

**Life Master Rank and Regulations
American Contract Bridge League**

- Black Points - Points won at club games, unit championships, unrestricted events and not similarly restricted events held at restricted Regionals and Sectionals.
- Silver Points - Points won at Sectional Tournaments, STaC's, and progressive Sectionals.
- Red Points - Points won at Regionals, Grand National Team and North American Pair events, Regional and NABC+ events with an upper limit of less than 750 masterpoints.
- Gold Points - Points won at NABC+ Events with an upper masterpoint limit of 750 or higher, overall and section top awards for all two or more session Regional rated events with an upper limit of not less than 750 masterpoints.
- Online Points - Points won at online internet games. These points are un-pigmented and no more than 1/3 of the points required to achieve established ACBL status levels may come from online play.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Mps needed</u>	<u>Pigmented Points needed</u>
Rookie	0-4.99	None
Junior Master (A)	5	None
Club Master (B)	20	None
Sectional Master (C)	50	5 silver
Regional Master (D)	100	5 red or gold, 15 silver
NABC Master (E)	200	5 gold, 15 red or gold, 25 silver
Advanced NABC Master (F)	300	25 gold, 25 red or gold, 50 silver, 50 black
Life Master	300	25 gold, 25 red or gold, 50 silver, 50 black (member before 2010)
Life Master (G)	500	50 gold, 50 red or gold, 75 silver, 75 black (member after 2010)

Additional Life Master designations have been established and are available only to players who have achieved LM Rank:

- Silver Life Master (H) 1,000 masterpoints
- Gold Life Master (J) 2,500 masterpoints
- Diamond Life Master (K) 5,000 masterpoints
- Grand Life Master (L) 10,000 Master Points. Win a North American Bridge Championship with no upper masterpoint restriction or an Open Team Trials or its equivalent or a Women's Team Trials or its equivalent or any of the following WBF events: Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, Rosenblum Cup, McConnell Cup, Open Pairs, Women's Pairs, Olympiad, Women's Team Olympiad, WBF Senior Pairs event, WBF World Swiss Teams, WBF World Mixed Teams, and WBF Senior Teams. (No events with an upper age limit.)

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ACBL CODE OF ACTIVE ETHICS

The **Actively Ethical Bridge** player does everything he can within the scope of the game to defeat his opponent at the bridge table while making that experience an otherwise enjoyable one for them.

A primary objective of the ACBL is to
Continue the concerted effort begun at
The Fall, 1986 Atlanta NABC to try to
Instill in all players the concept that
Vigorous efforts should be made to insure
Equity and enjoyment are benchmarks of Bridge.
Every player should strive to make sure
That opponents have in no way been
Harmed through incomplete or misleading
Information as to the meanings of his pair's
Conventional calls and treatments.
An aggressive approach along these
Lines on the part of each and every
Individual will do much to make sure
That Bridge remains the game that
You enjoy so much.

PRINCIPLE OF FULL DISCLOSURE

The philosophy of active ethics tells us that winners should be determined solely by skill, flair and normal playing luck. Actively ethical partnerships go out of their way to make sure that their partnership agreements are made known to their opponents. A major tenet of active ethics is the principle of full disclosure. This means that all information available to your partnership must be made available to your opponents.

Let us take a look at partnership agreements concerning weak two-bids from the point of view of full disclosure. When an established partnership opens a weak two-bid, they have a great deal of

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information of which their opponents might not be aware. The convention card discloses the point range, but little else. However, the partners are aware of the range of hands on which the bid can be made (discipline?, suit quality requirements?, five-or seven-card suits allowed?, side four-card major ok?, void ok?, positional variations?, etc.). Full disclosure requires that all these inferences, restrictions and tendencies be made known to any opponent who inquires about partnership style.

If you are interested in knowing these things about your opponent's bid, merely say to the bidder's partner, "Would you tell me more about your style?" You may use the "style inquiry" to ask about any call your opponent makes.

The actively ethical player will often go beyond what is technically required in volunteering information to the opponents. Quite often, the declaring side in an actively ethical partnership will volunteer such information before the opening lead is made. (But remember when there is misinformation given, such as a failure to alert or a mis-alert, there is a **legal** obligation on the player whose partner misinformed the opponents. He, the bidder, must give the opponents the correct information at the end of the auction if his side is the declaring side or at the end of the play if his side is defending.)

