

**GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS  
DISTRICT 4 CONDITIONS OF CONTEST  
SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR FINALS 2024**

**DISTRICT 4 GNT COORDINATOR**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The 2024 District 4 Grand National Teams Finals will be conducted in one stage. No qualification from the club or unit level is required to play in the District Finals. The District Finals will be held in March 2024 as shown below:

- Open Finals: Sat, Mar 9 & Sun, Mar 10
- Flight A Finals: Sat, Mar 2 & Sun, Mar 3
- Flight B Finals: Sat, Mar 9 & Sun, Mar 10
- Flight C Finals: Sat, Mar 2 & Sun, Mar 3

Players may play in more than one flight for which they meet the eligibility criteria.

**CONDITIONS OF CONTEST**

The 2023-2024 ACBL Grand National Teams Special Conditions of Contest (available at <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/coc/gnt/GNT2023-24.pdf>) shall govern all Grand National Teams qualifying play in District 4.

This document, “Grand National Teams, District 4 Conditions of Contest,” is a supplement to the ACBL GNT Conditions of Contest. In the case of any conflict, the ACBL GNT Conditions of Contest will supersede District 4 GNT Conditions of Contest.

GNT District Finals will be played over a period not to exceed two days. The GNT is played in four flights as defined below. Masterpoint requirements for each flight are as follows:

Open Championship Flight: Unlimited

Flight A: Under 6000 Masterpoints

Flight B: Under 2500 Masterpoints

Flight C: Non-Life Master under 500 Masterpoints

Flight eligibility will be established by ACBL’s September masterpoint cycle produced on August 6, 2023 in Horn Lake, MS. Masterpoints won after this cycle will not impact flight eligibility for these events.

## **QUALIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

1. The event is open to teams of four, five or six players. Each team must have a captain.
2. All players must live in District 4, be a member of a District 4 unit and be a paid-up member in good standing of the ACBL. For the GNTs, a member's principal physical residence as of September 1 of the year prior to the National Final shall establish the district in which a member is eligible to participate. Changes in residence after September 1 shall not change the district in which the player is eligible to participate. The ACBL will not grant a player's request to change units for the sole purpose of playing in a District GNT finals.
3. The first-place finishers in the Open Championship Flight, Flight A, Flight B, and the second-place finisher in the Open Championship Flight of the District 4 final earn Blue Ribbon Pairs qualifications. The first-place finishers in Flight C in the District 4 final earn a Red Ribbon Pairs qualification.
4. Players deemed ineligible by the ACBL are not allowed to participate in the District Finals. Such players are disqualified and may cause their team to be disqualified as well. See Appendix I of the ACBL GNT Conditions of Contest.

## **ENTRY FEES**

Entry fees will be determined and published in advance by the District 4 Board of Directors, Executive Committee or their designee.

District 4 shall refund the entry fees for any full-time students.

## **DISTRICT WINNERS**

The winning team from each Flight qualifies to compete in the National Finals. The teams finishing second in Flights B and Flight C are eligible to compete in the National Finals, provided 8 or more teams compete in the District GNT Finals.

## **RULES OF PLAY FOR DISTRICT FINALS –TWO DAYS**

1. Byes are not permitted unless as explicitly stated below.
2. Replays during the knockout phase are to be avoided as long as possible.
3. The defending champion team in the Open Championship Flight, Flight A and Flight B shall receive the top seed provided at least four members of that team return, not including substitutes or augmentees. Other teams within these Flights shall be seeded based on average masterpoints of team members.

4. All round robin and Swiss team matches are scored by IMPs and each match is converted to Victory Points by using the WBF Continuous VP scale (to reduce the chances of ties) to decide the order of finish: [http://www.worldbridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/WBF\\_VP\\_scales.pdf](http://www.worldbridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/WBF_VP_scales.pdf)

5. Schedule of Play for the Open Championship Flight, Flight A & Flight B:

2 Teams: Head-to-head, 60-boards played in two 30-board sessions on Saturday.

3 Teams: Saturday: Two round robins, 7 boards per match, in each of the 2 sessions (total of 4 round robins on Saturday). Each team will have played 28 boards against each other team. Two teams qualify for Sunday.

