



American Contract
Bridge League

Sectional Tournament Planning Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to the Sectional Tournament Planning Guide. The material in this guide has been designed to assist in planning and running a successful tournament. Here you will find tips for sectionals, ideas for bringing new players to your tournament, guidelines for the Tournament Chair and all of the appointed committee chairs, resources for current tournament fees and convention information and much more.

As the Tournament Chair, you are the official goodwill representative for your unit and/or district. Your availability throughout the tournament is essential to the success of the tournament. You will play many roles as Tournament Chair, but being an understanding, cooperative and hospitable host is paramount.

Your availability will allow you to:

- Effectively and efficiently oversee that hotel and convention center staff are performing their duties promptly.
- Confirm that subcommittees have completed assigned tasks.
- Ensure proper announcements are made.
- Act as a troubleshooter for unexpected problems.

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please email tournaments@acbl.org.

General Information

- ♠ 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.
- ♠ Each unit is required to hold a sectional at least once every two years.
- ♠ Sectionals must be at least two days and no more than five days in duration.
- ♠ 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 0-500.
- ♠ All sectionals have the same status, and the same rules and regulations apply.
- ♠ If a sanction application is submitted less than one year in advance, the unit loses its claim to the dates.
- ♠ Questions concerning scheduling and other conflicts for sectionals will be resolved by the unit(s) and the district organization involved.

For more information about sectionals, please see **Chapter 10** of the ACBL Codification (<http://www.acbl.org/about-acbl/administration/acbl-codification/>) and **Chapter 6, Section 3** of the ACBL Handbook (http://www.acbl.org/clubs_page/club-administration/club-managers/acbl-handbook-of-rules-and-regulations/).

Roles and Responsibilities of Tournament Sponsors and DICs

This is a list of areas requiring pre-discussion between a Director-in-Charge and a sponsor. When the DIC and sponsor are new to each other, these topics should be covered before the tournament in order to ensure a smooth and cohesive operation. Over time, the sponsor preferences become known to the DIC, and little or no discussion is necessary.

While the final option on many of these decisions rests with the sponsor, the sponsor should recognize the professional expertise of the DIC and make all efforts to reach a collaborative conclusion.

In unusual or unexpected circumstances (e.g. fire, power failure, impending severe weather, etc.) the DIC is responsible for making decisions in everyone's best interest.

Pair Game Type Movements (individual, pairs and BAM)

Number of boards played (number of rounds is a function of section size). Typically 24 to 27 in open games, 24 in gold rush games and 24 maximum in lintermediate/Newcomer games.

Sponsor's preference of 24 or 26/27 should be determined in general, not session-by-session.

Type of movement

The environment in which our games begin requires that movement decisions be made by the DIC.

If the sponsor has specific suggestions in this regard, the sponsor should discuss this with the DIC in advance.

Pair Game Type Movements (individual, pairs and BAM) *Cont.*

Combined scoring

Typically sections are combined for scoring and ranking in open and flight A(X) and B/C events.

Not combined in gold rush and I/N events.

Side games vary by circumstance.

As with type of movement, this is usually left to the DIC with sponsor input welcome.

Time per round

Typically the time allowed for pair games is 15 minutes for two-board rounds and 21 minutes for three-board rounds.

Sponsors wishing to deviate from these suggestions should consult with the DIC prior to the tournament.

Swiss and Round Robin Team Games

Number of rounds and number of boards per round

For two-session events, common choices range between 48 and 56 boards. Top flights often play more boards per round than concurrent lower flights (seven rounds of eight and seven rounds of seven). When a small event and a larger event share close quarters, they often both play six rounds of nine (or six rounds of eight instead of 7 x 7).

Round robin or Swiss, day of the week, getaway day, length of break, player desires and other factors need be considered.

One session (side games) are four rounds of six. The starting time of the next session is one of the determining factors for the number of boards played.

The option, provided the subject has been discussed in advance, rests with the sponsor.

Time per round

A set amount of time in which to play, compare and report has become the norm. The typical time allotted is eight minutes per board; this includes playing the boards, comparing scores and turning in the results. Often an additional minute or two needs to be given to inexperienced groups and a minute or two less when the sponsor has requested an early departure. Sponsors wishing to deviate from these suggestions should consult with the DIC prior to the tournament.

When (and if) to break (length)

Sponsor option.

VP scale (20 or 30)

Typically included in advertising.

Sponsor option. Substantial departure from past practice must be discussed with the DIC in advance.

