]): the score correction period for scorer and player errors expires one hour before the announced starting time of the session following a qualification.

The appeal period for or of a Director's ruling expires 30 minutes after the completion of the session or at the announced starting time of the next session, whichever is earlier.

## **XV. TOURNAMENT RECORDERS**

A tournament recorder is an official of the sponsoring organization and he or his designee is expected to be available at the tournament. Districts and units must have a recorder. The purpose of the recorder is to examine complaints received from players (usually concerning conduct and ethics matters), to respond to such complaints in an appropriate and timely manner, and to keep records.

Tournament recorders do not supersede tournament directors but provide additional educational and recording functions. Generally, the recorder will review the complaint with the other player(s) involved, explain the proprieties to those who may not be aware of them and advise the complainant as to his findings.

While tournament recorders have no independent disciplinary authority, they can refer a matter to the DIC with a request for a disciplinary committee. Additionally they may refer a matter to the sponsoring organization.

Recorder forms (or player memos) are available throughout the tournament from the directing staff. A player with a grievance may fill out a memo and return it to a director. The director turns it over to the DIC who either turns it over to the tournament recorder or talks to the players



involved and mails the recorder form with the tournament report. For more information on recorders, see Appendix C.

## **SECTION FOUR: TOURNAMENT PROMOTION**

### **I. ADVERTISING**

ACBL must approve all tournament schedules before advertising is printed and distributed. Advertisements should include schedule, location and starting times. No tournament publicity can occur until the schedule is approved by ACBL.

Sponsoring units may produce fliers or brochures, locally, to advertise their tournaments.

Units or districts may advertise their tournaments in the Bridge Bulletin at discounted rates. Complete information on advertising in the Bridge Bulletin is available through the ACBL Editorial Department. See Appendix G for fees and rates.

### **II. BULLETIN CALENDAR**

In order to receive a sanction, a regional or sectional must be included in the tournament listing of the Bridge Bulletin at least one month prior to the date of the tournament.

### **III. SPONSORSHIP**

ACBL encourages sponsorship of ACBL-sanctioned tournaments but advises that tournament organizers should exercise careful judgment in selecting sponsors.

### **IV. PUBLICITY MATERIALS**

The DIC is responsible for having publicity items such as membership applications, upcoming NABC information, etc., at the tournament. A DIC will take fliers for future tournaments upon request.

### **V. POST TOURNAMENT**

The computer-scoring program used by ACBL tournament directors to score the tournament events can provide lists of event and masterpoint winners for the tournament. The masterpoint lists can be sorted by unit membership.

It is important to send lists of winners and articles from the tournament to unit and district publications, local newspapers and anywhere else that can give your tournament publicity.

## **SECTION FIVE: POST-TOURNAMENT FINANCES**

### **I. MONIES DUE ACBL**

All monies due ACBL must be in U.S. funds (or in Canadian funds at the current exchange rate) and must be included with the DIC's tournament report to ACBL. The ACBL Board of Directors sets all tournament fees.

Refer to Appendix G for complete information concerning fees.

### **II. MONIES DUE SPONSOR**

A complete report along with all monies due must be given to the sponsoring organization by the DIC at the end of the tournament.



## **CHAPTER 8 - ACBL FOUNDATIONS**

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## **Chapter 8 - ACBL FOUNDATIONS**

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The American Contract Bridge League has a comprehensive program for raising and disbursing charitable funds for two foundations. These foundations are the ACBL Charity Foundation and the ACBL Educational Foundation. The ACBL Charity Foundation was created to help further the work of various charitable organizations. The ACBL Educational Foundation was created to further bridge education among the general public. This chapter describes these foundations.

### **SECTION ONE: ACBL CHARITY FOUNDATION CORPORATION**

The goals of the ACBL Charity Foundation are twofold: (1) to make substantial monetary contributions to a variety of charitable organizations, and (2) to create good public relations for ACBL and its members.

#### **I. ORIGIN AND PURPOSE**

The ACBL Charity Foundation Corporation was established on July 1, 1964, to serve as custodian and administrator of all funds raised by or contributed to the Foundation for charitable purposes. The Foundation processes grant applications, makes disbursements, and generally furthers charitable activities.

