



PLANNING AND ORGANIZING AN INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER (IN) TOURNAMENT OR PROGRAM

Revised January 2005

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You are taking the first step toward generating new, enthusiastic duplicate players for your unit games and tournaments by planning an IN tournament or IN program. These IN activities are designed to generate fun and excitement for those who are new to bridge, new to *duplicate* bridge and those who have begun playing regularly but have not acquired the status of Life Master. Nothing will make this audience more interested in playing competitive bridge frequently than a good first duplicate experience.

This booklet gives step by step suggestions for planning and organizing an IN sectional, an IN regional or an IN program. IN sectionals and IN regionals are run exclusively for players with a limited masterpoint holding and stand alone; IN programs also are run for players with a limited number of masterpoints and are organized as a part of a regular sectional or regional tournament.

ACBL places a high priority on making IN activities available to its membership. The future of bridge and the ACBL is dependent upon a steady influx of new players.

If the ACBL can be of any assistance to you in the development of your IN tournament or program, send an e-mail to education@acbl.org or call the Education Department at (662-253-3100, ext. 3172).

If you have questions about scheduling, sanctioning or directors, please contact the ACBL Tournament Department at tournaments@acbl.org or at (662-253-3100, ext. 3162).

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR IN TOURNAMENT OR PROGRAM!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Overview

Planning & Organizing an IN Tournament or IN Program

Getting Started

Sanctioning the IN Tournament

Choosing a Site

Applying for a Sanction

When to Apply for a Sanction

Planning the Schedule of Events

Number of Days

Schedule of Events

Tips for Attracting a Big Crowd

The Bridge Plus+ Event

The 0 to 5 Masterpoint Event

Swiss Team Events

Conventions

Staffing the Tournament

The IN TC

The Director-in-Charge (D-I-C)

Directing Staff

Equipment

Committees

Overview

Advertising and Promotion Committee

Hospitality (New Player Services)

Partnership Committee

Membership Committee

Caddy Committee

Prize Committee

Entertainment Committee

Reporting the Results of an IN Tournament

Reports and Payment of Fees

Sanction Fees

Due Date for the Tournament Report

Appendix

Suggested Timeline for an IN Program/Tournament

Sample Schedules

Sample Flyer

Supplies

Ordering IN Tournament Supplies

ACBL General Convention Charts

Masterpoint Awards

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING AN INTERMEDIATE-NEWCOMER TOURNAMENT (SECTIONAL OR REGIONAL) OR PROGRAM (AS PART OF A REGULAR SECTIONAL/REGIONAL)

AN OVERVIEW

Intermediate-Newcomer (IN) tournaments and programs are run for newer players – those who are new to bridge, new to *duplicate* bridge and those who have begun playing regularly but have not acquired the status of Life Master.

IN tournaments/programs offer a pool of congenial partners, a suitable place to play, events in every session that Intermediate and Newcomer players can win and a lot of fun. The IN tournament provides these attractions in a relaxed atmosphere, among fellow Intermediate and Newcomer players.

What is an IN Program? It is a full ten-point program of bridge activities designed for new and advancing players. An IN sectional and an IN regional follow this format. An IN program follows this format and is organized as a part of a regular sectional or regional tournament.

When this format is used, a tournament becomes an ideal tournament experience for a new player who is interested in competitive bridge. An IN Program should not be confused with simply scheduling newcomer games at a tournament.

Here are the basic ingredients of an ACBL IN Program:

- ♥ Games for 0-5, 0-20, 0-49er, 0-99er, 0-199er, & 0-299er players each session.
- ♥ Trophies for each overall win in a newcomer event.
- ♥ A special area or room for the Intermediate-Newcomer games.
- ♥ Directors who are experienced in working with newcomers.
- ♥ A Celebrity Speaker Program.
- ♥ Social Events.
- ♥ Pictures of the Winners.
- ♥ Flyers to invite the players and guarantee partners.
- ♥ Newcomer hand records with analysis sheets (0-5 and 0-20).
- ♥ New Player Services Committee – to greet players and answer questions.

From the unit's/district's viewpoint, IN tournaments can help create a new player program or expand the one already in place. They generate new members for the unit and spark increased participation at the local level. IN activities also help to integrate the newer player into the bridge community and, as a result, they will improve the unit's membership retention stats.

A unit may hold an unlimited number of IN sectionals (with district approval) that run from one to five days in length, and each district may hold one IN regional from two to six days per year. An IN program can be held in conjunction with any sectional or regional tournament and it does not require a separate sanction.

Planning and running IN tournaments/programs tend to infuse the unit members with new vitality by giving them an exciting project to work on as a team.

GETTING STARTED

Sanctioning the IN Tournament

Number of IN sectionals per unit: ACBL regulations do not restrict the number of IN sectional [0-49er, 0-99er, 0-199er, 0 to 299er and 0 to non-LM (500)] tournaments a unit can run. The district, however, may choose to restrict the number allowed.

Number of IN regionals per district: Each district is entitled to conduct one IN (0-199er, 0-299er, Non-Life Master) regional each calendar year. These regionals can be from four to twelve sessions and can be held concurrently with an open sectional or a senior regional. A district may allow a unit to conduct its IN regional.

Number of IN programs: A unit or district is encouraged to offer an IN program in conjunction with all of its sectional or regional tournaments. An IN program does not require a separate sanction.