Swiss and Round Robin Team Games *Cont.*

Pairing

Complete (and almost complete) round robins are paired entirely in advance. Swiss events typically are random in round one and paired by Swiss team rules thereafter. The Tournament Director, based on game size and other considerations, sets various parameters of loose or tight pairing in ACBLscore.

Bracketing

Brackets are typically determined by the TD when entries close. In an open event, the top bracket is typically played as a Swiss and is sometimes sold as open to any team.

Knockout Events

Number of boards

Typically, KOs play 24 boards per match. Flight A KOs (rare) sometimes play 28. Compact KOs are 24 boards. Morning sessions are 24 boards (or fewer).

Handicapping

Sponsor option. ACBL requires that advertising note whether the tournament will, may or will not handicap. Sponsor and DIC should discuss exact details in advance.

Replays

Typically not permitted but a sponsor may opt (in advance) to allow or to allow after an intervening match.

Bracketing (including where to break and three sessions)

Sponsor option. Large KOs rarely pose problems in bracketing. In relatively small events, when entries close, the TD must make brackets that will displease the fewest contestants. Sometimes one or two three-session brackets is the best solution. The sponsor should make desires, if any, known to the DIC in advance.

Additional Sponsoring Organization Responsibilities

Conventions permitted

The sponsor decides whether conventions from the Mid-Chart (or in rare situations from the SuperChart) will be permitted. ACBL rules pertaining to publication of conventions permitted must be followed.

Electronic scoring

The sponsor arranges for electronic scoring devices, if desired, in advance. Some sponsors own them, others rent them from various sources. The DIC must know in advance what, if any, those arrangements are and if a sufficient quantity will be on hand. Financial details need be agreed upon in advance if directors are involved in the rental process.

Hand records

Electronic sets (purchased from ACBL) are provided by the DIC. Typically the DIC arranges for copies to be printed for after-game distribution. If boards are not pre-duplicated, the DIC arranges for necessary hand records to be printed. The sponsor pays all costs.

Additional Sponsoring Organization Responsibilities *Cont.*

Masterpoint averaging

Sponsor option. Masterpoint averaging, if used, must be noted in the tournament advertising.

Number of breaks

Sponsor option. Typically zero, one or two hospitality breaks. Number and/or length of breaks is often determined by distance to and number of facilities.

Pre-duplicated boards

The sponsor may arrange to have boards pre-duplicated. The DIC must approve the security and reliability of the arrangements and supplies the ACBL pre-dealt hands.

Seeding

The sponsor may provide a person to assist the selling director with seeding or leave it to the director to seed the players.

Tournament Timeline

Pre-sanction activities

Prior to applying for a sectional sanction a unit should appoint a Tournament Chair, select dates for the tournament and secure a site.

Once the site is chosen, meet with site management to discuss the necessary arrangements for the tournament. Site management will use these notes to create a set of specifications for the tournament to distribute to their staff.

The items on the following checklist should be discussed and agreed upon at that time.

Tournament Site Checklist

- Playing space**
ACBL requires at least 81 square feet per table with extra room for director's tables, water stands, book vendors, etc. as needed. A copy of the projected playing area should be sent to the DIC. If there are any changes, a revised copy of the floor plan should be sent to the DIC of the tournament.
- Lighting**
At least 20-foot candles of illumination 30 inches above the floor are needed for all tables. Additional lighting may be necessary, particularly at the director's table.
- Tables and chairs**
Arrange for table and/or chair rentals if necessary.
- Smoking**
Areas for smoking must conform to local and state law.

Tournament Site Checklist *Cont.*

- Extra tables**
If possible six- and eight-foot tables are needed for directors, partnership desk, hospitality desk, bookstore, supplies, water tables, etc. Impress upon the facility the need for frequent maintenance of the water stations.
- Hotel rooms**
You may need to book a hotel room for a director that is travelling from out of town. You should also have a recommended hotel site for out-of-town players.
- Refreshments**
A provision for coffee and soft drinks must be made.
- Cleanup**
If cleanup is not provided by the facility, other arrangements must be made.
- Microphones**
May be needed, especially in large rooms.
- Coat racks**
Either coat racks or a check room must be available, especially in cold weather.
- Mirrors**
Any mirrors in the playing room must be covered.
- Food service**
If food is served by the facility, inform them of the hours bridge players will be eating.
- Power**
There needs to be power outlets for the director's table and for time clocks.
- Trash**
Large trash containers need to be plentiful throughout the playing rooms.
- Wall space**
If the facility does not allow for hanging recaps and posters on the walls, easels or push pin boards must be provided.
- Daily bulletin**
Arrangements must be made for bulletin production if the tournament chooses to produce one.
- Safe deposit box**
Arrange to have a safe deposit box to store tournament receipts.
- Bookstore**
If the tournament has a bookstore, hall space will be needed.
- Tournament desks**
Where will the desks for prizes, hospitality (registration), partnerships, I/N and information be located?
- Signage**
Some of your committees, such as registration, will need signs and decorations to identify them.

