



The ACBL Club Directors Handbook

American Contract Bridge League

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2005



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Dear Prospective Club Director:

Thank you for your interest in becoming an ACBL club director.

The information contained in this manual should prove helpful both in passing the Club Director Test and in running local club games.

If you want to take the ACBL Club Director Test for certification, you need to contact a unit official to make the necessary arrangements. The unit will appoint a monitor for you and will notify the ACBL of the person selected. Your monitor will receive the Club Director Test and instructions for administering it. You can also take the ACBL's Club Director Course offered at NABCs and some regional tournaments.

The test includes questions about Mitchell and Howell movements, the Laws, the most frequent rulings and ACBLscore commands. Three hours is an average time for completion.

Please become familiar with ACBL's web site, www.acbl.org. The material in this manual is updated there, and it is your responsibility to have the latest information. Usually, there are annual revisions of Chapters 4 and 5 of the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations.

Information on board regulations is sent to all club managers in the Club Managers Newsletter three times a year and posted on ACBL's web site. It is important that you stay current with this material.

We suggest that you obtain a hard copy of Duplicate Decisions or download it from the web site. It presents the laws in everyday language and will help you give good rulings. Using the ACBLscore computer program will enable you to run the best possible games and offer outstanding service to your players.

If you have any questions or suggestions for improving this Club Directors Handbook, please direct them to directorcourses@acbl.org.

Good luck! We hope you enjoy many pleasant years of directing.



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Running a Club Game

There are many elements to running a good duplicate bridge game. This section starts off with some suggestions that have proven to be successful at other clubs.

Tips for Running Really Good Bridge Games

The games you run and the way in which you run them constitute the foundation of your club. Pay attention to the details. Observe the habits of your players and try to accommodate their wishes. Don't tolerate bad behavior from anyone. If your games are well run and fun, your customers will be happy.

Decide to be a club director who will “go the extra mile.”

Here are some services you can perform that will enhance the quality of your games as suggested by Lindsey Butler of Charleston SC:

- Be available one hour before game time to assist newcomers and to answer questions from club members.
- Take reservations from all players who plan to attend the following week's game, asking if they will need a partner or a ride, etc.
- Arrange partnerships for players who need them. (All club members understand that their cooperation is expected.)

Make name tags for all of your players.

Make permanent name tags for everyone. They can be kept on a bulletin board at the front door and picked up as the players arrive for each session. Ask players to wear their name tags to create a friendlier atmosphere.

Use Duplicate Decisions to help make the best rulings.

ACBL has produced a booklet to assist club directors in making good rulings. This booklet, Duplicate Decisions, can be used in place of the difficult-to-understand Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge for 99% of the rulings you will be called upon to make. This is a “must-have” for all club managers. It is available for purchase or online at the ACBL web site.

Start and end your games on time.

Start promptly and end the game when it is expected to end (approximately 3½ hours for a regular session and 2 to 3 hours for a limited game). Players want to know that they have committed a certain amount of time to a game. They may have errands to run after the game or need to get home at night to prepare for the next day.

Remember bridge is a timed event.

Encourage your players to play in a timely fashion. “If you can't play well, play fast,” is a good reminder. If you have trouble with slow players, establish a club policy of “no late plays.” Anyone unable to complete the boards on a given round will get a “Not Played,” (N in ACBLscore) for the unplayed boards. This will give the players their percentage game for that board or boards. So, it will not help them and it won't hurt them.

Use a timer or reminder to help keep the game moving.

A timer that counts down the minutes in the round and signals each move can be very helpful. The timer lets the players know how much time they have left in each round and helps keep the game moving. If you don't use a timer, give your players a two-minute warning as each round is about to end.

Make the starting times for your games fit your customers.

Know your customers. If you have a lot of seniors who don't like to drive in the evening, don't schedule your games to start at 7 p.m. Be flexible with your times and change as necessary.

Simplify the entry-selling process.

Keep yourself free to welcome your players and tend to any unusual circumstances by NOT selling entries at the start of your game. Instead, put out table mats on the tables you expect to use and have the players choose their tables. Put envelopes on the table marked with the table number and the N-S and E-W pair numbers. Ask the players to put their fees in the envelope and note on the outside if anyone needs change, etc.

Remember your role as host/hostess.

When you elect to collect money at the tables for entries, you allow yourself the freedom to greet people as they come in. You are in effect the host/hostess of a party, and you should be with your guests, noticing a new hairdo, a new outfit, asking how her sister is, how was his trip and generally schmoozing. Marti Ronemus of York PA uses this technique to give everyone individual attention and to make them feel welcome. She feels it raises her players' comfort level and increases the "fun" level of the game. In the UK, all club members are required to take a turn as host/hostess within 28 days of being asked — a rotation system for "booking" hosts.

Talk with every player in your game.

Use tournament-style entry blanks at each table and collect them when you collect the fees. Turn over the entries at your desk of the people you have already talked with. This procedure enables you to make sure you have spoken with everyone. Make sure you also say "goodbye" when the players leave.

Use bid boxes.

Players love bid boxes — even new players. They cut down on the noise in the room and players no longer have to ask for a review!

Use pickup slips.

Pickup slips help keep the game moving. Travelers often result in at-the-table postmortems.

Post results on the Internet or in a newsletter.

Run All the Games Your Club Is Entitled to Run

If your club conducts its sanctioned games in full compliance with ACBL regulations during the calendar year, you are entitled to run a number of special events. Some can be run by converting your regularly scheduled game, some can be run in addition to your regularly scheduled game, some can be earned and some can be run with the approval of your local unit.

All of these events pay more masterpoints than a regularly scheduled weekly club game. Many also offer hand records and analyses and special recognition for your players.

Check the ACBL web site at Resources for Clubs for specific information on dates, masterpoints awarded, additional fees required, regulations and links for online sanctioning. Some additional fund-raising and charity games also are referred to in this section of the web site. Also refer to the ACBL Handbook (Chapter 4).

Deadlines

Sanction requests for special games requiring hand records and analyses should be submitted six weeks in advance to ensure you receive your supplies on time. Game supplies are shipped approximately four weeks prior to game date.

January

ACBL-wide International Fund Game #1

Masterpoints: 50/50 red and black at 100 % sectional rating

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Hand records and analyses

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Games may be stratified with top strat open.
- Games with 17 tables or more must have a non-playing director.

These games raise funds to defray the expense of North American participation in international competition.

February

Junior Fund Month

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

All sanctioned club sessions in February may be held as Junior Fund Games and in other months except April and September. Players earn extra masterpoints while helping the junior program for youth up to age 26.

ACBL-wide Senior Pairs

Masterpoints: 80% sectional rated black

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Hand records and analyses

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin

Sanction: Special sanction required

Additional fees: \$4 per table

Contact: specialevents@acbl.org

Special Instructions

- Any club OR unit may hold this game.
- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Game may be stratified with top strat open.
- Game with 17 tables or more or two sections must have a non-playing director.
- Participants must be 55 years of age as of the day of the event.

March

ACBL-wide Charity Game #1

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Hand records and analyses

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions

- Conducting an ACBL-wide Charity Game fulfills a clubs charity obligation. This game does not qualify a club to run a charity club championship for a local charity.
- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Games with 17 or more tables or two sections must have a non-playing director.

The spirit of giving is always in season. These games support the ACBL Charity Foundation and Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund.

Canada-wide Olympiad Fund Game

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Hand records and analyses

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least three full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Games with 17 or more tables or two sections must have a non-playing director.

A special game to support Canadian teams in international events.

April

Charity Month

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

All sanctioned club sessions may be held as Charity Games during April and in other months except February and September. Games support the ACBL Charity Foundation and Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund or may support local charities. A club cannot have more games for a local charity than for the ACBL or CBF charities.

Helen Shields Canadian Rookie-Master Game

Masterpoints: 68% sectional rated black

Hand records and analyses

A special “pro-am” game pairing newcomers with fewer than 20 points with more experienced players.

May

ACBL-wide International Fund Game #2

Masterpoints: 50/50 red and black at 100 % sectional rating

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Hand records and analyses

Special Instructions

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Game may be stratified with top strat open.
- Games with 17 tables or more must have a non-playing director.

Funds defray the expense of North American participation in international competition.

June

North American Pairs (NAP)

Club Qualifying June-August

Masterpoints:

- Club qualifying games 50/50 red and black at sectional rating
- One-session unit qualifying games sectional rated red
- Two-session unit qualifying games include percentage of gold for overalls.
- District finals award gold for section firsts and overalls. Flight C is 25% gold for overalls. Other masterpoints in all flights are red.

Flights: A (Open), B (-2000), C (0-500 Non-Life Masters)

District winners in each flight recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin

Final: Spring 2006 NABC

Sanction-Clubs: No special sanction required for clubs

Sanction-Units and Districts: Sanction required

A highly prestigious “grass roots” event, the North American Pairs starts at the club level in June, July and August. Club-level qualifications may be earned at any club in any unit in any district.

A player may qualify as often as desired and with as many different partners as desired. Unit-level qualifiers are optional and held after Sept. 1 and before the district final, which may be held after the unit final until the third week in January. At the district final, both players must have qualified at the club level and must be members of the parent district. Winners of each flight in each district are reimbursed for airfare and hotel nights to attend the final event at the spring NABC. Second-place pairs receive airfare. Third-place pairs qualify to attend but do not receive reimbursement. Check with your district to learn whether it provides additional funding. Some districts provide additional funding. Conditions of Contest are on the ACBL web site.

Worldwide Bridge Contest

Masterpoints: 50/50 red and black at sectional rating

Hand records and analyses

Top ACBL winners recognized on web site and the Bridge Bulletin.

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- Clubs must use ACBLscore and submit results electronically.
- Game supplies shipped four weeks prior to game date.
- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Game may be stratified with top strat open.
- Games with 17 tables or more must have a non-playing director.

It's the event played around the world! Join us for the Worldwide Bridge Contest sponsored by the World Bridge Federation. This international competition is scored across the world using the Internet to give an overall winner. The Friday and Saturday games are separate events. Each participant receives a souvenir booklet containing Eric Kokish's excellent commentary. The WBF will award prizes based on world matchpointing. The two top district winners by percentage receive bonus awards. Additional recognition comes from the WBF.

July

ACBL-wide International Fund Game #3

Masterpoints: 50/50 red and black at 100 % sectional rating

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Hand records and analyses

Special Instructions

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Game may be stratified with top strat open.
- Games with 17 tables or more must have a non-playing director.

Funds defray the expense of North American participation in international competition.

September

International Fund Month

Masterpoints: 100 % sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

All sanctioned club games in September and in other months except February and April may be held as International Fund Games to support North American participation in international events.

ACBL-wide 49er Pairs

Masterpoints: 45% black at sectional rating

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Sanction: No special sanction required

Special Instructions

- Games may be held at any session during the qualifying period except when in conflict with a game regularly held in the same locality with an upper masterpoint limit equal to or lower than 50 masterpoints.
- 49er Pairs Games need not be held during the club's regularly sanctioned sessions.
- Do not schedule an event within 25 miles of a sanctioned sectional.
- The game must have at least three full tables and include at least 18 boards.

The 49er Pairs is open to any player with fewer than 50 registered masterpoints on the September cycle. Clubs may host these games during all regularly sanctioned sessions.

Grand National Teams (GNT)

Begins Sept. 1 (qualifying dates set by district)

Masterpoints:

- Club qualifying games 50/50 red and black at sectional rating
- One-session unit qualifying games sectional rated red
- Two-session unit qualifying games include percentage of gold for overalls.
- District finals award gold for section firsts and overalls. Flight C is 25% gold for overalls.

Other masterpoints in all flights are red.

Flights: Championship (Open), A (0-5000), B (0-2000), C (0-500 Non-Life Masters)

District winners in each flight recognized on web site.

Final: Summer 2005 NABC

Sanction: No special sanction required for clubs

Sanction: Units and Districts. Sanction required.

Additional fees: \$1.25 per table per session

Contact: specialevents@acbl.org

The second of the ACBL's "grass roots" events begins again at the club level and continues through district qualifying events held as late as July prior to the finals. The ACBL does not reimburse teams to attend the finals, but check with your district for available district support. See Conditions of Contest on the ACBL web site.

ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Game

Masterpoints: 1 gold point to section tops in each direction in each club, remaining points red at sectional rating.

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Hand records and analyses

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- Games of 17 or more tables or more than one section must have a non-playing director.
- Games must have five tables and a minimum of 24 boards.
- High scores must be reported to the ACBL by the date specified.

See your score instantly after each deal is played! Features for players include a gold point for section top winners and a booklet with complete analyses of the deals by national champion Richard Pavlicek.

October

Jane Johnson Club Appreciation Month

Pair and Team Games

Masterpoints:

100% sectional rated black (pairs)

5% gold to maximum .25 for winners, remaining 100% sectional rated black (teams)

Sanction: No special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- These events must be held during your regular club sanctioned sessions.
- You may hold 1 pair game and 1 team game per-sanctioned session.
- This event may not conflict with a higher rated one.
- A minimum of three tables is required (pairs)
- A minimum of three teams is required (team games)
- Field must be seeded.
- Both games may be stratified.
- This event may not be held within 25 miles of a sectional.
- This event may not be held during a district regional.

Canada-wide Olympiad Fund Game

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Hand records and analyses provided

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least three full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Games with 17 or more tables or two sections must have a non-playing director.

A special game to support Canadian teams in international events.

Erin Berry Canadian Rookie-Master Game

Masterpoints: 68% sectional rated black

Hand records and analyses

A special “pro-am” game pairing newcomers with fewer than 20 points with more experienced players.

November

ACBL-wide Charity Game #2

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Overall Awards: 1st, 20; depth of awards, 10 places

District Winners: 1st, 10; depth of awards, 5 places

Hand records

Winners recognized on web site and in the Bridge Bulletin.

Sanction: Special sanction required

Special Instructions:

- Conducting an ACBL-wide Charity Game fulfills a clubs charity obligation. This game does not qualify a club to run a charity club championship for a local charity.
- This event must be run at the appointed date and time. If you do not have a session, you may still run this event with the permission of your unit.
- The game must have at least five full tables and include at least 21 boards.
- Games with 17 or more tables or two sections must have a non-playing director.

The spirit of giving is always in season. These games support the ACBL Charity Foundation and Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund.

Other Games

Club Championships

Date: Quarterly as scheduled by club

Masterpoints: 65% sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

Additional fees: none

Special Instructions

- If a club holds these events, it must hold each of the four club championship sessions for one weekly game during a different calendar quarter of the year, except for an event it conducts in two sessions. A club may not carry over a club championship from one year to the next for the purpose of conducting a two-session event.
- A club may change the playing site of a club championship with written approval from the unit with jurisdiction over the new site.
- Once a year, a club may hold a one- or two-session club championship at a time other than that of the game it represents. The club must obtain written permission from all other clubs holding sanctioned games within a 25-mile radius on that day of the week.

Upgraded Club Championships

Date: As scheduled by club

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

Clubs earn one of these games for each 10 new ACBL members recruited. Clubs will be notified when eligible to hold a game.

Super Club Championships

Date: As scheduled by club

Masterpoints: Overalls receive 100% sectional red

Sanction: No special sanction required

Club Membership Games

Date: As scheduled by club

Masterpoints: 100% sectional rated black

Sanction: No special sanction required

Special Instructions

- Only Life Masters and paid ACBL members are eligible to win masterpoints in these games.
- Games must be held during regularly sanctioned sessions.
- A club may hold as many membership games per year as it has sanctioned sessions. A club entitled to hold more than one membership game must schedule each one for a different session (for example, not two Friday nights).
- A club may change the playing site of a membership game with written approval from the unit with jurisdiction over the new site.
- A membership game may not be run at the same time as an ACBL-wide event, sectional or regional if located within 25 miles of the playing site of the higher rated event.

Inter-Club Championship Games

Your players face-to-face play with the perk of across-the-field scoring through the Internet to determine overall rankings at all clubs that participate on the same date.

Date: 24 available dates scheduled by the ACBL

Masterpoints: Black club championship rating for overall across the field.

Hand records available online day after game

Results posted within 48 hours

Sanction: Registration required

Special Instructions

- Clubs must register at least seven days in advance of a game.
- Clubs will receive material via e-mail 48 hours prior to the game. Arrangements must be made to print the hands for duplication or have the director duplicate the hands for his or her game. If you receive hand records from the ACBL and decide not to participate in the event, please notify the ACBL so that we are not expecting results from your club.
- You must score your game using ACBLscore 7.00 or higher to participate.
- Set up your game as follows:
- Select “2 – Club Championship (ALL).”
- Select “5 – Inter-Club Championship” from the next pick box.
- You must send the ACBLscore gamefile to ACBL Results within 24 hours. (Send the file as an attachment.) Files and any corrections not received within 24 hours will not be included for overall awards. No exceptions.

ACBLscore

To run a good club game in today's market and to give your players the best possible service, you need a computer with the ACBL's free scoring program, ACBLscore, and a printer.

The ACBL requests that all clubs use ACBLscore to run games and process reports. This will assist the ACBL in keeping costs down and in recording results quickly. The program is available to download at the ACBL web site.

Advantages of using ACBLscore

Quick Results. ACBL's scoring program will allow you to produce the results of your club game almost instantaneously. This allows your customers to see their scores immediately after the game and it frees you to visit and interact with your players.

Personalized Service. With ACBLscore, you can provide individual printouts of results for your players so they can review their scores. You can produce leader sheets for the winners to take home and show to their friends.

Find movements that work for any game. With ACBL's scoring program, you can find a movement for any number of tables in any game and handle all movement variations including an individual. You can rank a stratified game with up to three strata, and you can score by matchpoints or IMPS.

Produce the monthly club reports due to ACBL. Sending in your monthly club reports via e-mail as produced by the ACBLscore program cuts down on paperwork and effort.

Keep a running total of each player's masterpoints. You can use the ACBLscore program to keep a running total of the masterpoints won at your club by each player. This makes it easy to award prizes to top scorers either on a monthly basis or at the end of the year. You can also order a "Player Information" disk from ACBL (for a fee) that has the latest masterpoints for the players in your area.

Figure handicaps for your club players. Because you can keep a running total of all of the game results for each of your players, it's easy to figure their handicaps and to run special handicapped games.

Print mailing labels for your club members. Use the club directory in your ACBLscore program to print mailing labels for your club mailings.

Print masterpoint receipts for non-members. Be sure you give every non-member who wins masterpoints a receipt printed from the ACBLscore program. Most new players who win a piece of a masterpoint will want to start collecting them.

Track player attendance. ACBLscore can help you keep track of which players play the most, and it can also find those who have not played for long periods of time.

Categorize your players. ACBLscore can help you keep track of different groups of players (afternoon players, beginners, those taking lessons, etc.).

Using the ACBLscore program

An operations manual is installed as part of the program disk. Press the F1 key for the Help program at any time. Pressing F1 a second time gives even more information.