#### **II. COMPOSITION**

In accordance with its bylaws (a copy of which may be obtained by writing to the Foundation, in care of ACBL), the Charity Foundation membership is made up of all current members of the ACBL Board of Directors and other individuals whom the Foundation appoints as needed (such as attorneys). The Foundation members elect a five-member Board of Trustees to administer the operation of the Foundation. The members elect one of these trustees each year for three consecutive years, and every fourth year they elect two; each serves a four-year term. Trustees may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms, after which they must remain off the Board of Trustees for one year before being eligible for election again. The trustees elect the Foundation officers.

#### **III. FOUNDATION EXPENSES**

The Charity Foundation pays for all operating expenses, including office expenses, trustee and management expenses, and operating costs of ACBL-wide charity games.

#### **IV. THE CANADIAN CHARITY FUND**

The Canadian Charitable Fund is the custodian and disbursing agent for all charitable funds raised by Canadian clubs, units, and districts. This Fund has six trustees who are responsible for processing applications for grants from the fund and for supervising all disbursements.

The ACBL Charity Foundation does much of the administrative work of the Canadian Charitable Fund, for which the Canadian Charitable Fund pays minimal charges to the ACBL Charity Foundation.

#### **V. CHARITY CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Each club that conducts regularly scheduled sanctioned masterpoint game sessions is entitled to one charity club championship per session per month, except for the months of January, May and September. The points awarded at charity club championships are upgraded.

## **VI. FOUNDATION/FUND UNIT TOURNAMENTS**

ACBL allocates four sessions of sectional-rated foundation/fund events annually to each unit. Included are Charity Championships, Junior Fund, International Fund, Grass Roots Fund and Educational Fund games. These sessions may be run as four one-session events, two two-session events, one two-session and two one-session events, one three-session and one one-session event, or one four-session event. Only Junior Fund games can be run in the month of January, Charity games in April, Grass Roots Fund in May and International Fund games in September.

If a charity event is run, the ACBL Charity Foundation or the Canadian Charitable Fund must be the beneficiary of the first event and two of the first three events. The unit may select any IRS-approved or Revenue Canada-approved tax-exempt charitable organization for the second or fourth event.

## **VII. CHARITY GAMES AT SECTIONALS**

In addition to its unit charity tournaments, a unit may conduct charity game(s) at each of its sectional tournaments.

### **SANCTION**

**APPLICATION:** The unit must list the charity game on-line sanction application. The game is subject to the same scheduling restrictions as any other one-session championship event.

**BENEFICIARY:** The unit may conduct the game on behalf of the ACBL Charity Foundation, the Canadian Charitable Fund, the ACBL Educational Foundation, or an IRS-approved or Revenue Canada-approved local charitable organization.

**AWARDS:** When the ACBL Charity Foundation, the Canadian Charitable Fund, the ACBL Educational Foundation, or an IRS-approved or Revenue Canada-approved local charitable organization is the beneficiary, the game carries full sectional rating.

**MINIMUM DONATIONS:** When the ACBL Charity Foundation or the Canadian Charitable Fund is the beneficiary, there is a minimum per table donation equal to 100% of the sectional per table sanction fee. When the beneficiary is a local charity, the per table fee goes to ACBL and the remainder goes to the local charity. Any differences between these minimum donations and the actual fees charged may be retained by the sponsors for expenses.

**STAFFING:** Staffing for this game is the responsibility of the Director-in-Charge of the sectional.

**PROCEEDS:** The unit must send the entire ACBL Charity Foundation or Canadian Charitable Fund donation to ACBL along with the tournament report form. If the unit conducted the event for a local beneficiary, it must include on the report the name of the beneficiary and the amount donated.

## **VIII. CHARITY GAMES AT REGIONALS**

The sponsoring organization of a regional tournament may conduct charity game as part of the regional schedule. Additionally, a charity pair game may be held as an afternoon or evening session on the day prior to the commencement of a six-day regional to benefit the ACBL Charity Foundation, the ACBL Educational Foundation, the ACBL Junior Fund or the Canadian equivalent of the three. The minimum per table donation to charity is 40% of the regional per table sanction fee.