One Year Out

Sanction application with TourneyTRAX

Any ACBL member may apply for a sectional tournament. If you are new to TourneyTRAX, you will need to create an account (MyACBL login information will not work in TourneyTRAX). Go to <http://tournaments.acbl.org/UserLogin> and click on the *Click here to register* next to *New User?*.

Tournaments Login

Sign in

ACBL Member#

Password

New User? [Click here to register](#)

Forgot Password? [Click here to request](#)

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- FAQ's (Coming Soon)

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Once you have created your account and signed in, select “Tournament Application” on the right side navigation and complete the application.

Tournament Application

Tournament Basic Information

Click here to search events by date range & district

Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

Start Date *

End Date *

Tournament Name * Application Date : 06/04/15

Category * Type *

District Unit

MP Restrictions Conventions Allowed

Proposed Tournament Site

Site

Address

City * Greater Metropolitan Area

State/Province *

Zipcode * Phone Number

Hotel Information

Copy Address from Tournament Site

Name

Address

Local Phone# Nightly Rate

National Phone# Book-By Date

Parking Fee

Parking Note

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Note that asterisked items are required.

TourneyTRAX will automatically select the appropriate District Tournament Coordinator.

Once an application is submitted, it must then be approved by the District Tournament Coordinator before being sanctioned as a tournament.

Only the Tournament Chair is allowed to make certain changes to a tournament. Fliers must be submitted to the ACBL Tournament Coordinator for approval and posting.

Submit final schedule of events to the ACBL Tournament Department. Timely completion of a sectional's schedule is critical in this process as staffing, advertising, online partnership desk and other parts of the tournament process require the submission of the flier.

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Ten Months Out

To run a successful tournament, the Tournament Chair must have an effective team of volunteers for committees. Now is the time to appoint Tournament Committee Sub-Chairs.

Increasingly, tournaments are seeking sponsors for tournaments and individual events. The chair, the publicity and promotion committee or a special sub-committee may handle sponsorship. All committee chairs should report to whoever is in charge of sponsorship before seeking donations or giveaways from local businesses so that these efforts aren't duplicated.

The Tournament Chair may serve in more than one capacity but should not try to do everything. The following committees are suggested for sectionals:

- ♥ Finance
- ♥ Hospitality/Information
- ♥ Publicity and Promotion
- ♥ Partnership
- ♥ Intermediate/Newcomer (I/N)
- ♥ Conduct and Ethics and Tournament Appeals
- ♥ The Caddy Master
- ♥ Prizes

The following pages contain guidelines for the committees listed above.

Finance and Budget Committee

The primary function of the Finance and Budget Committee is to prepare a budget for the tournament and inform each committee of its allocation. Some flexibility should be built into the budget so that more funds are available when attendance is up, and cutbacks can be made should attendance be less than anticipated. Click [here](http://web2.acbl.org/handbook/handbook/AppendixG.pdf) (<http://web2.acbl.org/handbook/handbook/AppendixG.pdf>) for a current fee schedule.

The DIC can provide estimates of all ACBL-related expenses prior to the tournament. These items include sanction and supply fees, including hand records and printouts where applicable, and director fees, transportation and per diem expenses. The DIC can also provide an estimate of the number of hotel nights needed by the directing staff.

The Tournament Chair or designee should consult with the DIC about decisions that deal with the financial aspects of the tournament operation. The DIC will be responsible for the collection and disbursement of money during the tournament. The DIC also will be responsible for tournament funds for the duration of the tournament unless the sponsor chooses to receive funds after each sale and disburse the funds as necessary. In either case, selling shortages are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.

The chair of the Finance Committee should inform the DIC of entry fees, student rates and free plays, if any, and how they will be handled.

Unless the sponsoring organization has assumed the handling of funds, the DIC must:

- ◆ Be the custodian for all funds collected.
- ◆ Pay staff per diem and travel expenses from funds collected.
- ◆ Make all authorized disbursements.
- ◆ Give the Tournament Chair a complete financial report and any funds due the sponsor immediately after the tournament is over.
- ◆ Get a check from the sponsoring organization for the amount due the ACBL.

If the sponsor has chosen to maintain control of the funds during the tournament, the sponsor must:

- ◆ Receive the funds collected by the entry sellers.
- ◆ Pay for all staff costs and expenses.
- ◆ Ensure the security of the receipts.
- ◆ Have a check for the funds due the ACBL ready for the DIC at the conclusion of the tournament.

