

## Chapter X - Sectionals

### A. General

#### Section 1 - Sectional Tournament Allocations

~~1.1 Each Unit is required to hold a Sectional at least once every two years.~~

1.1~~2~~ Sectionals are allocated to Units. There are no restrictions as to the number of Sectionals a Unit may conduct. A District has the right of approval for Sectionals conducted by its Units. A Unit must abide by the decision of the District as to how many Sectionals it may run.

1.2~~3~~ Sectionals must be at least two days and no more than five days in duration, with the exception of Limited/Junior Sectionals , **Local Sectionals, Bridge Camps,** and Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs.)

1.3~~4~~ Limited/Junior Sectionals must be at least one day and no more than five days in duration. A Limited Sectional is defined as a Sectional with a masterpoint limit of no more than ~~0~~-750.

#### **1.4 Local Sectionals must be at least one day and no more than three days in duration.**

1.5 A Unit may not schedule more than six one-day Limited Sectionals in any calendar year.

1.6 STaCs must be at least two days and no more than seven days in duration. A Unit may not attempt to circumvent this rule by scheduling back-to-back sanctions that run consecutively.

1.7 The Las Vegas Unit 373 is grandfathered permission to run:

~~a.~~**1.7.1** Two, and only two, Sectionals per year which may be up to six and one half days in length; or

~~b.~~**1.7.2** One six and one-half day Sectional and up to two Sectionals not to exceed five days; or

~~c.~~**1.7.3** An unlimited number of standard Sectionals.

1.8 Sectionals may be Open, Senior, Limited by masterpoints (specifically, 0-100; 0-200; 0-300; 0- 750), Junior, Youth, **Local,** Progressive-style or a STaC.

1.9 Senior, Youth or Junior Sectional tournaments may be combined with limited-by-masterpoint tournaments. In these instances, the higher sanction fee will apply.

- 1.10 A Unit may join with another Unit(s) to run a Sectional or a STaC. A Unit may, with permission of the other Unit and the District(s), hold a Sectional in a contiguous Unit.
- 1.11 A Sectional may schedule up to four sessions of championship-rated events per day with no decrease in masterpoint awards. ACBL management may, with cause, disallow more than two championship sessions per day.
- 1.12 Sectionals-at-Sea **and Bridge Camps** are allocated only by the ACBL.
- 1.13 An Open Sectional may be run concurrently with a Regional restricted by age or masterpoints with the permission of the Unit in which the Regional is being held.

## **Section 2 - Scheduling Sectional Tournaments**

- 2.1 A Sectional may be scheduled and sanctioned at any time, provided the tournament can be included in the tournament listings in the Bridge Bulletin at least one month prior to the tournament and all rules and regulations regarding conflicts are met.
- 2.2 If a sanction application is submitted less **than** one year in advance, the Unit loses its claim to the dates.
- 2.3 All Sectionals have the same status and the same rules and regulations apply.
- 2.4 A sanction application to hold a Sectional will be acknowledged immediately upon receipt by the ACBL Tournament Department. The process is as follows: the Unit Tournament Coordinator will submit an online sanction application to ACBL headquarters that shall automatically be forwarded, without review, to the District Tournament Coordinator for approval. Upon the District Tournament Coordinator approval, the application will be reviewed for sanctioning by the ACBL Tournament Department.
- 2.5 Approval of Sectional sanction applications will be made **at least** one year out or immediately upon approval if received less than one year out.
- 2.6 Questions concerning scheduling and other conflicts for Sectionals will be resolved by the Unit(s) and the District organization involved.
- 2.7 Districts and Units perceiving a conflict with other Units or Districts must notify ACBL management or the Arbitration Panel within thirty (30) days of the tournament posting on the website.
- 2.8 When a Unit perceives a conflict between its Sectional and a tournament in another District, the Unit Tournament Coordinator shall work through his District

Tournament Coordinator to initiate the processes of conflict resolution in the same manner that Regional conflicts are resolved.