The afternoon and evening session pair games held prior to the beginning of a regional may not award gold points.

## **IX. DISTRICT-WIDE FUND/FOUNDATION GAMES**

ACBL allocates four sessions of sectional rated foundation/fund events annually to each district. Included are Charity Championships, Junior Fund, International Fund, Grass Roots Fund and Educational Fund games. These sessions may be run as four one-session events, two two-session events, one two-session and two one-session events, one three-session and one one-session event, or one four-session event. Only Junior Fund games can be run in the month of January, Charity games in April, Grass Roots Fund in May and International Fund games in September.

## **X. ACBL-WIDE CHARITY GAMES**

ACBL specifically assigns two ACBL-wide games each year to the charity program. The Spring ACBL-wide charity game is held in conjunction with the Spring NABC, and the Fall ACBL-wide charity game is held in conjunction with the Fall NABC.

All sessions of these ACBL-wide games, except those conducted at the NABC sites as part of the NABC schedule, fall under the jurisdiction of the clubs in which they are held. See Chapter 5, Section Five-I.B. For information on masterpoint awards and reporting as well as information on other ACBL-wide charity events regulations, See Chapter 4, Section Five, V.

## **XI. HONORARY AND MEMORIAL FUNDS**

### **A. SPECIAL FUNDS**

With the approval of the ACBL Charity Foundation, individuals, non-bridge organizations, clubs, units, and districts may establish special funds in honor of or in memory of individuals and specified groups. Donors should inaugurate these special funds with contributions of \$1,000 or more. The Foundation will recognize establishment of the funds by awarding engraved plaques to the donors or honorees, as may be appropriate to the circumstances. Donors can make the donations in installments if they so desire.

### **B. MEMORIAL CONDOLENCE CONTRIBUTIONS**

Many ACBL members express condolences at times of bereavement by giving gifts to the ACBL Charity Foundation. On receipt of condolence contributions, the Charity Foundation sends acknowledgments to the families of the deceased members. The cards contain proper credit to the contributing individuals or organizations.

### **C. CONTRIBUTIONS AS ANNIVERSARY OR HOLIDAY GIFTS**

The ACBL Charity Foundation solicits contributions from those members who, on special occasions, choose to make gifts to charity in lieu of more materialistic gifts to one another. As a service to members making such contributions, the Foundation sends suitable cards of congratulations or holiday wishes to the recipients and sends receipts to the donors. A donor may send the Foundation a list of recipients together with one check to cover the donations for all names on the list. For example, if the donor wishes to contribute \$5.00 to honor each of four recipients, a check for \$20.00 should accompany the list.

### **D. BEQUESTS**

Donors can make bequests to the ACBL Charity Foundation or the Canadian Charitable Fund directly or to specifically approved beneficiaries. The ACBL Charity Foundation administers these

bequests. Those who wish to make such bequests should have their attorneys write to the Foundation for details.

## **SECTION TWO: ACBL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

The ACBL Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization funded by tax-deductible contributions and memberships. The Foundation's resources are used exclusively for promoting bridge among the general public. There is a special emphasis on bridge education for children and disadvantaged groups. The Foundation supports the idea that focusing attention on younger generations will contribute greatly to the proliferation of the game in the years to come.

### **I. COMPOSITION**

In accordance with its bylaws (a copy of which may be obtained by writing to the Foundation, in care of ACBL), the Educational Foundation voting membership is made up of all current members of the ACBL Board of Directors. An elected Board of Trustees, consisting of nine members, administers the Foundation. These nine members are elected to three-year terms, with three elected each year. These Trustees, who serve without pay or reimbursement of expenses, meet three times a year during ACBL North American Bridge Championships.

ACBL members are requested to be non-voting members of the Foundation by paying dues to the Foundation. See Appendix G.

### **II. GRANTS**

Since its inception, the ACBL Educational Foundation has awarded grants totaling over \$700,000.

The Foundation has a firm set of procedures in place for allocating funds. Applications for grants are made to the Trustees through the Foundation Secretary. Refer to the ACBL Educational Foundation website for further information.

