

CHAPTER VI – CLUB SANCTIONED GAMES

A. ACBL SANCTIONS FOR CLUB MASTERPOINT GAMES

Section 1 – ACBL Club Masterpoint Game Sanction Eligibility

- 1.1 An ACBL club sanction grants the right to an entity to conduct bridge games at regularly scheduled times and locations and award masterpoints at those games in accordance with specific ACBL rules and regulations.
- 1.2 A club may run up to two *ad hoc* regular sanctioned masterpoint games per calendar year at a date and time not currently sanctioned. These games are subject to the same rules and fees as a normal club masterpoint game.
- 1.3 Every club running ACBL-sanctioned games must have a designated club manager who is the official representative to ACBL.
- 1.4 It is the responsibility of the club to comply with all local, state and federal laws. Clubs are not authorized to use the ACBL name or logo or other ACBL identification except in connection with the issuance of masterpoints.
- 1.5 Games must be conducted in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of ACBL regulations as well as the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. The success or failure of games conducted by a club is the responsibility of the club manager. The club manager is free to operate the club as he or she sees fit, as long as the operation of ACBL-sanctioned games falls within the limits prescribed by ACBL.

Section 2 – Obtaining and Maintaining a Sanction

- 2.1 An application for an ACBL club game sanction, whether new or renewal, will not be accepted until the club manager signs the following arbitration agreement:
 - 2.1.1 Should any dispute, of whatever kind or nature, arise between the ACBL and the undersigned club, it is agreed that such dispute shall be resolved by binding arbitration pursuant to the rules of The American Arbitration Association or such other method of binding arbitration as may be agreed upon mutually by the parties.

2.2 Waiting Period

- 2.2.1 When the ACBL receives an application for a new club game sanction (or reinstatement of a lapsed sanction), there is a 30-day probationary period before the sanction is issued. During this period, copies of the application are sent to an official of the Unit in which the club is located and, on request, to the District Director for their assessment.
- 2.2.2 The ACBL will waive the 30-day probationary period if the Unit or the District Director agrees in writing to the waiver.

2.3 Allowable Objections to a Sanction

- 2.3.1 A Unit or a District Director may object to a masterpoint game sanction being granted on the grounds that:
 - a. the proposed quarters are not suitable, or
 - b. the applicant's record as an ACBL member indicates previous failures in meeting ACBL standards.
- 2.3.2 The ACBL may refuse to grant a new sanction because of the club manager's history of failure to adhere to ACBL regulations. If the ACBL rejects an application because of an objection from the Unit or the District Director, the applicant may appeal the rejection to the ACBL Board of Directors. The applicant must make the appeal within 30 days of the date he or she received notice that the application was rejected.

2.4 Duration of a Sanction

- 2.4.1 A sanction is valid until the end of the calendar year for which it was issued.
- 2.4.2 The ACBL will not renew a sanction if the club fails to observe regulations, including those that concern reporting and paying for special events sanctioned by the club.
- 2.4.3 If for some reason, such as remodeling playing quarters or location loss, a club must close a game for an extended period of time, the ACBL will place the sanction on an inactive status. The ACBL will not renew the sanction for the following year unless the club has a location and a specific date when games will resume.

2.5 Cancellation of a Sanction

- 2.5.1 ACBL management has the right to cancel or suspend a club game sanction for cause upon 30 days' notice to the club manager. Any one of the following shall constitute "cause" for cancellation or suspension: operation of a club out of compliance with ACBL regulations; unsuitable club venue; and/or the discriminatory practices in the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations.
- 2.5.2 A suspension is for a fixed period of time whereupon the sanction shall automatically renew. If a cancellation is for a fixed period of time, the club manager may apply for renewal. Cancellations may be permanent without the possibility of renewal.
- 2.5.3 ACBL management may immediately suspend or cancel a club game sanction if the "cause" for cancellation is such that continuation of the sanction will result in substantial and immediate violation of ACBL regulations, increase the likelihood of lawsuit against the ACBL, or result in violation of state or Federal law.
- 2.5.4 The 30-day notice of suspension or cancellation shall provide the club manager with the option of providing ACBL management with reasons in writing why the suspension or cancellation should not take place, whereupon ACBL management, in its own discretion, may leave the suspension or cancellation in place, amend the suspension or cancellation, or withdraw the suspension or cancellation.
- 2.5.5 The club may file a written appeal of a suspension or cancellation with the Appeals and Charges Committee of the ACBL Board of Directors within 30 days of the effective date of the cancellation; provided, however, that the suspension or cancellation will remain in effect until the appeal before the Appeals and Charges Committee has been decided. In order to be considered, such written appeal must include reasons why the cancellation is inconsistent with the terms of this Part A.

Section 3 – Cost of a Sanction

3.1 New Club Games

- 3.1.1 The ACBL considers a club game new if it has not been sanctioned previously at the specific location for which it is applying, if it failed to renew its sanction by January 31, if it is on inactive status, or if it has not conducted regularly scheduled duplicate games during the preceding calendar year. However, if a club moves to a new location in the same area and retains its club number, the ACBL does not consider it new. Should a new club game sanction be denied, a specific reason will be given.