New players or infrequent partnerships usually will not have understandings about the items discussed here and, of course, it will be perfectly proper for them to reply "We have no agreement as to style."

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Active ethics enables players to compete on equal terms. In addition, the actively ethical player contributes to the enjoyment of all players by continuously striving to maintain a courteous attitude toward both his opponents and his partner and by avoiding any behavior that would make anyone uncomfortable. These social attributes are **vital** to the game of bridge and duplicate bridge.

SLOW PLAY

Failure to finish on time can do a great deal to chase players away from the game and is extremely distressing to waiting players. Bridge is a timed event. If a pair takes more than their share of the allotted time for each round, they are inconveniencing their fellow competitors as well as gaining an unfair advantage over them. When a pair has fallen behind it is incumbent on them to make up the time lost as quickly as possible % whether at fault or not.

The actively ethical player makes a concerted effort to catch up when they have fallen behind, regardless of the reason for their lateness. All players are expected to develop this good habit. Remember: slow play is subject to penalty, and the penalties are well earned when slow pairs disrupt the normal progression of the game.

Additionally players should be available to start each subsequent round promptly, avoiding wherever

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possible being late to a table for non-bridge reasons.

STATEMENTS ON CONVENTIONS

The latest version of the “Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge” defines a *convention* as a call that, by partnership agreement, conveys a meaning other than willingness to play in the denomination named (or in the last denomination named), or high-card strength or length (three cards or more) there.

All ACBL events are “governed” by the appropriate convention chart which lists those conventions permitted in the event. Conventions not included on the chart are not permitted in the event.

Part of the “right” to use a convention is the responsibility of deciding when it applies in probable auctions. The opponents may be entitled to redress if you did not originally have a clear understanding with your partner of when and how to use a convention you are playing.

For example, a partnership that chooses to play conventional bids over opponents no-trump opening bids is expected to have discussed at least the following:

1. Does it apply over strong no trumps?
2. Does it apply over weak no trumps?
3. Does it apply in the direct seat?
4. Does it apply in the balancing chair?
5. Does it apply when used by a passed hand?

We all occasionally encounter situations where we are not sure what partner’s bidding means. There exists an added responsibility if that uncertainty arises from a convention you and your partner have agreed to play. In these situations, you should tell your opponents all you know. Sometimes, the director will even ask you or your partner to step away from the table so that the opponents can talk openly with the remaining player.

The actively ethical player does everything possible in these situations to bring his opponents back to even terms % to remove any possible disadvantage accruing to them from his side’s failure to have a complete conventional understanding.

THE NORTH AMERICAN JUNIOR CORPS

Concept: To establish a Junior Club within the ACBL, known as the North American Junior corps (NAJC), for which membership must be earned. The NAJC consists of a group of young players with an established bridge-experience level who will serve as an inspiration to ACBL Youth Members. This group of Junior Players will be our best young players and our best young citizens.

Profile:

- a. Must be under 26 years of age.
- b. Must have been an ACBL member for more than a year.
- c. Must have more than 100 masterpoints and at least one gold.
- d. Must be approved by The Junior Corps Selection Committee which will be appointed by the North American Junior Team Manager.
- e. Must be willing to be available for promotional efforts to advertise the existence and ideals of this program.

Selection Process:

- a. Qualifications for the Junior Corps must be submitted in writing to the Junior Team Manager.
- b. Candidates will be given a bridge proficiency test to verify that they have the experience level required for this program.
- c. The first appointments to the Junior Corps will be made prior to the 1990 Summer NABC.
- d. Corps members will be eligible to play in the Junior Team Trials.

Goals of the Program:

- a. To provide opportunities for young players to learn more about bridge from World Champions.
- b. To develop players capable of competing successfully on the international level - first as juniors and later in open events. Specifically in 1990-91 to develop partnerships to form a second and possibly a third team to represent the ACBL in the 1991 World Junior Championship.
- c. To serve as a showcase for young people who will be attracted to the "Olympics" of Bridge, a mental sport.
- d. To provide incentive for ACBL Youth Members to improve their games and develop their skills.
- e. To build a base for an ACBL Junior Division.
- f. To encourage our young players to become active in their Units and Districts and to participate in ACBL Programs (Unit Education Liaison, CDIN & TDIN Director, ACBL

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Accredited Teacher).