Hospitality Committee

The responsibility of the Hospitality Committee is to welcome the players to the tournament, staff the hospitality/information table, operate the registration desk and plan entertainment at the tournament.

Ask local bridge teachers and club owners to assist with hospitality. Newcomers like to see a familiar face, and the opportunity to sign up new members can be a nice perk for a club manager who has closed a club for the duration of the tournament.

Hospitality desk

The hospitality/information desk should provide local information about bridge lessons, club games, local hotels and restaurants.

The people staffing the hospitality desk at the tournament need to be able to answer all types of questions. If they can't answer a player's question, they need to find the answer and get back to the player as soon as possible.

Registration desk

For the registration desk, you will need registration cards and a way to organize them, signage for the desk and pencils. You can also stock it with instant membership forms that can be obtained from the DIC.

The registration card should be designed to capture as much information as possible. This will help the committee to decide how to use the information following the tournament.

It's a nice touch to welcome the players with a "goodie" bag or special registration gift (or both). The gifts add to the feeling of being welcome at the tournament. This committee would select the welcome gift and stuff the bags.

The registration desk must be staffed at least one hour prior to each afternoon and evening session ensuring that players have a chance to register throughout the tournament.

After the tournament use the information gathered from the registration cards to:

- ♣ Contact non-members and invite them to join.
- ♣ Send a letter to non-members thanking them for attending the tournament and send along a free play to invite them to the next unit game.
- ♣ Do a postcard mailing to non-unit members to invite them to the next sectional/regional.
- ♣ Create an email file so you can send periodic announcements to this group.

Entertainment

Daily entertainment that includes both social and educational activities is usually well received by players.

Look to your own membership for entertainment. Many clubs have talented musicians, artists, comedians and magicians among their ranks. Be sure to make arrangements for sound systems if necessary.

Hospitality Committee *Cont.*

Social activities are important. Here are a few ideas:

- ♠ A between-sessions wine and cheese party.
- ♠ An after-session dance (have a live band or a DJ, a cash bar and snacks).
- ♠ A panel of local experts to answer questions about the hands just played (add pizza to the panel between sessions, and you'll see a lot of players returning to play in the evening).
- ♠ A panel show (Bridge Hollywood Squares).
- ♠ Celebrity speakers.
- ♠ Free 45-minute lesson between sessions.
- ♠ A breakfast or brunch with your volunteers providing the food (if your site allows food to be brought in).

The Hospitality Committee could:

- ♥ Provide refreshments during the session (e.g. cookies, popcorn, candy, fruit). Many players enjoy a snack while they discuss the hands just played, especially after the evening session. Some facilities will allow you to bring in food, and others will not.
- ♥ Sell ACBL memberships or collect dues payments.
- ♥ Ask area clubs to provide fliers. Some players will want information on local club games, including games for I/N players.
- ♥ Ask local teachers for information to create a list of bridge courses. Make a directory of courses currently being given by area teachers as a handout.
- ♥ Validate parking tickets.
- ♥ Make a restaurant guide and have sample menus available. Make it easy for your players to eat between sessions by providing area information.
- ♥ Distribute brochures on local points of interest.
- ♥ Appoint a decorating committee. A lot of fun can be added to the tournament if there is a theme.
- ♥ Act as a center for lost and found items (especially misplaced convention cards).
- ♥ Set up, stock and staff the hospitality suite. Make sure players are notified of the times when the hospitality suite will be open and its location.
- ♥ Have first-aid materials available. If you choose to provide any medication such as aspirin, ibuprofen or acetaminophen, a form should be signed by the player stating that they are taking this medicine at their own risk.
- ♥ Provide "goodie" bags for the registration table

Hospitality Committee *Cont.*

If “goodie” bags are being given out, decide on the items (either purchased or solicited) for the bags and have them assembled before the first day of the tournament.

Suggested items for “goodie” bags:

- ◆ Restaurant lists and coupons
- ◆ Brochure listing local clubs and teachers
- ◆ Information on local tourist attractions
- ◆ ACBL Instant Scorer
- ◆ Fliers for other upcoming local tournaments
- ◆ Pencils or pens (hanging pens are popular)
- ◆ Promotional gifts (key chains, pencils) donated by local businesses
- ◆ Candy
- ◆ Convention card stickers and holders
- ◆ T-shirts
- ◆ Bumper stickers
- ◆ Notepads
- ◆ Coffee mugs
- ◆ Decks of cards
- ◆ Magnets

Publicity and Promotion Committee

The main responsibility of the Publicity and Promotion Committee is to get the word out about the tournament and to encourage as many people as possible to attend.