The Foundation actively supports programs and services that help bridge:

- By encouraging grant applications for bridge education projects and bridge education materials.
- By providing grants to individuals for subsidized lesson and teaching programs.

### **III. EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMS**

#### **A. SCHOOL BRIDGE LESSON SERIES**

This program introduces the benefits of learning bridge and the joy of the game to students in middle schools, junior high schools, high schools and colleges throughout North America. The School Bridge Lesson Series (SBLs) program promotes the development of young bridge players by providing textbooks, trophies and teacher fees for bridge lessons offered to students.

#### **B. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS FOR JUNIOR EVENTS**

The Foundation provides scholarships for the winners of the Collegiate Bridge Bowl. See Chapter 9.

#### **C. JUNIOR TEAM TRAINING PROGRAM**

The Educational Foundation contributes to the funding for the training of Junior Teams to compete in the World Junior Team Championships.

#### **IV. HONORARY, MEMORIAL FUND AND OTHER BEQUESTS**

##### **A. SPECIAL FUNDS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS**

Individuals, non-bridge organizations, club, units and districts may establish special funds in honor of or in memory of an individual or group. Specific education programs can be requested. The Educational Foundation must approve the establishment of these special funds. \$1,000 or more is required to initially establish a special fund. Donors can make the donations in installments if they so desire.

##### **B. MEMORIAL AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Many ACBL members express condolences at times of bereavement by giving gifts to the ACBL Educational Foundation. On receipt of condolence contributions, the Foundation sends acknowledgment cards to the families of the deceased.

##### **C. CONTRIBUTIONS AS ANNIVERSARY OR HOLIDAY GIFTS**

The ACBL Educational Foundation solicits contributions from members who on special occasions choose to donate monetary gifts to support bridge education. As a service to members making such contributions, the Foundation sends suitable cards of congratulations or holiday wishes to the recipients and sends receipts to the donors. A donor may send the Foundation a list of recipients together with one check to cover the donations for all names on the list. For example, if the donor wishes to contribute \$5.00 to honor each of four recipients, a check for \$20.00 should accompany the list.

#### **V. FOUNDATION/FUND UNIT TOURNAMENTS**

ACBL allocates four sessions of sectional-rated foundation/fund events annually to each unit. Included are Charity Championships, Junior Fund, International Fund, Grass Roots Fund and Educational Fund games. These sessions may be run as four one-session events, two two-session events, one two-session and two one-session events, one three-session and one one-session event, or one four-session event. Only Junior Fund games can be run in the month of January, Charity games in April, Grass Roots Fund in May and International Fund games in September.



## **CHAPTER 9 - ACBL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

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## **Chapter 9 - ACBL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

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To help insure the future of bridge through education, ACBL currently focuses on a number of areas. These include the development of ACBL teaching materials, the training of quality bridge teachers and the cultivation of new bridge players who will subsequently become enthusiasts of bridge and members of ACBL.

### **SECTION ONE: ACBL TEACHER PROGRAMS**

#### **I. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

##### **A. TEACHER ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

The Teacher Accreditation Program (TAP) is a 10-hour seminar designed to recruit and train teachers. The seminar uses materials included in the ACBL Bridge Series of five texts and teacher manuals and introduces other sources of teaching material. A TAP is presented in a workshop format where teachers are trained to present bridge effectively, using special bridge teaching techniques developed by Audrey Grant.

##### **B. BASIC TAP SEMINAR**

This seminar is offered at all NABCs and local programs can be arranged. ACBL charges a flat fee to put on a TAP but these programs can be organized by sponsors as moneymaking ventures. Participants can be charged a fee comparable to what ACBL charges at an NABC. Some districts and units offer financial assistance to members interested in taking the course. Other districts and units have established programs where TAP graduates receive rebates after teaching their first course. At least every five years, units are expected to sponsor, co-sponsor or assist unit members in attending a TAP.

##### **C. CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS**

Special seminars and workshops are offered at all NABCs. Teacher programs can usually be arranged at sectional and regional tournaments with the cooperation of the local education liaison.

##### **D. TEACHER-TRAINER PROGRAM**

Teacher-Trainers are the seminar instructors for TAP courses. Special workshops are held periodically to re-evaluate the TAP program and to update the trainers.