Benefits of Membership in the Corps:

- a. All members are entitled to play in the Junior Team Trials.
- b. All members are entitled to participate in designated Junior Team Training Workshops for which they are available, although no funding will be provided for these players.
 1. It is expected that some Junior Corps members will be sponsored by their Units, Districts or families.
 2. It is anticipated that some Junior Corps members will be able to promote sponsorship on their own from companies whose interest would be served in his manner (e.g. card companies, airlines, Nabisco, Coco Cola).
- c. A Junior Corps Workshop will be provided to members, free of charge, at each Summer NABC.
- d. Special events will be created to further the mutual interest of the Junior Corps and the ACBL.

THE EDUCATION LIAISON AND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

1. Who is the District Education Liaison?

The DEL is a volunteer appointed by the District President or the District Board and reports to the District. The DEL is the district's Liaison between the District and the ACBL Education Department. The DEL's committee is made up of the Unit Education Liaisons. The DEL is responsible for activities at the Regional level.

2. Who is the Unit Education Liaison?

The UEL is a volunteer appointed by the Unit President of the Unit Board and reports to the Unit. The UEL is a Liaison between the Unit and the ACBL Education Department. The Liaison works with the bridge teachers and club managers in the Unit. The UEL is responsible for activities at the Sectional and Local level.

3. What ACBL Education Programs should the Unit Have?

Programs that involve Bridge Teachers: Teacher Accreditation Program; The Unit needs teachers to generate new interest in bridge and to produce new players for the Unit. The TAP will produce new bridge teachers and increases the expertise of existing teachers.

Programs that involve new players: Intermediate/Novice Program; Provides games specifically designed for new players. New Player Services; Makes new players comfortable and eager to continue to participate in ACBL sanctioned games.

4. For whom does the Liaison work?

Job satisfaction comes from knowing for whom you are working. The District Liaison works for the District Board. The Unit Liaison works for the Unit Board and also reports to the District Education Liaison.

5. What is the fee for the services of the Unit Liaison?

In many units this is a volunteer position. If it becomes a paid position, there are concerns that it may also become a political position. What a unit can and will pay may also be a product of the unit budget, available funds, interest and need.

6. What would be a reasonable amount of time spent on the job?

All agreed it is a full time job.

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7. Why is there a need for such a position?

To coordinate the efforts of the unit within the unit and the efforts of the unit with ACBL. To promote bridge locally and help the unit take advantage of programs made available through ACBL.

8. What are the potential benefits of the job?

In some units this could be a paid position and therefore an income for someone who needed to work at a job where they can make their own hours. Paid or not, it is an opportunity for a great deal of personal satisfaction if the Liaison's motivation is a love of the game and a desire to perpetuate bridge.

9. What are the possibilities for advancement?

The Liaison could be responsible for a large increase in the membership of the unit by organizing the teachers in the area and helping them recruit students and by locating sites for lessons. The unit might agree to pay the Liaison a bonus based on the number of members the unit gains throughout his work. The Liaison might grow into other jobs that could have financial benefits...teaching, directing, running a club.

10. What are the obstacles that might need to be overcome?

Apathy of the unit members; resistance of the local bridge teachers to work together; funds to hold a TAP in order to get an ACBL program started in the area.

11. How can the success of the job be judged?

By an increase in the membership of the unit; by the number of new players produced by the teachers; by the number of high school and college programs started in the area; by the number of new player games and events offered - including, Bridge Plus+, Intermediate/Novice programs at the sectional and regional level and newcomer games at the club; by the development of a Big Brother/Big Sister program; by the establishment of a teacher chapter in the unit.

12. Who evaluates the success of the job done by the Unit Liaison?

The Liaison knows best what has been done and what more could be done. The growth of the unit is the best test.

13. What ACBL departments might the Unit Liaison need to contact?

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14. What skills are required for the job?

Salesmanship, people skills (to infuse others with your enthusiasm and get other people in the unit interested in working with you), knowledge of your product.

15. What other jobs could be compared to that of the Unit Liaison?

Recruiter, Organizer, Manager, Cheerleader.