Sunday: 32 board final with full carryover (results in 60 boards in head-to-head play between finalists).

4 Teams: 30-board semifinal on Saturday (seeding by average masterpoints) followed by 30-board final on Saturday second session.

5-10 Teams: Saturday: Full round robin with the number of boards as specified below. The top 4 teams advance to Sunday.

5-6 teams: Each team plays 5 matches of 12 boards (if 5 teams, one of the matches will be a sit-out); the matches will be split into two half matches of 6 boards played in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sessions, with scoring comparison at the halfway mark.

7-8 teams: Each team plays 7 matches of 8 boards each (one sit-out if needed).

9-10 teams: Each team plays 9 matches of 6 boards each (one sit-out if needed).

Sunday: 30-board semifinal and 30-board final.

11-20 Teams: Saturday: The teams will be divided into two seeded brackets as evenly as possible. For example, 14 teams will be divided into two brackets of 7 teams each, 15 teams into brackets of 7 and 8 teams, and so on. Seeding will be by average masterpoints. The teams in each bracket will play a complete round robin based on the number of teams, as specified above for "5-10 Teams." The top 2 qualifiers from each bracket advance to Sunday. In the semifinals, each bracket winner will play the 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher from the opposite bracket.

Sunday: 30-board semifinal and 30-board final.

20+ Teams: Saturday's format is expected to be similar to a Swiss qualifier where each team plays eight 7-board matches spread over two sessions. The top 4 teams advance to Sunday.

Sunday: 30-board semifinal and 30-board final.

## 6. Schedule of Play for Flight C:

2 Teams: Head-to-head, 48-boards played in two 24-board sessions on Saturday.

3 Teams: Three-way matches of 12 boards each during the first Saturday session with one team eliminated, and a head-to-head 24 board final during the second Saturday session.

4 Teams: 24-board semifinal on Saturday (seeding by average masterpoints) followed by 24-board final on Saturday second session.

5-10 Teams: Saturday: Full Round Robin with the number of boards as specified below. The top 4 teams advance to Sunday.

5-6 teams: Each team plays 5 matches of 10 boards (if 5 teams, one of the matches will be a sit-out); the matches will be split into two half matches of 5 boards played in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sessions, with scoring comparison sat the halfway mark.

7-8 teams: Each team plays 7 matches of 7 boards each.

9-10 teams: Each team plays 9 matches of 5 boards each.

Sunday: 24-board semifinal and 24-board final.

11-20 Teams: Saturday: The teams will be divided into two seeded brackets as evenly as possible. For example, 14 teams will be divided into two brackets of 7 teams each, 15 teams into brackets of 7 and 8 teams, and so on. Seeding will be by average masterpoints. The teams in each bracket will play a complete round robin based on the number of teams, as specified above for “5-10” teams. The top 2 qualifiers from each bracket advance to Sunday. In the semifinals, each bracket winner will play the 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher from the opposite bracket.

Sunday: 24-board semifinal and 24-board final.

20+ Teams: Saturday’s format is expected to be similar to a Swiss qualifier where each team plays eight 6-board matches spread over two sessions. Said two sessions may include byes. The top 4 teams advance to Sunday.

Sunday: 24-board semifinal and 24-board final.

## **TIE BREAKERS (Applies to all Flights):**

1) If a KO match ends in a tie, a four-board playoff will determine the winner. Should a second (or third) playoff be required to break a tie, those playoffs will be four boards each. If a fourth or subsequent tiebreaker is required, each playoff shall be a one-board playoff. If one team is not able to field 4 players when a playoff is announced, the DIC shall, at his/her sole discretion, award the match to the other team after a suitable interval. If both teams are unable to field 4 players when a playoff is announced, the higher seeded team shall be deemed the winner.