Computer requirements for using ACBLscore

The ACBLscore program requires an IBM-compatible computer with Windows or MS DOS.

The ACBLscore program is available on 3.5 inch diskettes, double density or high density. The program can be downloaded from the ACBL web site www.acbl.org with an authorization code. (Contact the ACBL Club and Member Department to get a code.)

The computer keyboard should have a numeric keypad separate from the letter keys for easier numeric entry. A separate set of arrow keys is helpful.

Printer requirements to use ACBLscore

The program can use any printer including dot matrix, laser, ink jet and others. Most printers will only print using a Windows driver. ACBLscore can use any printer with Windows 95, 98, ME, NT, 2000 or XP. It can also use any legacy printer (dot matrix) that works with MS-DOS.

ACBLscore Commands

- (ADD) — Add a new section
- (ADJ) — Outside score adjustment
- (AR) — Print ACBL report for a special game (CLUB only)
- (BA) — Copy current game file to floppy
- (BO) — Display a board (F10)
- (BU) — Product output for daily bulletin
- (CA) — Print captains for team games
- (CF) — Configure event or combined scoring
- (CC) — Compute carryover scores from qualifying sessions
- (CH) — Change to another section (F7, PgDn, PgUp)
- (CO) — Enter or modify carryover scores
- (CP) — Extract final scores for continuous pairs
- (D) — Update data base from game file
- (EDM) — Edit movement
- (EDP) — Edit previous session crossovers
- (EDX) — Edit next session crossovers
- (EL) — Scan all sections for player MP eligibility
- (EN) — Enter or correct scores (F2)
- (EV) — Event leaders to screen or printer (F6)
- (EX) — Export to another game file (Tournament only)
- (FF) — Form feed the printer
- (FI) — Find a player or verify player eligibility
- (FO) — Use fouled board procedure
- (FR) — Frequency charts or datums for IMP pairs

- (GN) — Next game file in alphabetical order (CTRL-Right)
- (GP) — Previous game file in alphabetical order (CTRL-Left)
- (HA) — Enter or modify handicap scores
- (I) — Import from another game file
- (K) — Delete a section from this game file
- (LAS) — Revert to last game used
- (LAT) — Report of late plays
- (LE) — Section leaders to screen or printer
- (LI) — List scores in pair order to screen or printer
- (LR) — Recap and/or press to screen/file/printer
- (ME) — Edit memos to print on recap
- (MP) — Edit masterpoint awards (Tournament only)
- (NA) — Enter or modify player names (F3)
- (NE) — Go to a different game file
- (NO) — Edit notes for this game file
- (OA) — Rank overall
- (OR) — Print recap sheet at 6 lines per inch
- (OU) — Specify players sitting out in board-a-match
- (PC) — Print club masterpoint or NAP qualifying receipts
- (PD) — Enter pre-determined IMP datums
- (PE) — Event leaders to screen or printer with percentages
- (PM) — Edit player masterpoint holdings (bracketed events)
- (PR) — Print press sheet
- (PX) — Cross-over from a previous session
- (Q) — Terminate execution
- (RE) — Print recap sheet at 8 lines per inch (F5)
- (RO) — Post from pickup slips
- (SC) — Score the game
- (SE) — Change setup of game
- (SHO) — Display or print configuration
- (SHX) — Display or print cross-over destination table
- (SP) — Print short press sheet (one page)
- (ST) — Assign strata to pairs
- (SU) — Print summary for a pair or pairs on printer
- (TO) — Enter and edit event information
- (TR) — Transfer names from a different game file
- (TS) — Traveler format scores report with names
- (UNB) — Restore a backed up or exported game file
- (UND) — Undo DBADD command
- (V) — View boards
- (WH) — Display version # that created this game file
- (WO) — Create files for WBF worldwide matchpointing
- (X) — Cross-over from a previous session

Movements

Setting up the movement tends to give the new director more trouble than almost anything else!
 If you are using ACBLscore, the program will find the proper movement for you if you need help.

General guidelines

The goal in a successful* **open game** is to play 24 to 28 boards in three hours.

The goal in a **limited masterpoint or advanced newcomer game** is to play 22 to 24 boards in less than three hours.

The goal in a successful* **newcomer game** is to play 18 to 22 boards in three hours or less.

*Successful

The people had a good time, played a sufficient number of boards and they're coming back!

Selecting the right movement

There are two basic movements:

Mitchell: N-S remains stationary; E-W moves up; boards move down each round in an orderly progress.

Howell: One (or more, depending on the size of the game) pair remains stationary; the rest all move each round. Each pair plays N-S some of the time and E-W some of the time; each pair plays against most or all of the other pairs.

The Mitchell Movement

All figures were obtained using ACBLscore and the EDMOV command

5 Tables 5 rounds 5 boards per round

| Round → | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Table | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 1 | 3 | 16 | 1 | 2 | 21 |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 16 | 2 | 4 | 21 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 16 | 3 | 1 | 21 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 21 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 11 |
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 16 |

6 Tables 5 Rounds 5 boards per round

| Round → | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Table | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 1 | 3 | 16 | 1 | 2 | 21 |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 2 | 6 | 16 | 2 | 4 | 21 | 2 | 3 | 26 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 16 | 3 | 1 | 21 | 3 | 5 | 26 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 21 | 4 | 2 | 26 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 5 | 4 | 26 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 11 |
| 6 | 6 | 6 | 26 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 16 |

Six-Table Revenge Mitchell

| Round → | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | | 6 | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Table | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd | NS | EW | Bd |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 13 | 1 | 2 | 17 | 1 | 1 | 21 |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 13 | 2 | 4 | 17 | 2 | 3 | 21 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 13 | 3 | 1 | 17 | 3 | 5 | 21 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 17 | 4 | 2 | 21 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 17 | 5 | 4 | 21 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 13 |
| 6 | 6 | 6 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 13 | 6 | 6 | 17 |

Advantages of running a Mitchell

1. You have an eight-table or larger game. (With five to seven tables, you may also elect to run a Mitchell but may decide a Howell is better.)
2. More people will win masterpoints.
3. The game tends to run faster.
4. Many players prefer to sit in a stationary position.
Half of your players will be stationary in a Mitchell movement.

Variations of the Mitchell Movement

Mitchell movements may be classified into two categories: **even** number of tables and **odd** number of tables, when thinking of your setup and moves.

ODD NUMBER OF TABLES

Straight Mitchell

E–W will move up one table and the boards will move down one table at the end of each round.

5 tables: 5 boards per table

7 tables: 4 boards per table

9 tables: 3 boards per table

11 tables: 3 boards per table *Quit this game at the end of eight or nine rounds,*

13 or more tables: 2 boards per table.

The odd-numbered Mitchell movement is a rest for the director. No surprises.

EVEN NUMBER OF TABLES

Skip Mitchell

The even-tabled skip Mitchell movement is also restful, but the director must wake up at the halfway point. Again E–W will move up one table and the boards will move down one table at the end of each round — until the *halfway point* of the game. Then, one time, E–W will skip a table.

(If they don't, they will meet the same boards they played at the beginning of the game.)

6 tables 5 boards on each table. E–W skip after three rounds.

8 tables 4 boards on each table. E–W skip after four rounds.

10 tables 3 boards on each table. E–W skip after five rounds.

12 tables 3 boards on each table. E–W skip after 6 rounds.

14 tables or more 2 boards on each table. E–W skip after the halfway round.

19 or more tables Break into two or more sections as appropriate.

In an eight-table game, three boards per round, you must skip the E–W pairs one table (usually after round 4) and play seven rounds, 21 boards, or have the E–W pairs replay their original opponents on round 8 (Revenge Mitchell). An alternate movement is to play four boards a round and skip after four rounds as each player would play 28 boards. Similar problems exist with six- and 12-table games.

With 6, 8 or 12 tables, you have another option, one which will enable all of the players to play all of the boards and all of the other pairs in the same direction — a perfect movement. The price you pay is that you need to take a little extra care. (The 12-table game may run a little slowly unless you have two fast N–S pairs at the relay tables.)

Two tables will always be sharing the same set of boards during the same round (the relay). Halfway around the movement, there will be a set of boards that sits out each round on the bye-stand. The bye-stand is always directly across from the relay if you use a clock diagram.

The Relay and Bye-stand Mitchell

This variation is used with six, eight or 12 tables only. It is a method of playing all opponents and all boards available in an even-table game without a skip. It is used almost exclusively with 8- and 12- table Mitchell movements.

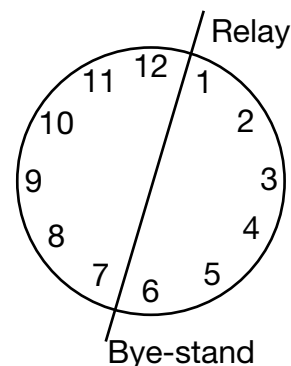
With an eight-table relay and bye stand, you play 24 boards, eight rounds.

1. Have two adjacent tables share boards = Relay
2. Have a set of boards sit out between two tables each round = Bye-stand. Boards progress through the relay as though the two tables were one. Boards progress through the bye stand as though it were a table.

A quick check method is to draw a clock. Then, if you draw a diagonal line, the relay will be on one end and the bye-stand on the other.

Practically, you should start putting out boards with your relay, and after you have put out half the number of boards, establish a bye-stand.

The principle is — the same numbers of boards are on one side of the diagonal as are on the other — as shown above there are six tables on each side of the diagonals.



Principles of a Relay and Bye-stand Mitchell

1. Any two adjacent tables may relay.
2. Set the relay first.
3. The bye-stand is then half the total number of tables away. Therefore there are the same number of tables between the relay and the bye stand as there are between the bye stand and the relay.

You may use any two adjacent tables for the relay, as long as the bye-stand is exactly halfway around the movement. And if board 1 is always on the relay the first round, board 13 will always be on the bye-stand during the first round if you plan to play 24 boards in the game.

Be very careful. With many numbers of tables in play, the complete movement is time consuming:

16 tables = 16 rounds / 32 boards

10 tables = 10 rounds / 30 boards

14 tables = 14 rounds / 28 boards

1. Have two adjacent tables share boards = Relay

2. Have a set of boards sit out between two tables each round = Bye-stand.

Boards progress through the relay as though the two tables were one. Boards progress through the bye-stand as though it were a table.

Correcting a misplaced bye-stand when the bye-stand is placed:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 TABLE TOO LOW</p> <p>6-TABLE GAME</p> <p>* Relay between 6 & 1</p> <p>At round 4: Relay between 5 & 6, with the boards on table 5. Bye-stand moves between tables 3 & 4. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 3 trades places with N-S 6 <i>for this round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 4: Relay between 6 & 1, with the boards on table 6. Bye-stand moves between tables 4 & 5. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 4 trades places with N-S 1 <i>for this round only.</i></p> | <p>1 TABLE TOO HIGH</p> <p>* Relay between 6 & 1</p> <p>At round 4: Relay between 1 & 2, with the boards on table 2. Bye-stand moves between tables 3 & 4. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 1 trades places with N-S 4 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 4: Relay between 2 & 3, with the boards on table 3. Bye-stand moves between tables 4 & 5. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 2 trades places with N-S 5 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> |
| <p>6-TABLE GAME</p> <p>* Relay between 8 & 1</p> <p>At round 5: Relay between 7 & 8, with the boards on table 7. Bye-stand moves between tables 4 & 5. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 4 trades places with N-S 8 <i>for this round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 4: Relay between 8 & 1, with the boards on table 8. Bye-stand moves between tables 5 & 6. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 5 trades places with N-S 1 <i>for this round only.</i></p> | <p>8-TABLE GAME</p> <p>* Relay between 8 & 1</p> <p>At round 5: Relay between 1 & 2, with the boards on table 2. Bye-stand moves between tables 4 & 5. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 1 trades places with N-S 5 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 5: Relay between 2 & 3, with the boards on table 3. Bye-stand moves between tables 5 & 6. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 2 trades places with N-S 6 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> |
| <p>8-TABLE GAME</p> <p>* Relay between 12 & 1</p> <p>At round 7: Relay between 11 & 12 with boards on table 11. Bye-stand moves between tables 6 & 7. All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 6 trades places with N-S 12 <i>this round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 7: Relay between 12 & 1, with the boards on table 12. Bye-stand moves between tables 7 & 8 All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 7 trades places with N-S 1 <i>for this round only.</i></p> | <p>12-TABLE GAME</p> <p>* Relay between 12 & 1</p> <p>At round 7: Relay between 1 & 2, with the boards on table 2. Bye-stand moves between tables 6 & 7 All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 1 trades places with N-S 7 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> <p>* Relay between 1 & 2</p> <p>At round 7: Relay between 2 & 3, with the boards on table 3. Bye-stand moves between tables 7 & 8 All boards put back in numerical order. N-S pair 2 trades places with N-S 8 <i>for the last round only.</i></p> |

More Variations of the Mitchell Movement

The *Scrambled Mitchell* is used when it is desirable to produce one winning pair. Pairs play some boards N-S and some boards E-W. This is accomplished by switching the arrows designating North so that they point to the original East simultaneously at all tables for certain rounds. The original E-W pairs continue to move; the original N-S pairs remain at their tables, even though they are playing the E-W hands.

The *Revenge Mitchell* is an allowed movement. This occurs frequently in an eight-table Mitchell game when a skip has been called. In order to play a sufficient number of boards the pairs play another set of boards against the pair they started against. It only works with even numbered tables in play.

| Movement | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|-----|-----|----------------|
| Tables: | 4 | | 3.5 | |
| Boards/Round: | 4 | | 4 | |
| Rounds: | 7 | | 7 | |
| Boards played: | 28 | | 24 | |
| Top on a board: | 3 | | 2 | |
| Average: | 42 | | 24 | |
| Check total: | 334 | | 168 | |
| Movement: COMPLETE HOWELL | | | | |
| INITIAL GAME SETUP | | | | |
| TABLE | BOARDS | N-S | E-W | (*=Stationary) |
| 1 | 1-4 | 8* | 1 | |
| ESC, P=PRINT, PGDN, PGUP, HOME, END, ↑, ↓ | | | | |

| Movement | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|-----|-----|----------------|
| Top on a board: | 3 | | 2 | |
| Average: | 42 | | 24 | |
| Check total: | 336 | | 168 | |
| Movement: COMPLETE HOWELL | | | | |
| INITIAL GAME SETUP | | | | |
| TABLE | BOARDS | N-S | E-W | (*=Stationary) |
| 1 | 1-4 | 8* | 1 | |
| Bye-Stand | 5-12 | | | |
| 2 | 13-16 | 3 | 6 | |
| Bye-Stand | 17-20 | | | |
| 3 | 21-24 | 2 | 7 | |
| 4 | 25-28 | 5 | 4 | |
| Board Movement: | | | | |
| 1<--BYE<--BYE<--2<--BYE<--3<--4<-- | | | | |
| ESC, P=PRINT, PGDN, PGUP, HOME, END, ↑, ↓ | | | | |

The Howell Movement

Advantages of running a Howell

1. It offers a good duplicate bridge comparison — every pair (or almost every pair) plays every other pair.
2. It's a one-winner movement and will save on free plays if your club offers one to the winners.
3. The people who win masterpoints will receive twice as many.
4. There is usually a shorter sitout if you have a half-table movement.
5. It's a must for a three- or four-table game. (You have a choice with five to seven tables.)
6. It's easy to run because the director places a table guidecard on each table or gives each player an individual guide card.

Disadvantages of running a Howell

1. It will take longer to play the same number of boards played in a Mitchell.
2. A slow pair can turn the game into a nightmare.
3. The director must move the boards.
4. Hand scoring is more complex offering more chance for error.
5. Most players must move.
6. You must be careful to run the whole game if you do not want the scoring to be in decimals or to find that the boards have different tops because they have not been played the same number of times. (ACBLScore allows you to stop a Howell at any time.)

Wrong seats — wrong boards

It is standard procedure to allow a pair to play a board sitting in the wrong direction whenever it is necessary to get a proper result on a board and to avoid assigning an adjusted score. Deviating from the directions outlined on the table guide card does not create a problem with the movement — it simply changes the comparisons within the field.

If directors feel a pair is careless in paying attention to the movement directions, they should issue a procedural penalty following a warning for repeated violations for failing to sit in the proper direction. A typical procedural penalty is one-quarter of the matchpoints available on a board.

Play of the wrong board does not necessarily mean that averaged boards are required. If this is the first time the board has been played by BOTH pairs, the result stands. When they are to play that board against their correct pair, they will inform the pair that they will play the board against a different pair immediately at the end of the session. The pair that the OTHER pair was supposed to play will be the opponent. Anytime one of the pairs had previously played the board, the first result stands and the second result is scored as Average+ for the non-offenders.

Running Swiss Teams

Selling the entries

In the top right hand corner of your entry blank, write the team number in large, dark print, 1 through 10 (or however many teams you think are coming in).

Now write the table letter and number on the blanks alternating A1, B1, A2, B2, etc. so that team #1 will be at A1 and team #2 will be at B1, team #3 will be at A2, team #4 at B2, etc.

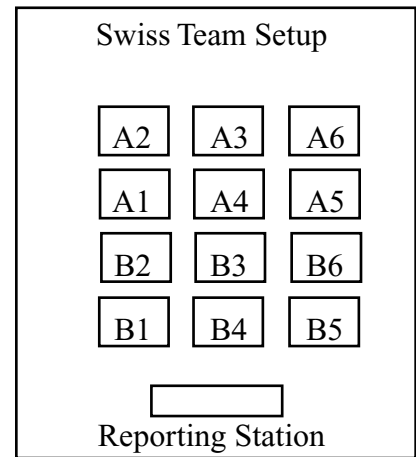
If two flights are playing in the same room, use different colored entries for the different flights. Or use a magic marker to differentiate them. Using different colors helps greatly in tallying your final results, assigning new matches, and reassuring the players that they are in the right group.

Setup

1. Divide the room into two sections, tablemats A in one section and tablemats B in the second. The B mats should be laid out exactly the same as A so that like numbered tables are in the same row, but not next to each other.
2. Put five to seven boards on each table in section A.

Starting the game

3. It often helps if the players will now turn their tables 45 degrees clockwise. It makes much more room for the cadding of boards.
4. Have the E–W pairs in Section A take half the boards to the corresponding (like numbered) table in Section B and stay there to play the round. The E–W pair from Section B moves to the like numbered table in Section A to play. When a table has played all three or four of its boards, it will call for the caddy to exchange boards between the like numbered tables in the two sections.