#### **II. BRIDGE TEACHING MATERIALS**

ACBL develops bridge support materials to assist ACBL Accredited Teachers in presenting the ACBL beginning bridge courses.

### **A. BASIC TEXTS AND TEACHER MANUALS**

The ACBL has developed five bridge texts and teacher manuals called the ACBL Bridge Series. They are: “Bidding in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (CLUB), “Play of the Hand in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (DIAMOND), “Defense in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (HEART), “Commonly Used Conventions in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (SPADE) and “More Commonly used Conventions in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (NOTRUMP). These books were updated between 2010 and 2012 to complement the Learn to Play Bridge computer programs and to reflect current duplicate bridge bidding and play standards. Baron Barclay Bridge Supply distributes and sells these books.

### **B. ADDITIONAL TEXTS AND MANUALS**

Lesson plans for school courses are available for free download under “Teacher Resources” at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

### **C. TEACHER AND SUPPORT PRODUCTS**

Derivative products using the bridge materials found in the ACBL Bridge Series textbooks have been produced for teachers and their students. These include E-Z Deal Cards for each of the five textbooks and E-Z Deal “Play” Cards and analyses booklets for eight practice courses and E-Z Guide Booklets for reference.

### **D. TRANSLATIONS INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Spanish and Japanese translations of the basic texts, and a French Canadian translation of the Bidding (CLUB) and Play of the Hand (DIAMOND) texts have been produced.

## **III. TEACHER PUBLICATIONS AND SUPPORT TOOLS**

### **A. ACBL ACCREDITED TEACHER RESOURCE MATERIALS AND HANDBOOK**

Information on ACBL’s new player membership programs, school lesson series, junior, college and teacher programs can be found in the Teacher Resource pages on the ACBL website, [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org). The ACBL Handbook for Bridge Teachers contains special tips for presenting the ACBL courses.

### **B. ONLINE TEACHER LISTINGS**

ACBL offers a “Find a Teacher” page online. Active teachers can apply for a listing through the Teacher Resource section.

## **IV. TEACHER INCENTIVES**

### **A. REDUCED PRICE MEMBERSHIPS**

New bridge players are encouraged to join ACBL for the first time by the offer of a reduced price membership. Accredited or registered teachers, who sell these reduced price one-year memberships, are eligible for a \$500.00 check from ACBL for every 100 new members recruited by that teacher, regardless of the year recruited. They also receive a \$100 gift certificate to Baron Barclay Bridge Supply for each 25 new members recruited during the calendar year.

### **B. BOOK DISCOUNTS**

Baron Barclay Bridge Supply offers special teacher discounts on ACBL textbooks (BIDDING, PLAY, DEFENSE, COMMONLY USED CONVENTIONS, MORE COMMONLY USED CONVENTIONS).

## **V. ACBL AND ABTA**

The American Bridge Teachers Association (ABTA) is an organization of bridge teachers that predates the formation of the ACBL bridge teaching programs. The ACBL and the ABTA work together for the betterment of bridge and the growth of both organizations.

Many of the ABTA's members have participated in the TAP and are ACBL Accredited Teachers. The ACBL participates in the annual ABTA convention held during the Summer NABC. ACBL/ABTA teacher seminars are held in conjunction with the Summer NABC whenever they can be scheduled.

## **SECTION TWO: UNIT/DISTRICT LIAISON PROGRAMS**

Units and districts have been asked by the ACBL Board of Directors to appoint an education liaison to work with the ACBL in the promotion of education programs at both the unit and district levels.

The ACBL suggests five ways to jump-start a Unit Education/Newcomer Program:

- Host a TAP.
- Establish a "New Player Services" Program.
- Establish ongoing communications with local teachers.
- Create a progressive newcomer schedule for tournaments and send out postcard invitations to invite new players.

- Get teachers to give lessons in local schools, working to bring the young people into the unit.

The ACBL offers handbooks online for units interested in more information on education programs (Education Liaison, I/N Coordinator). Call the ACBL Education Department 662-253-3161 for more information.