Sponsoring the IN tournament: A unit can run its own IN tournaments, or it can give one or more IN sectional sanctions to a club under its jurisdiction. An IN sectional sponsored by a unit should be organized to attract players from a larger area, whereas one run by a club may attract only local players and should be organized accordingly.

Preliminary decisions and approval: Before a unit or district can apply for a sanction, it must select the dates for the IN tournament, secure a site and appoint a tournament chair (TC). The sanction application must be completely filled in with the number of the unit or district applying for the sanction, the name of the requested director-in-charge and a preliminary schedule of events to be approved. The unit may list a Tournament Correspondent or Tournament Contact if the TC has not been officially named. The Tournament Correspondent or Tournament Contact is the Liaison with the ACBL and must have Internet access. The TC for this type of tournament is often the Unit Intermediate Newcomer Coordinator or the Unit Education Liaison if there is no IN Coordinator appointed.

Choosing a Site

Overview: When selecting a site, always keep in mind these things. Is it a safe location? Is there a lighted parking lot? Is it in a good part of town? Are there enough bathrooms? Is the lighting (especially at night) sufficient for card play?

Local Hotel Discounts: Check with hotels, located within easy walking distance (if possible) of the playing site, for a weekend package deal. Some hotels give special rates for rooms and also serve a complimentary breakfast. If enough rooms are booked for the tournament, the unit or district might be offered one or more complimentary rooms to use as a hospitality suite or to house volunteer workers.

Campus Weekend Package Deals: Some universities offer sites on their campus which can be rented as playing space. They may also offer rooms and a meal plan. These dormitory locations are attractive to bridge players. They allow the players to enjoy tournaments where lodging, dining and playing can be arranged under the same roof. Campus sites can often be secured during summer break or long holiday weekends. Check with the local college or universities in your town to discover these super bargains.

State Parks: Tournaments held in these locations can be fun for the entire family. Parks with a resort facility generally offer special rates during the "off" season. Not only can you get special room rates, but you might also arrange extra discounts for meals that come with the plan. Resort parks may offer golf, swimming, fishing, boating or other activities for non-bridge-playing family members to enjoy while the bridge player is happily playing.

Chamber of Commerce: Check with your local Chamber of Commerce for other conventions and activities scheduled for the weekend you are considering for your bridge tournament. It is important that you verify that hotel rooms will be available for your out-of-town players before making a final date selection.

Applying for a Sanction

The unit's tournament coordinator submits the sanction application to the district tournament coordinator as soon as the unit or district board approves the details of the tournament. On approval, the district tournament coordinator then forwards the application directly to the ACBL Tournament Department. When the Tournament Department approves the application, it assigns a sanction number and returns the form to the tournament coordinator or tournament correspondent/contact.

When to Apply for the IN Tournament Sanction

An IN tournament sanction should be submitted at least one year ahead of the scheduled tournament date for sectionals and three years ahead of the scheduled tournament date for regionals.

Early application allows time for proper promotion of the tournament and planning of hospitality. If the unit hasn't established a New Player Services Program, this is a good time to get one started. [Click here for more information on the New Player Services Program.](#) Early application also allows time for the Tournament Department to advertise the IN tournament in the schedule of Intermediate-Newcomer Tournaments which appears monthly in *The Bridge Bulletin*.

Applications submitted in a timely fashion are sanctioned subject to conflicts with "traditional" tournaments. Untimely sanction applications are subject to the regulations governing conflicts. (See the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations.)

Planning the IN Tournament Schedule of Events

Number of Days

Sectionals: An IN sectional can be one to five days long.

Regionals: An IN regional must be from two to six days long.

Programs: An IN program (run as part of a regular sectional or regional) should run concurrently with all of the regular sessions of the tournament to encourage players from out of town to attend.

Schedule of Events

Have the same schedule every day. Offer the same events at the same time both afternoon and evening. Use imagination in naming your events and add morning games and Swiss teams. You can even schedule knockout events.

IN sectional tournaments can have an upper masterpoint limit of 50, 100, 200, 300 or NLM (500). No matter which limit you select, events for all groups within the selected range should be scheduled each session. For example, there should be events for players who have 0 to 5 MPs, 0 to 20 MPs, 0 to 50 MPs, 0 to 100 MPs, 0 to 200 MPs, 0 to 300 MPs or 0 to NLM (500). The 0 to 200 and the 0 to 300 or 0 to NLM (500) categories are for intermediates.

By offering all of these single-session events every session, players can find partners more easily. With specific activities listed for each session, the Intermediate and Newcomer players will feel invited and more people will attend. Don't worry about offering so many different events. It's better to have only a few players for a strata than to have none. These newer players will not come if you don't invite them. Whenever an event attracts too few tables to form a separate game, the director can stratify any two or three groups to create a very enjoyable event. Three tables constitute a legal game.

Tips for Attracting a Big Crowd

Diverse Scheduling

The scheduling should be as diverse as possible. Single-session events in all categories are a must, but by all means, offer two-session championship games, too.

Special Names for Events

Be creative and use special names and themes for each of your events to give them personality. You can name the games after sponsors and/or teachers whose students are playing in the tournament.

Special Trophies

Best of Two – Consider a “Best of Two” trophy. A partnership must have the best-combined percentage for both sessions to win, but players can choose to enter only one session. The “Best of Two” event offers more masterpoints than a two-session championship making it a popular game.

Best Overall – Consider a trophy for best overall performance in the tournament. This is an excellent way to highlight someone who participates in a lot of sessions.

