

CHAPTER VI – CLUB SANCTIONED GAMES

B. Types of Club Masterpoint Games

Section 1 - Open Games

- 1.1 An open game is open to all ACBL members. Prohibiting or allowing non-members of ACBL to play does not affect open game status.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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 6-B.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 An open pair game must have a minimum of two-and-a-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.
- 1.6 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.

Section 2 – Invitational/Restricted Game

- 2.1 An invitational game is one that limits or places restrictions on who can participate in its events. Participation commonly is limited to:
 - a. Members and guests of the organization that holds the sanction (such as country club or fraternal organization)
 - b. Personnel (and their families and guests) of industries that are currently participating in commercial and industrial leagues
 - c. 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)
 - d. Sections or directions segregated according to strong and weak pairs

- e. Strong players forbidden to play as partners
 - f. Life Masters excluded or required to play with non-Life Masters
 - g. Members of one sex only
- 2.2 Eligibility may be restricted for any reason except those that violate ACBL bylaws.
- 2.3 An invitational/restricted game may have no fewer than two-and-a-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 12 boards.

Section 3 – Newcomer Games

- 3.1 A newcomer game is limited to players who hold fewer than 20 masterpoints, although a club can set a lower maximum, such as one masterpoint, if it so desires.
- 3.2 A newcomer game is conducted to acquaint new players with duplicate bridge and to encourage participation by inexperienced players. At the discretion of club management, players may ask for advice, refer to notes and have help on any hand.
- 3.3 A newcomer game must consist of at least two-and-a-half tables. However, there are masterpoint awards for two-table newcomer games conducted as individuals or team games.
- 3.4 Participants must be scheduled to play a minimum of six boards.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 **Players with 20 or More Masterpoints**
- 3.7.1 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 six-and-a-half table game which, by adding a player, would become seven tables. In this instance, the club may allow one non-newcomer to play.

- 3.7.2 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.
- 3.7.3 A partnership, including one with a fill-in player (non-newcomer), may use only the conventions the club allows for that game.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 Ineligible pairs count in table totals. For example, the 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.
- 3.10 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.

Section 4 – Special Fund Games

- 4.1 Clubs are allowed to hold games to benefit special funds. These games are charged an extra per table fee to be remitted to the ACBL (except for games to benefit a local charity.)
- 4.2 The month of January is reserved for Junior Games, the month of April is reserved for charity games, the month of May is reserved for Grass Roots Fund games and the month of September is reserved for International Fund games; in those months any and all ACBL sanctioned club sessions may be special games for the named funds. In the remaining eight months of the year, one game per month per sanctioned session may be a special fund game for the benefit of the Grass

Roots Fund, Junior Fund, International Fund, Educational Foundation or charity. A regularly scheduled club game held at a frequency other than weekly may hold one special "fund" game every fourth game. The masterpoint rating for all of these special games will be 70% sectional-rated black maintaining the current cap of 6.00 masterpoints.

4.3 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). This regulation does not apply to Limited/Restricted Sectionals.

4.4 Charity Games

4.4.1 Beneficiaries

4.4.1.1 The first charity club championship held each year must name an Official ACBL Beneficiary, i.e., the ACBL Charity Foundation or the CBF Charitable Fund (for games held in Canada) as its principal beneficiary. Under exceptional circumstances and on written application to the ACBL, the ACBL may 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 and every other odd-numbered subsequent charity game, a minimum amount per player (currently \$1) must be contributed to the ACBL Charity Foundation or the CBF Charitable Fund (for games held in Canada.)

4.4.1.2A 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.

4.4.1.3 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.

4.4.2 Two Session Charity Games

4.4.2.1 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.

4.4.2.2 Both sessions give 70% sectional-rated black points. The entire contribution must be made to an official ACBL beneficiary. See 4.4.2.3 below. A club may charge any table fee that it chooses.

4.4.2.3 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.

4.4.3 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 28th of the following calendar year.

4.4.4 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.

4.4.5 Reporting Charity Fund Games

4.4.5.1 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.

4.5 Educational Foundation Games

4.5.1 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.

4.6 Grass Roots Fund Games

4.6.1 The month of May is designated as "Grass Roots Fund Month." Clubs may hold special games under the same rules and regulations applicable to the other special fund months (currently benefitting the Junior and International Funds and the ACBL Charity Foundation.) Funds raised shall be used by the individual districts to help fund Grass Roots Events. Grass Roots Events are defined as the Grand National Teams and the

North American Pairs.

4.6.1.1 At the conclusion of the collection cycle, 80% of the funds, net of total entry fee awarded by the ACBL Flights A, B & C, is returned to the respective Districts that raised the monies. The remaining 20% is retained by the League and distributed according to the process shown in Appendix 5-B.