3.2 Annual fee

3.2.1 The annual sanction fee per sanctioned game shall be \$11.50.

3.2.2 When a club files its annual sanction application, it must include the fee for each regularly scheduled game session. This fee is paid once a year. Games that operate for a short time during the year (for example, during summer months) are subject to this fee, just as if sessions were held throughout the year.

3.3. Table Fees

3.3.1 Regular game (18+ boards) table fees are \$1.00 and short game (12-17 boards) table fees are \$0.58 per table. **(short game fee increase effective 1/1/2019)**

3.3.2 A club must pay a fee for each sanctioned game session held plus a fee for each table in play. The ACBL charges only one game session fee if different levels of games are held simultaneously.

3.3.3 Clubs will be charged an additional \$2.00 per game fee if they either mail a hard copy of the monthly masterpoint and financial reports or submit reports using an outdated version of ACBLscore. Small clubs can request an exemption from these additional fees. New clubs requesting sanctions will be required to report electronically using ACBLscore.

Section 4 –Sanctioned Game Provisions

4.1 Scheduling Masterpoint Games

4.1.1 A club may conduct one or more regularly scheduled games under one sanction at varying sites.

4.1.2 The club must list all regularly scheduled games that will award masterpoints and all addresses where these games will be held on the sanction application.

4.1.3 Once the sanction is granted, only those game sessions listed on the application may award masterpoints.

4.1.4 If a schedule change is contemplated or proposed, two weeks' notice must be given to ACBL before the change may be made.

- 4.1.5 No notice is necessary if a club's regularly scheduled session falls on the evening (6:00 p.m. or later) of December 31 (New Year's Eve). The club may schedule two sessions of play that night – one to begin before midnight and the other after midnight.
- 4.2 Adding games
 - 4.2.1 A club may add or change game sessions on a sanction any time during the year, provided that it notifies the ACBL Club and Member Services Department and pays a fee for each game session changed.
- 4.3 Cancelling Sessions
 - 4.3.1 ACBL regulations permit the canceling of a specific session without penalty. The club manager or club director must note the canceled game session on the Monthly Report Form for Club Games ("Monthly Report"). No fees are refunded for canceled game sessions.
- 4.4 Non-exclusivity of Sanction
 - 4.4.1 ACBL sanctions are not exclusive. The ACBL encourages open competition among clubs and will sanction two or more club games simultaneously in the same community but usually not at the same location. When two or more club games occupy the same quarters (as happens when a group of sanction holders cooperate to maintain a city bridge center), they may not operate simultaneously unless their games are of a different class.
 - 4.4.2 Units may not compete with existing club sessions. A Unit may sponsor a club session or sessions when no existing club session(s) is in operation in a given area. Exception: Units operating a club-type session prior to a new session receiving sanction may continue to do so.
- 4.5. Clubs in Good Standing
 - 4.5.1 Clubs that operate in full compliance with ACBL regulations remain in good standing. On application, the ACBL will renew their game sanctions for the following year. However, the ACBL will not renew sanctions for clubs that have unresolved problems with their Monthly Report or other special game reports until the problems are resolved. The ACBL is not obligated to renew sanctions for clubs with significant violations of ACBL rules and regulations.

Section 5 – Sanctioned Club Game Requirements

5.1 Club Manager

5.1.1 Every ACBL-sanctioned masterpoint club game must designate an ACBL member in good standing with all service fees and dues paid as its manager. The club manager is accountable to the ACBL for the enforcement of ACBL rules and regulations in all sanctioned games that the club conducts. The club manager must supervise the following activities:

- (a) Preparation and filing of the Monthly Report and the Club Masterpoint Report. The signature of the club manager must be on the form when it is filed.
- (b) Correspondence with the ACBL on club game matters.
- (c) Application for sanction renewals and reporting any change of club manager(s), change of club address or session changes on a form provided by the ACBL or via email.

Section 6 – Daylong Robot Tournaments

6.1 Up to four (4) sanctioned daylong online robot games may be held daily per approved online club. Up to 24 hours are allowed for play. Each daylong game will play either 12 or 18 boards.

6.2 Masterpoint awards for one-session daylong robot games will be as follows:

6.2.1 Section awards capped at current 15 table level.

6.2.2 Overall awards for 100+ participants shall be:

- a. 2.50 for 1st place with 18 boards in play or 1.50 for 1st place with 12 boards in play (40% reduction) with depth and subsequent award per formula.
- b. Duplicate awards shall be awarded for each additional 100 participants.
- c. Sanction fees to be \$1.00 per table for 18 boards and \$0.58 per table for 12 boards. **(Short game fee increase effective 1/1/2019)**

Section 7 –Miscellaneous Club Regulations

7.1 Legal Defense of Clubs in Civil Actions

7.1.1 The ACBL Executive Director is authorized to have the ACBL participate to the extent and in such form as the Executive Director deems reasonable in the defense of a club/club manager/club official who is sued as the sole result of having enforced conditions of his/her sanction.

7.2 Relationship of clubs, Units and the ACBL

7.2.1 The primary concern of the ACBL is the welfare of its members as it relates to the game of bridge. Thus, regulations have been established by the ACBL to protect the interests of its members. However, these regulations are only in force during ACBL-sanctioned masterpoint games. Only the ACBL can assess discipline against a club for a violation of ACBL regulations.