

CHAPTER 4 – THE CLUB SANCTIONED BRIDGE GAME

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I.

Chapter 4 - THE CLUB SANCTIONED BRIDGE GAME

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 90 days after Grass Roots Fund Month 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. Details can be found in the ACBL Codification [Chapter 5 Section B](#).

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.

$$0.088 \times 312 = 27.0$$

$$0.81 \times 312 = 250$$

$$1.02 \times 312 = 320$$

$$1.25 \times 312 = 390$$

$$0.75 \times 312 = 23$$

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)

<u>Player Rank</u>	<u>Masterpoints</u>	<u>Percent Handicap</u>	<u>Bonus Board</u>
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 30 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, and would fall under the annual ship rate. (See Appendix G)

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.

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 upgraded club championship game may be run as a 81.8% 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 runs 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](#)