16. What kind of course would best improve the skills of the Unit Liaison?

Basic business courses, workshops, public speaking.

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CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

There are basic steps to follow in obtaining corporate sponsors for events at all levels. Management has prepared a general outline that may be used by unit and district officials who are interested in securing sponsors for sectional and regional tournaments. The same strategies are employed to obtain sponsors at the national level.

The key elements are:

Identify potential corporate sponsors.

Prepare a verbal and written presentation.

Negotiate an agreement.

Follow through with commitments in the agreement.

Coordinate with ACBL when targeting major companies which are multi-regional and/or national marketers.

IDENTIFY PROSPECTIVE CORPORATE SPONSORS

When you approach a potential sponsor you are on a selling mission. Think about how many people approach businesses for money -- you have to demonstrate that you're the one they should choose. Be creative in showing them what you have to offer and what makes bridge a good choice for their support.

Where do you find sponsors?

The local Chamber of Commerce. Keep in mind they may have some restrictions on how their money is used.

Check with the Chamber to see if they will share a list of member businesses. Chamber members are the businesses most likely to respond favorably to sponsorship proposals.

Local celebrities. Often, a local celebrity will be eager to participate in a sponsorship situation because of the prestige associated with an event.

Attend non-bridge conventions and sporting events in your vicinity to see what organizations are sponsors.

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Who's Who lists in local weekly or monthly business newspapers and periodicals are good sources for potential sponsors.

"*Network*". Poll local club members to see who their contacts may be. It's really a matter of *who* you know, not *what* you know. If you have an "in" with a company, take advantage of that to at least determine who their audience is and what type sponsorships they would most likely be interested in.

If you have a good contact with a national company, ACBL will handle all the details for you.

Research magazines whose readership is composed of people who fit duplicate bridge's current demographics (age 55+, college educated, \$50,000 + annual household income, 60% female, like to travel for pleasure, dine out, etc.)

For example, *AARP* magazine is targeted toward people age 55 and older. A high percentage of duplicate bridge players are seniors. If Buick is running advertisements in *AARP* then we know they are targeting seniors. The local Buick dealer could be contacted as a potential sponsor of the bridge tournament because research has confirmed that Buick is targeting the senior buyers' market and a large percentage of our membership matches the demographics of the audience Buick wants to reach.

ACBL works with national and multi-national companies for advertising and national tournament sponsorships. Therefore, it is very important that you coordinate your local efforts with ACBL regarding these major companies. A joint effort will increase your share of the money generated.

Pre-Visit

Advance planning is critical.

Many companies plan their budgets at least 12 months in advance. It is imperative to meet with company officials well in advance of the tournament dates.

Find out if the potential sponsors have knowledge of bridge and/or duplicate. Be prepared to briefly help them understand the size and scope of duplicate.

Do your homework.

Find out all you can about the company and its products. We cannot stress enough the importance of thorough research that allows you to be as knowledgeable as possible about the potential sponsor.

Who are the company's customers? Determine a link between duplicate bridge players and the company before you meet with company representatives.

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What do you want?

Decide specifically what you're going to ask for before the meeting. If money, how much? Outline why that particular company should sponsor the bridge tournament. What's in it for them?

PREPARE A PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION

When You Arrive

Be professional. Don't be late!

Dress appropriately in locally accepted business attire. Be prepared to make a good impression. You are a representative of the largest bridge association in the world. Your clothing and demeanor should reinforce your position.

Organization is essential.

Be prepared to answer all the prospective sponsor's questions. Provide a prospective sponsor kit and briefly discuss its contents.

Company officials receive numerous requests for sponsorships and promotional advertising. Prepare the presentation so that it will fit into the executive's busy schedule.

Determine if they have any knowledge of bridge and/or duplicate. If not, quickly help them understand the size and scope of duplicate bridge, "it's not just a local event, it's a major activity worldwide".

Now is the time to give the prospect the Prospective Sponsor Kit.

Prepare a set of materials to present to prospective sponsors in an attractive presentation folder. There are several essential items that should be included in the package -- you may insert others that are germane to your area:

One page fact sheet about your tournament.

The fact sheet should include the 3 W's:

When Where Why

Also mention the size of the tournament, who the attendees will be and where they will come from (XXX local and XXX out-of-towners are expected to participate).