No tournament publicity should occur until the tournament is sanctioned. In addition, ACBL must approve all tournament advertising before it is printed and distributed. (The approval of your sanction does not imply approval of your schedule of events.)

This committee should work with the media by sending advance press releases to local papers announcing the tournament and highlighting any special events (such as a free lesson). The committee can also send releases about winners—a nice way to provide recognition for your players. Tips from the ACBL Marketing Department can be found [here](http://www.acbl.org/marketing/publicity/) (<http://www.acbl.org/marketing/publicity/>).

Funding for publicity for newcomer activities may be available through the ACBL Cooperative Advertising Program. For more information about the CAP program, click [here](http://www.acbl.org/marketing/cooperative-advertising-program/) (<http://www.acbl.org/marketing/cooperative-advertising-program/>).

Take advantage of the discount at Office Max and Office Depot for fliers and other copying. Click here for a member discount card: <http://www.acbl.org/assets/documents/marketing/OfficeMax2010.pdf>

Ways to publicize your tournament:

Make arrangements for fliers to be printed and distributed locally and sent to nearby clubs in other units.

Use ACBL's Tournament Email Services. For guidelines and instructions, click [here](http://www.acbl.org/marketing/email-services/) (<http://www.acbl.org/marketing/email-services/>).

Place an ad in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin or other bridge-related publications. Ads should include the schedule of events (with masterpoint limitations), the tournament site, hotel information and contacts. Click here for tournament advertising deadlines and rates: <http://www.acbl.org/marketing/cooperative-advertising-program/advertise-in-the-bridge-bulletin/>

Coordinate committee assignments to ensure that all local clubs are visited and urged to support the tournament.

Use mailing labels from previous tournaments and send reminders.

Coordinate with the Chair of the I/N Committee. Special inserts or fliers should be sent to the 0 to 200 players to inform them of events and activities especially for them. This group is more likely to attend if you offer a full schedule of limited games.

Partnership Committee

The main responsibility of the Partnership Committee is to find a partner or teammates for anyone attending the tournament. Finding a compatible partner can make all of the difference in someone playing at your tournament and attending future tournaments.

All tournament advertising should contain the name, phone number and email address of the Partnership Committee Chair. Many out-of-town players will contact the chair well in advance of the tournament to arrange partnerships and teammates.

Use ACBL's online Partnership Desk for pre-tournament matches. ACBL's online Partnership Desk is available to all ACBL members for all tournaments and clubs through the MyACBL portal. The ACBL Partnership Desk allows individuals to post requests and respond to the requests of others via a messaging system.

The Partnership Committee can take advantage of the online Partnership Desk by viewing the requests that have been posted for their tournament and matching those individuals with players who have contacted the Partnership Committee directly; however, the tournament can benefit from the matches made on the online Partnership Desk even without the involvement of the Partnership Committee.

On-site partnership desk

- ♣ Arrange for the staffing of the partnership desk. One or more people need to be available at the partnership desk one hour before afternoon sessions and one-half hour before evening sessions to arrange pairings. It is especially important to have someone staff the desk prior to the start of a knockout event. For late-night events, the director running the game will make partnerships.
- ♣ Make sure the desk is stocked with player information cards. The card should include the player's name, phone number, number of masterpoints, system and events for which a partner is needed. Since you are collecting information, it wouldn't hurt to ask for an email address in case you want to do some follow-up work.
- ♣ Arrange for a standby who is willing to fill in with anyone available each session. Such a standby should not be charged an entry fee and when not used could be rewarded with a free play for another session.
- ♣ Maintain a separate partnership desk for I/N players at a large tournament. New players are more likely to play if a familiar face is making partnerships in the area where they are scheduled to play (the I/N area).
- ♣ Always guarantee partners for newcomers who check in one hour before the game. It is an incentive for new players to attend your tournament when they know that you will help them get a partner. Be sure to put this information in your tournament advertising and deliver!

Intermediate/Newcomer (I/N) Committee

The main responsibility of this committee is to work with the area teachers and club managers to bring newer (and first-time duplicate) players to the tournament.

Work with the Tournament Chair

- ♠ Offer a full schedule of events. The ACBL recommends games for 0-5, 0-20, 0-50, 0-100, 0-200 and 0-500 (NLM) players each session, or games can be run as stratified.
- ♠ Obtain a separate playing room (or specific area of the main room) for the I/N games.
- ♠ Name I/N events after teachers to encourage them to bring their students to the tournament.
- ♠ Reward teachers with a free play for every four 0-5 players they bring to the tournament.