***Note:** ACBLscore will calculate any form of scoring (win/loss, Victory Points, etc.) and assign all of the new matches automatically. This program eliminates any possible suggestion of favoritism. **If you use ACBLscore, disregard all references below to Swiss worksheets and subsequent assignments.**

5. During the first match make out your worksheets using different colors to differentiate flights.
 - Place the TEAM NUMBER in the top right corner. If it is a newcomer Swiss, also enter the captain's name to the left of the team number.
 - Enter the number of the team that is the opponent on this round.
 - Determine the size of your various strata for your masterpoint chart maker.
 - Make up a Swiss Team Leader Board and a VP chart for the wall.
 - If you are using a rack, de-rack the numbers and put them in order.
 - If you are using assignment tickets, make out the tickets for matches 1 to 4. Make sure each team has its first-round individual assignment ticket on its table.

6. Reporting the Results. Announce that the winning captain reports the results of each match. The winning captain should go to the losing captain to get a filled-out ticket. (In some areas, losing captains just sign the winning ticket.)
 7. Record the match on each team's worksheet. A winning match goes to the left of the box and a losing match goes to the right of the box on the worksheet.
 8. Lay the worksheets in a horizontal line with the highest VP winners to the left and the lowest to the right. When all of your worksheets come in, you will be ready to make new assignments immediately.
 9. Assignment and subsequent matches. Make your matches beginning with the teams that have the best records. If a team has already played the next team (card) down, continue methodically downward until you find a team with the closest record. If there is a three-way tie, randomly select opponents.
11. MAKE SURE BOARDS ARE RESHUFFLED EACH MATCH.

Swiss Team Movements

(It is standard practice to use a round-robin movement for four- to seven-team events.)

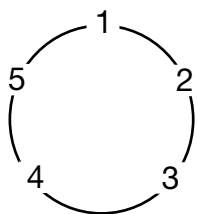
4 TEAMS **3 Matches** **Newcomer: 6 or 7 boards per match** **Compare results after each match.**
Intermediate/Open: 8 or 9 boards

| | Tables A1 & B1 | Tables A2 & B2 |
|---------|----------------|----------------|
| Match 1 | Teams 4 vs. 1 | Teams 2 vs. 3 |
| Match 2 | 4 vs. 2 | 3 vs. 1 |
| Match 3 | 4 vs. 3 | 1 vs. 2 |

5 TEAMS* **4 Matches** **Newcomer: 5 boards per match** **Compare results after each two matches.**
Intermediate: 6 boards per match
Open: 6 or 7 boards per match

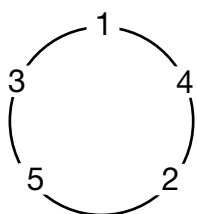
1. Have each team sit at its home table.
2. Distribute boards starting with Board 1 on Table 1.
3. To start the game:

Matches 1 & 2:



- a. E–W pairs move down two tables from their home base (5 to 3, 4 to 2, 3 to 1, 2 to 5, 1 to 4). Shuffle and play the boards on the tables.
- b. E–W pairs take the boards they just played and deposit them at their home tables. They then proceed up two tables from their home base and play the boards that have just arrived there. (1 to 3, 2 to 4, 3 to 5, 4 to 1, 5 to 2). Do not shuffle.
- c. E–W returns to home base and compares scores.

Matches 3 & 4:



- d. Change the tablemats as in the diagram to your left. (Otherwise the teams would be playing at adjacent tables — a security problem.)
- e. E–W pairs move down one numerical (two physical) tables from their home base (5 to 4, 4 to 3, 3 to 2, 2 to 1, 1 to 5). Shuffle and play the boards on those tables.
- f. E–W pairs take the boards they have just played and deposit them at their home tables. They then proceed up one numerical (two physical) tables (1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4, 4 to 5, 5 to 1) from their home base and play the boards that have just arrived there. Do not shuffle.
- g. E–W returns to home base and compares scores.

* This movement is recommended for five teams because it will give the players more of a flavor of a Swiss Team Movement since they compare after every two matches. It also makes reporting and ultimate scoring easier if you are using Victory Points. It's the “down and up” movement.

5 TEAMS 4 Matches Newcomer: 5 boards per match Do not compare results until all four matches have been played.
 Intermediate: 6 boards per match
 Open: 6 or 7 boards per match

1. Have each team sit at its home table.
2. Distribute boards starting with Board 1 on Table 1.
3. To start the game, and after each round (set of 5 to 7 boards):
 - a. Pass boards to next lower table (Table 3s boards to Table 2).
 - b. E–W pair moves down, skipping a table.
 (Example: E–W3 to Table 1, then 4, 2, 5 and back to 3 to compare)

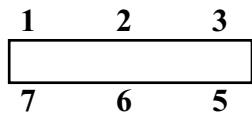
6 TEAMS 5 Matches Newcomer: 4 boards per match Compare results after each match
 Intermediate/Open: 5 boards per match

| | Tables A1 & B1 | Tables A2 & B2 | Tables A3 & B3 |
|---------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Match 1 | Teams 6 vs. 1 | Teams 5 vs. 2 | Teams 4 vs. 3 |
| Match 2 | 6 vs. 2 | 5 vs. 3 | 4 vs. 1 |
| Match 3 | 6 vs. 3 | 5 vs. 4 | 3 vs. 1 |
| Match 4 | 6 vs. 4 | 5 vs. 1 | 3 vs. 2 |
| Match 5 | 6 vs. 5 | 3 vs. 1 | 4 vs. 2 |

7 TEAMS* 6 Matches Newcomer: 4 boards per match Compare results after two matches.
 Intermediate: 4 boards per match
 Open: 4 or 5 boards per match

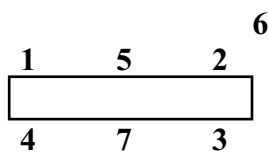
1. Have each team sit at its home table.
2. Distribute boards starting with Board 1 at Table 1.
3. To start the game:

- Matches 1 & 2:
- a. E–W pairs move down two tables from their home base. Shuffle and play the boards on those tables.
 - 4 b. E–W pairs take the boards they just played and deposit them at their home tables. They then proceed up two tables from their home base and play the boards that have just arrived there. Do not shuffle.
 - c. E–W returns to home base and compares scores.



- Matches 3 & 4:
- d. Follow the same routine as in matches 1 & 2, but E–W moves down three tables and up three tables in this segment.

- Matches 5 & 6:
- e. Rearrange the table mats as in the diagram.



- 6 f. Follow the routine for the 1st and 2nd matches, but E–W will move down one numeric table and up one numeric table in this segment. NOTE: After you have rearranged your table mats, it will be down two physical tables and up two physical tables (Example: E–W1 to T7 and then to T2; E–W2 to T6 and then to T1, etc.)

* This movement is recommended because it will give the players more of the flavor of a Swiss Team Movement since they compare after every two matches. It also makes reporting and ultimate scoring easier if you are using Victory Points. It's the "down and up" movement.

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 TEAMS | 6 Matches | Newcomer: 4 boards per match Intermediate: 4 boards per match Open: 4 or 5 boards per match | Do not compare results until all matches have been played. |
|---------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|

1. Have each team sit at its home table.
2. Distribute boards starting with Board 1 on Table 1.
3. To start the game, and after each round (set of 4 or 5 boards):
 - a. Pass boards to next lower table (Example: T3s boards to T2).
 - b. E-W pairs move down, skipping a table.
(Example: E-W3 to T1, then 6, 4, 2, 7, 5, and back to 3 to compare.)

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 7 TEAMS* | 4 Matches | Newcomer: 5 or 6 boards per match |
|----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|

1. Set up teams 1 to 4 in a head to head, 5 or 6 board matches.
Set up teams 5 to 7 in a round-robin, playing two 5 or 6 board matches.
2. At the end of the first match, match the winners of the head-to-head and the losers of the head-to-head.

| | Tables A1 & B1 | Tables A2 & B2 | Table C1 | Table C2 | Table C3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Match 1 | Teams 1 vs. 2 | Teams 3 vs. 4 | Teams 5N vs. 7E | 6N vs. 5E | 7N vs. 6E |
| Match 2 | Winners | Losers | 5N vs. 6E | 6N vs. 7E | 7N vs. 5E |
| <p>The two unmatched teams from the head-to-head that have the highest score go into the round robin. The team from the round robin with the highest score remains in the round robin. Example: Teams 1 & 4 have not met and Teams 2 & 3 have not met. Assume the aggregate score of 1 & 4 is best. Assume Team 7 had the best round robin cumulative score.</p> | | | | | |
| Match 3 | 2 vs. 5 | 3 vs. 6 | 1N vs. 7E | 4N vs. 1E | 7N vs. 4E |
| Match 4 | 2 vs. 6 | 3 vs. 5 | 1N vs. 4E | 4N vs. 7E | 7N vs. 1E |

* This movement is recommended ONLY FOR NEWCOMER SWISSES. It seems more like a real Swiss Teams and has the advantage of playing only four matches, thereby running a shorter time. You will not have rematches, but you may — in the second half — have to match teams of quite disparate ranking. Not all teams will play each other.

8 TEAMS: 4 matches Newcomer: 5 or 6 boards per match (5 bds = c. 3 hours)
 Intermediate: 6 boards per match (c. 3 hours)
 Open: 7 boards per match (c. 4 hours)

1. Use Swiss Team Movement.

EVEN NUMBER OF TEAMS ENTERED

1. Use setup pattern of the type shown in Running the Swiss Teams.

ODD NUMBER OF TEAMS ENTERED

1. Set up a round robin for your three last-entered teams. They will play and compare after two matches.
2. Set up the remainder as a head-to-head even-table Swiss.

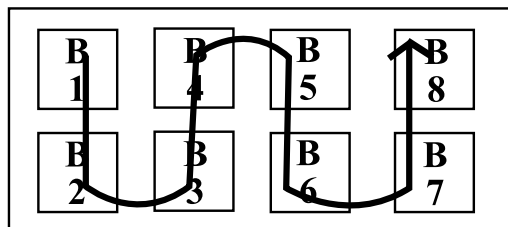
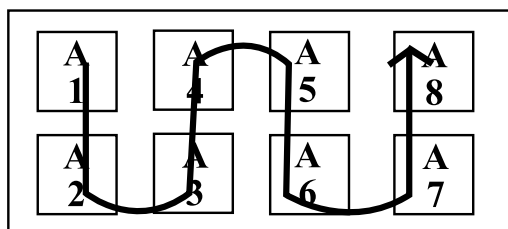
ROUND ROBIN (CIRCUS)

1. A round robin is essentially a three-table Mitchell with the tables spaced apart. Set up your table mats that way.
2. Each team sits at its home table. To start the match, E-W moves to the next higher table.
3. Shuffle and play. When the match is finished, the director ...
4. Moves the boards (NO SHUFFLING) to the next lower table and E-W again move to the next higher numbered table.
5. The teams do not compare until both matches have been played.

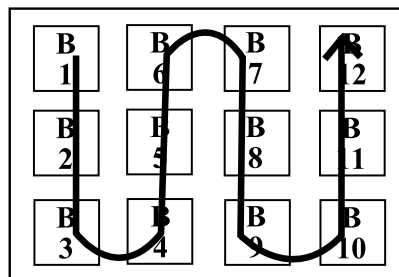
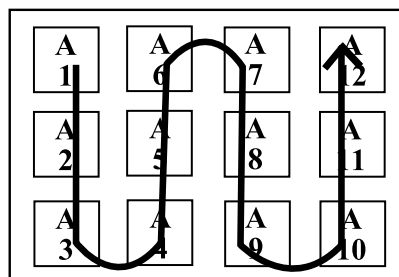
| TABLES | C1 | C2 | C3 |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Match 1 | Teams 1N vs. 3E | 2N vs. 1E | 3N vs. 2E |
| Match 2 | Teams 1N vs. 2E | 2N vs. 3E | 3N vs. 1E |

SWISS TEAM ROOM SETUP TERMS

WIGGLY TWOS



WIGGLY THREES



Recommended Short Bridge Game Movements

Avoid Howell movements except for the situations noted below. A Mitchell movement should be used whenever possible. Here are the recommended movements:

- 4-7 players Social bridge game with players cutting in an out.
- 2 tables A Howell movement with three rounds and six boards per round. Number the pairs 1 through 4 (any order). Put boards 1-3 on Table 1 and 4-6 on Table 2. Have the players relay the boards so that all six are played at each table. Then have the E–W players exchange positions. Put boards 7-9 on Table 1 and 10-12 on Table 2. Have the players relay the boards so that all six are played. Have the N–S pair from Table 2 exchange with the E–W pair from Table 1. Put boards 13-15 on Table 1 and 16-18 on Table 2. Again have the tables relay the boards so that all six are played.

The advantage of this movement is that each pair plays the three other pairs. The game is easy to score since you can score each set of six boards at the end of each round (1 is top). You can also shorten or extend the game by adjusting the number of boards that are played in the last round. For example, put out only two boards on each table if the play has been slow. If one table is considerably slower than the other, give the slower table an average on the unplayed board(s) and move for the next round. (If you are using ACBLscore, use Not Played instead of Average for a fairer comparison of boards not played.)

This is a much preferable movement to a two-table team game.

- 2½ tables This is an awkward number. Try to avoid it. A more practical choice is a three-table Howell with a sitout. There are movements in Appendix C of Groner and a movement can be set up on ACBLscore. The director has to watch the movement carefully to make sure the right boards are used. There are five rounds. It is usually best to use three boards per round since Howells generally run slowly. The disadvantage is that the pairs that sit out will only play 12 boards. You can set up the movement with four boards per round but the complete movement would be 20 boards ... likely too much for a two-hour game unless the players are very fast. However, you can curtail the last round (to two boards, for example), awarding averages on the unplayed boards. (If you are using ACBLscore, use Not Played instead of Average for a fairer comparison of boards not played.)
- 3 tables Three table Houwell with five rounds of 4 boards
- 3½ tables Another awkward movement. A 4-table Howell is best with three boards per round.
- 4 tables Four-table Mitchell with a relay and bye-stand and four boards per round.

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4½ tables | Five-table Mitchell with three boards per round and a 22-minute sitout for the E–W pairs at Table 5. |
| 5 tables | Five-table Mitchell with three boards per round. If the players are experienced, you can put out four boards per round and curtail the last round by playing only one or two boards and awarding averages on the unplayed boards. (If you are using ACBLscore use Not Played instead of Average for a fairer comparison of boards not played.) |
| 5½ tables | Six-table skip Mitchell with three boards per round and a 22-minute sitout for the E–W pairs at Table 6. (E–W pair 3 won't have a sit out.) |
| 6 tables | Six-table skip Mitchell with four boards per round. You can curtail the movement after four rounds or call a fifth round and then curtail the movement after a couple of boards. |
| 6½ tables | Seven-table Mitchell with three boards per round and a 22-minute sitout for the E–W pairs at Table 7. You can play five or six rounds depending on the speed of the players. |
| 7 tables | Seven-table Mitchell with three boards per round. You can play five or six rounds or curtail the sixth round after one or two boards. |
| 7½ tables | Eight-table Mitchell with a relay and bye-stand and two boards per round. There is no actual relay because the E–W pairs at Table 8 sit out for 15 minutes. The E–W pairs will play only 14 boards, but this is preferable to having a 22-minute sitout. |
| 8 tables | Eight-table Mitchell with a relay and bye-stand and two boards per round. Be sure to keep an eye on the board movement when there is a bye-stand. |
| 8½ tables | Nine-table Mitchell with two boards per round. E–W pairs at Table 9 have a 15-minute sitout. Play eight or nine rounds. |
| 9 or more | Mitchell movement with two boards per round. Play eight or nine rounds depending on the time available. With a half table, there will be an E–W sitout at the highest-numbered table. Don't forget to call a skip after the halfway point with an even number of tables. |

With 16 or more tables, you can split the game into two sections. Don't split the game with fewer tables because two-board rounds are preferable to three-board rounds.

Note: Avoid half-table games whenever possible. Keep a list of people you can call at the last minute to fill it or have a standby pair that you reward with a free play for another night when they aren't needed.

Notes

RULINGS

How to Make a Good Ruling

Whenever you approach a table to make a ruling, you are representing your club and displaying your own professional abilities and knowledge. It is important that this be done well. Carry a Law Book or Duplicate Decisions with you when you go to make a ruling.

1. **Be aware of your game at all times.**

Making a ruling starts even *before* you reach the table. Be aware of the noise level and emotional content of the game. Many times you can hear a situation developing and be on your way to the area even before you are called. If you are on top of these situations it will keep your game quieter, less tense and progressing easily. Everyone will have a better time. **Do not** let yourself get so involved talking with players or friends that you must be called two or three times before a table of players can get your attention. If you allow this to happen, the players will be irritated with you before you even reach them. The sooner you get to the table, the less time there will be for an explosive situation to develop.

2. **Locate the director call and let the players know you are on the way.**

Whenever you hear a call, pinpoint the area and let the players know you are on the way by a wave of the hand, a nod or a call of "Coming." This will forestall multiple follow-up calls and consequent irritation and noise. If you cannot pinpoint the call, ask the room at large "Who called?" When they raise their hand, acknowledge the call. Then proceed to the table.

3. **Approach the table as smoothly as you can.**

Don't run, but get there as quickly as possible *without disturbing the rest of the room*. This may necessitate taking detours or going the "long way round." Do it! Pushing in back of other players or otherwise disturbing their game will annoy them unnecessarily.

4. **Approach the table in a friendly manner with a cheerful expression.**

When you arrive at the table, ask the question, "How can I help?" Remember, the players are already somewhat disconcerted by an irregularity and are probably on the defensive. Anything you can do to ease the situation will be to everyone's advantage. You will be able to think and comprehend more quickly, and the players will be able to explain and listen more carefully if the tension is lessened.

5. **Define the problem — bidding, play, conduct.**

Attempt to define the general area of the problem (bidding, play, conduct) without etching it in stone. Remember to be as open as possible to information that the players are trying to give you.

6. **Remain in control of the situation at all times.**

When the players see that you are ready to listen, they will probably all start talking at once. It is imperative that only one person at a time speak. Sometimes you will need to require a moment of silence so "we can collect ourselves." Choose one player to speak, and indicate this to the others. Say something like "One at a time, please. I will listen to everyone, in turn, but only one at a time. Will you (indicate one player, preferably the one who called you) please tell me about the situation?" "*What is the problem we are considering?*" If you can get one agreed statement from the players in answer to this question, or even one key word, you will be able to listen much more knowledgeably and shorten your *ruling time* considerably.