## **SECTION THREE: NEW PLAYER PROGRAMS**

### **I. NEW PLAYER PUBLICATIONS**

Special publications have been updated for students and newcomers to bridge:

- *Welcome to the World of Duplicate: What to expect at your first club game*
- *Welcome to the NABCs*

### **II. THE JUNIOR PROGRAM**

A player under the age of 26 is a junior player. A number of programs are in place to encourage college, high school, junior high and even elementary school students to learn bridge. Junior players have their own website: [www.youth4bridge.org](http://www.youth4bridge.org).

#### **A. SCHOOL BRIDGE LESSON SERIES**

The School Bridge Lesson Series program is available to elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities in North America. It offers free bridge lessons to students. The ACBL funds this program which includes textbooks, teacher fees, T-shirts for course graduates and trophies for mini-tournament winners.

#### **B. STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS**

Student memberships have been established whereby ACBL's Junior members pay a greatly reduced membership fee. Anyone under the age of 26 who is a student is eligible to receive:

- ACBL's monthly magazine, the Bridge Bulletin,
- An opportunity to win scholarship monies in the King and Queen of Bridge Contest,
- The opportunity to use discount entry coupons for all events at NABCs,
- The right to participate in all ACBL-sponsored Junior activities.

These students can join the ACBL for \$15 a year and receive all of the above benefits.

### **C. NABC JUNIOR PROGRAM**

The NABC Junior Program consists of the following:

- Special Junior events and activities,
- Junior entries for a reduced fee,
- Junior Day, the first Saturday of each NABC.
- 

### **D. JUNIOR MONTH**

The month of January is designated as Junior month. During this month each club is authorized to hold sectional-rated black point Junior Fund games. Junior Fund games may also be run in any other month, except April, May and September. For more information contact the ACBL Education Department.

### **E. YOUTH NORTH AMERICAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP (YNABC)**

Each summer in conjunction with the NABC, the ACBL sponsors a three-day Youth Championship known as the YNABC. This tournament is open to all players under the age of 19. Two sessions are offered each day for the most experienced down to the newest players. Two championship events that offer scholarships are held: The National Open Pairs and the National Swiss Teams of Four. More information is available at the Youth4Bridge website ([www.Youth4Bridge.org](http://www.Youth4Bridge.org)).

## **CHAPTER 10 – ACBL SERVICES**

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## **Chapter 10 - ACBL SERVICES**

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The primary function of the ACBL office is to conduct the business of the organization. In addition, ACBL offers a number of other services to clubs, units, districts, and members; some are free and for some there is a nominal charge. For details, clubs, units, districts, and individual members may write to ACBL, 6575 Windchase Blvd, Horn Lake MS 38637 or call the Customer Service Department at 1-800-467-1623.

### **SECTION ONE: SUPPLIES, PROMOTIONAL, AND INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

#### **I. SUPPLIES FOR SECTIONALS AND REGIONALS**

All supplies needed for sectional and regional tournaments held in the contiguous 48 states can be obtained from the Director-in-Charge of the tournament. ACBL will provide boards, cards, and table mats for a flat charge per table. Supplies can also be ordered directly from Baron Barclay at 800-274-2221.

#### **II. CLUB SUPPLIES AND DIRECTOR MANUALS**

Baron Barclay Bridge Supply sells the supplies necessary for all types of tournaments and club games. These include duplicate boards, playing cards, table markers, guide cards, pickup slips, traveling scoreslips, recap sheets, bidding boxes, golf pencils, convention cards, and many other items.

The “Laws of Duplicate Bridge”, “Laws of Rubber Bridge”, and various manuals for directors are also available.

#### **III. PAMPHLETS AND PLAYER AIDS**

ACBL furnishes a number of pamphlets and brochures on the ACBL website. These can be found at: <http://www.acbl.org/helpfuldocuments/>

#### **IV. HAND RECORDS FOR CLUB AND UNIT TOURNAMENTS**

Baron Barclay maintains a supply of printed bridge deals, numbered 1 to 36, for use in duplicating boards for any number of sections. The smallest set accommodates two sections only. The sizes available are for even-numbered sets.

#### **V. PRIZE AWARDS**

ACBL Prize Certificates (bridge bucks) are available in the amount \$20.00. They are valid for three years from date of purchase.