Work with Other Committees

Hospitality — Welcome the new players at a reception in the hospitality suite and invite experienced players to discuss hands.

Make special “goodie” bags for I/N players. Consider adding an ACBL publication (Welcome to the World of Duplicate and Bridge Life). Print out the online SAYC booklet, a free play to a local club (good for a special game on a special day), an instant-scorer, a list of area lessons or some trinkets that you have collected from area merchants.

Organize a Celebrity Speaker Program where teachers and top players give a 30-minute mini-lesson 45 minutes before the afternoon and evening sessions. Prepare a handout for the players for each talk. Since the newer players will be the main audience, the speakers should be asked to simplify their topics.

Plan a special I/N reception or party to welcome the newer players.

Prize — New players want trophies for overall wins.

Partnership — New players may be shy. Set up a partnership desk in the area where they are going to play. Guarantee partners for players who arrive one hour before game time.

Promotion — Send fliers to the 0-200 players in the unit and surrounding area. All advertising should include the fact that partners will be guaranteed for all 0-200 players who arrive one hour before game time. Contact teachers and club managers. Establish incentives for teachers who bring students to play in 0-5 games.

Other Ideas to Consider

Organize a Welcoming Committee (often called a New Player Services Committee). This group will greet the players when they arrive in the I/N area, answer questions and help make the newcomers feel welcome. Invite your teachers to be on this committee and make arrangements so the I/N room is covered before and after every session.

Work with area teachers to get them to bring their students to the tournament. Consider asking one of the area teachers to give a free lesson and invite social players and students to attend.

Bridge Plus+ Game: Follow the free lesson with a free Bridge Plus+ game to introduce these players to duplicate. Click [here](http://www.acbl.org/about-acbl/administration/acbl-handbook/v-other-club-games/) (<http://www.acbl.org/about-acbl/administration/acbl-handbook/v-other-club-games/>) for more information on this type of game.

Other Ideas to Consider *Cont.*

Encourage a qualified club director to run the 0-5 game. (I/N players like familiar faces.)

Add special trophies to the I/N Program to enhance the fun. Consider:

- ♥ “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 awards more masterpoints than a two-session championship making it a popular game.
- ♥ “Best Overall” trophy — Reward the best performance at the tournament. This is an excellent way to highlight someone who participates in a lot of sessions. The DIC can provide this information at the end of the tournament.
- ♥ Create a special display board for the winners of the I/N events.

For more details on organizing a successful I/N Program, check out [Planning and Organizing an Intermediate/Newcomer Sectional or Regional Tournament](#) on the ACBL’s website.

The information presented as guidelines for the I/N Committee comes from the format used at all NABCs for I/N Programs. The ACBL I/N Program has proven to be very effective.

At the Tournament

- ◆ Set up a separate I/N registration desk and partnership desk in the I/N area.
 - Give each new player a “goodie” bag with ACBL brochures, etc. and provide name tags so they can meet each other easily.
- ◆ Confirm that the area set aside for the Celebrity Speaker Program is appropriate. This works best when it is in a separate room that has a microphone and a podium.
- ◆ Take pictures of the I/N winners.
 - Use the pictures to celebrate the winners.
 - Display them on a winner board that has a theme.
 - Make a big deal out of announcing winners and distributing trophies or other prizes.
- ◆ Organize a panel of local and/or visiting experts to answer questions.
 - Following one or more sessions, have the panel discuss the hands just played. This is particularly interesting when the same hands have been used in the championship and I/N game.
 - Add pizza to a between-sessions panel and you will see a lot of players returning to play in the evening.
- ◆ Arrange with the DIC to get the entry blanks for all of the I/N events.

After the Tournament

Send a thank you note to all of the I/N players who are not members of the unit inviting them to a unit game with a free play coupon.

Send a note to thank the teachers who brought students to the tournament.

Conduct and Ethics Committees (C&E) and Tournament Appeals Committees

The Tournament Chair (or a designee) is responsible for providing the DIC with a Conduct and Ethics (C&E) or a Tournament Appeals Committee after all sessions (when needed). Toward the end of each session, this person should check with the DIC to see if a committee is required.

Recruitment and Procedures

- ♣ Check with standing committee members (if your unit or district has any) to see if they will be available during the tournament.
- ♣ All committees should have an odd number of members.
- ♣ At least 50% of the committee should be from outside the sponsoring organization.
- ♣ Individuals appointed to serve on these committees are expected to be impartial.
- ♣ More information on Tournament Committee procedures can be found in the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations in Appendix B.