7. **Verify with the players your understanding of the problem.**
Listen to the facts as related by each person, one at a time. At the completion of their statements, verify with the players at the table that this is indeed what happened by repeating it to them sequentially and logically. Do not try to make a ruling until you are able to do this. If you are not careful, you may well find yourself quoting Laws and penalties that really don't apply.
8. **Quote the Law (Preferably by reading it) and see that it is properly applied.**
After you are able to verify the facts, complete with agreement or disagreement on the facts by all concerned, quote the Law applying to the situation, state the options available and penalties that apply, and stand by to see that these are selected and paid.
9. **Inform the players when it is a judgment situation and explain procedure.**
If it is a judgment situation, the director should never make a ruling or adjustment immediately. In cases of this sort, state, "I will consider the problem more fully. Score it up 'AS IS' for now. I will let all of you know my decision later. Meanwhile, please proceed." After consideration, you must return and inform both parties of your decision.
10. **Leave the vicinity as soon as you can.**
After you make your ruling, don't stick around to get into further discussion. If you have a judgment situation, analyze the deal, check the other results on the board, and if possible, get an opinion from appropriate players (players of the same caliber who are not playing or who have played the hand already) or other directors before making a decision.
11. **Inform the players of their right to appeal a judgment ruling.**
A ruling on a judgment situation can be appealed. The players should be so informed. If your club does not provide appeals committees, directors should (at their convenience) hear the appeal by discussing the situation with the appellants and their opponents, if necessary, at greater length.
12. **Be able to make book rulings rapidly.**
To be able to make timely rulings, you have to know where in the Laws the various situations are covered. In your spare time at home, leaf through your Law Book or copy of Duplicate Decisions, spotting at random various Laws and their places in the book — front, middle, back. Be sure you have read and are familiar with Laws 72–76 (Proprieties), Laws 81–91 (Tournament director) and Laws 92 and 93 (Appeals). Indexing your Law Book or your copy of Duplicate Decisions is one of the most valuable exercises a new director can perform.
13. **To appear professional you must have a firm grasp of the material available in you field.**
Directors should be aware of pertinent articles published in the Bridge Bulletin. They must know at least as much as, and preferably more than, the players. This can only be done through extra study. Keeping current is expected of anyone who wishes to run a successful game.

When the Director Makes an Incorrect Ruling

The directors occasionally will err either in the substance of a ruling or in its presentation. When the error is one of substance, directors should ascertain whether a different result would have been achieved with a correct ruling, and, if so, assign that result with a full explanation to the contestants involved. Unfortunately, the matter will seldom be so clear as to allow such a determination. (A *mea culpa* posture, it's all my fault, will frequently aid directors in having a changed decision accepted.) When no highly probable new result is evident, a two-way Average+ is appropriate, but avoidance of a committee hearing should never be used by the director as a reason for assigning such scores. Any assigned or adjusted scores are, of course, subject to committee review.

Errors in presentation are more difficult to resolve. It may be apparent to directors that even though they believe the presentation to have been adequate, a contestant may not have understood the situation. In such cases, they should review their own procedures. Should they be less than perfect, they should protect a participant who has been injured by the error. No fixed procedures appear proper in such instances.

Directors at all levels should be willing to admit an error. Players will be more willing to accept decisions when they are known not to be dogmatic in defense of a position. Directors should always be willing to admit to the possibility of error even though feeling strongly about the position.

Common Rulings

Unauthorized Information – Law 16

Definition: After a player makes extraneous information available to partner by an action such as a remark, a question, a reply to a question, an unmistakable hesitation, unusual speed, special emphasis, tone, gesture, movement, mannerism or any other action that suggests a call, lead or plan of play, the partner may not choose from among logical alternative actions one that could have demonstrably been suggested over another by the extraneous information.

Steps in dealing with unauthorized information

1. Was the unauthorized information available? Was there a huddle? **If yes, proceed.**
2. Were the opponents disadvantaged? **If yes, proceed.**
3. Were there logical alternatives to the call chosen by the partner (of the huddler, for example)? A logical alternative is defined as a call that would be seriously considered by at least a substantial minority of equivalent players, acting on the basis of all the information legitimately (and probably obviously for that player) available. **If yes, proceed.**
4. Could the extraneous information demonstrably suggest the call chosen over (a likely less successful) logical alternative(s)? Is it obvious? Is it readily apparent? Is it easily understood? **If yes, proceed.**
5. **Assign an adjusted score.** Figure the most likely result had the irregularity not occurred and award that score. Only when you cannot decide what the likely outcome would have been should you award Average-, Average+, Average+.

Failure to Follow Suit: Inquiries Concerning a Revoke – Law 61

Definition of a revoke: A revoke is the play of the card of another suit by a player who is able to either follow suit or comply with a lead penalty.

Note: See Law 59, when a player is unable to comply.

Right to inquire about a possible revoke

1. Dummy may ask declarer.
2. Declarer may ask the defenders.
3. Defenders may ask one another (in ACBL-sanctioned events) and declarer.
4. DUMMY MAY NOT QUESTION THE DEFENDERS.

Correction of a Revoke – Law 62

A player must correct his revoke if he becomes aware of it before the revoke becomes established.

A revoke is corrected when the offender withdraws the card he played in revoking and substitutes a legal card.

1. If the withdrawn card was from defender's unfaced hand, it becomes a major penalty card.
(See Law 50.)
2. If the withdrawn card belonged to declarer or dummy, it is replaced without penalty.

Subsequent cards played after a revoke can be withdrawn

1. **By a member of the non-offending side** without penalty provided the card was played before attention was drawn to the revoke.
2. **By the partner of the player who revoked** if his RHO withdraws a card played after the revoke. This withdrawn card becomes a major penalty card if the player is a defender.

A revoke on the 12th trick

1. **The revoke must be corrected** if discovered before all four hands have been returned to the board.
2. If a defender revokes on the 12th trick before his partner has played, and if offender's partner has cards in two suits, offender's partner may not choose the play that could possibly have been suggested by seeing the revoke card.

Note: When a defender legally retracts a played card after declarer's infraction and change of play, the defenders are entitled to redress under Law 16C2 when declarer benefits from the knowledge of the withdrawn card. Declarer is not entitled to protection in this situation when the defenders profit from this knowledge.

Establishment of a Revoke – Law 63

A revoke become established when the offender or his partner:

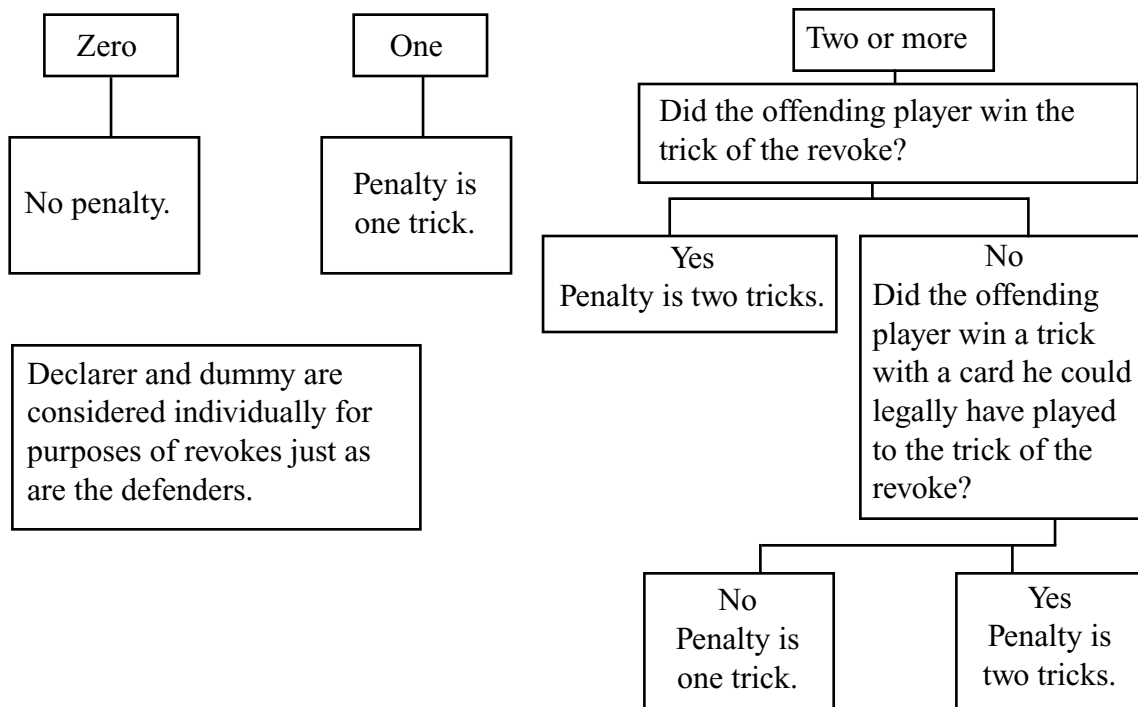
1. Leads or plays to the following trick.
2. Names or designates a card to be played to the following trick.
3. Makes or acquiesces in a claim or concession of tricks.

A revoke, once established, may not be corrected and stands as played (unless it occurred on the 12th trick and was discovered before the hands were returned to the board). (See Law 64 for the director's responsibility to restore equity.)

Procedure after Establishment of a Revoke – Law 64

Decision tree for revoke penalty

How many tricks were taken by the offending side beginning with the trick on which the revoke occurred to the end of the hand?



Note: When declarer wins a trick in the dummy and revokes in his hand, he is deemed not to have won the revoking trick. If he later wins a trick in his hand with a card he “could legally have played” on the revoke trick, the penalty is two tricks. “Could legally have played” is intended to include a card that would not rationally have been played had the revoke not occurred, as in playing a king under the ace.

Note: In all of the above cases, the director retains the right to award an adjusted score (Law 64C).

Lead out of Turn Accepted – Law 53

Any lead faced out of turn may be treated as a correct lead

1. If declarer or either defender, as the case may be, accepts it by making a statement to that effect. If no acceptance is made, the director will require that the lead be made from the correct hand.

Note: See Law 56 for declarer's options if the proper lead is to be made by the partner of the player who led out of turn.

2. If the player next in rotation plays to the irregular lead.

Note: If a card is played by a player whose turn it was to lead, even if made subsequent to an opponent's (not partner's) lead out of turn, it may be treated as the correct lead if the player was leading on his own rather than following to the card led out of turn. In this case, the director should not treat this as a play to the opponent's lead. The opponent would pick up his card without penalty. If the player is a defender, however, Law 16C2 applies.

Faced Opening Lead out of Turn – Law 54

The director's ruling should begin with the statement to declarer:

You have five options. They are:

1. You may accept the lead from the wrong hand and see dummy before playing in proper sequence from your own hand.
2. You may accept the lead and become the dummy. Note that if one or more cards are exposed in spreading his hand to become dummy, the lead is accepted and declarer becomes dummy.
3. You may require the lead (one time only from the proper opening leader) of the suit that was improperly led, and the penalty card is returned to the offender's hand.
4. You may prohibit the lead (from the proper leader for as long as he holds the lead) of the suit that was improperly led, and the penalty card is returned to the offender's hand.
5. You may leave the improperly led card on the table to remain a penalty card. The opening leader can lead as he chooses. If the correct opening leader retains or regains the lead, however, and his partner still has the penalty card, you will, each time before the defender leads, have the choice of exercising option 3, option 4 or option 5.

When declarer does not accept the opening lead out of turn, the card becomes a penalty card. (See Law 50.)

Note: A player may withdraw a lead out of turn if the leader was mistakenly informed by an opponent that it was his turn to lead. (See Law 47E.)

Declarer's Lead out of Turn – Law 55

The Laws state that either opponent may accept or require retraction of a lead out of turn by declarer. (**Note:** if the lead out of turn was due to misinformation from an opponent, see Law 47E.) The Laws do not state specifically how this should be handled. **The proper method of extending the defenders their rights is as follows:**

1. The director should advise the defenders that either of them may accept or reject the lead. They are not allowed to consult and the first to speak will speak for the partnership.
2. The director should explain that if a defender chooses to reject the lead, declarer must lead from the correct hand but **IS NOT REQUIRED TO LEAD THE SAME SUIT**. The card incorrectly led will be restored to its proper hand with no further penalty and declarer will make any legal play from the correct hand.
3. If no one has yet spoken up, the director should say, "If neither of you cares to accept the lead, declarer will be required to lead from the proper hand," pause for a moment, and then so direct the declarer. If a defender requests a little more time to ponder his decision, the director should honor the request.

Note: If simultaneous acceptance and rejection occur, the director should give preference to the wishes of the defender next to play after the irregular lead. In cases where a player adopts a line of play that could have been based on information gained from his own infraction, the director should warn the players that an adjusted score might be awarded.

Defender's Lead out of Turn – Law 56

Declarer's options when a defender leads out of turn:

1. Declarer may choose to accept the lead out of turn. (See Law 53.)
2. Declarer may require the defender to retract his lead out of turn. The card illegally led becomes a major penalty card. (See Law 50.)

Premature Lead or Play by Defender – Law 57

Declarer's options: When a defender leads to the next trick before his partner has played to the current trick or plays out of turn before his partner has played, the card so led or played becomes a major penalty card. **Declarer has three options:**

1. He may require offender's partner to play the highest card he holds of the suit led.
2. He may require offender's partner to play the lowest card he holds of the suit led.
3. He may prohibit offender's partner from playing a card of a different specified suit.

Note: When offender's partner is unable to comply with the choice made by declarer, he may play any legal card.

When a defender plays before his partner, there is no penalty:

1. If declarer has played from both hands.
2. If dummy has played a card on his own initiative or illegally suggested that it be played.

Note: A singleton in dummy or one of a group of cards in the same suit which are equal in rank is not considered to be automatically played.

Insufficient Bid – Law 27

An insufficient bid is automatically accepted if LHO calls. The auction then proceeds as though there had been no irregularity. If LHO simply points out that the bid is insufficient, LHO does not suggest or imply that he accepts the insufficient bid. The director should give LHO the option to accept the insufficient bid after explaining all the options and penalties that may be applicable. (The auction proceeds normally and may sound a little strange — but that’s all right.)

Note: Especially when bid boxes are in use, the director needs to ascertain, away from the table, if the call was inadvertent (*i.e.*, due to a mechanical error). Many times a player may be too embarrassed to relate that fact to the director in front of other players. In addition, by inquiring at the table, the director may cause unauthorized information to be passed.

When the insufficient bid is not accepted, it must be corrected by either a sufficient bid or a pass. “Double” and “Redouble” are not options.

Before proceeding, the director must decide if the insufficient bid may be conventional, or, if a later correction to the lowest sufficient bid in the same denomination may be conventional.

Note: The director should use his own judgment in determining when an insufficient bid is conventional. At the table, he should not ask the offender or his partner how these bids are interpreted. He can examine the offending side’s convention card in making this determination. Example: Opening bidder bids 2NT and LHO overcalls 2♣. On examining the convention card, the director determines that 2♣ over 1NT was Landy, showing hearts and spades. He should treat this overcall as conventional and rule accordingly.

1. **If the insufficient bid is deemed by the director to be conventional,** it must be corrected by a legal bid or pass and the offender’s partner must pass for the remainder of the auction.
2. **If the insufficient bid is not conventional and is corrected by the lowest sufficient bid in the same denomination,** the auction proceeds as though no irregularity had occurred. The director may assign an adjusted score in a case where the insufficient bid (corrected by the lowest bid in the same denomination) gave information to the offenders which caused the non-offending side to be damaged.
3. **If the insufficient bid is corrected by any other sufficient bid or a pass,** the offender’s partner must pass for the remainder of the auction.

Note: In #1 and #3 above, Law 23 applies when the enforced pass damages the non-offenders and the lead penalties of Law 26 apply to any illegally named suit — specified or implied — not specified at any time in the auction by the offender.

Directors should caution the offenders that a double or a redouble may not be substituted for the insufficient bid.

Call out of Rotation – Laws 28–32

Note: The director should be extra careful to read the appropriate Law in making a ruling under these sections.

This is one area where it is vital to understand the distinction between Laws that use the all-encompassing term “call,” which can refer to ANY bid, double, redouble or pass, and other Laws that deal with specific bids, doubles, redoubles or passes.

Calls Considered to Be in Rotation – Law 28

A call is considered to be in rotation

1. When made by a player before RHO calls if RHO is required by Law to pass.
2. When made by a player at his turn to call before a penalty is assessed for an opponent's call out of turn. In such a case there is no longer a penalty for the call out of turn, which is canceled, and the auction proceeds as though there had been no irregularity. (Law 16C2 applies.)

Procedure after a Call out of Rotation – Law 29

The call out of rotation is automatically canceled when the opponent whose turn it was to call makes a call before a penalty has been assessed. The auction proceeds as though the offending player had not called at that turn, and no penalty may be assessed.

Director's role (See Law 10C):

1. It is the director's obligation when making a ruling to inform a player of all of his options.
2. Whenever a director rules on a pass, bid, legal double or redouble out of rotation, he should inform LHO of the penalties that are applicable to the infraction after FIRST informing him that he has the right to accept the call – in which case the auction would continue without penalty. If the LHO does not accept the call, the director then invokes the appropriate penalty.

Note: If the out-of-rotation call is conventional, the denomination(s) specified rather than the denomination named is the one referred to by Laws 30, 31 and 32.

Pass out of Rotation (Not Accepted) – Law 30

In general, a player who passes out of turn must pass at his next turn to call — unless his pass was conventional. If the director determines that the pass is conventional, the penalties are the same as those in Law 31 for a bid out of turn — partner must pass for the remainder of the auction and Law 26 (lead penalties) and Law 23 (effects of enforced pass) may apply.

Note: A pass is conventional when, by special agreement, it promises more than a specified amount of strength, or when it artificially promises or denies values other than in the last suit named. Since a Forcing Pass as an opening call is not allowed in ACBL tournaments, this situation will occur infrequently in ACBL events.

Before any player bids Offender must pass (once) at his next turn to call, and Law 72B1 may apply if partner was dealer.

After any player bids:

At RHO's turn..... Offender must pass (once) at his next turn to call.

At Partner's turn..... Offender must pass throughout the balance of the auction and partner may not double or redouble at that turn. (Again Law 72B1 may apply.)

At LHO's turn..... Treat as a change of call. Apply Law 25.

Bid out of Rotation (Not Accepted) – Law 31

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| At RHO's turn..... | RHO passes — Offender must repeat the bid out of rotation. When that bid is legal, there is no penalty. |
| At RHO's turn | RHO acts — If offender repeats the *denomination, partner must pass at his next turn. If he makes any other legal call, partner must pass for the balance of the auction and lead penalties of Law 26 may apply. |
| At partner's turn or at LHO's turn if offender has not previously called | Offender's partner must pass for the balance of the auction and lead penalties of Law 26 may apply. |
| At LHO's turn if offender has previously called | Apply Law 25, Change of Call. |

*See Law 29C.

Double or Redouble out of Rotation (Not Accepted) – Law 32

(See Law 35 for inadmissible doubles or redoubles accepted)

If LHO does not accept the double or redouble, then —

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| At Partner's turn to call..... | Partner must pass for the balance of the auction and lead penalties of Law 26B may apply and Law 23 may apply if the enforced pass damages the non-offenders. |
| At RHO's turn to call..... | <i>If RHO passes</i> , the offender must repeat the out-of-rotation call — no penalty. |
| At RHO's turn to call..... | <i>If RHO bids</i> , the offender may make any legal call, offender's partner must pass for the balance of the auction and lead penalties of Law 26B may apply. |

Simultaneous Calls – Law 33

When two calls are made at approximately the same instant, and one of the calls was made by the player whose turn it was to call, the second call shall be treated as subsequent.