### Section 3 - STaCs

- 3.1 A STaC may be scheduled for up to seven consecutive days but may include only one weekend. However, ACBL management may grant an exception to the weekend requirement for cause.
- 3.2 A sanction application must be sent to the appropriate District Tournament Coordinator at least 12 months prior to the scheduled tournament date. The ACBL may sanction a STaC when it receives the sanction application with fewer than 12 months advance notice if there are no scheduling conflicts.
- 3.3 While only Units may apply for a sanction to hold a STaC, there is no objection to a Unit nominating a District or Districts to conduct the tournament. In District-wide STaCs, all clubs within the District(s) must be offered the opportunity to participate. Participation is at the club level when sponsored by a District. If a Unit outside of the sponsoring District chooses to participate, all clubs within that Unit must be invited to participate.
- 3.4 The organization receiving the sanction (i.e., the sponsoring organization) is responsible for the collection of any fees due from a participating ACBL sanctioned game.
- 3.5 A sponsor may schedule morning, afternoon and/or evening sessions. For the purpose of determining in which session a club should participate, use the standard club session designations. Many STaCs schedule only two sessions per day. The local sponsor must designate the sessions to be scheduled. For example, morning games would be those starting prior to noon local time, afternoon games would be those starting prior to 6 p.m. local time, and evening games would be those starting at 6 p.m. and later. Morning and afternoon games may not be combined as day games.
- 3.6 When a club wishes to participate in a STaC for a session other than their regularly scheduled game, the Unit may decide these cases. This authority to disallow a club from participating in a STaC extends only to games which conflict with another game for that session and only to games being conducted at other than their regularly scheduled time. Any club desiring to participate at their regularly scheduled time must be permitted to do so.
- 3.7 In order to be eligible for overall awards in a STaC, or any event that is ranked across more than one club, the minimum number of boards played is ~~set at~~ twenty (20) with the exception of masterpoint-limited events restricted to players

with less than 199 masterpoints whose minimum number of boards played is ~~set~~ **at** eighteen (18). (Effective 7/14/20)

- 3.8 Playing directors, and their partners, in STaC games are ineligible to receive overall STaC masterpoint awards (silver masterpoints) but are eligible to receive section awards. At the sponsor's option, the above restriction may be waived. Such waiver shall be noted on the sanction application submitted to ACBL Headquarters.

## Section 4 - Limited Sectionals

### 4.1. ~~Non-Championship~~ Local Sectional

**4.1.1 Local Sectionals, which are defined as open sectionals with an anticipated attendance of fewer than 25 tables per session, may be staffed by Tournament Assistants or club directors who have been certified for Local Sectional staffing.**

**4.1.2 Masterpoints awarded: 80% Silver, 20% Black, 100% Sectional rating.**

**4.1.3 No more than two events in any one session: only single session pair games; Swiss Team games will be allowed to be one or two sessions.**

**4.1.4 Maximum two sessions per day and six sessions in total.**

~~A Unit of fewer than 200 members or a Sectional tournament which averages 15 or fewer tables per session may run up to three non-championship Sectionals a year.~~

- ~~a. This Sectional is not required to use a Tournament Director.~~
- ~~b. A qualified club director or a local-rated Tournament Director may be used.~~
- ~~c. The Sectional will award silver masterpoints.~~
- ~~d. The M value will be no greater than 65% of an Open Sectional.~~
- ~~e. The Sectional must have a sanction and meet all other requirements.~~
- ~~f. The Sectional will be listed in the Bridge Bulletin with an "\*" or other indication that it is non-championship.~~
- ~~g. The sanction fees will be the same as for a championship Sectional.~~

### 4.2 0 - 99 Sectionals

~~4.2.1~~ A Unit not running at least two 99er Sectional tournaments per year is encouraged to grant approval to any club within its jurisdiction that applies for a sanction to run such a tournament. Sanction notification/application

per existing regulations will be forwarded to the District's Tournament Coordinator for his or her approval.