The Caddy Master

The Caddy Master is an important member of the team necessary to produce a successful bridge tournament. The caddies are also members of the team.

The Caddy Master and the caddies work together to assist the directors in preparing the room for tournament play, moving the boards, collecting entry slips and results and taking care of the supplies.

The Caddy Master's Guide (<http://web2.acbl.org/documentlibrary/units/CaddyGuide.pdf>) for training tournament caddies will provide detailed information on training and the job caddies are expected to perform at the tournament. You may want to print this booklet and distribute it to your caddies.

Also, everyone involved with your tournament should be familiar with **ACBL's Youth Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy** (<http://web2.acbl.org/documentlibrary/youthprotection/groupsmembers.pdf>).

Prize Committee

The main responsibility of the Prize Committee is to determine the prize structure for the tournament and purchase the prizes that will be awarded, keeping the budget in mind.

- ♠ Will there be prizes for the overall winners in each event?
- ♠ Will there be section-top prizes?
- ♠ Will there be drawings for door prizes?

Here are some suggestions for prizes:

OVERALL

- ♥ ACBL Scrip (Bridge Bucks) can be purchased from the ACBL Accounting Department.
- ♥ Trophies are what most I/N players prefer. They can be purchased locally.

SECTION TOPS

- ♦ T-shirts with the tournament name and/or logo
- ♦ Coffee cups
- ♦ Bridge books
- ♦ Mouse pads
- ♦ Decks of cards
- ♦ Convention card holders.
- ♦ A novelty exclusive to your tournament (\$2 bills are a Gatlinburg TN tradition).

DOOR PRIZES

- ♣ Free dinner at an area restaurant.
- ♣ Coupon for refreshments at the host hotel (cocktails, buffet, etc.).
- ♣ Signed bridge book.
- ♣ Free Play.
- ♣ Check the Internet. There are many companies that produce imaginative promotional products.

Will any prizes be donated? Often a local person or club is interested in donating a permanent trophy named after a person they would like to honor as the prize for an event. Ask around and see if there is any interest in this.

Some units/districts arrange for prize or trophy donations in exchange for free advertising in the daily bulletin for the tournament.

Contact local companies to see what they might offer. Be sure to coordinate with the person handling sponsorship activities.

Awarding the prizes

- ♠ There should be a prize room or a prize desk where the prizes can be picked up. Place and hours should be published in the daily bulletin.
- ♠ In the I/N Program, the directors like to award the prizes over the microphone and in the playing area whenever possible.
- ♠ A complete list of overall and section-top winners can be provided for the Prize Committee shortly after the end of each session, but it is a good idea to wait 24 hours until the correction period has expired.

Nine Months to One Day Out

Nine Months Out

- ♠ Submit final schedule of events to the ACBL Tournament Department. Timely completion of a sectional's schedule is critical in this process as staffing, advertising, online Partnership Desk and other parts of the tournament process require the submission of the flier.
- ♠ Fliers must be submitted to the ACBL Tournament Coordinator for approval and posting.
- ♠ Only the Tournament Chair is allowed to make certain changes to a tournament.

Six Months Out

- ♥ Hold a meeting with the subcommittee chairs for a progress report.
- ♥ Arrangements for the tournament should be reconfirmed with the management of the tournament site and host hotel.

Five Months Out

Tournament Supplies

- ◆ If you are not providing your own supplies, check with the DIC to make an arrangement for ordering.
- ◆ If the unit/district is providing its own supplies, an inventory should be taken at this time. Order any additional supplies needed from the supply company of your choice.
- ◆ Normally, the DIC or another supply-carrying director will bring the required hand records and printouts to the tournament.
- ◆ Time clocks (optional) and bidding boxes (required) are usually provided by the sponsoring organization. If not, arrangements should be made with the DIC.

Four Months Out

- ♣ The Tournament Chair and the Tournament Correspondent are notified through TourneyTRAX of the staff assigned for the tournament, their sessions and lodging requirements. Reservations should be made for the specific staff members and committee members who will be staying at the host hotel. If the hotel has provided any free rooms, it is often a good idea to assign these rooms to staff members rather than committee members since the staff will generally spend more nights at the hotel.

Three Months Out

- ♠ Check with tournament site management. It is important to reconfirm all arrangements. All sectional and regional tournaments for which the ACBL issues a sanction are covered under a general liability and property damage policy. A certificate of coverage can be obtained by completing this [form](https://fs3.formsite.com/acbl/form632296545/index.html) (<https://fs3.formsite.com/acbl/form632296545/index.html>).
- ♠ The Tournament Chair should schedule a meeting with subcommittee chairs for an official progress report.