Prominently list the benefits the sponsor will receive for his investment in the event.

Detail who will handle publicity. (Note: Very often, the company will prefer to oversee their own publicity because they have a paid staff responsible for publicity and promotion.)

ACBL fact sheet.

A brief history of bridge.

Copies of news clips that promote bridge.

Letters from previous sponsors.

Third party endorsements -- letters from previous sponsors -- confirming that the sponsorship arrangement was of benefit to them serve as testimonials for your event.

Flyers and daily bulletins from previous tournaments.

These give the sponsor a visible sample of the types of publications and literature that will promote his company's products and services.

NOTE: The ACBL fact sheet and brief history of bridge are available upon request from ACBL's Member Benefits department. Contact the Director of Communications for complimentary copies.

Attractive "ACBL. . .It's a great deal!" presentation folders are available from ACBL for a modest fee.

Demonstrate that the people who attend tournaments are the same people who buy their products.

Talk about the demographics of the tournament.

Attendance expected. How many will be area residents? From other areas. Where?

Male/female ratio.

Registration packets (souvenir bags).

Vendor activities.

Illustrate how the sponsor will benefit from the tournament. For example, if you are visiting a local property in a national hotel chain, you might say that the XYZ Tournament will bring in 1,000 people from out of town into your hotel. Remember, too, if you are calling on a major corporation ACBL can offer them a larger national package with local benefits and more money to the local event. Be sure to call ACBL on this type of company.

Get the prospective sponsor involved on an personal level.

Offer discounted lessons, a free play, a partner. If he shows an interest in bridge try to "fan the spark" -- but don't overwhelm.

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NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT

What should you ask for?

Money for: flyers, give-away items, postage, rentals, signage, youth involvement.

Don't just ask for money -- it's not up to the company to figure out what they should do for the tournament or how they can promote themselves. Make it easy for them to see how the money will be spent and what they will get from their involvement.

Give them options.

Let them know about the various levels of sponsorship, i.e. \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$25,000 or whatever the amounts are based on expected attendance and exposure.

Give them opportunities.

Provide the sponsor with an active opportunity to sell his goods or services on-site.

Print his logo on hand records, cards, souvenir bags, etc.

Use his products in the tournament's souvenir gift bag. Use coupons for his products--they will reinforce his investment if they are redeemed.

Display his product in a booth.

Offer door prizes, then develop a mailing list from the entries. Give the mailing list to the company to provide an impact for that company beyond the impact of just the one local tournament.

In-kind services versus actual cash money sponsorships. Sometimes it is easier to obtain services or products from the company rather than it is to receive outright cash.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Promote the tournament to ensure the sponsor receives top value for its sponsorship

One way to ensure the sponsor feels they've "gotten their money's worth" is to make sure the tournament is well attended. How can you do that?

Publicize upcoming tournaments at surrounding local clubs.

Be creative in how you publicize and promote the tournament to out-of-towners.

For example, for a local tournament in El Paso, the flyer advertises "bring your partner for free on

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Southwest Airlines". (Southwest Airlines is always 2 for 1 on its flights.)

Advertise for free. There are lots of opportunities to promote your tournament at no cost. How?

In the newspaper.

Most newspapers have a community calendar where free announcements can be listed. These are small notifications saying what is going to happen and when. Suburban newspapers in particular are trying to fill space and are almost always glad to include these notices.

Don't waste money buying newspaper ads. You'll be sending a message to thousands of people who have no interest in bridge. How much better it is to use your money to target the places you are more likely to reach bridge players specifically.

On television or radio.

Television and radio stations are required to make a certain number of public service announcements. Try placing brief public service announcements on TV and radio or send information to be included on the broadcast community calendar. ACBL, upon request, will provide unit and district officials with sample news releases and public service announcements.

After the Tournament

At the conclusion of the tournament, send a letter to the sponsor thanking them for their participation and reiterating what the money was used for and measure the success of what they got for their investment. Demonstrate even in some non-quantifiable ways like, "we had lots of people comment on. . .". If you show the sponsor what a good investment they made in your tournament, they will be much more likely to work with you again in the future.

Wouldn't it be nice if you were already in next year's budget before you even asked?