The Bridge Plus+ Event

Bridge Plus+ is a shorter, friendlier, low-key duplicate experience created especially for students who have taken one or more of the ACBL beginning bridge courses. The game is patterned after the students’ classroom experience. They play 10 to 14 deals in a two-hour game supervised by an ACBL Accredited Teacher. Use this game at one session of your IN tournament to introduce local bridge students and social bridge players to duplicate bridge for the first time. Consider starting with a free lesson followed by a Bridge Plus+ game. This is a popular format used with the NABC IN Programs.

Schedule Bridge Plus+ games (without fees) on one afternoon of your tournament. A successful game requires the cooperation of your local bridge teachers. Ask them to distribute free play coupons and encourage their students to come to the Bridge Plus+ games, or allow the teachers to sell entries to their students and keep the money. When the student arrives at the Bridge Plus+ game, give a free play for another session of the tournament. This is an excellent promotional idea. Students who play twice will tend to come back to play in more sessions.

Bridge Plus+ players are encouraged to ask questions on bidding and play. The teacher’s job is to guide the players to answer their own questions. Invite local teachers to help out at these sessions.

The 0 to 5 Masterpoint Event

Consider having a day or session when the 0 to 5 players play free. This is an excellent promotional tool to bring in new people. Mail out coupons or ask teachers to distribute them.

ACBL regulations state that three tables constitute a legal game. If there are at least three tables of players with 0-5 MPs each, the director should offer them a separate game. These players are more comfortable in a group of their peers. If they have a good time, they are more likely to return to play in another session.

The director-in-charge should limit the number of boards played in entry-level games. IN players often play more slowly than those with more expertise, and they are not conditioned to having a good time playing cards for more than a couple of hours at a time. ACBL regulations state that a minimum of 18 boards must be played in each session to award masterpoints. IN games run no more than 24 to 25 boards. When these players are able to play more, it’s time to move them to an open game. (In Bridge Plus+ Games, ACBL requires only 10 to 14 boards. In 0 to 5 games, as few as 10 boards can be played. See Chapter 5 in the *ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations* for details or call the Tournament Department, ext. 3162, for more information.)

Swiss Team Events

Schedule a Swiss team event on Sunday. Also schedule a full complement of pair games (0 to 5, 0 to 20, 0 to 50, 0 to 100, 0 to 200, and 0 to 300). Advertising a diverse schedule usually attracts more players, and because new players enjoy playing in team games, having pair games gives you the opportunity to invite new players to participate in the team games if a team is needed to fill out the movement.

Conventions

The director-in-charge and the TC should review the conventions that will be allowed for the IN tournament. The ACBL Limited Convention Chart may apply for IN games having an upper limit of points no higher than 20 MPs. However, ACBL suggests that the ACBL General Convention Chart be allowed in all IN games. (Click here to see all of the ACBL Convention Charts.)

STAFFING THE TOURNAMENT

Chair, Director-in-Charge, Staff and Equipment

The IN Tournament Chair (TC)

The unit appoints an IN tournament chair (TC) who has the overall responsibility for planning and running the tournament. The TC works together with the unit or district board and the Unit Tournament Coordinator to get the tournament sanctioned and to develop a tournament budget. (Click here to see the budgeting worksheet in the Appendix.) The TC is the sponsoring organization's official liaison with the Director-in-Charge (DIC).

The IN TC should include the IN Coordinator in the planning and organizing of the IN tournament/program or the IN Coordinator can serve as the TC. The TC should also work with the Unit's Education Liaison and the area bridge teachers to focus on opportunities to bring new players (students) into the games.

To run a successful tournament, the TC must put together an effective team of volunteers for committees. Remember to ask your newcomers to participate. They tend to be very enthusiastic.

For smaller tournaments, the work of several committees can be combined. Hospitality, Registration and Membership could all work together. In some cases, groups and individuals will be given specific assignments and asked to report back to the TC.

A detailed timeline for the TC to use in preparing for the IN tournament/program is included in the Appendix. It will help with decisions on the amount of detail you want to incorporate into the planning process and the organization of work that must be done to run a successful IN tournament or program.

Possible Committees

In an ideal world, the following committees and duties are suggested...

- Advertising/Promotion
- Hospitality (New Player Services)
- Partnership
- Caddy
- Membership
- Prize
- Entertainment

At the first meeting of each committee, the members should brainstorm about what they can do to ensure the success of the tournament. The TC should then meet regularly with the committee heads for several months before the tournament to review and coordinate the activities of each group. The TC should make regular reports to the unit board as the plans for the tournament develop.

Director-in-Charge (DIC)

ACBL allows a local director to serve as DIC of an IN sectional if the tournament has an upper masterpoint limit of 100 or fewer masterpoints. A sectional for players with more than 100 MPs must have a tournament or higher-rated DIC unless use of a local director is approved by ACBL management. All DIC assignments must be made by the ACBL Tournament Department.

IN regional tournaments must be staffed by an associate national or higher-rated director assigned by the ACBL Tournament Department.

IN programs held as part of a sectional or regional tournament will use the directorial staff assigned to the tournament. It is suggested that the unit request an IN director, one who is experienced in working with new players, and that the IN director work all of the sessions in the IN program. This will allow the new players to bond with the director and feel a sense of security and familiarity.

The unit or district can request a specific director on the sanction application. These requests will be honored whenever possible.

The DIC handles all aspects of running an IN tournament. This includes setting up the games, selling the entries, handling the tournament proceeds, supervising the other tournament directors and paying their expenses, handling appeals and completing and submitting the required paperwork.