2) Tiebreakers for determining order of finish in Swiss & Round-Robins: If 2 or more teams are tied after the WBF Continuous VP scale is used, the following tiebreakers will be used to determine the order of finish. As soon as one (or more) teams can either be eliminated or selected using the following tiebreakers, the tiebreakers will continue among the remaining tied teams, starting with Tiebreaker a) below:

a) Head-to-Head win %age among tied teams: Wins count for 1, ties for 0.5, and losses for 0.

b) Total # of wins in the Swiss / Round-Robin stage.

c) Total IMP margin = (Total IMPs won less Total IMPs lost)/(Matches Played).

d) Total IMPs = (Total IMPs won)/(Matches Played) in all matches.

e) In the event that 2 or more teams remain tied at this stage, Average Masterpoints (AMPs) of team members (as used by the DIC to seed the teams in the event) will be the final tiebreaker. In odd-numbered playoff years, the team with higher AMPs is the higher seed, and in even-numbered playoff years, the team with the lower AMPs is the higher seed.

3) Swiss & Round-Robins Playoffs: These playoffs in the Saturday Swiss / Round-Robins only come into play when 2 or more teams are tied for the last qualifying spot(s) for Sunday's semi-finals, requiring one or more teams to be eliminated. Ties are based on VPs after the continuous VP Scale is used, but before the Tiebreakers listed in "2)" above are applied. For example, two or more teams finish tied on VPs for the 4<sup>th</sup> position

a) If exactly two teams are tied for the last qualifying spot, then they participate in a playoff as listed in c) below.

b) If more than two teams are tied for the last qualifying spot, then the Tiebreakers listed in 2) above will be used to rank the teams, and exactly two teams (e.g., those finishing ranked #4 and #5 after the Tiebreakers are applied) will participate in a playoff as described in c).

c) In the event of a tie of two teams for the last qualifying spot (e.g., for the right to go on and play in the semifinals), there is a 4-board playoff. If the teams are tied after the first playoff – and a second or subsequent tiebreaker is required – there will be a one-board playoff.

d) If one team is not able to field 4 players anytime a playoff is announced, the DIC shall, at his/her sole discretion, award the match to the other team after a suitable interval. If both teams are unable to field 4 players, the tiebreakers described below in “Tiebreakers for determining the order of finish” shall be applied to determine the team that qualifies.

## MISCELLANEOUS

1. When a full round-robin is played among all teams on Saturday to advance 4 teams to Sunday’s semifinals (see “5-10 Teams” above for all Flights), Saturday’s winner will choose its semifinal opponent from the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> place team. However, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team may choose to make itself available to be selected, in which case Saturday’s winner can choose its semifinal opponent from any of the qualifiers.

2. Allowed conventions: Championship Flight: Open+ chart. Flight A: Open chart. Flight B: Basic+ chart. Flight C: Basic+ chart.

3. **Preregistration is required in all flights.** Late registrations WILL NOT be accepted, except at the discretion of the District 4 GNT Coordinator in consultation with the District President. Late withdrawals may not receive a refund of deposits paid in advance – this will be at the sole discretion of the District 4 GNT Coordinator.

4. The total boards in all semifinal and final matches shall be as above unless all the Team Captains agree to play fewer boards before the matches begin.

5. Masterpoint awards are as described in the ACBL GNT Conditions of Contest.

## SUBSTITUTIONS DURING PLAY AT DISTRICT FINALS

The District GNT Coordinator or the Director-in-charge may approve a substitute in an emergency. Only one substitute is permitted at any time, and no substitute is permitted if four or more team members of record are available. A substitute may not appreciably strengthen a team and is also subject to the following limitations:

1. The substitute must meet the requirements under QUALIFICATION (see page 1);
2. The substitute must be eligible to play in the flight in which the team requiring the substitution is competing; and
3. The substitute is not permitted for more than 50% of the boards played; any substitute who is required to play more than 50% of the boards because the original team member cannot return shall be deemed a replacement player subject to the requirements of the following section; the original player shall not return for the remainder of the District Finals but may be returned to the team as an augmentee provided such player meets the requirements for augmentation set forth below.
4. Any team with a substitute player shall retain its original seed.

## **REPLACEMENT DURING PLAY AT DISTRICT FINALS**

The Permanent replacement of a player who, for cause, cannot continue in the event is permitted only with the permission of the District 4 GNT Coordinator. A replaced player permanently leaves the event with all masterpoints already earned, and the replacement continues in the event earning points thereafter. A replaced player may be returned to the team as an augmentee provided such player meets the requirements for augmentation set forth below. Play percentage requirements apply to the replacement only for the portion yet to be played. The replacement:

1. Must meet the requirements under QUALIFICATION (see page 1);
2. Must not be eligible for further competition in another flight, but may withdraw from such other flight in a writing directed to the District GNT Coordinator;
3. Must be eligible to compete in the flight of the team needing the replacement; and
4. Must not appreciably strengthen the team.