If the second call was legal, it stands.

If the second call was out of rotation or insufficient, the call can be accepted as a legal call by the LHO of the offender.

1. It is accepted automatically if LHO calls.
2. If LHO does not choose to accept it, the call is canceled and the appropriate Law and/or penalty is invoked.

Retention of Right to Call – Law 34

After a pass out of rotation has been accepted by a pass, the director should allow the auction to continue, making certain that anyone skipped gets a subsequent chance to call.

If a player who is skipped does not get a chance to call, the director should cancel all passes commencing with the pass out of rotation, and revert the bidding to the player who missed his turn. No penalties are applicable.

Penalty Cards Card Played – Law 45

Note: This is perhaps the most frequent judgment ruling the director is called upon to make. It is one of the most difficult rulings for players to accept. It usually costs the offender a trick or two and it makes a difference whether the card being judged is declarer's or a defender's.

The differences between the definitions of a defender's played card and declarer's played card must be kept in mind. Since exposure of one of declarer's cards can help only the opponents, the director should exercise slightly more leniency in allowing retraction of a card of uncertain status when it is from declarer's hand. If its exposure has prompted any reaction by a defender which may have aided declarer, the director must take this into consideration (see Law 47 F).

Declarer's card is played when it is held face up, touching or nearly touching the table, or maintained in such a position as to indicate that it has been played. **It is irrelevant whether either or both of the defenders see the card.** If the card is held in a manner to indicate declarer has determined to play it, the card is played.

A defender's card is played when it is held in a position where it could be possible for his partner to see its face. The director should endeavor to reconstruct the action as closely as possible. If he is convinced that a card could have been seen by defender's partner, he should rule it a played card (an important point to remember is that if both opponents saw the card it is very likely that partner could have seen it). **It does not matter whether the defender's partner saw the card. The question is could he have seen the face of the card had he been looking directly at it?** As in all judgment rulings, the director's decision is subject to review.

A player may correct the call of a card if it is inadvertent (*i.e.*, a slip of the tongue) and if there was no pause for thought in indicating a desire to change the card called. An opponent, however, may change a legal play made in turn prior to the correction.

As always, an opponent may not benefit from the knowledge that an innocent opponent holds a withdrawn card, unless that knowledge is otherwise available.

When dummy plays a wrong card, a card not named by declarer, the trick must be corrected if attention is drawn to the error before both sides have played to the next trick.

An opponent, however, may change a legal play made in turn prior to the correction.

A fifth faced card contributed to a trick becomes a penalty card (if played by a defender) subject to Law 50 unless the director deems that it was led. Law 53, Lead out of Turn Accepted; Law 55, Declarer's Lead out of Turn; or Law 56, Defender's Lead out of Turn, may apply.

No player should turn his own card down until all four players have played to the trick. (See Law 66 for inspection of quitted tricks or cards.)

Dummy should not touch or indicate any card (except for purpose of arrangement) without instructions from declarer after dummy's hand is faced. If he does, the director should be called to the table immediately to determine if dummy's act did in fact constitute a suggestion to declarer. If the director judges that it did, he allows play to continue, reserving his right to assign an adjusted score if the defenders were damaged by the suggestion.

Laws Commission Interpretation of – Law 45C4b

There are two general cases:

1. The card played by dummy was NOT the one declarer called. In this case Law 45D applies. There is no problem with this interpretation as there is a clearly defined time beyond which a correction is not permitted — after each side has played to the next trick.
2. The card played was the one declarer called, but declarer claims that the play was not intended (*i.e.*, an “inadvertent” play). The Law reads, “A player may, without penalty, change an inadvertent designation if he does so without pause for thought ...”
 - a. While it may be difficult to identify an inadvertent action, it is sometimes easier to define what it is not. It is not a slip of the mind.

Example: 1♥–Pass–4♣ (splinter)–Pass.

The opening bidder now thinks for a while, considering whether to make a slam try. He finally places the green card on the table. This is clearly a slip of the mind — NOT INADVERTENT — declarer did not pull the wrong (unintended) bidding card.

An example of a change of mind is:

Declarer leads toward the A–Q in dummy, intending to finesse. He calls “queen” without looking to see the card that LHO has played. He wants to change to the ace. No matter how fast (without pause for thought) the change is made — NOT INADVERTENT.

- b. In determining “inadvertent,” the burden of proof (of inadvertency) is on the declarer. The standard of proof is “overwhelming.”
- c. In judging “without pause for thought,” if declarer has made a play after making an inadvertent designation from dummy, a “pause for thought” has occurred — no change in designation is to be permitted.

If declarer's RHO has played and there is any reasonable possibility that information gained from RHO's play could suggest that declarer's play from dummy was a mistake, a "pause for thought" has occurred — no change in designation is to be permitted.

In determining that there was no "pause for thought," the director may judge so, even though there has been a pause between the inadvertency and the indication by the player committing the inadvertent action. There should be no pause, however, between the awareness of the inadvertent action and drawing attention to it.

The bottom line is that there is to be a strong presumption that the card called is the card that was intended to be called.

Incomplete or Erroneous Call of Card from Dummy – Law 46

Proper designation of dummy's card: When calling a card to be played from dummy's hand, declarer should clearly state both the suit and rank of the desired card.

In cases of incomplete or erroneous calls by declarer of dummy's cards to be played, the following restrictions apply, *except when declarer's different intention is incontrovertible.*

If declarer calls "**high**" or words of like import, he is deemed to have called the highest card of the suit indicated (or, if dummy is last to play the trick, the lowest winning card).

Note: As fourth hand to play, declarer may be deemed to have called for the lowest winning card. *For example,* if dummy has the ace and queen of a suit led by dummy's LHO, "high" may be deemed to be the queen. There are instances, however, when declarer means to play the ace in order to overtake the queen with the king in his hand. Hence, use of the words "may be deemed."

If declarer calls "**low**" or words of like import, he is deemed to have called the lowest card of the suit indicated.

If declarer names **a suit but not a rank**, he is deemed to have called the lowest card of the suit indicated. (**Note:** declarer's intent is important. When declarer is running diamonds from dummy and says "play a diamond," the director may decide declarer meant to play a high diamond.)

If declarer names **a rank but not a suit**, he is deemed to have played a suit in which dummy won the preceding trick, provided the dummy contains a card of the named rank in the suit. In all other cases, he must play a card of that rank if legally possible. If there is more than one card in dummy which can be played, declarer may select the suit.

If declarer indicates a play **without naming either a suit or rank** (as by saying "play anything" or words of like import), either defender may decide which card is to be played (without consultation).

Note: Declarer's intent is important. For example, if dummy has an ace and three deuces, declarer may not have intended the ace to be one of the cards considered.

Special bridge jargon: Much bridge jargon and many gestures have become an integral part of the game, and directors are cautioned to recognize their validity. Expressions such as "ruff it," "hit it" or "cut it," for example, all refer to playing a trump to the lead of another suit. "Hook it" designates a finesse. Similarly, hands or fingers pointing or swinging upwards mean play high, while "duck" designates a low card. This list could be quite long, but these examples should suffice.

Retraction of Card Played – Law 47

A played card may legally be retracted:

- To comply with a penalty.
- To correct an illegal play.
- To change an inadvertent designation.

Following an opponent's change of play

1. If declarer changes his played card, from either his hand or dummy, after defender's correction of a revoke, and the offender's partner also changes his play, the withdrawn cards of both defenders are major penalty cards, Law 50.
2. When LHO plays before declarer's inadvertent play is withdrawn, both declarer and LHO may withdraw their cards without penalty. (See Law 45.) If defender's withdrawn card gives declarer substantial information, the director may assign an adjusted score.

Because of misinformation

1. A lead out of turn may be retracted without penalty if the leader was mistakenly informed by an opponent that it was his turn to lead. Declarer should not accept the lead.
2. A card played may be retracted if played because of a mistaken explanation of an opponent's conventional play or call and before a corrected explanation — but only if no card was subsequently played to that trick. (When it is too late for a player to retract such a card, the director awards an adjusted score if he decides there has been damage because the opponent failed to properly explain the meaning of a call or play.)
3. A face-down opening lead out of turn may be withdrawn after an irregularity, but only upon instruction by the director.

Unauthorized Information from a Card Withdrawn by a Non-Offender

When a player's infraction results in a non-offender legally withdrawing a card, the non-offending side is entitled to redress in cases where the knowledge from the withdrawn card aids the offending side. If declarer is the offender, information gained by the defenders from their withdrawn plays is legal and authorized. (See Law 16C2.)

Exposure of Declarer's Cards – Law 48

Declarer is not subject to penalty for exposing a card, and no card of declarer's or dummy's hand ever becomes a penalty card. Declarer is not required to play any card dropped accidentally.

When declarer faces his cards:

1. **After an opening lead out of turn has been faced**, he has accepted the lead and there is no penalty. Play continues with dummy as declarer.
2. **After a lead out of turn but before it has been faced**, declarer's cards are treated as exposed during the auction because the auction is not completed until the lead is faced. (See Law 17E.)
3. **Intentionally at any time other than immediately after an opening lead out of turn**, he may be deemed to have made a claim or concession of tricks and Law 68 applies.

Note: When declarer intentionally plays a card, it cannot be changed (even if the wrong card was pulled) unless provided for in Law 47. Changes of mind are not permitted.

Exposure of a Defender's Cards – Law 49

A card prematurely exposed, but not led, becomes a penalty card when:

1. **A defender holds it so that it is possible for the defender's partner to see it.**
2. **When it is named as being in the defender's hand.**
3. **When it is played by the defender before he is legally entitled to do so.**

Note: Per the footnote to referenced Law 68, when a defender makes a statement about the trick currently in progress, cards exposed or revealed by a defender do not become penalty cards. Law 16, Unauthorized Information, however, may apply.

Exception: When an external influence is a dominant factor in the exposure of the card(s), the director should designate the card(s) as not being penalty cards, but should consider applying Law 12, Director's Discretionary Powers, or Law 16, Unauthorized Information.

Example: South spills coffee in East's lap. In endeavoring to escape, East exposes one or more cards. No penalty should be given, although Law 16 will surely be applicable, and maybe Law 12. The director may assign an adjusted score if no rectification can be made that will permit normal play of the board.

Note: The director must exercise discretion in making his decision in such cases. Carelessness should not exempt an offender from penalty. When there is no likelihood of intent to expose the card(s), however, the director should seek to be lenient if indeed there has been any external influence created by the opponents that has affected the offender.

Disposition of a Penalty Card – Law 50

Definition of a penalty card:

A card prematurely exposed (**but not led** — *if prematurely led see Law 57*) by a defender is a penalty card unless the director designates otherwise.

Designating a card as a penalty card:

When the players have agreed among themselves that a card is a penalty card, the director, when subsequently called to the table, should generally agree unless he feels that someone's rights were jeopardized by the failure to call him when the card was first exposed.

Example: The defenders may not be aware of the lead penalties to which the offender's partner is subject because the director wasn't called in a timely fashion to explain the Law. (See Law 11.)

The director's role:

1. The director has the right to cancel a ruling agreed upon by the players and carried out before the director was called to the table.
2. The director, when called about an exposed card, should explain all rights and penalties involved with the exposed card.
3. The director should remain at the table if possible until the penalty card is disposed of. If the director needs to leave, he should caution the partner of the player with a major penalty card that, should he obtain the lead while his partner's card is still exposed, he must not lead before declarer has exercised his options.

A **Minor Penalty Card** is a single card, 9 or lower, and exposed by accident (as in playing two cards to a trick or dropping one accidentally). **It is not an "accident," however, if a player accidentally plays a club instead of a spade.**

The following facts are true about a minor penalty card:

1. It must be left face up on the table.
2. It does not have to be played at its first legal opportunity.
3. It must be played before any other card, 9 or lower, of the same suit is played.
4. It is permissible to lead or play a card, 10 or above, in the same suit before playing the minor penalty card.
5. The offender's partner is not subject to lead penalties but Law 16A, Unauthorized Information, may apply.

A **Major Penalty Card** is a single card, 10 or above, exposed accidentally, or any card exposed through deliberate play (as in leading out of turn or correcting a revoke), or two or more penalty cards (note that the same defender cannot have two minor penalty cards) belonging to one defender.

The following facts are true about a major penalty card:

1. It must be left face up on the table immediately in front of the player to whom it belongs until it is played or until an alternative option has been exercised.
2. It must be played at the first legal opportunity (leading, following suit, discarding, ruffing).

Note: Declarer has no options when the player with the major penalty card is on lead.

3. The obligation to follow suit, or to comply with a lead or play penalty, takes precedence over the obligation to play a penalty card.

4. When a player has a major penalty card, his partner **may not lead** to a new trick until declarer states which, if any, of his three options he is selecting.
 - a. He may require the lead of the suit of the penalty card, just once, and all penalty cards in the suit are returned to the player's hand.
 - b. He may prohibit the lead of the suit of the penalty card for as long as the partner retains the lead, and all penalty cards in the suit are returned to the player's hand.
 - c. Declarer may choose to exercise neither option, in which case the penalty card(s) stays on the table and the partner leads anything. If the partner again has the lead, even at the very next trick, while the same penalty card is on the table, declarer can still exercise option a, b or c.
5. Except for the fact that the offender must play the penalty card, other information arising from exposing the card is unauthorized to the offender's partner. An example is that the partner may not use the knowledge to help place other cards unless he has that knowledge from the auction or the play up to that point.

Note: When cards are returned to a defender's hand after being major penalty cards, there are no further restrictions on the offender unless he still has penalty cards in another suit. **See Law 16C2**, however, as, until the knowledge of the card is gained by the subsequent play, information arising from having seen the withdrawn card is unauthorized to the partner of the offender.

Two or More Penalty Cards – Law 51

1. If a defender has two or more penalty cards that can legally be played to the current trick, the declarer may designate which card shall be played.
2. If a defender has two or more penalty cards in one suit when it is his partner's turn to lead, declarer may:
 - a. **Require** the lead of that suit. Defender's cards are no longer penalty cards. He may pick them up and make any legal play.
 - b. **Prohibit** the lead of that suit. Defender's cards are no longer penalty cards. He may pick them up and make any legal play.
3. If a defender has penalty cards in more than one suit when it is his partner's turn to lead, declarer may:
 - a. **Require** the lead of *one* of the suits in which there is a penalty card. Defender's cards in that suit are no longer penalty cards. He may pick them up and make any legal play subject to the restrictions on any remaining cards.
 - b. **Prohibit** the lead of *one* or more of the suits. Defender's cards in that suit (those suits) are no longer penalty cards. He may pick them up and make any legal play subject to the restrictions on any remaining cards.

Failure to Lead or Play a Penalty Card – Law 52

When a defender fails to lead or play a penalty card as directed by Law 50, he may not, on his own initiative, withdraw any other card he played.

When a defender plays a card from his hand rather than his major penalty card:

1. Declarer may accept the play.*
2. Declarer must accept the play if he has subsequently played from his own hand or dummy.*
3. Declarer may require the defender to substitute the penalty card for the card illegally played or led. Every card illegally led or played by the defender in the course of committing the irregularity becomes a **major** penalty card.

*The unplayed penalty card remains a penalty card if the card played from defender's hand is accepted.

Use of Bid Boxes

The use of bid boxes at tournaments has now become standard. In fact, players appreciate the benefits to such an extent that many clubs use them, and players in less formal settings such as when playing at home also use them.

ACBL regulations regarding bid boxes:

1. Bid boxes will be used in all events except Intermediate/Newcomer events (0-200). Their use will be optional in IN events.
2. Units and districts are encouraged to use bid boxes in their games.
3. Handicapped players requiring bid boxes will have preference when availability is limited.
4. Non-handicapped players may use bid boxes, if available, in games in which such use is not mandated as long as no player at the table objects.

Note: Any player has the right to use bid boxes (assuming they are available) for any ACBL event in which they play, if they are needed because of a hearing impairment. As a policy, we do not question players as to the details of a handicap when they state that one exists. When bid boxes are in use for this reason, no player has the right to refuse to play with them. Players who have a handicap which preclude their use will have a distinctive card. The card will be displayed on the table and read, "due to a physical or visual handicap, we are not using bid boxes."

Choosing a call using bid boxes

1. A player is obligated to choose a call before touching any card in the box. Deliberation while touching the bidding box cards, removing bidding cards prior to the call being considered "made," etc., may subject the offending side to the adjustment provisions of Law 16. A call is considered made when a bidding card is removed from the bid box and held touching or nearly touching the table or maintained in such a position to indicate that the call has been made. Until a call is considered made, the director will treat the situation as unauthorized information and apply Law 16. After a call is considered made, the director will apply Law 25.
2. A call, once made, may be changed without penalty under the provisions of Law 25 only if a player has inadvertently taken out the wrong bidding card, *and* the player corrects, or attempts to correct without pause for thought, **and** partner has not taken action (picking up the bidding cards after the auction is over constitutes taking action).

3. The skip-bid warning is given using bid boxes by displaying the stop card, making a call and then replacing the stop card in the bid box. LHO is obligated to wait 10 seconds (while giving the appearance of studying his hand) before making a call.

The STOP Card

Players should protect their rights and the opponent's by announcing, prior to making any subsequent bid that skips one or more levels of bidding. Place the stop card so that LHO sees it (the skip bidder is responsible for gaining LHO's attention). The skip bid is made. The stop card is replaced in the bid box.

Note: If a player forgets to replace the stop card there is no penalty. It is each player's responsibility to maintain appropriate tempo including after a skip bid. If the stop card is placed on the table and a skip bid is not made, the director may judge that the bid card was played inadvertently or not. If the judgment is that the card was played after a "slip of the mind" therefore with intent, then the situation is a Law 16 (Unauthorized Information) situation, not an insufficient bid — assuming that the player does not want to make (or did make) a purposeful correction under Law 25B2. An example of this situation is: 1♥ - 2♦ - (after the stop card is displayed) 2♠.

Alert procedure

Except when screens are in use, a player must say "Alert" out loud when tapping the alert strip of the bid box.

Here are some advantages to using bid boxes

1. Auctions can't be overheard at other tables.
2. No extraneous information is exchanged through a remark or the tone in which a call is made.
3. The need for reviews during the auction is virtually eliminated.
4. Bids out of turn are rare.
5. The noise level in the playing area is dramatically reduced.