Directing Staff

In addition to a DIC, other directors are necessary to help run the tournament. The number of directors you need will be based on the expected attendance.

NOTE: If you have a personable, local director who would like to work with the IN directors at the tournament, contact the Tournament Department for information on how to proceed.

Computers

All tournaments are scored by computer and all computers are provided by the directors. A computer enables the director to quickly calculate the scores, making the game more exciting because the competitors can find out how well they did almost immediately.

Personal summaries or recaps can be generated for interested participants. These are very popular with the newcomers and a great study tool. The line for these may be long because the players who win points are excited about having a printout to show their friends.

COMMITTEES

Overview

In an ideal situation, a lot of volunteers would serve on the following committees to produce the best possible results at an IN tournament/program. In the real world, and for a smaller tournament, the TC will probably want to select some of these ideas – those that seem best for the type of IN activity you are planning – and assign people/groups to work on them. Each committee would report back to the TC.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Advertising is the key ingredient in attracting outstanding attendance and in ensuring the success of an IN tournament. If the new players aren't invited, they won't come. New players like to feel that they were given a personal invitation.

The Tournament Flyer

Your flyer needs to be bright and cheerful. In addition to the schedule, it should include all of the special features of your IN tournament or program such as:

- ♥ **Guaranteed Partners** – for anyone who shows up an hour before game time.
- ♥ **Playing with Your Peers** – all the participants will be Newcomer or Intermediate players with about the same amount of bridge-playing experience.
- ♥ **IN Tournament Directors** – special directors who work well with Newcomers and Intermediate players.
- ♥ **Free Lesson & Speaker Program**
- ♥ **Free 0 to 5 Game**
- ♥ **Free Bridge Plus+ Game**
- ♥ **Entertainment, Refreshments**
- ♥ **Door Prizes (Goodie Bags, etc.)**
- ♥ **Trophies**

The Schedule

In advertising the schedule, make certain you show the different stratifications on the flyer. It is important that each person know there is a specific place for them (*e.g.*, If it's a 199er tournament, show 199er, 99er, 49er, 0 to 20 and 0 to 5 newcomers). Remember, the director will try to make the best games possible for the players. What you want is for everyone in every category to know they have a place to play, so they will show up. This is especially important if you are talking about an IN program as part of a larger tournament.

Never advertise events, as warranted. This will keep people home. Have the same events every day – same stratification and same time. Use your imagination to name the events to increase their appeal and to challenge the players.

NOTE: The tournament can offer a free game as high as 199er and not have to pay any sanction fees, as long as the game has zero entry fee and is used as a promotional tool to attract new players.

Extra Activities

The chair of this committee needs to work with the Entertainment and Hospitality Committees to see what they are planning. The tournament will be fun, so make it sound that way in the flyer.

Mailings

A mailing to advertise the IN program should be made to the group targeted to attend. Select your target group for the mailing based on the number of masterpoints they have earned; *i.e.*, 0 to 5, 0 to 20, 0 to 50, 0 to 100, 0 to 200, 0 to 300 (or Non-Life Master – 500 mps). Pressure-sensitive, printed mailing labels can be purchased from the ACBL targeting almost any group you wish, including not only players who are members of the host unit or district, but also groups in all surrounding units. These labels cost \$.025 each for the first 2000 and \$.015 each label after that (\$20 minimum order). The labels can be ordered by telephone, by e-mail (Alica.VanGunda@acbl.org) or through the Internet.

For the best results, mail your advertisements six to eight weeks ahead of the tournament dates. This gives potential participants time to set up partnerships and make arrangements to attend. This is very important for out-of-towners who must make travel and hotel arrangements.

Special Funding from ACBL

The ACBL has a cooperative advertising program. You may apply to receive one-half of the cost of your flyers, or mailing or other promotional effort. [Click here](#) for more information on the ACBL Cooperative Advertising Program.

Radio and TV Public Service Announcements

Many commercial radio and television stations will broadcast a certain number of public service announcements (PSAs) every day. By making the Friday night game a charity game, the sponsoring unit often can get free announcements on radio and television. If you are offering free bridge lessons at the tournament, the stations will usually announce them as well. Many newspapers are happy to publish such news in their weekly or monthly calendar of events. [Click here](#) for information on creating a press release.

Newspaper Articles/TV News Spots

Call the entertainment editor of your local paper and the "about town" news reporter at the local TV stations to tell them about the IN tournament. (You have nothing to lose by asking.) If you have a "hook" (such as a very young person playing in the tournament or a free charity game), you may get some additional free publicity for your local bridge activities.

Telephone Subcommittee

The Advertising and Promotion Committee Chair should appoint a telephone subcommittee to contact the Intermediate-Newcomer players in the unit(s) to encourage them to come to the tournament.

Social Bridge Players

Several members of the Advertising and Promotion Committee should arrange to visit all social clubs in the area to invite people who play bridge to participate in the IN tournament. This is an ideal way to give social players a positive, fun introduction to duplicate bridge. Remember, there may well be hundreds of people in your town who have never tried duplicate and who might enjoy the game, if you give them a chance to discover that competition can be great fun.

Area Bridge Teachers

The Advertising and Promotion Committee should coordinate its efforts with the unit's Continuing Education Committee (or Education Liaison) to ask area bridge teachers to invite their students to the tournament. These teachers should receive free invitations for their 0 to 5 players and flyers to share with all of their students. Give the names of the teachers you are working with to the Hospitality Committee. They should be asked to serve as hosts and hostesses at the playing site. Students like to see familiar faces when they arrive.