## **Section 5 - Sectionals-at-Sea**

- 5.1 A sanction application for a Sectional-at-Sea should be submitted to the ACBL at least three months in advance. (~~Send the request to tournaments@acbl.org~~)
- 5.2 The application must contain the following information:
  - 5.2.1 Ship's name and cruise line, departure/arrival dates, and ports plus the sponsor or Unit/District name, address and email.
  - 5.2.2 A schedule of all ACBL events with scheduled lectures.
  - 5.2.3 The schedule must meet the same criteria as for a land-based Sectional.
  - 5.2.4 The schedule and any advertising must be approved by ACBL.
  - 5.2.5 A list of directors who will be operating the games.
    - a. Directors must be approved by ACBL.
    - b. ACBL may require the director(s) to take a certification test.
- 5.3 Masterpoint awards will be:
  - a. 80% of an Open Sectional if an active ACBL Tournament Director is requested and assigned.
  - b. 65% of an Open Sectional (non-championship) if an active ACBL Tournament Director is not utilized.
- 5.4 There should be adequate playing space for all sessions scheduled as well as for the expected attendance.
- 5.5 The SAS Bridge Package (required to participate in the Sectional-at-Sea) may be purchased by passengers in advance or on board the ship, albeit at different prices, subject to available playing space and staffing.
- 5.6 A Sectional-at-Sea sanction fee per table is payable to the ACBL.
- 5.7 If an active Tournament Director is assigned, the Tournament Director per-session fee will also be payable to the ACBL. There will be no Sectional surcharge. The sponsor will be responsible for the Tournament Director(s)' transportation costs.

- 5.8 Sectionals-at-Sea will be subject to the same general conflict rules as land-based Sectionals. Currently, no Sectional-at-Sea may depart from a port within 25 miles of a concurrent land-based Sectional or Regional.

## **Section 6 - Progressive Sectional**

- 6.1 A Progressive Sectional tournament consists of one week of qualifying sessions in participating clubs, with a single-session final held at a central site after completion of club play. The sponsoring Unit should hold the one-session final within two weeks after completing the last club qualifying game. Two separate qualifying events may be held, with the single-session final of each event held on the same day.
- 6.2 Each Unit will be permitted to hold no more than one Progressive Sectional per calendar year.
- 6.3 All masterpoint awards for Progressive Sectionals will be based on Sectional rating. All masterpoints awarded will be silver.
- 6.4 During the qualifying rounds, there will be no overall masterpoint awards in either Pair events or Swiss Teams.
- 6.5 During the final, masterpoints will be calculated as though it were a two-session game ( $S=1.50$ ). The table count for each stratum will be equal to  $1.50 \times$  actual tables in the final. Credit will be given for tables in a lower strata/flight in accordance with normal rules for Sectionals.
- 6.6 The finals may be open, with or without stratification, or flighted. The finals may only be stratified or flighted if the qualifying rounds were also stratified or flighted.
- 6.7 Concurrent non-championship events shall not be considered in masterpoint calculation for the progressive finals.

## **Section 7 - Other**

- 7.1 ACBL management is authorized to award a Sectional sanction to a non- ACBL sponsor to conduct a tournament in other than ACBL territory as long as:
- a. the NBO (if no NBO, the appropriate WBF zonal representative) gives written permission;
  - b. Tournament Directors meet ACBL standards;
  - c. normal per table sanction fees are paid to ACBL;
  - d. the sponsoring organization abides by all ACBL regulations then in effect; and
  - e. the host country's laws are not contrary to ACBL regulations then in effect.

## Section 8 – Bridge Camps

### 8.1 Definitions and Parameters

8.1.1 A Bridge Camp is a special instance of a Local Sectional, where a residential program of bridge instruction incorporates games which award Silver masterpoints. Similar to tournaments-at-sea, attendees purchase a comprehensive package which includes lodging, bridge instruction, sanctioned games, and potentially other amenities such as meals.

8.1.2 Bridge Camps must be at least three and not more than seven days in length.

8.1.3 Bridge Camps may be located anywhere within ACBL territory. As with tournaments-at-sea, sanctioning is done through District 99 rather than the “home” District and Unit.