A team with a replacement player shall retain its original seed.

## **SELECTION OF THIRD AND FOURTH PLACE TEAMS IN GNTs**

At the district finals, the losers of the semifinal matches will be offered a playoff for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> places. Masterpoint awards, if any, for third and fourth place will be determined according to the ACBL guidelines as dictated by the ACBL Conditions of Contest for the GNT as well as the ACBL General Conditions of Contest for KO events. Determination of the third and fourth place teams **for the sole purpose of determining who will go to NABC should the first and second place decline to attend** will be as follows:

1. If both teams agree to a playoff, then the playoff determines 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place. The number of boards played will be determined by the Director in Charge.
2. If one team agrees to a playoff and the other does not, then the team that agreed is the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team and the other team is the 4<sup>th</sup> place team.
3. If neither team agrees to a playoff, then a coin flip conducted by the District GNT Coordinator will determine which of these two teams is the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team and which of the two teams is the 4<sup>th</sup> place team.

## **AUGMENTATION OR REPLACEMENT AFTER DISTRICT FINAL**

The Permanent replacement of a player who, for cause, cannot continue in the event or augmentation of a fifth and/or sixth player to a team after completion of the District Final will be allowed provided:

1. The District GNT Coordinator is notified;
2. The augmentee or replacement does not appreciably weaken the team;
3. The player(s) to be added meet the requirement under QUALIFICATION (see page 1) and are eligible to compete in the flight in which the team wishing to add them is competing;
4. At least three original members remain on the team; and
5. Must not be eligible for further competition in another flight, but may withdraw from such other flight in a writing directed to the District GNT Coordinator.

### **SELECTING THE TEAM TO REPRESENT DISTRICT 4 IN THE NABC GNT FINALS**

The 2023-2024 National GNT Finals, for all flights, will be held at the Summer NABC in Toronto beginning on Wednesday, July 17, 2024. In each flight, the first-place team will represent District 4 in the National GNT Finals. Second-place teams in Flight B and C will also represent District 4 in the National GNT Finals provided at least 8 or more teams compete in the District GNT Finals in those flights.

If the first-place team cannot attend, the second-place team will be offered the opportunity to represent the District. If the second-place team cannot attend, then the offer will be made to the third-place team. If the third-place team cannot attend, then the offer will be made to the fourth-place team. (See “SELECTION OF THIRD AND FOURTH PLACE TEAMS IN GNTs” earlier.)

If none of the teams that finished first through fourth can attend the national event, then the District GNT Coordinator, the District President, and the District ACBL Director will select a team based on these priorities:

1. Pairs or individuals who can attend nationals that played on the first through fourth place teams (in that order) will be given priority. That is, pairs from the first place team will be selected before pairs from the second place team, and on down the line. Preference will be given to established pairs over individuals.
2. After #1 above, priority will be given to pairs (or individuals) that played in the District 4 finals on any team in the specific flight.
3. After #1 and #2 above, any pair (or individual) eligible from the District may be extended an invitation.

### **DISTRICT 4 SUBSIDIES**

District 4 awards subsidies to help defray travel and lodging expenses to the NABC GNT Finals. In 2024, subsidies are \$2000 to the first-place team in each flight and \$1200 to the second-place team in Flights B and C. Additionally, any team that survives past the second day of NABC



competition will receive \$400 a day subsidy. Subsidies are paid after the team attends and plays in the NABC until elimination. D4 will also reimburse entry fees and screen fees, if applicable.

#### **UNEXPECTED CIRCUMSTANCES**

In the event that these District 4 Conditions of Contest and the ACBL GNT Conditions of Contest do not provide a remedy to an incident that requires a timely solution, the District 4 Director, or, in that person's absence, the District 4 President, or in the event of both of their absence/unavailability the District 4 GNT Coordinator (or a delegate they appoint for this express purpose), shall make a timely and just determination and ruling with the consultation of district officials, tournament directors, and others as such person may deem necessary.