Distributing the Flyers

Encourage players at the local clubs to take flyers to any social players they know. Ask unit members to post the flyers at libraries, shopping malls, YMCA, YWCA, senior centers and country clubs.

Convention and Visitors Bureau (Local Chamber of Commerce)

Check with these groups to see what they might be able to do for your tournament. The Convention and Visitors Bureau sometimes offers giveaways provided by their members (boxes of cereal, perfume, etc.) or a booklet of coupons for your customers to use during the tournament (restaurants, etc.). If you apply in a timely fashion, the Chamber of Commerce may support the tournament with a grant.

Follow-up Publicity and Ideas

For six months after the tournament, the Advertising and Promotion Committee should assist the unit or district in sending advertisements announcing their regular tournaments to the players that attended the IN tournament. If the unit or district has a newsletter, this committee should send copies to these players. Follow-up publicity can help bring players to future tournaments.

Working with the Education Committee, you might also want to phone the players who participated to see if they enjoyed the tournament and to get suggestions for the next tournament. It's a good idea to have a special game in mind to invite these players to attend when you call. Your goal is to see if you can get them to be more active locally.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

The main function of the Hospitality Committee is to make the new players feel welcome.

New Player Services (NPS) Program

It is suggested that you take this opportunity to develop a New Player Services program for your unit. NPS is primarily a public relations program. A group of unit members serve on a committee (New Player Services) where they take turns being in the IN area, welcoming the players, answering questions and chatting.

New players often venture into club games or their first tournament with more than a slight level of trepidation or fear. Fear of embarrassment or failure may cloud the excitement of an advancing player. NPS Committee members help advancing players put these fears aside. The work of this committee results in a positive experience for the players – one that they will want to repeat again and again – even if they come in last! Through a New Player Services Program, a group of volunteers are able to greet newcomers with a friendly face while providing information and assistance.

Click here for more information on the [New Player Services Program](#) found in the Unit Education Liaison Handbook.

By implementing a NPS program in your unit, you will establish a committee that can continue to function at all levels of play to help ease new players into the bridge community. It's a nice feature at a club game, a sectional or a regional. New Player Services Committee members are encouraged to visit the IN program at all NABCs to help out.

If the intermediate and newcomer players feel welcome, they will be inclined to attend the unit's future IN sectionals and regionals.

Hospitality Desk

The people manning the hospitality desk need to be able to answer all types of questions, and when they can't come up with the answer, promise to get back to the player later on.

Set up a table where players can get local information about bridge lessons, club games, local hotels and local restaurants. Take-home materials on these subjects are invaluable. Ask the area clubs to provide flyers listing their newcomer and intermediate game schedules and distribute them during the tournament. Poll local bridge teachers, it's helpful if you can produce a list of the bridge courses currently being offered in the area.

Have on hand an ample supply of ACBL's *Exciting World of Bridge*, an inexpensive pamphlet that contains valuable information on what to expect at a duplicate game including bidding boxes, Alerts and Announcements, computer scoring and ethics. It also contains the information side of a convention card, a simplified version of the official ACBL convention card. This sample has been filled in to reflect the possible choices of a beginning bridge player. A newcomer can use this card or adjust it to show variations. The simplified convention card (blank), can be ordered from ACBL (product # SS4) for your tournament. Newer players, who don't use many conventions, may find it easier to fill out. (This card has affectionately been named the "fat free" card.) You can download a PDF of the simplified card at www.acbl.org/play/toolsSupplies.html

Registration Desk

Set up a desk to register the players and to distribute special registration gifts, or "goody bags," as they are often called. New players love receiving presents.

Registration Cards: Have each player fill out a card so the unit or district can get valuable information on each new player and at the same time properly distribute any gifts.

Gifts: Here are some suggestions for your registration gift: free plays from local clubs, the ACBL booklet *Adventures in Duplicate Bridge* (available from the ACBL Sales Department for \$2.00 each plus shipping), the *Exciting World of Bridge* brochure, the *E-Z Guide to Bidding the ACBL Way* booklet, lists of area clubs, IN games

and bridge teachers, a tournament flyer for the next sectional or regional in the area, a convention card holder, an instant scorer (available free from ACBL), a list of restaurants in the area and a candy bar or some other treat.

Name Tags: Name tags help new players get to know each other. They may be issued at the registration desk, included in the gift bags or made available at the selling desk. To help the new players feel more at ease, the people hosting the tournament should also wear name tags.

Extras: The Hospitality Committee should aim to make the room in which the events are played more pleasant and comfortable for the players. For example, the committee can place dishes of hard candies on the registration and partnership desk, provide coat racks and hang decorative signs for the various information desks. Balloons, posters, paper flowers, etc., all add a festive air.

PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Staffing the Partnership Desk

Units or districts often staff the partnership desk with local intermediate players and newcomers, generally because they have a good feel for matching up other intermediates and newcomers. In addition, these players may be willing to fill in with people who are still looking for partners when it is time for the session to begin.

Guaranteed Partners

If you want to attract new players to the tournament, offering a guaranteed partner service is extremely important. Ideally, players seeking partners should arrive one hour before game time. Have a stand-by person ready to play in case there are an odd number of players who need partners. If your volunteer stand-by doesn't get to play, it's a good idea to thank this person for helping out with a free play for another session of the tournament.