8.1.4 Bridge Camps are subject to the same rules regarding conflicts with other tournaments as any other Sectional.

### 8.2 Bridge Play

8.2.1 Bridge Camps may include up to two sessions of sanctioned play per day.

8.2.2 Each session must be directed by a certified ACBL club director.

8.2.3 Each session must include at least 18 boards to qualify for masterpoint awards.

8.2.4 As part of the bridge instruction, sessions may include supervised play, “chat bridge”, or similar features.

### 8.3 Bridge Logistics

8.3.1 Masterpoints awarded are the same as for a non-championship Sectional at Sea: 65% of Sectional rating, all Silver.

8.3.2 Bridge data will be handled the same as for Local Sectionals

8.3.2.1 A tournament schedule will be created and viewable online

8.3.2.2 Hand records will be generated and files sent to the sponsor for duplication

**8.3.2.3 Game results will be sent to an ACBL Tournament Director for posting on ACBL Live**

**8.4 Financials**

**8.4.1 Bridge Camps will be billed the same per-table sanction fee as an Open Sectional.**

**8.4.2 The full Sectional Surcharge also applies; this covers file processing at ACBL.**

**8.4.3 Bridge Camps are exempt from the \$4-per-player nonmember surcharge.**

**8.4.4 Sponsors will be invoiced at the conclusion of the Bridge Camp.**

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**Chapter X - Sectionals  
B. Finance**

**Section 1 - General**

- 1.1. Sponsoring organizations are required to pay all funds due the ACBL at the conclusion of the tournament.
- 1.2. The ACBL strongly recommends Units and Districts make student discounts available at Sectionals and Regionals.
- 1.3. All participants in any ACBL-sanctioned Sectional tournament are required to have a valid ACBL member number (even if inactive). **(Effective March 1, 2018)**
- 1.4. Except for charity events or events limited to players with fewer than 20 masterpoints, and except for active members of the American Bridge Association, for all Sectionals, the sponsoring organization will charge a mandatory additional fee for inactive members. This fee will be determined by ACBL management. For tournaments that are hosted in Canada, the fee will be collected in Canadian dollars.
  - a. It is suggested that the sale signage present this as a discount to members.
  - b. The additional fee shall be remitted to the ACBL. Fees collected in Canadian dollars will have that amount converted to US dollars before being remitted. **(Effective March 1, 2018)**



## Section 2 - Fees and Charges

- 2.1 Sectional tournaments are charged a surcharge in lieu of the transportation cost of the nearest Tournament Director of highest rank in addition to the usual table sanction fees and Tournament Director fees. The surcharge does not apply to Progressive Sectionals, STaCs, Sectionals-at-Sea, or Sectionals held at the same site as a restricted Regional.
- 2.2 STaC sanction fees are calculated on a sliding scale dependent on the number of tables in the STaC.
- 2.3 The added fee per player that is required to be collected at Sectionals from non-members or non-service fee paying Life Masters is waived for STaCs.
- 2.4 Sectionals-at-Sea have a unique schedule of fees and charges.
- 2.5 All of these fees are subject to annual review by ~~the Board of Directors~~ **ACBL Management** as part of the budgeting process and are posted on the ACBL website under Prices and Fees.
- 2.6 The sanction fee will be waived for Sectional and Regional tournament events which are designed to introduce new players to tournaments and those which do not charge entry fees.
- 2.7 No sanction fees will be charged for free fill-ins.
- 2.8 ACBL management is authorized to waive any Board-mandated sanction fee for cause. This authority may be used for a specific event(s) or an entire tournament.

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## Chapter X - Sectionals

### C. Events/Schedules

- 1.1 Strata-flighted events at Sectionals may be advertised and run with a combined Flight A and Flight B flight in one group playing together and ~~the~~ Flight C playing separately.
- 1.2 Senior events may be held with minimum age restrictions of 60 (60 as of January 1, 2020, 61 as of January 1, 2021, 62 as of January 1, 2022, 63 as of January 1, 2023, 64 as of January 1, 2024, and 65 as of January 1, 2025) or 75. Such events may be stratified by masterpoints. The masterpoint awards will be 80% for 60+ years of age and 70% for 75+ years of age. (Age limit transition effective 1/1/2020.)

(See also Ch. XIII – General Tournament Information, F. Events, Section 1 – Tournament Events and Restrictions)

## **Section 2 - Scheduling**

- 2.1 When sanctioning Sectionals, ACBL management will notify the Tournament Chair and the District President (or his/her designee) when proposed events or masterpoint ranges seem inadvisable or inappropriate.
- 2.2 If it is in the best interests of bridge and the ACBL, ACBL management may, at its discretion, grant a sanction even though such a sanction would violate an existing regulation. Irrespective of this authority, another Unit or District retains the right of appeal for arbitration to the Arbitration Panel if the matter concerns violation of a conflict regulation.