Suggestions to help you become familiar with using bid boxes

1. Make up your mind what you going to bid before you reach into the bid box. This eliminates shuffling through the bid cards as if you were still debating which to place on the table. This gives unauthorized information that you weren't sure about your final choice.
2. Develop the habit of placing your thumb over the bid you select as you pull the bid card out. Look at the bid card before you place it on the table. This ensures that you've got the card you want.
3. Place the bid cards on the table without special emphasis. "Building" your auction from left to right enables you to display and recover your bid cards most effectively. The bids should overlap so that the entire auction is visible. This includes pass, double and redouble.
4. The red STOP card is used during the auction as a skip bid warning. As with verbal bidding, either you should always make a skip bid warning when a skip bid comes up or you should never use the warning. Place the stop card so that LHO sees it (the skip bidder is responsible for gaining LHO's attention). The skip bid is made. The stop card is replaced in the bidding box.

Note: LHO is entitled to 10 seconds even if the STOP card is picked up immediately.

5. A player must say “Alert” out loud while touching the alert flag on his bid box. When using screens, silent alerts are mandatory.

Even with practice and familiarity, accidents will happen and the “oops” rule applies to inadvertent calls or mechanical errors.

For example: You mean to bid 1 ♠ but accidentally play the 1 ♥ card on the table. The director is authorized to permit you to change your call if it was inadvertent.

In such a case, some immediate indication is necessary before partner has called. The director should be liberal in judging whether there was pause for thought.

If partner has already taken some action, you now have an obligation, just as with verbal bidding, to continue bidding as though no irregularity had occurred.

Huddles and Hesitations

Huddle situations are difficult for players, directors and committees. The following is a summary of how such cases should be handled.

How should directors and committees apply the Laws to cases involving breaks in tempo?

The relevant provisions are as follows (from Law 73):

“Calls and plays should be made without special emphasis, mannerism or inflection, and without undue hesitation or haste.” And, “When a violation . . . results in damage to an innocent opponent, if the director determines that a player chose from among logical alternative actions one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another by his partner’s remark, manner tempo, or the like, he shall award an adjusted score (see Law 16).”

In applying these provisions, a director (or, subsequently, a committee) has four different issues of bridge fact and judgment to resolve.

1. Was the violation a call made with undue hesitation? If so,
2. Could the innocent side have suffered **damage** thereby? When the first two answers are yes, then
3. Were there **logical alternatives** to the call chosen by huddler’s partner? The Law’s phrase “logical alternative” is intended to exclude extreme interpretations: it means neither “any conceivable alternative” on the one hand nor “clearly preferable alternative” on the other hand. A logical alternative is a call that would be seriously considered by at least a substantial minority of equivalent players and chosen by some of them, acting on the basis of all the information legitimately available.
4. Could the hesitation **demonstrably suggest** that the call chosen at the table would be more successful than one of the logical alternatives?

Note: Refer to Law 16 for more information defining demonstrably.

A score should be adjusted only when the answers to all four of these questions are “Yes.” Was there an infraction? Did it cause damage? Was there a logical alternative? Could the alternative chosen have been demonstrably suggested over another?

Note: The director should not permit the non-hesitating side two chances to obtain a good result. In other words, if the partner of the hesitator becomes the dummy, the opponents should voice their objections immediately upon seeing the dummy if they feel that dummy’s actions subsequent to the hesitation could have been influenced by the hesitation. If the non-offending side waits, in this case until conclusion of play, in effect they are judged to have waited to see whether their result was good or poor, planning to object only if it was poor. Their objection should be lodged before they know the result of the play. The director is advised to encourage his players to call at the time a hesitation occurs (Law 16A.1), so that he can get agreement and inform the players of their legal obligations. In the ACBL, players are not allowed to reserve the right to call the director later. They must do so as soon as they have substantial reason to believe that an opponent has chosen from logical alternatives one that could demonstrably have been suggested by the break in tempo. The non-hesitating side has not abrogated any rights by waiting until the end of the hand when they have seen declarer’s 13 cards before calling the director, if it is declarer’s call that is in question. So, if the call in question was made by the dummy, call when dummy is tabled, but if the call is made by declarer, call when the play is completed.

The director must be summoned when the players become aware of a possible infraction.

Director’s Role

1. **The director’s first responsibility is to establish the fact that a hesitation did in fact take place.** When the director is called to the table during the auction and it is reported that an undue hesitation has occurred.
2. **Next, the director should advise the partner of the hesitator what is expected:**

Example: The partner is not to take advantage of information gained by the out-of-tempo action, but to make any clear-cut calls that would have been made.

3. **The director then should order the auction to proceed.**
4. **Directors should not make a ruling until the conclusion of play,** at which time they will either allow the result to stand or assign an adjusted score. They should clearly state, “My ruling is ...” to avoid uncertainty as to his decision.

The best way to handle this ruling is to tell players to temporarily record the score achieved at the table, making it clear that you have not yet made a decision. Then return with your ruling to both pairs a round or two later. Tempers will not be as frayed, and the players will be more inclined to listen to your ruling. They will also feel that you have devoted time to consider the case.

The following “Ruling the Game” article by Peter Mollemet from the Bridge Bulletin deals extensively with these situations.

Hesitation Problems

Approximately 40% of the cases heard by appeals committees concern hesitations. No matter what the ability level of the player, situations arise for which extra time is needed. Generally, as the player becomes more experienced, hesitations become less frequent.

Unfortunately, the hesitation often conveys some information to the other three players at the table that would not have been available otherwise. The opponents are allowed to draw inferences from the tempo break, but only at their own risk. Partner, of course, is not.

There seems to be a popular misconception about the responsibility of the hesitater’s partner. Nothing could be further from the truth than “I had to pass. Partner’s huddle barred me from the auction.” Players are generally well advised to take the action they would have taken had there been no huddle.

When directors are called, it is his responsibility to ensure that no advantage accrues to the hesitater’s side because of the huddle. The first issue to be resolved is whether or not there was a break in the normal tempo. It has been my experience that a director will generally get an honest answer from the alleged huddler. It has also been my experience that when someone calls the director and says there has been a huddle, there has been a huddle.

When it has been determined that a huddle did indeed occur, the director must examine three other questions.

1. Did the huddle suggest to partner that one call was likely to be more successful than another?
This does not mean “any other conceivable call” but rather another call that might demonstrably have been selected at that turn (current guidelines suggest that any call that might have been chosen by a substantial minority of the players of like caliber is a “reasonable call”).
2. Did partner choose that call?
3. Was there damage to the non-offending side?

When the answer to all three questions is “yes,” the director will award an adjusted score. Two examples may help clarify these points. They have been taken from actual committee hearings at North American Bridge Championships.

Case #1: Matchpoints, N–S vulnerable

North holds

♠ 6 3 ♥ K J 10 9 ♦ 3 2 ♣ J 10 7 6 2.

The auction:

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| 2♦ | Pass | 3♦ | Pass* |
| Pass | 3♥ | All Pass | |

**Huddle*

Three out of four players (not huddler's partner) agreed that South hesitated over 3♦. The director adjusted the score from 3♥ N-S making four to 3♦ E-W making four.

North told the committee that he "always balances vigorously. I believe strongly that when the opponents have a fit, then we do also."

The committee determined that there had been a hesitation, that North had a choice of reasonable calls (3♥ or pass), that 3♥ was more likely to be successful because of the huddle, and that the opponents had been damaged. Therefore, the committee upheld the director's ruling.

It is interesting to note that even if North had been known by the committee to be extremely aggressive in balancing situations, it would still have to rule the same way as long as it believed that a substantial minority of peers would pass on the same auction without the huddle.

Case #2: Matchpoints, both vulnerable

North holds

♠ J 10 8 6 5 ♥ 10 2 ♦ A Q 5 3 ♣ 10 6.

The auction:

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♥ | Pass* |
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 3♥ | All Pass | | |

**Huddle*

This time all four players agreed there had been a significant break in tempo. The hesitation clearly suggested that balancing was more likely to achieve a better result than passing, and the huddler's partner did choose the latter course of action. However, neither the committee nor the director felt that pass was a logical alternative to balancing (that is, not as many as a substantial minority of this player's peers would pass).

The result was allowed to stand (3♥ down one).

At Your Club

Tips for Creating a Pleasant Game Atmosphere

1. Stressbuster.

The Mountain View DBC wants to ensure that each player has a good time and it makes certain that the stress level of the new player is kept at a very low level. The directors are trained to keep a constant watch. If things look tense, a visit from the director to lighten up the situation always seems to be welcome.

2. Adopt club rules to make your games pleasant.

Randy Shaw of Oklahoma City OK came up with these guidelines for a club plan to help attract and keep new players.

- a. Always speak to the opponents when they sit down at your table.
- b. Teach bridge in the classroom only!
- c. The bridge table has four corners. Only use your corner, on your right.
- d. Don't sit or think too long before you bid or play.
- e. Don't criticize or show irritation toward partner while at the table.
- f. Never discuss your opponents' bids or plays if they can hear you.
- g. Work with the club manager to maintain a friendly atmosphere.

3. No gloating, no griping policy.

Make your club a pleasant place to play by making signs to encourage players to congratulate opponents who play well against them. Do not permit griping or gloating.

4. Don't tolerate bad behavior.

Adopt a Zero Tolerance policy for your club. More players will participate in your games if the experience is pleasant.

5. Help bad actors see the light.

Alan LeBendig of Los Angeles CA has a few players who don't always mind their P's and Q's, and he has a few players for whom it is difficult to get partners. The club has a "community service" program that puts these two groups together. Some players, in lieu of being barred, are offered the opportunity to play four times during the month with a partner provided by the club manager. The player picks the four games he wants to stand by and, if there are no partners needed for the game, the player is off the hook. When matched up, however, the disciplined player must do everything possible to see that his partner has a really good time. (If there is a second problem, the player is barred.)

6. Allow your players to bid ZT.

You can actually bid "Zero Tolerance" at the Scottsdale Bridge Club in Arizona. Yellow Zero Tolerance cards are in the bid boxes. They have had a positive influence on behavior. Players are asked to flash a ZT card to an offending player (or players) when they feel intimidated or abused. If the bad manners continue, the offended player can call the director. This is an excellent program for new players who are frequently too afraid to call the director when unruly behavior occurs at the table.

7. Keep psyching under control.

Check the article in this section for suggestions on how to implement this.

Setting the Stage at Your Club Game

The club director and/or the club manager are responsible for the atmosphere of the games at their club. They must work together to make the club inviting — a pleasant place where the members want to socialize as well as play bridge. The majority of a club’s customers will be looking for a social experience along with their bridge game. It isn’t surprising that the most frequent complaint voiced by “drop-outs” is the rude and obnoxious behavior of others.

Club directors need to take a firm stand against the behavior of players who drive newcomers away. Sometimes the situation may be solved by a quiet conversation with a disruptive player about the club’s concerns. If this does not alleviate the problem and the player continues to be a bad actor, do not hesitate to take further action. If you don’t, your business will suffer. Check the ACBL Handbook, Chapter 4, regarding disciplinary procedures.

Dealing with Difficult Players

You want your bridge club to have a great reputation all around town. You want it to be a club where happy, friendly, well-mannered players are known to gather to play bridge. You want a club where the environment is user-friendly for players of all levels of experience – a club that first-time players in particular will quickly feel is a second home.

In order to attain and maintain the atmosphere described above, you must deal quickly and firmly with players who are likely to disrupt your games and run off your players.

Active Ethics

ACBL encourages clubs to support Active Ethics. An actively ethical player contributes to the enjoyment of all players by continuously striving to maintain a courteous attitude toward both the opponents and partner and by avoiding any behavior that would make any player uncomfortable. These social attributes are vital to the healthy growth of the game of bridge.

A player who doesn’t practice active ethics is a player who may ruin your game. Customers will not pay to play bridge in an unpleasant or contentious environment. It will serve club managers well to be strict with bad “actors.” Here are some things you can do:

Zero Tolerance. Have a Zero Tolerance policy at your club. Suspend or expel players who offend.

The ultimate purpose of the ACBL’s Z-T program is to create a much more pleasant atmosphere at ACBL-sanctioned games. It’s an attempt to eradicate unacceptable behavior in order to make the game of bridge more enjoyable for all.

Below are some examples of commendable behavior that, while not required, would significantly contribute to the improved atmosphere of our games:

- Being a good “host” or “guest” at the table.
- Greeting others in a friendly manner.
- Praising the bidding and/or play of the opponents.
- Having two clearly completed convention cards readily available to the opponents. (This is a regulation, not just a nicety.)

Here are some examples of behavior that should not be tolerated at your club:

- Badgering, rudeness, insinuations, intimidation, profanity, threats or violence.
- Negative comments concerning opponents' or partner's play or bidding.
- Constant and gratuitous lessons and analyses at the table.
- Loud and disruptive arguing with a director's ruling.

Z-T requires that when a player at a table behaves in an unacceptable manner, the director should be called immediately. Annoying behavior, embarrassing remarks, or any other conduct which might interfere with the enjoyment of the game is specifically prohibited by Law 74A. Law 91A gives the director the authority to assess disciplinary penalties.

ACBL Zero Tolerance Policy

Here are the details of ACBL's Zero Tolerance program and how to enforce the Z-T policy:

1. At the start of each game, the director will announce that the players will be observing ZERO TOLERANCE for unacceptable behavior. It is requested that the director be called whenever behavior is not consistent with the established guidelines.
2. The director, when called, will assess the situation. If it is established that there was unacceptable behavior, an immediate $\frac{1}{4}$ board disciplinary penalty (3 IMPs in team games) will be assigned to all offenders. This may involve any one or all four players at the table irrespective of who initiated the unacceptable behavior. If both members of a partnership are guilty, the penalties are additive ($\frac{1}{4}$ board EACH = $\frac{1}{2}$ board). The ACBL strongly believes that assigning disciplinary penalties will improve the overall behavior at our tournaments.
3. If it is determined that a second offense has occurred in the same event, then the offender(s) shall be ejected from future competition in that event. An offender removed from an event shall be deemed to have not played in the event. No masterpoints will be awarded and no refunds will be made. In the case of a serious offense and in the case of multiple offenses (three) during a tournament, a disciplinary committee may be convened to determine whether the offender(s) should be allowed to play in other events at the tournament and/or whether additional sanctions may be appropriate.
4. Warnings are strongly discouraged and will be given only when there is no clear violation or in cases where the facts cannot be determined. Offenders are to receive immediate penalties. Regardless of who may have initiated unacceptable behavior, ALL offenses are punishable. Retaliatory behavior is a punishable offense. Frivolous accusations will also be considered as offenses under this policy.
5. In accordance with the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, a director's ruling in a disciplinary manner is final; however, all such decisions may be appealed. An appeals committee may not overturn the director's decision, but could *recommend* that the director reconsider the imposition of a penalty. It should be noted that the committee may feel that the penalty assessed was not severe enough and may refer the matter to a disciplinary committee.

Dealing with Psychic Bids

What is a psych?

The Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge define a psychic call as “deliberate and gross misstatement of honor strength or suit length.”

The key word is “gross.” If you forget the meaning of a call, that is not a psych. If you make a call with 12 points when your partnership agreement calls for a maximum of 11, that is not a psych — it is not a gross misstatement. If you are playing five-card majors and open the bidding with 1♠ on a four-card holding, that is not a psych. In general your call is a gross misstatement, and therefore is considered a psych, if the call varies by at least two points in strength or two cards in length from your agreement.

Are psychs allowed?

Clearly Law 40 permits psychs. Psychic bidding is a part of the game..

Excessive psyching leads to implied and concealed partnership understandings and such understandings are serious offenses — they erode the very basics on which the game of bridge are built. Pairs that regularly use psychs soon learn the type of psychic calls their partner makes and are prepared for them. The opponents do not have this same information, although the rules of the game call for complete disclosure of bidding methods.

When does psyching become excessive?

It becomes excessive when your partner can accurately work out what you’re doing because of past experience. A series of tactical bids that are also psychs that occur over a period of time might not be excessive because partner is as unaware of what you are doing as are the opponents.

Are there other psychic bids that aren’t allowed?

Frivolous psyches are especially bothersome and should never occur. These psyches are usually inspired by malicious mischief or a lack of interest in a game that is going poorly. They can disrupt a game by causing an abnormal result.

Unsportsmanlike psychs are equally bad. It is totally against the spirit of the game to throw a psychic call at a contending pair toward the end of the game because you want to create some action or because you’re having a game so bad that one more poor result won’t make any difference. It may make no difference to you, but it could change the winner of the event.

When should you make a psychic bid?

Even when your psych meets the requirement that your partner doesn’t know what’s going on, there should be a good tactical reason for your action. It should never be because you want to get back at so-and-so, or because you’re bored and want to create a little action, or because you’re having a bad game and what difference does one more bottom make?

Is psyching a good practice?

Psyching, in general, is not a good idea. A psych is a good tactic occasionally, but more often it’s a source of irritation, a violation of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, an unsportsmanlike tactic, or a combination of all three.

Why do players become upset when their opponents psych against them?

Although there are many humorous stories about psychs, more often than not, psychs lead to bad scores for the psycher. In addition, players who are the victims of a successful psych often are upset by what they sometimes view as an unfair tactic. It doesn't help the situation any when the psycher chooses this time to gloat.

What can I do to help my players feel better about this ruling?

Explain to them that you are keeping a log of psychs and also a log of unusual incidents. (And do it.) This is really easy to do on your computer but can be done with pen or pencil and a spiral notebook as well. That way you know how often a partnership actually does psych or have a breakdown in their agreements.

A player who psychs once every six months is a "big psycher" among folks who never psych. And that player is certainly within the law and the spirit of the game.

What can be done to keep psyching under control?

1. **Education.** Players need to be informed early in their bridge careers about the legal and social dangers of psyching. These warnings should be repeated from time to time. The best vehicles for this are the Bridge Bulletin, unit and district publications, tournament directors, club managers and club directors.
2. **Legal adjustments.** Sometimes it is clear that the partner of the psycher has bid in such a way as to allow for the possibility that partner has psyched — no other interpretation of the call seems to make much sense. Bidding to cover the possibility that your partner psyched indicates at least an implied understanding which is clearly in violation of the Laws. The director should make an adjustment to repair the damage, possibly give a procedural penalty, and deliver a stern warning to the offenders.
3. **Possible expulsion.** If a player is found to be psyching excessively, frivolously or in an unsportsmanlike manner, the director should inform this player that if such tactics continue to be used, the player faces suspension from the game.

Alerts and Announcements Overview

The objective of the Alert system is for both pairs at the table to have equal access to all information contained in any auction. In order to meet this goal, it is necessary that all players understand and practice the principles of full disclosure and active ethics. Ethical bridge players will recognize the obligation to give complete explanations. They will accept the fact that any such information is entirely for the benefit of the opponents and may not be used to assist their own partnership.