Standby Pairs

It's a good idea to have a pair of eligible players stand by in case they are needed to fill a game with a half table. Anyone willing to fill in should be allowed to play free.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Membership Desk

It's a good idea to have a membership desk or booth available at your tournament and located with the Hospitality Desk.

Supplies: Stock the membership desk with instant membership forms (available from the DIC), brochures about duplicate bridge and the *ACBL from A to Z* member guide. One of the best times to get a new player to join is immediately after winning a masterpoint.

Help from Local Clubs: Ask local club managers to help at the membership desk and use the instant membership forms that bear pre-designated ACBL player numbers. Memberships issued from this desk can help clubs earn an upgraded club championship and increase rebates to club officials. The club officials can earn the recruitment credit. This is a perk that the unit or district can offer to a club (or clubs) that might have canceled a regularly scheduled game in deference to the tournament.

Junior Memberships: ACBL offers a junior membership to players age 25 and under at a cost of \$14 per year provided the player is enrolled in school. The name of the student's school and the student's birth date must be on the application. A Junior membership entitles a student to receive three issues of ACBL's junior newsletter and a monthly issue of *The Bridge Bulletin*.

CADDY COMMITTEE

Caddy Chairman

The Chair of the Caddy Committee is called the Caddy Master and is usually the only member of this committee. The Caddy Master hires, schedules, supervises and pays the caddies.

The Right Kind of Caddy

Caddies are not there just to pick up score slips. They should be pleasant and friendly, and it is helpful if they have an interest in bridge. A personable caddy can enhance the players' enjoyment of the game. In addition, caddies often hear about problems that directors may be unaware of and can bring them to the directors' attention (such as a very slow table).

Training the Caddies

Click here to see the [Caddy Master's Guide](#), a brochure designed to help train the caddies.

Caddy Bridge Lessons

If you have four or more caddies interested in bridge, ask one of the local teachers to give them some mini-lessons between sessions. These youngsters can easily get started with [MiniBridge](#) and may want to take lessons when the tournament is over. This activity could lead to an entree into one of the schools the caddies are attending.

PRIZE COMMITTEE

TROPHIES

Overall Awards: It is suggested that you award trophies for each overall win and overall in each stratification. These awards can be trophies, engraved glass mugs, ACBL Bridge Bucks, etc. Trophies of any kind are extremely popular with new players – but if it's a trophy you decide to give, remember the bigger the better.

Section Top Awards: Section top awards are nice because they allow more people to collect prizes. Decks of ACBL cards, convention card holders, glasses engraved with the name of the tournament or an item that represents the area are all popular choices. If you aren't using *Adventures in Duplicate Bridge* in the gift bags, they make excellent section top awards (\$2.00 each for units from ACBL).

Door Prizes

Door prizes are fun, and you can award them in several ways.

First, fill three separate containers with slips of paper bearing section letters, table numbers and directions, respectively. By drawing one slip from each container, a winner can be determined, (e.g., Section A, Table 3, East).

Another way to award door prizes is to play Bridge Bingo at the end of each session. This will only work well if the games in the room are scheduled to finish at the same time and this activity is given publicity before the fact (otherwise the players will leave or gather around the scores). Here's how it works. Players use the last hand played as a bingo card. At the microphone, a member of the Prize Committee instructs the players to put their hands face up on the table, dummy-style. Taking another deck of cards that has been shuffled, the caller turns the cards up one at a time, calling each one out to the players. When players have the card that is called, they turn that card face down. The first player who turns over all thirteen cards is the winner. (It's also possible to use this gimmick to get the room quiet before the game starts.)

Awards Presentation

To add more interest to the tournament, a local official could be invited to formally acknowledge the winners immediately after each session as you award the trophies. The excitement is in the moment! It generates enthusiasm for others to try to win a trophy. Newcomers like to see who won the trophies, so make the most of the presentations. One of the members of the New Player Services Committee might be available for this job.

Remember, however, that many players come just for one session. They should be able to take their trophies home with them right after the game – even if there is a later score adjustment. The goodwill you have created is worth much more than the cost of an additional trophy!

Copies of the Event Overall Award

The DIC can run two extra copies of the event overall awards on the computer to give to the winners. A member of the Prize Committee should check to make certain the DIC (or a designated TD) is planning to do this.

Club Free Plays

The Prize Committee can work with local club managers to arrange for free play coupons for the participants in the IN tournament. If a club is willing, a free play coupon can be added to each gift bag or given out as a door prize. The players appreciate them and these coupons give the players a reason to visit a club and possibly become members.

Photos of the Winners

Intermediate players and newcomers like to be photographed when they win.

Polaroid pictures placed on a computer-generated event leader sheet make a great Wall of Fame or Rising Stars display. The last time the winners play at the tournament, they can take their picture with them. *Make sure each winning player gets a picture!*

Let your imagination go and get more creative with your Wall of Fame. Consider a pot of gold where you post pictures of the winners on the gold coins. Suspend stars from the ceiling and hang the pictures on them.

Often the IN director will be available and willing to help with the picture taking.

NOTE: With all decorations, make certain the playing site allows you to hang materials on the wall. If not, plan on free-standing displays – use easels, wire arches, white boards, etc.

Prize Desk

At an IN tournament, the section tops can be given out at the same time as the overall trophies. At a larger tournament, there is usually a prize desk for section top awards since so many are given.

ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

The Entertainment Committee plays a very important role in the success of an IN tournament. Here are some suggestions for activities you can provide that are popular.