Bridge bucks may be redeemed at full face value for payment of sectional and regional tournament entry fees and North American Bridge Championship entry fees. Many ACBL clubs also accept bridge bucks for payment of entry fees. ACBL accepts bridge bucks for payment of membership dues. Some Bridge Bulletin advertisers accept bridge bucks for the purchase of their merchandise. In addition, bridge bucks are convenient for making donations to the ACBL charity groups.

Any club, unit, or district wishing to use this method of rewarding winners at its events should contact the ACBL Accounting Department for complete details.

## **SECTION TWO: SERVICES**

### **I. PROMOTIONAL SERVICES**

#### **A. MEMBERSHIP LABELS**

ACBL sanctioned clubs, units and districts may download, as often as they wish, an electronic file containing the masterpoint holdings of all members in their district, or an adjoining district, or all of ACBL. This information will include names, ACBL numbers and address only.

Any commercial use (other than for the normal bridge business of the requesting body) of a membership list/ label/ disc including those obtained free or at wholesale must be approved by the ACBL CEO or his designee.

#### **B. PROGRAMMING**

The ACBL Computer Services department will provide at cost special programming services to clubs, units, and districts to allow extracts from our membership database. See Appendix G for pricing.

### **II. BRIDGE BULLETIN ADVERTISING**

Units and districts can advertise their sectional and regional tournaments in the Bridge Bulletin. See Appendix G for prices.

Generally, insertion order closing dates occur six weeks before the issue dates (e.g., January 10 for the March issue).

The deadline for copy to be done in-house is the 15th of the second month preceding publication (e.g., January 15 for the March issue.)

However, for camera-ready advertising on which no in-house work is required, the deadline is January 25 for the March issue.

Contact the Bridge Bulletin for further information; [advertising@acbl.org](mailto:advertising@acbl.org).

### **III. MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

ACBL maintains membership records in its computer system. The system processes membership information and masterpoint award data daily. Early each month ACBL uses the system to produce membership dues billings. Masterpoint records are updated and Bridge Bulletin labels produced once a month. The use of this computer system enables ACBL to furnish a large amount of pertinent data to clubs and units.

#### **A. UNIT, DISTRICT OR CONFERENCE PUBLICATION**

Any unit, district or conference bridge publication may receive a free list of the members receiving the publication. The publication must be published at least twice a year, and any incidental costs, including postage, are the responsibility of the user.

#### **B. UNIT, DISTRICT OR NABC TOURNAMENT CHAIRMAN**

Any unit, district or NABC tournament chairman may receive a free list of the potential tournament attendees. Any incidental costs, including postage, are the responsibility of the user.

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## **Chapter 11 - DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

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Anyone choosing to participate in an ACBL sanctioned event is subject to the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. See Chapter 4, Section Three IV.G for regulations concerning clubs. This chapter discusses the system and procedures in place to deal with violators of ACBL conduct and ethics rules.

### **SECTION ONE: ACBL RECORDER SYSTEM**

#### **I. THE RECORDER**

A recorder is an official of the sponsoring organization and the sponsoring organization assigns the recorder's duties in accordance with the Recorder Regulations and Procedures. Generally, these duties are to receive, investigate and respond to players' reports. Most often these reports concern matters of player conduct and ethics.

The recorder should be an experienced, knowledgeable bridge player who is tactful and apolitical. The recorder should be familiar with the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations and the *Recorder Regulations*. See Appendices C and D.

#### **II. NATIONAL OFFICE OF RECORDER**

##### **A. APPOINTMENT**

The National Office of Recorder is established within ACBL Headquarters.

##### **B. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The function of the National Office of Recorder is to:

- Maintain documents forwarded by sponsoring organizations as set forth by the *Recorder Regulations and Procedures*; see Appendix C
- Periodically review existing player files and, when appropriate, refer a matter to the ACBL Recorder
- Review uninvestigated memos and forward to the appropriate recorder for investigation

#### **III. OFFICE OF RECORDER**

The ACBL Recorder is selected and hired by the ACBL CEO. His or her duties include advising unit and district recorders as necessary, conducting seminars at NABCs for recorders, advising the National Office of Recorder as necessary concerning files, and performing recorder duties at NABCs.