Alerts and Clubs

The use of the ACBL Alert Procedure continues to be optional with club games. It is strongly recommended that it be used, but there is no mandate to do so. Regulations a club establishes pertaining to club masterpoint games may also be made applicable to club tournaments, club charity tournaments, ACBL-wide events, membership games and split locals. Differing club regulations may not be used for district-wide, unit-wide or Sectional Tournaments at Clubs where several clubs compete for an

overall award. In these latter cases, the sponsoring organization (usually a Unit or District) establishes the conditions of contest, and the ACBL Alert procedure must be used.

Guidelines for Alerting

- Bridge is not a game of secret messages; the auction belongs to everyone at the table.
- Remember that the opponents are entitled to know the agreed meaning of all calls.
- The bidding side has an obligation to disclose its agreements according to the procedures established by ACBL.
- When asked, the bidding side must give a full explanation of the agreement. Stating the common or popular name of a convention is not sufficient.
- The opponents need not ask exactly the “right” question. Any request for information should be the trigger. Opponents need only indicate the desire for information – all relevant disclosures should be given automatically.
- The proper way to ask for information is “please explain.”
- Players who remember that a call requires an Alert but cannot remember the meaning must still Alert.
- In all Alert situations, tournament directors should rule with the spirit of the Alert Procedure in mind and not simply by the letter of the law.
- Players who, by experience or expertise, recognize that their opponents have neglected to Alert a special agreement will be expected to protect themselves.
- Adjustments for violations are not automatic. There must have been misinformation. An adjustment will be made only when the misinformation was a direct cause of the damage.
- Note that an opponent who actually knows or suspects what is happening, even though not properly informed, may not be entitled to redress if he or she chooses to proceed without clarifying the situation.
- When an Alert is given, ASK, do not ASSUME.

How to Alert

Using spoken bidding, the partner of the player making an alertable call says, “Alert.”

Using bid boxes, an Alert is made by tapping an Alert card on the table or by tapping the Alert strip on the side of the bid box. In addition, the alerter must say “Alert.”

Responding to a question concerning an Alert

It is important to remember that players are not required to understand their opponents’ systems. When a partnership makes a call or bid that requires an Alert, it is their responsibility to see that their opponents have sufficient information to comprehend the auction. Frequently, in response to a question concerning an Alert, a player will give a one or two word answer such as Brozel, Michaels, Texas, forcing, etc. When this answer is given in a lofty or condescending manner, newer players are often intimidated. This type of explanation may do nothing to alleviate their lack of understanding of the call. This can lead to a poor result and justifiable resentment on their part, which may in turn lead to their departure from your duplicate game.

It is important to remember also that players, at their turn to call, have the right to ask the meaning of any call made during the auction or of calls that may not have been made. Players should try to give a brief, complete answer but be willing graciously to explain further, graciously, when asked. If players are still uncertain as to the meaning of a call or play, they are entitled to ask questions about that call or play to clarify.

Example: 1♣, 1♠, 2♠ — the bid is explained as forcing. Questions may be asked to determine if it is forcing for one round or to game, if it promises a spade stopper, if specific point count is shown. The director can and should be called to the table to assist in these situations and to help protect the rights of the players. The director should make sure the questions do not confuse, embarrass or intimidate the person being asked the question.

Announcements

An Announcement is one word or a short phrase which tells the opponents directly the meaning of partner's call. *When bid boxes are used, the "Alert" strip is tapped also.*

When to Announce

Announcements are required in the following four instances only:

1. State the range after all opening 1NT bids.

EXAMPLE: A 13-15 1NT opening bid is made. The partner of the bidder will say aloud, "thirteen to fifteen."

2. After a diamond or heart transfer response at any level to any level natural notrump opening or overcall.

The Announcement is also used for those methods that initially treat the bid as a transfer even though occasionally the bidder will have a strong hand without the next higher suit. When the message is sent that the transfer was not a transfer, just the first step in showing another type of game-going hand, the call that sends the message must be alerted.

EXAMPLES: 1NT – Pass – 2♥ and 1♦ – 1NT – 2♦ – 4♥. If the heart bid shows spades, in each instance, the 1NT bidder will say aloud, "Transfer."

3. After a 1NT Forcing or Semi-Forcing response to a 1♥ or 1♠ opening bid with no interference.

EXAMPLE: 1♥ – Pass – 1NT. The opening bidder will say aloud, "Forcing" or "Semi-forcing," if there was no other meaning attached to the agreement. If there is more to the agreement, such as showing four or more spades, the opening bidder says, "Alert."

4. Say "short" after all non-forcing opening bids of 1♣ or 1♦ which may be fewer than three cards.

How to Announce

When bid boxes are not in use, the partner simply makes the required spoken statement. When bid boxes are being used, the Alert strip is tapped and the appropriate spoken statement is made. In the event that cards are available with a printed statement, the Alert strip would be tapped and the appropriate printed card displayed to the opponents.

Note: It is the alerter's responsibility to ensure that the opponents are aware that an Alert has been made.

Alerts, Announcements and Reviews of the Auction

Alerts and Announcements, as given, are to be included in reviews of the auction.

Failure to Alert or Announce

If partner fails to Alert or Announce, a player may not make any indication during the auction. Showing surprise or discomfort may wake partner to the error and would also be a violation of Law. In addition, a player may not make allowances for partner's error. The auction must continue as if partner acted properly.

When the auction is over, the declaring side must reveal to the defenders, after first calling the director, any errors of explanation (including Alerts or Announcements that were omitted) before the opening lead is faced. Defenders must reveal any errors but may NOT do so until the board has been played. Again, the director should be called first.

Equity in failure to Alert situations

There is no automatic penalty or redress awarded to opponents for inadvertently failing to Alert or Announce as required. When a pair's failure to Alert or Announce disadvantages an opponent or benefits themselves, however, the director should award an adjusted score. The director should strain to award an assigned score rather than an artificial one (see Law 12C.).

Law 16 requires the director to judge whether the unauthorized information that was made available was significant. An adjustment is given only if, in the opinion of the director or the committee, sufficient damage occurred. A player should not be given a free shot and an adjustment just because his opponents have made unauthorized information available. However, in some cases a procedural penalty is indicated.

Information received by a partnership as a result of the Alert Procedure:

1. If, as the result of an Alert or Announcement, whether an explanation is asked for or not, a partnership may have avoided a misunderstanding; or
2. If an Alert or Announcement is given when it should not have properly been given and a partnership may have avoided a misunderstanding; or
3. If an incorrect explanation of a call (alertable, announceable or not) awakes partner to a misunderstanding.

Then these actions must be considered as unauthorized information under Law 16 of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, and the director should rule in accordance with the discretion and penalties provided in the Law.

Under this Law it is considered an infraction to take advantage of such information, and the director may decide an adjusted score is in order.

Redress in failure to alert situations

A failure to Alert or Announce may entitle a pair to redress if the pair is disadvantaged by this failure, but only if they did not know what was going on at the table. To help in the determination of whether or not the opponents did know what was going on at the time, the director should ask, "Did you look at the convention card?" A player who does not protect himself by asking questions in the hope that opponents will have a misunderstanding does not have a firm basis for asking for redress. It may be helpful in distinguishing real misinformation from a mere technical failure to Alert to ask opponents (privately, at the same time possible alternative actions by them are discussed) what each felt the unAlerted call meant when it was made. Some calls, Alert or no Alert, simply cannot be taken at face value. The missing Alert would not have provided any truly useful information.

When an Alert is made in a situation which requires an Announcement, there is usually no reason for redress. The meaning should be clarified when an explanation of the Alert is requested.

When the director is called to a table where an infraction involving the Alert procedure has occurred, the director should attempt to get a statement from each of the innocent parties (by taking them away from the table one at a time) as to what action each would have taken if he had been properly informed (alerted). Directors should try to get this information before the deal is revealed at which point the players would learn what they should have done. The other way, they have a little guessing to do.

Definitions

Alert: A manner specified by the sponsoring organization by which opponents are notified of your pair's special agreements. These may be given aloud, in writing and/or by using an Alert card or strip. When in doubt, Alert. (There is no penalty for alerting unnecessarily but there may be one for failing to Alert when one is required).

Pre-Alerts (Alerts before hands are removed from the first board of a round or match segment):

- Two-system methods (*e.g.*, strong club when equal or favorable vulnerability; a natural two-over-one when not).
- Systems based on very light openings or other highly aggressive methods or preempts.
- Systems which may be unfamiliar to opponents, such as canapé.
- Super-Chart and Mid-Chart methods.
- Leading low from a doubleton.

Delayed Alerts: Beginning with and including opener's second call, an alertable bid above the level of 3NT bid is a delayed Alert. Passes, doubles and redoubles requiring an Alert must always be alerted immediately.

A delayed Alert is made as follows:

Declaring side: The partner or the person making the alertable call Alerts after the auction is completed and prior to the opening lead.

Defending side: The partner of the player making the alertable call Alerts after the opening lead is made face-down and before the dummy is tabled.

Control bid: A bid, not intended as a place to play, which denotes a control (usually first or second round). These bids are usually used to investigate slam.

Convention: A call that by partnership agreement conveys a meaning other than willingness to play in the denomination named or, in the case of a pass, double or redouble, the last denomination named. In addition, a pass that promises more than a specified amount of strength, or artificially promises or denies values other than in the last suit named.

Cue bid: A bid in a suit an opponent has bid naturally or shown four or more cards.

Doubles (in increasing order of penalty orientation):

- Takeout: Partner is requested to bid.
- Competitive: Shows a desire to compete further; partner normally bids.
- Optional: Shows extra high-card values; offers partner a choice between bidding or passing.
- Penalty-oriented: Partner normally passes but occasionally bids.
- Penalty: Partner is requested to pass.

Puppet: A bid requiring partner to make a specific bid (*e.g.*, a 2NT bid that requires partner to bid 3♣).

Relay: A bid which does not guarantee any specific suit; partner is requested to make the next-step bid (usually) or make another descriptive bid if appropriate (*e.g.*, a diamond bid which usually shows hearts but may not have hearts in some cases).

Transfer: A bid of a suit to show another specific suit (*e.g.*, a diamond bid showing hearts).

Treatment: A natural call that by partnership agreement carries a specific message about the suit bid or the general strength or shape of the hand.

ACBL Regulations

Skip-bid Warning

How to announce a skip bid: The proper way to announce a skip bid using spoken bidding is to say, “I am about to make a skip bid, please wait,” or, “Skip bid, please wait.”

When using bid boxes, the skip bid is announced by placing the stop card so the LHO sees it (the skip bidder is responsible for gaining LHO’s attention). The skip bid is made. The stop card is replaced in the box.

Skip bids and clubs: The use of the skip-bid warning is discretionary with clubs.

When the skip-bid warning should be used: If players are going to use the warning, they must use it whenever they skip one or more levels of bidding — be it an opening bid, an overcall, a rebid or response, strong or weak. Players who use the warning to call attention to the type of bid being made are in direct violation of both the letter and the spirit of the regulation.

Role of the opponent: The announcement of a skip bid requires the LHO of the player who makes the announcement to consider his hand for an approximate count of 10 seconds before calling.

When a player makes a skip bid but doesn’t use the warning: If a player fails to use the warning, the player who is next to call is still expected to break the tempo of the auction before calling as though a skip bid warning was given. This break in tempo puts no constraints on his partner’s actions. However, when a player takes a considerably longer time, his opponents may become entitled to redress under the provisions of Law 16. Experienced players, especially, are required to pause with or without a warning.

Purpose of the skip-bid warning: Use of the warning protects both the user and his ethical opponents (who are not put under time pressure to select a call following a bid that skips one or more levels).

Skip bid announced but not made: When a player announces a skip bid and then fails to make one, the director must be called to the table. The director should announce to the table that unauthorized information may have been made available. (The player probably intended to skip the bidding but failed to do so.) The director should inform the partner of the player who made the skip-bid announcement that he must bid his hand on the basis of the auction (1 ♠, 2 ♥) and disregard his partner’s statement (or the stop card) (1 ♠, skip bid 2 ♥). The director should instruct the players to proceed with the auction and the play. After the deal has been completed, if the non-offenders feel the offender’s partner’s bidding (or play if they become defenders) was influenced by the unauthorized information, they should call the director. The director should question the players and determine if, in his opinion, there has been damage. When the director deems that there has been damage, an adjusted score should be awarded.

Note: In situations where the unauthorized information interferes with the auction (or play) and the partner of the person who said “skip bid 2 ♥” is unable to bid (or play) the hand normally, the director should award the offender no better than average minus and the non-offenders average plus or their score, whichever is better.

Slow Play

Bridge is a timed event. Games should start on time, and the director should keep them moving on schedule. A timing device is a major plus (a table-size 15-minute timer is perfect). There is nothing more frustrating for a pair than to follow two slow players all evening and never be able to begin a round on time.

The guideline for ACBL events is 15 minutes per two boards. The director has an obligation to players not to allow one or two persons to make the game unpleasant for the majority. First offenders should be warned, given one round to get back on schedule and informed that in addition to a late play (when allowed), procedural penalties (Law 90) may be assessed for future offenses. It is understood that the director will make every possible effort to determine who is “at fault” before assessing any penalties. When a player is late for the second time, the director may issue a procedural penalty (usually 25% of top on a board).

Before assessing a penalty for persistent slow play, sometimes it is better for the pair and the game as a whole to grant the problem pair a late play (hoping that by putting them back on schedule they can keep up). If this does not cure the problem, the director may then resort to penalties.

It is possible to run a duplicate game where late plays are not allowed. The director can award an adjusted score for boards that are not started before the round ends. The offenders receive average minus and the non-offenders receive average plus, or a percentage of their game. If neither pair is deemed to be at fault, the board is scored as average for both pairs.

Barring of Players

Club management should deal promptly and fairly with all cases of improper conduct that occur during an ACBL-sanctioned masterpoint game in the club, including cases of unethical practices. The club manager should either handle these situations personally or establish a standing committee to review all disciplinary problems. Clubs holding non-sanctioned games may deal with problems arising in these games as they see fit.

The club manager can handle many behavior problems by discussing them with the offenders, by issuing a warning, or declaring a period of probation. In extreme cases or cases of repeated offenses, the manager may bar the player from the club game for a stipulated period of time, or permanently.

To bar a player, club management must notify the player in writing and send a copy of the notification to the ACBL Club and Member Services Department. The notification must include the player's name and player number and the reason for the barring.

No open club may bar a player or players as a class, based upon the player's race, creed, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, national origin or proficiency at bridge.

An open club may bar a player (or impose partnership prohibitions) from its regular club masterpoint games, membership games, ACBL-wide games, club championships and charity and international fund, club championships and other special events specifically allocated to clubs.

Except as detailed in the previous paragraphs, a club may bar a player for whatever reason it deems proper consistent with ACBL Rules and Regulations and the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. An obnoxious or incompatible partnership may be barred as a pair, but each may be permitted to play with other partners.

A club may extend the barring of a player from Grand National Teams, North American Pair events, Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs), qualifying sessions of a progressive sectional, unit or district competitions, such as unit championships, charity games, IMP games, and unit-or district-wide championships held at the club. In such cases, the written notice to the person barred must include the person's right to appeal the action to the unit board in which the club is located within 30 days of the action taken by the club. Such written notice is required, otherwise the barring shall not be effective. The club may not impose partnership restrictions on such players for these events unless the unit, district or the ACBL first imposes them.

Tact is necessary when notifying a player that he or she is barred from an open game. It is not necessary that the player be brought before a committee or be granted a public hearing. The player should be told privately by the club management and should be given the reason for the exclusion.

If the player feels that his or her barring does not comply with these regulations prohibiting barring players as a class, religious or political affiliations, race, national origin, physical disability, or bridge proficiency, he or she may appeal the barring sequentially to the unit board, the district, and the ACBL Board of Directors. Until the appeal is lodged and heard, the player remains barred unless reinstated by the club.

Tie-breaking Procedures

Approved Method for Awarding Prizes: The ACBL does not specify any regulations regarding procedure for breaking a tie for prize awards. Any announced method may be used.

Approved Methods for Breaking Ties for Qualifiers: Regulations are established to break a tie for the last qualifier in qualifying events. These methods may be used for breaking ties for prizes, if desired.

Pair Event Procedure:

1. Consider ONLY the boards played in COMMON by ALL TYING contestants from the SAME field. They receive one point for each score they beat, and a half point for each score that they tie of the competing tied pairs for the last qualifying position.
2. Should the above method not resolve the tie, then proceed as follows. Compare the matchpoints obtained on each board against average. Award one point for above average or one-half point for exactly average. The pair that scores the most points qualifies.
3. If a tie still exists, then the total scores (pluses and minuses) are calculated.

Appeals

Guidelines for Club Appeals Committees

Note: Since a club is not required to allow appeals committees, the director shall hear the appeal as provided for in Law 93 A. whenever a club does not so provide.

Basic principles of an appeals committee:

1. Club appeals committees usually are called upon to consider matters of bridge judgment and fact. (A club conduct and ethics committee might decide non-bridge matters.)
2. The objective of a committee is to provide a forum for a fair hearing and final decision. These guidelines have been prepared to help achieve this objective. These guidelines are suggested procedures; therefore, a deviation therefrom does not invalidate the hearing.

The committee:

1. The committee should be composed of an odd number of members so that a decision may be reached more easily.
2. Those individuals appointed to serve on the committee are expected to be impartial and to present the appearance of impartiality. If committee members feel they might not be able to act impartially, they should ask to be excused. If there is an appearance of possible partiality (*e.g.*, the committee member is a frequent partner of one of the parties), the member should ask to be excused or the matter should be discussed with the parties involved to determine if there is an objection.
3. There are no preemptory challenges to empaneled committee members. Any party may challenge a member for cause. The challenger must state the reason(s) for the challenge to the committee, and then the committee meets privately to decide the issue. The committee is the sole judge of its membership. There is no appeal from its decision.
4. Proper decorum should be observed at all times. A committee member may be well acquainted with a party but each should refrain from camaraderie. This applies not only to the hearing but to the periods immediately before and after the hearing.

Powers and duties of the committee:

The convened appeals committee is considered to have been delegated all judiciary powers and duties of the tournament committee, save for any that may have been specifically withheld by ACBL regulations. It must adjudicate every case that is brought before it, but may dismiss an appeal as being either trivial or frivolous and assess a penalty against the player(s) filing such an appeal.

The director must inform the committee that its rights and powers include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Upholding the director's ruling;
2. Canceling the director's ruling and making any adjustment permitted by the Laws which the committee believes will constitute an equitable solution. This adjustment may be:
 - a. to adjust the total point score —
The committee may attempt to estimate what final contract would have been played and/or calculate the probable result that would have been achieved had the infraction in question not occurred. It may then order the board scored as though that result had actually been attained at the table.