Speaker Program

Organize a speaker program. Local experts and teachers make great speakers. Who is more of a celebrity or expert to beginners than their teacher? If teachers are speaking at the tournament, they are going to make sure that their students are there to hear them. Teachers don't want to speak to an empty room. Mini-lessons or bridge tips should be scheduled for each afternoon and evening starting 45 minutes before the session.

Here are some steps to follow:

- ♥ Put together a schedule for the tournament.
- ♥ Confirm and reconfirm with your speakers.
- ♥ Try to have a couple of back-up speakers who can step in if something goes wrong.
- ♥ Check out the tournament site and select an area for the speaker program that is appropriate – not too much traffic, good lighting, sufficient space, etc.
- ♥ Ask your speakers to provide a one-page handout that you can either photocopy before the tournament or reimburse the speaker for copying.
- ♥ Provide a microphone and a flip chart.
- ♥ You can schedule volunteers, such as local experts and bridge teachers, to speak for 30 minutes before each session. (If you don't have enough volunteers, schedule speakers only once a day.)
- ♥ Decide how you are going to compensate the speakers – with an honorarium or a free play – and be prepared to give them this “thank you” at the conclusion of their talk.

The Speaker Program can lead into a lot of other possibilities:

- ♥ You could have a book signing for speakers who are authors.
- ♥ You could give a door prize of one of the books written by a speaker.
- ♥ You could gather a panel of the speakers to answer questions after one of the sessions. (Coordinate this with a pizza party between sessions and you'll see a lot of players returning for the evening session.)

Free Lesson on Saturday Morning

Offer a free Introduction to Duplicate lesson on the Saturday morning of the tournament. Coordinate this activity with the Education Committee. This group will help you select a local bridge teacher to make the presentation. This gives local teachers a chance to bring their students who haven't tried duplicate to the tournament. Schedule a Bridge Plus+ (short, friendly) game to follow. Don't charge an entry fee. This is an excellent promotion and, if done well, should bring the unit or the district some new business.

You also could offer a beginning bridge lesson – Lesson One of the ACBL Bridge Series course *Bidding (The Club Series)* was designed as a promotional piece – and recruit people who don't play. The teacher who gives the lecture should offer the rest of the course for a fee following the tournament for those who are interested.

Special Saturday Night Bridge Show

Offer a special Saturday night bridge show. This activity takes a lot of organization and work but is well worth the time spent preparing it.

Invite eight of the better known players in the area to get together to deal and play about 10 hands as a board-a-match competition. Include five or six of the more interesting deals in a pre-duplicated set of boards for the Saturday evening events. Write out the hands on transparencies and, at the end of the game, show them with an overhead projector on a screen, or a chalkboard or large sheets of paper taped to the wall.

This presentation should be done in an entertaining fashion. When discussing these hands, include some errors. It's good for the newcomers to realize that experts don't always make the right bid or play.

NOTE: This will work at an IN Sectional. The players who pre-play the hands can't participate in the actual event.

Newcomer Hands with Analysis Sheets

Order sets of newcomer hands with analyses from the ACBL Sales Department. They give the players another opportunity to re-examine and discuss the hands when the game is over. These hand records have 60 copies in a pack and cost \$14.95 a set with free shipping and handling. They are for 0 to 5 and 0 to 20 games only. Notify your DIC prior to the tournament that you want to use these hands. (Incidentally, the director, unless a local, will have the regular hand records for the other events.)

Panel of Local Experts

Organize a panel of local experts to answer bidding and playing questions about hands the intermediate players and newcomers have just played. (Hand records for the players are necessary to make this activity work.)

Social Activities

Social activities are important. You can hold an informal dance by clearing the bridge tables and turning on a disc or tape player. Unit or district volunteers can cook various dishes to create a before-the-session breakfast or dinner buffet. A wine and cheese party is fun either between sessions or after the evening game.

IN Reception

If you host a between-sessions party for the IN players, be certain to invite some local bridge stars or dignitaries to attend. The new players enjoy knowing who's who!

REPORTING THE RESULTS OF AN IN TOURNAMENT

Reports and Payment of Fees

Report Forms: The DIC must submit the results of an IN tournament to the ACBL Tournament Department.

Press Sheets: The DIC must also provide the Tournament Department with a report of the games on disk. ACBL will award masterpoints earned at the tournament based on these results.

Sanction Fees: Sanction fees must be submitted with the tournament report. [Click here for a schedule of current fees.](#)

Due Date for the Tournament Report: The DIC must submit all fees, financial papers, and tournament results within two days of the end of the tournament.

IN Sectionals Run by a Tournament Director: If a tournament director is assigned to the sectional, there is a \$.50 per table surcharge up to a maximum of \$135.00. At the conclusion of the tournament, the DIC will meet with the TC to present copies of the completed financial forms and to collect the fees due ACBL. A unit official must be ready to write a check for the amount due at this time.

IN Sectionals Run by a Local Director: If your IN sectional has been approved to be run by a local club director, the TC is responsible for submitting the results (a copy of the game files on disk) within two days of the end of the tournament to Tournaments@acbl.org. The unit will be billed for the amount due ACBL.

APPENDIX

IN PROGRAM/TOURNAMENT TIMELINE & CHECKLIST

The Intermediate-Newcomer (IN) Coordinator who follows the ABCs of building an IN Program is responsible for insuring that there is:

- as large an attendance as possible, increasing throughout the tournament.
- an attractive selection of events for each group to play in each session.
- a direction to those events that will encourage these newer players to play more bridge – both at the tournament and club level.
- an attractive selection of social activities for the players.
- a continuous dialog between the unit's IN Coordinator and IN players throughout and after the tournament.