### **SECTION TWO: DISTRICT/UNIT DISCIPLINARY BODIES**

#### **I. APPOINTMENT**

ACBL requires each district to appoint a District Disciplinary Chairman and a separate District Appellate Chairman. ACBL requires each unit to appoint a Unit Disciplinary Chairman.

Each district/unit appoints committee members according to its own established procedures, which may vary from district to district and unit to unit.

It is required that members of a tournament disciplinary committee not serve on a unit or district disciplinary committee dealing with the same matters. Members of the District Appellate Committee may

not have served on a Tournament, Unit or District Disciplinary Committee dealing with matters coming before the District Appellate Committee.

## **II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

On behalf of its unit or district, a Unit or District Disciplinary Committee acts on disciplinary matters in accordance with the ACBL *Code of Disciplinary Regulations*. See Appendix D.

A District Appellate Committee hears appeals from decisions of a Tournament, Unit or District Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the ACBL *Code of Disciplinary Regulations*. See Appendix D.

## **III. OPERATIONS**

A unit or district must notify ACBL headquarters of who has been appointed chairperson of the District Appellate Committee and must notify ACBL when a chair changes.

ACBL does not subsidize expenses of any unit or district disciplinary body. All decisions made by disciplinary bodies must be reported to ACBL in writing.

## **SECTION THREE: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AT TOURNAMENTS**

Although a Tournament Appeals Committee is most commonly called upon to review a tournament director's decision, it can be called upon to act as the Tournament Disciplinary Committee to judge matters of conduct, deportment, and ethics.

Disciplinary procedures at tournaments are intended to be expeditious and notices may be oral and the proceedings may be informal. For further information about disciplinary procedures at tournaments. See the Code of Disciplinary Regulations in Appendix D.

## **SECTION FOUR: ACBL APPEALS AND CHARGES COMMITTEE**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

The president of the ACBL Board of Directors appoints the chairperson and members of the ACBL Appeals and Charges Committee, who serve concurrently with the president.

### **II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Appeals and Charges Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the ACBL Board of Directors in all matters assigned to it by the Code of Disciplinary regulations or referred to it by the ACBL Board of Directors.

## **SECTION FIVE: ETHICAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

The Ethical Oversight Committee consists of 15 members. During a member's term of office, a member may not be dismissed except for grossly inappropriate behavior. To remove a member of the committee, the President of the ACBL or the Chairman of the Ethical Oversight Committee will schedule a meeting of the members of the committee. Removal of a member requires a majority vote of the committee.

### **II. APPOINTMENT**

Five members are appointed each year by the President of the ACBL for three-year terms. The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected from among and by the members of the committee. The Chairman may not serve more than three consecutive one-year terms.

### **III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Ethical Oversight Committee acts upon charges brought by ACBL Management as the ACBL disciplinary body in cases of alleged cheating by the use of signals, other unauthorized information, other forms of cheating, or serious breaches of ethics, in accordance with the ACBL *Code of Disciplinary Regulations*. League Counsel, the ACBL President and the District Director (for the district of the person charged) are to be notified of a decision to hold an ethical oversight hearing. See Appendix D.

## **SECTION SIX: ACBL DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

The ACBL Disciplinary Committee consists of nine members.

### **II. APPOINTMENT**

Three members are appointed each year by the President of the ACBL for three-year terms. The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected from among and by the members of the committee.

### **III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The ACBL Disciplinary Committee shall hear referrals from actions of an NABC Tournament Disciplinary Committee and any other matter of original jurisdiction assigned to it in accordance with the *Code of Disciplinary Regulations*.

This committee will also act as an Appeals Committee when an action taken by an NABC Tournament Disciplinary Committee is appealed.

## **SECTION SEVEN: GUIDELINES FOR UNIT AND DISTRICT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Unit and district disciplinary committees are called upon to judge complaints of conduct and ethics. District Appellate Committees and the ACBL Appeals and Charges Committee hear appeals from decisions of lower jurisdictional bodies of ACBL in accordance with the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations (see Appendix D).