4.6.2 The Grass Roots Fund shall be considered an additional, eligible beneficiary from regional-rated games at sectionals along with the Junior and International Funds and the ACBL Charity and Educational Foundations.

Section 5 – Other Club Games

5.1 Introductory Games

5.1.1 A club may conduct ACBL introductory games without first obtaining sanctions, but the games must have ACBL approval. The director usually issues club masterpoint receipts. Each game must have at least three tables, and each player must be scheduled to play a minimum of six boards.

5.2 Handicap Games

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

5.3 Stratified Pairs

5.3.1 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 players.

5.3.2 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.

- 5.3.3 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.
 - 5.3.4 In a Newcomer strat (0 to 20 masterpoints), only tables in this strat receive masterpoints, from the newcomer award chart.
 - 5.3.5 If a player places in more than one strat, the player receives the higher of the two awards, not both.
- 5.4 Homestyle
- 5.4.1 Homestyle 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 to conduct homestyle bridge games that issue masterpoints.
- 5.5 College Program
- 5.5.1 A sanction application will be provided to any student or faculty member who is interested in operating a sanctioned bridge game on any campus within ACBL jurisdiction.
 - 5.5.2 Games are to be open to students, faculty members, and their spouses only.
 - 5.5.3 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.
 - 5.5.4 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.
 - 5.5.5 The game will be allotted one session with club championship rating for every 12 regular sessions played.
 - 5.5.6 The college game is rated as an invitational game.
 - 5.5.7 Each game must submit a monthly report of all game activity that occurred during the preceding month.

- 5.5.8 A fee for each game plus a fee for each table must be sent with the report form.
- 5.5.9 A faculty adviser must co-sign the sanction application and must agree to serve as the official ACBL contact.
- 5.6 Easybridge
 - 5.6.1 Easybridge! is a program and series of books designed to develop newcomer game(s) in clubs.
- 5.7 High School Program
 - 5.7.1 A high school program similar to that offered to a college is available.
 - 5.7.2 The minimum number of boards played for a 0-5MP game conducted in schools is six for middle-schools through college. The masterpoint award will be .03 per table.
 - 5.7.3 There are no sanction or table fees associated with these games.
- 5.8 Pupil Games
 - 5.8.1 A bridge teacher may apply for a special sanction to conduct a pupil game. The sanction will be 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.
 - 5.8.2 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.
 - 5.8.3 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.
 - 5.8.4 A monthly report form is not required for pupil games, and there are no session or table fees.
 - 5.8.5 The teacher who runs the game need not be an ACBL club director.
- 5.9 Bridge Plus+

- 5.9.1 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.
- 5.9.2 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 five 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.
- 5.9.3 The teacher who runs the game need not be a club director. The teacher/director resolves all irregularities.

5.10 Foreign Clubs

- 5.10.1 Bridge club games at locations outside of Bermuda, Canada, Mexico and the United States may be sanctioned at the discretion of management, subject to the following guidelines:
- a. Where there is no indication of a local bridge organization or local bridge club game, sanctions may be freely issued.
 - b. Sanctions may be issued for "isolated" locations, such as military bases, consulates, etc.
- 5.10.2 Where there is a local bridge club in operation, efforts will be made to minimize competition or interference between such a club and an ACBL club. If all parties agree, joint sanctions will be encouraged. If a local club appears to have legitimate concerns that an ACBL club is unduly interfering, or would unduly interfere, with the operation of the local club, then any sanction granted to the ACBL club to run sanctioned games will be subject to restrictions that minimize such interference; e.g., play restricted to citizens of ACBL NBOs with guest privileges no more than once a month.

Section 6 – Miscellaneous Rules Relating To Club Masterpoint Games

6.1 Two Table Team Games

- 6.1.1 Two-table sanctioned team games at club sessions will be allowed to award masterpoints. Regular session and table fees would apply.
 - 6.1.2 Short matches are permissible and makeup of teams or partnerships may be changed for each match.
 - 6.1.3 The masterpoint awards will be .01 masterpoint per board played and there will be match awards only. There are no overall awards.
- 6.2 Club Handicapping; Masterpoint Awards
- 6.2.1 The masterpoint awards for club handicap games can be as currently given or at the discretion of the club as follows:
 - a) 100% awards for scratch winners for the class of game involved.
 - b) 50% awards for handicap winners.
 - c) Players receive the higher of the awards, but *not* both.
- 6.3 Masterpoint Races – Games at Clubs
- 6.3.1 All sanctioned games held at clubs, with the sole exception of STaCs, are to be counted in Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs masterpoint races at unit-, district- and ACBL-wide levels.
- 6.4 Addition of M Factor for Special Club Games
- 6.4.1 The formula for masterpoints for special games at clubs will have the appropriate “M” factor applied when there are masterpoint limitations in exactly the same manner as the “M” factor is applied to all games conducted at tournaments