## **Section 3 - Unrestricted Events**

- 3.1 At Sectional tournaments, events which are unrestricted in any way (completely open) shall be credited with all tables in play in totally concurrent events (pairs, teams or individual but not knockouts or continuous pairs) for the purpose of computing overall awards up to a maximum total of three times the number of tables in play in the unrestricted event. In the event that a concurrent NLM Regional is held at the same site, the unrestricted event shall be credited with 65% of any pair or Swiss tables in the NLM Regional held during the same session for the purpose of calculating overall awards.
- 3.2 For the purpose of awarding masterpoints, a restricted event that is two sessions, morning and afternoon, is deemed to be totally concurrent with a two- session event that is afternoon and evening. However, if a restricted event is scheduled horizontally, it is not deemed to be totally concurrent with a two- session vertical event.

## **Section 4 - Special Games at Sectionals**

- 4.1 All Units (i.e. Sectional sponsors) are permitted to run up to two special game sessions at each Sectional with the exception of STaCs. In the USA, these special games may be to benefit the ACBL Charity Foundation, the ACBL Educational Foundation, the ACBL International Fund, the Grass Roots Fund or the ACBL Junior Fund. In other countries, they may benefit the NBO equivalent, if it exists, or an ACBL fund/foundation if it does not. The choice of beneficiary shall be made by the tournament sponsor.

- 4.2 Such a special game may be run as an open game, senior game, team or pair game, newcomer game, or any other game that is run at a Sectional.
  - 4.3 The masterpoint awards will be Regional-rated silver points.
  - 4.4 The sponsor of the Sectional will be charged USD \$1.00 per player. In Canada, the charge will be CAN \$1.00 per player. In other countries, the sponsor will be charged USD \$1.00 per player. These funds shall be included in the tournament report and shall be dispersed to the appropriate organization chosen by the tournament sponsor.
  - 4.5 The normal sanction fee for Sectionals will also be charged to the sponsoring organization.
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## Chapter X – Sectionals

### D. Operations

#### **Section 1 - Staffing** (Effective January 1, 2023)

- 1.1 Championship Sectional tournaments will be staffed by Tournament Directors who are ACBL employees. Championship Sectionals are defined as open sectionals with an anticipated attendance of 25 or more tables per session.
- 1.2 Local Sectionals, which are defined as open sectionals with an anticipated attendance of ~~less~~ **fewer** than 25 ~~more~~ tables per session, may be staffed by Tournament Assistants or club directors who have been certified for Local Sectional staffing.
  - 1.2.1 Masterpoints awarded: 80% Silver, 20% Black, 100% Sectional rating.
  - 1.2.2 No more than two events in any one session: only single session pair games; Swiss Team games will be allowed to be one or two sessions.
  - 1.2.3 Maximum two sessions per day and six sessions in total.
  - 1.2.4 ACBL will provide a specific ACBL Tournament Director to work remotely with each Local Sectional's club director, assisting with rulings, movements, and other questions, as well as immediately posting session results online.  
Note: One ACBL TD would work with 3-6 Local Sectionals at a time.
- 1.3 For tournaments not staffed by an ACBL employee, the Sectional surcharge applies. This Sectional surcharge is to offset the cost of processing at ACBL

Headquarters that would normally be done on site by a Tournament Director.

- 1.4 NLM Sectionals with an upper masterpoint limit of 750 masterpoints or fewer may be run by Tournament Assistants or club directors who have been certified for Local Sectional staffing.
- 1.5 Regardless of staffing, all tournaments are expected to follow ACBL policies and regulations relating to permitted methods, use of bidding boxes, and nonmember eligibility and charges.
- 1.6 ACBL will produce educational content for those club directors and Tournament Assistants that want to be eligible to run our Local Sectionals and Non-Life Master Sectionals or assist at larger tournaments. This content will be made available at no charge to these directors. These club directors and Tournament Assistants would need to pass a test on directing skills once every two years to continue working at those tournaments.