8 months before the tournament

- Discuss and create the event schedule for 300 MP and under games with the Tournament Chair.
- Discuss assignment of IN Director with the ACBL Tournament Department.
- Decide what IN promotions will be used (e.g., first day free-entry for 0 to 5 MP, teacher panel show, bridge lessons, special registration gifts, free-play coupons, etc.).
- Discuss IN space availability.
- Arrange for adequate budget for prizes, speaker free plays, IN promotions and mailing of IN Program flyer.
- Review the projected tournament ad, or appoint someone to create an ad to advertise the IN Program.
- Place the ads when ready in the district newsletter, etc.
- Ensure that the next sectional in the area has a full 5-20-49-99er & up schedule and is ready to be advertised at this sectional.
- Work on sponsorships and handouts for IN players.
- Get approval from the unit board to establish a *New Player Services Program* if the unit doesn't already have one.

3 months before the tournament

- Review the plans for publicizing the tournament
- If applicable, make sure a photographer has been appointed.
- Schedule meeting with *New Player Services Committee* members to decide on tournament assignments.
- Design a flyer to advertise the IN Program.
- Firm up plans for hospitality, speakers, panel show, free lessons, etc. which will be advertised on the flyer.
- Submit the flyer to ACBL for approval prior to printing.
- Order preprinted, pressure-sensitive labels for mailing IN flyers.
- Check playing space and arrange for ordering newcomer championship hand analyses from the Director-in-Charge.
- Decide on decoration theme and purchase supplies.
- Ensure that prizes and trophies are ordered.
- Prepare a club/teacher listing for IN information table.
- Check that a supply of ACBL materials has been ordered for the IN information table (*Exciting World of Bridge*, *Adventures in Duplicate*, back issues of *The Bridge Bulletin*).
- Discuss with area tournament director willingness to distribute flyers to nearby tournaments he/she attends.
- Confirm speaker schedule with the speakers.
- Begin coordination with teachers to invite their students to special games and events.
- Review plans for the IN hospitality goodie bags.

8 weeks before the tournament

- Send out IN postcards (flyers).
- Follow through with local publicity.
- Reconfirm arrangements for all social activities.
- Send out confirmation letters for all *New Player Services* assignments including IN guaranteed partnership program.
- Reconfirm with teachers all special activities for their students.
- Order trophies and prizes.
- Collect free plays and sponsor gifts for IN hospitality bags.

3 weeks before the tournament

The Telephone Committee should phone all IN players in the unit and extend an invitation to attend the tournament, mentioning that partnerships will be arranged.

1 week before the tournament

- Reconfirm again with the speakers.
- Verify that all signs for the tournament are ready.
- Make sure Zero Tolerance posters (or similar signs) are available.
- Purchase film for camera.
- Continue working with local publicity.
- Confirm with the Caddy Master that the caddies are hired, trained and have their assignments.

3 hours before the tournament

- Ensure playing area is set up including decorations, signs, and information table.
- Ensure everything is available for speaker program and that someone is prepared to introduce the speaker every session.
- Meet with IN director to discuss last minute details and announcements to be made before each session.
- Review with the IN D-I-C what you expect to be done each session:
 - Awarding of prizes after each session,
 - Taking photographs of the winners,
 - Asking winners to join ACBL,
 - Giving winners copies of the overall award sheet,
 - Explaining the scoresheets and masterpoint awards.

Before each session

- Be *responsible* for the performance of all specialized IN services.
- Follow through with the speakers. (Is there a thank-you gift?)
- Confirm that all positions are staffed (including IN partnership).
- Check on last minute arrangements for social activities.
- Have applicable trophies in view.
- Give the IN director any special announcements for the players.
- Socialize with IN players!!!

After the tournament

- Publicize the names of winners in local media.
- Handle any problems that may have occurred.
- Thank committee members.
- Get a disk of the names and ACBL numbers of participants in the tournament; ask for the entry blanks to retain addresses and contact all new players.
- Submit a report to the board on the tournament.

SUPPLIES FOR AN UNDER-200-TABLE TOURNAMENT

Checklist for Units Providing Their Own Supplies

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR AN UNDER-200-TABLE SECTIONAL

1. DUPLICATE BOARDS 5 sets of Boards

2. TABLE CARDS Section A & B Table Cards

3. GUIDECARDS Howell Assembly for 3-4-5-6-7 Tables
 Small Guidecards for 14-16-17-18-20-22-24 pairs

4. ENTRY BLANKS 1 pad of blank entry blanks
 1 pad of Section A entry blanks
 1 pad of Section B entry blanks
 1 pad of Team Entries

5. SWISS TEAM 600 Swiss reporting slips (T-10A, 100 each of 6 colors)
 50 Swiss Worksheets (T11)

6. CONVENTION CARDS 1,000 ACBL Private Scores (SS1)
 500 Simplified Convention Cards (SS4)
 200 Swiss Teams Inserts (SS3)

7. PICKUP SLIPS 1,000 White (102A)
 1,000 Yellow (102A)
 500 Green (102A)

8. RECAP SHEETS Recap and Press Sheets are generated by the computer.
 (Order these only if you are not using a computer.)

9. EXTRAS 10 extra decks of cards
 3 boxes of gold pencils

10. FORM KIT All of the forms you need are found in this booklet.

OPTIONAL: Hand Records with analyses for 0 to 5 and 0 to 20 events.