Two Weeks Out

- ♥ Get names of committee members who will be working during the tournament and arrange to have badges made for everyone.

Twelve Days Out

- ◆ If the supplies are to be shipped, verify their arrival time with the tournament site.

Two Days Out

- ♣ Meet with subcommittees to receive progress reports and press for action on anything behind schedule.
- ♣ Contact the management of your tournament site to review all arrangements. See that the hotel desk and switchboard have a program for your tournament so that they can answer questions accurately and put proper information on hotel bulletin boards. Stress the need for ice water and numerous trash receptacles.
- ♣ Discuss all items again that were originally on the one-year-out checklist.

One Day Out

- ♠ The DIC and some of the staff will arrive the day before the tournament begins.
- ♠ Arrange a meeting to discuss any problems, ideas or just to get to know each other.
- ♠ Discuss sponsor options.
- ♠ Review room setup and location of the various tournament desks and bookstore. The DIC can give instructions to the management of the site for any necessary changes and adjustments.
- ♠ Review the tournament program and advertised conditions.
- ♠ Review the unit's check-cashing policy.
 - Players' checks are the responsibility of the unit/district.
 - Please inform the DIC of your policy of accepting checks from the players.
 - Normally you should allow the DIC to accept checks for the amount of the entry fee or less at his/her discretion.
 - Checks for larger amounts can also be at the DIC's discretion, but you may want to have someone on the tournament committee available for approval of checks above the entry fee.
- ♠ Introduce the site management team to the DIC. Since the DIC will now be working with you, it will be very helpful if he knows the hotel personnel.
 - For a larger tournament, the hotel management will normally generate an internal memorandum that states special instructions for their staff for the tournament and specifies all details of special arrangements. It would be helpful for the DIC to have a copy of this information.
- ♠ Tell the DIC what lists you would like to have at the end of the tournament.
 - Various lists of winners (by unit, district, masterpoint levels, etc.) can be provided by the DIC at no charge provided you tell the DIC what type of list(s) you need prior to the start of the tournament.

Tournament Checklist

Daily Tournament Checklist

Here is a list of the things the Tournament Chair should check each day of the tournament. You may want to print and date a new checklist for each day of the tournament to assure nothing gets missed.

- See that the hotel/motel bulletin boards have the proper information concerning events and starting times.
- Ask for a listing if the property has a closed-circuit TV channel for daily activities.
- Inspect the tournament site (well before game time) for proper setup of tables, cleanliness and site compliance with cleanup information.
- See that the hospitality desk (registration) and partnership desk are properly manned.
- Check daily arrangements with hotel/motel/convention center concerning entertainment and refreshments ordered for that day.
- See that a unit/district official is available for check approval during entry selling, if necessary.
- See that trash containers are available.
- Check drinking water supply and stations, cups, etc.
- Be a host, talk with the players (especially in the I/N area), see if they are pleased, try to accommodate specific requests and correct specific complaints.
- Inspect restrooms for cleanliness and maintenance.
- Look for obstacles that might block emergency exits and eliminate them.
- Check that site has unlocked emergency exit doors.
- Ask the DIC to make proper announcements concerning Zero Tolerance, prizes, pictures, entertainment, hospitality services (parking discounts, aspirins, menus, etc.)
- See that the Publicity Chair and daily bulletin editor (if there is one) are informed of any special happenings or the presence of any special personalities who might be the basis for a good newspaper article.

Final Session of the Tournament Checklist

- Settle finances with the DIC unless other arrangements have previously been made. All fees due the ACBL must be settled by the end of the tournament.
- Arrange gratuities for site personnel.
- Arrange with the site management for protection of unused supplies until they are picked up.

Tournament Checklist *Cont.*

After Tournament Checklist

- Settle finances with the tournament site. Be certain to get a receipt.
- Discuss future dates with site management.
- Collect your lists of winners from the DIC. If you decide you want a list(s) after the tournament, the ACBL will provide them for a nominal fee.
- Hold a post-tournament meeting with subcommittee chairs for evaluation and reports.
- Write a final report on the tournament to be presented to the unit/district board with recommendations, suggestions and comments.
- Remember to say “thank you” to all of your helpers. Be generous with appreciation and pass along compliments to your workers. If you can, drop a brief thank-you note to everyone who helped. These people volunteered their time, just as you did. Knowing that their efforts were appreciated will mean a great deal to them.
- Help the I/N Committee follow up with mailings to the new players who have participated in the tournament. (If you can, send a free play to a unit game or a club newcomer game as a “thank you” for attending the tournament.)