- b. to award an adjusted score —
The committee may adjust the matchpoint score received by either or both sides.
- c. to cancel results and award an artificial adjusted score —
The committee may cancel the result achieved at the table and award average, average plus, or average minus to either side or both sides.
- d. to award overall percentage scores —
The committee may award one or both sides their overall percentage score in the session on the board in question (in effect, not permitting the board to affect the disputants' scores one way or another).
- e. to assess matchpoint penalties —
The committee may assess a matchpoint penalty against the offenders without granting any compensation to the non-offending side.

Procedures for the hearings on appeals for score adjustments

1. **The chair** shall call the hearing to order and proceed as follows:
 - a. Determine that an appeal has been filed and both members of a partnership concur in the appeal (in the case of team events, that the team captain concurs in the appeal, Law 92D).
 - b. Introduce himself, panel members, parties appealing, opponents and participating directors. (Anyone else shall be permitted to remain only at the discretion of the chairman.)
 - c. Clarify to all parties that he is in charge, that no one is to speak until recognized by him, and that, upon recognition, the individual should address only the panel.
 - d. Explain how the hearing will proceed.
2. **The director's role:** The director should be recognized first to relate the facts and explain and interpret applicable Laws or ACBL and/or club regulations. Appellants, opponents or committee members, when recognized by the chairman, may ask questions of the director.
3. The appellant parties should then present their side of the appeal.
4. The respondents next should present their side of the appeal.
5. Either side may be questioned by the committee or by the other side through the chair.
6. After all evidence has been received, the chair should state that the testimony phase is closing and will not be reopened unless the committee so decides. The committee then entertains final comments.
7. The chair dismisses all parties and the director so the committee can deliberate in private. The chairman should specify to the parties whether or not they are to remain available.
8. The chair should conduct the deliberation and poll panel members on any decision proposed. A majority decision shall prevail.
9. The chair should remind panel members that their deliberations are privileged and are not to be discussed with any non-committee members.
10. The chair should notify the director of the committee's decision and then the parties. This may be done orally and/or in writing. If appropriate, the chair should explain the decision to the parties and caution against any continued unnecessary or disruptive argument as such argument could constitute a violation of the Proprieties and subject one to a disciplinary penalty.

Conventions

Clubs and Conventions

1. Any conventions may be allowed or disallowed at the discretion of the club's management.
2. Players must have the approval of the club director before using any convention not specifically authorized. (It is suggested that each club post a list of approved conventions in a conspicuous place on its premises.)
3. The conventions allowed in a game may vary in accordance with the masterpoint level of the contestants. The basis for the determinations at each club (or each session of a club) should be what is most desirable for the players at that game.
4. What conventions a club allows or does not allow has no effect on the club's rating.
5. Clubs inclined to permit patrons to test new or little-known conventions or systems are advised to restrict such testing to one of several scheduled sessions. If experience indicates the majority of the club players welcome this policy, it can easily be extended to other sessions.

Statement on Conventions

The latest version of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge defines a *convention* as a call that, by partnership agreement, conveys a meaning other than willingness to play in the denomination named (or in the last denomination named), or high-card strength or length (three cards or more) there.

All ACBL events are “governed” by the appropriate convention chart which lists those conventions permitted in the event. Conventions not included on the chart are not permitted in the event.

Part of the “right” to use a convention is the responsibility of deciding when it applies in probable auctions. The opponents may be entitled to redress if you did not originally have a clear understanding with your partner of when and how to use a convention you are playing.

For example, a partnership that chooses to play conventional bids over opponents notrump opening bids is expected to have discussed at least the following:

1. Does it apply over strong notrumps?
2. Does it apply over weak notrumps?
3. Does it apply in the direct seat?
4. Does it apply in the balancing chair?
5. Does it apply when used by a passed hand?

All players occasionally encounter situations where they are not sure what partner's bidding means. There exists an added responsibility if that uncertainty arises from a convention they have agreed to play. In these situations, they should tell their opponents all they know. Sometimes, the director will even ask one or both of the players to step away from the table so that the opponents can talk openly with the remaining player.

Actively ethical players do everything possible in these situations to bring opponents back to even terms — to remove any possible disadvantage accruing to them from their side's failure to have a complete conventional understanding.

Partnership Restrictions on the Use of Conventions

Both members of a partnership must employ the same system that appears on the convention card.

1. During a session of play, a system may not be varied, except with permission of the director. (The director might allow a pair to change a convention, but almost never their basic system.)
2. At the beginning of a round or session, a pair may review their opponents' convention card and alter their own defenses against their opponents' conventional calls and preempts. After being informed of these alterations in defense, the opponents may not then vary their system.

Note: The current ACBL Convention Charts are on the ACBL web site.

Playing Unclassified Conventions

Clubs should post a list of approved conventions. When your club decides to permit players to use methods not permitted on the General Convention Chart, the opponents should be permitted to refer to written defenses during the auction and play whether those defenses are the users' or have been decided by the opponents of the users.

Note: Permission to play an unapproved convention at one club or one tournament does not mean that permission is granted for all clubs and all tournaments. A player must contact the sponsoring organization of each game in which he participates to make sure that the ACBL Convention Chart under which that particular event is played permits the method being used.

1♣ Opening Bids

Approved 1♣ openings:

1. A 1♣ opening is considered to be natural and does not require an Alert if it guarantees at least three cards in the club suit. (The hand may, of course, contain more than three clubs.) If the hand contains only three clubs it probably implies a 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-2-3 distribution.
2. An unusual treatment of the 1♣ opening which requires an Announcement is one where the bid may be non-forcing but does not guarantee three or more clubs. The player must check the appropriate box on the convention card that describes the length of the club suit.
3. There are two basic approaches of the forcing 1♣ opening and both usages must be Alerted.
 - a. The Big Club shows a hand of more than minimum opening strength (15+). This includes systems such as Schenken, Precision and Blue Team. No homegrown system is automatically approved — it must be authorized by the management of your club game.
 - b. A 1♣ bid can be used as a general all-round force showing a hand of opening strength. This may be used as a convenience bid (for instance, playing five-card majors and three or four-card diamond openings, 1♣ may be the only attractive alternative), or it may be used because the hand has substantial playing strength and the opening bidder wants partner to keep the auction alive.

Prohibited Bids and Procedures

1. Systems based on extremely light initial action combined with frequent psychic opening bids are barred from any ACBL-sanctioned event.
2. Appropriate convention charts indicate bids that are disallowed at various levels of competition.
3. An opening one bid (in a suit or notrump) which by partnership agreement may contain fewer than 8 high-card points is prohibited. This is not intended to bar psychic opening bids. Psychic natural opening bids are allowed.
4. No conventions are permitted in response to 1NT openings which have fewer than 10 HCP or a range greater than 5 HCP (for example, 13-18 notrump openings) or two non-consecutive ranges of more than 3 points. No conventions are allowed in response to weak two-bids which by partnership agreement may have a range of more than 7 HCP or which by partnership agreement may contain fewer than five cards in the suit.
5. The use of excessive, frivolous or unsportsmanlike psychic bidding is disruptive to the game and can subject an offender to disciplinary action. (See discussion in this manual under Law 40.)
6. Flagrant and deliberate attempts to lose tricks are detrimental to the game of bridge. Such action will subject the offender to disciplinary penalties.
7. Each player is restricted (physically) to one chair.
8. Any time an ACBL member, because of a physical disability or handicap, needs the aid of special equipment or special consideration (*e.g.*, Braille cards, bid boxes, stationary seats, etc.), no ACBL-sanctioned club, unit, district or tournament may prohibit the use of said equipment or special consideration.

Psyching a Conventional Bid

There is no general regulation prohibiting the psyching of a conventional bid but there is a specific prohibition against psyching some (for example, an artificial opening bid such as 1♣ or 2♣, or a conventional response to an artificial opening bid). Please consult the appropriate ACBL Convention Chart for other prohibitions relating to psychs.

If, however, players psych a particular bid more than once with the same partner, they may be deemed to have established an implicit agreement.

Opening 1NT or 2NT with a Singleton

(The following is an article from the Bridge Bulletin.)

“The time has come,” the Walrus said, “To talk of many things: of shoes — and ships — and sealing wax — of singletons and kings.”

On many of the occasions that someone opens 1NT (or 2NT) with a singleton, someone else at the table becomes upset with the opener. Half of the time it’s an opponent (who has ducked an ace and lost to a singleton king), and the other half it’s opener’s partner, who has transferred into the suit in which opener has the singleton, causing the partnership to play in a 5–1 or 6–1 fit (going down) when the contract should have been some number of notrump.

Bridge players have different understandings of what the rules are concerning opening notrump with a singleton. It is described, depending on whom you ask, as illegal, immoral, unethical or fattening. The answer is almost always — none of the above.

The ACBL General Convention Chart states, “A notrump opening or overcall is natural if not unbalanced (generally, no singleton or void and only one or two doubletons).”

Also from the General Chart is this definition of natural opening suit bids and responses:

“An opening suit bid or response is considered natural if for minors it shows three or more cards in that suit and for majors it shows four or more cards in that suit.”

Players who, by agreement, use opening bids that are not natural may use only the conventional methods permitted by the General Chart.

If your notrump opening shows a balanced hand, you may occasionally pick up a hand with a singleton, which you may want to treat as balanced. You may use your bridge judgment to open or overcall a notrump with a singleton, provided that:

1. It is a rare occurrence (no more than 1% of the time) *and*,
2. Partner expects you to have at least two cards in each suit *and*,
3. You and your partner have no agreements which enable you to discover that partner has a singleton.

Example:

Using strong notrumps, players may elect to open 1NT with ♠K 8 3 ♥A Q 7 2 ♦A 9 6 5 3 ♣K.

They might judge that they did not want to open 1♦ and rebid such a weak suit, or raise spades on only three cards after partner’s 1♠ response, or rebid 1NT. You may feel such judgment is incorrect, but that was their decision. Similarly, a player playing five-card majors may opt to open ♠A K Q J ♥8 7 6 4 2 ♦K 8 ♣J 9 with 1♠ rather than 1♥.

In today’s bridge world, you should exhibit some tolerance and understanding of opponents’ judgment when they open or overcall a notrump with a singleton — especially for hands where moving one card from a long suit to the singleton will produce a 4–4–3–2 distribution. The player has probably used what little bridge judgment an opponent of yours usually has (just kidding, folks) in deciding to open his hand 1NT (or 2NT).

Chef Emeril Lagasse of the Food Network says, “Hey, we’re really cooking here!” when something does not go as it should. A player might decide, “Hey, we’re really playing bridge here! This hand is not unbalanced — even with that singleton!”

If, however, your opponent has opened 1NT with an outlandish distribution — 6–5–1–1, 6–4–3–0 or some such — or has agreements about one-of-a-suit opening bids or other openings which mean that they have to open *all* 4–4–4–1 hands with 1NT, you should report such to the director. The director should determine whether the pair’s notrump opening is natural or conventional.

There *is* one conventional 1NT opening permitted on the ACBL General Convention Chart. It’s a forcing 1NT opening which indicates a hand of 16 or more high-card points that may be balanced or unbalanced. An example is the Dynamic 1NT opening, which is a cornerstone of the Romex system. This opening requires an Alert.

Another conventional opening permitted by the ACBL General Convention Chart is an opening notrump bid at the two level or higher indicating at least 5–4 distribution in the minors (the opening “unusual” notrump).

There are two types of conventional notrump overcalls permitted. The first is a two-suited takeout, *i.e.*, the unusual notrump. If used by an unpassed hand at the one level or as non-jump overcall, it requires an Alert. The second is a three-suit takeout similar to a takeout double. This always requires an Alert.

Newcomer Program

Purpose of a newcomer program

Learning to play and enjoy duplicate bridge has been compared to a journey for a lifetime. And starting out newcomers in an open game is like having them jump on a train going 30 MPH through the station. Many can’t make the jump successfully and fall by the wayside. Not only that, they complain loudly and bitterly about how inhospitable the experience is to anyone who will listen. This is anti-marketing at its worst.

Why not stop the train for these people and let them get on in a calm and dignified manner? And why not make this one of those trains that never goes more than 5 MPH so newcomers can swing aboard without falling under the wheels? You will find many people eager and delighted to board. Your club and your unit will grow big and rich and lively again.

Differences between open and newcomer games

Bridge, and duplicate bridge in particular, can demand many virtues that one wishes one didn’t have to cultivate, such as courage, fortitude, cheerfulness under adversity, commitment, empathy, loyalty, psychological insight, memory, judgement and restraint. It’s easy to see that newcomers have their work cut out for them.

Players starting the duplicate experience in a newcomer game learn to introduce themselves at the beginning of each round if they don’t know each other, or they say hello or some other pleasantry if they are regulars. During the play of the hand, there may be some discussion if an irregularity occurs,

such as a lead from the wrong hand, and the director may or may not be called. After the round is over, there may be some postmortem, everyone says goodbye and perhaps something polite about enjoying the game. They're in a milieu where everyone is still getting used to the mechanics of the game, meeting each other for the first time, acquiring new partners and working out their conventions.

If newcomers must begin in an open game, they usually try to introduce themselves and get cold stares for their pains. The director is called continuously because of their hesitations and their slow play — and the newcomers feel like the opponents have accused them of cheating. They do not know the full implications of the Alerts and are too afraid — or too ignorant — to ask. If a new player asks for a full explanation of what an alert means, the answer usually comes with an exasperated sigh. And that might be the nicest response!

New Players

Make them comfortable.

A duplicate bridge game can be a frightening experience for the first-time player. Unless that player has been introduced previously to convention cards, the Alert system, bid boxes, etc., the mechanics of the game can be overwhelming. The ACBL suggests that the club make arrangements to have a host or hostess available at each game to greet new players and help them settle into the routine of the club game. If your unit sponsors a “New Player Services” program, the members of that committee would be available to assist. It's important to remember that a new player is a potential life-time supporter and customer of your club. Anything you can do to make each person comfortable will add to the success of your business. (The “Exciting World of Bridge” is an excellent handout for newcomers.)

Games for new players.

Limited games designed with new players in mind should be offered regularly if you want to generate new customers on a regular basis. Playing against their peers, new players can gain confidence and eventually graduate into the main open games. If the club does not have sufficient attendance for a 0–5, 0–20, or 0–49er game, stratify the open game.

A club may run a stationary duplicate for new players by attaching a table of students to a regular duplicate game. (Choose a N–S pair who would enjoy relaying with beginners.) The names of the students will not show up on the recap sheet. They can start later than the regular game and finish in about two hours (or whenever they become weary). They will see the scores of other players and will be able to compare their results, but will at no point play against any players from the regular duplicate game. Their scores do not appear on the official score slip. The students may play among themselves and stay at one table.

Mentoring.

Mentoring programs can be especially helpful in assisting newcomers to become a part of your club family. Check the ACBL's web site for information on mentoring programs or contact the Education Department.

Work with teachers.

It is suggested that you work with the teachers in your area to provide playing opportunities that will bridge the gap between classroom lessons and the local duplicate games. Teachers know that students

who practice what they learn will return for more lessons. Club managers know that students who practice at their clubs will tend to play there after the lessons are over. ACBL offers free “Bridge Plus+” (for ACBL Accredited Teachers) or “Pupil Game” (for any bridge teacher) sanctions for this purpose. Consult the ACBL’s Club Managers Handbook for ideas on how to encourage teachers to bring students to your games.

Adjust your timing.

Remember, when working with new players, that they should not be expected to play on the same time schedule as seasoned players. Intermediate/Newcomer (IN) games need to be run in a more relaxed manner, although no one pair should be allowed to dictate the pace of the game. Ten minutes per board is a good guideline for these players.

Intermediate-Newcomer (IN) Program

The ACBL has developed a basic formula for helping new players become a part of the local bridge family. The 10 points of the IN Program help to establish the right atmosphere for a new-to-duplicate player to blossom. Become familiar with these 10 points and try to offer them at your club if you want your newcomers to be happy and to play regularly in your games. IN activities can be restricted to any group(s) of non-Life Master players.

There are 10 basic ingredients of a “full” newcomer program for sectional and regional tournaments or IN Sectionals. A booklet entitled “Planning and Organizing your IN Tournament or Program” is available through the Education Department.

Games for 199er, 99er, 49er, 0–20 and 0–5 players each session.

Offer all of these events. A notation, “may be stratified at the director’s discretion,” should appear on all advertising. (*A game can be stratified but any group of three or more newcomer tables should be run as a separate event.*)

Trophies for overall wins.

New players love to win trophies. The trophies can be regular trophies, glasses, mugs, etc. New players like prizes that say, “First-place winner.”

A special room for the IN games.

A special room or area is necessary if the new players are going to get maximum benefits from participating in an IN Program. The games should be close to the rest of the players so the new players will feel like a part of the whole.

Directors who are experienced in working with newcomers.

Running games for new players requires a combination of public relations and directing skills. The ACBL has trained a number of tournament directors to work with new players. They are referred to as IN Specialists. The ACBL will assign one of these directors to a tournament on request. Any club director can gain more experience in working with new players by spending one or more sessions with the directors of the IN Program at any NABC. They can sign up by contacting the Education Department.

Celebrity speakers to give bridge tips before the games.

Start each session with a special speaker lecturing for 20 to 30 minutes. Speakers who can entertain *and* give bridge tips on the level of the new players are best for this program. If the topic is too advanced, the speaker will do more harm than good.

Social events.

Social events give the players a better chance to get to know each other and to find partners for future events. Bridge Bingo, a juke-box and dancing, a wine and cheese party, a between-sessions dinner buffet, a hospitality room where new players can meet the local “stars” and bridge officials, a panel show and a pizza party are ideas that have worked.

Pictures of the winners.

Take Polaroid pictures of the winners and display them. Players love to see who has won in the “Winner’s Circle.”

Flyers to invite the players and guarantee partners.

A flyer should be mailed to the eligible players in the area inviting them to attend. Advertise that partners are guaranteed for anyone who arrives one hour before game time. Standby or house players are a real bonus whenever possible. (Mailing labels can be ordered from the ACBL.)

New Players Services (NPS).

Have volunteers ready to assist new players as needed with questions and information. Have committee members walk around the IN room/area to visit with the players, pass out candy, go from table to table wishing the players good luck in the game to follow. Have volunteers available after each session to help the players interpret the scores. These are services that would be performed by the committee members of a unit New Player Services Program.

Newcomer hand records with analysis sheets.

The ACBL can provide these packages for the under 20 masterpoint players. This material provides an opportunity for the new players to re-examine and discuss the hands after the game.

New Player Services Program

This program is excellent for making new players comfortable at the club.

Who: This program is usually organized at the unit level by the education liaison and implemented by a committee of teachers and volunteers selected by the education liaison. At a club, the club manager would organize the program and select the committee if the unit does not have this program in place.

What: New Player Services (NPS) is a public relations program dedicated to welcoming new players into the ACBL family and making them comfortable at all levels of play. Committee members wear identifying badges and make themselves available to offer a helping hand to new players by answering questions, helping to fill out convention cards, giving directions, and informing the players of special club activities and programs.

Where: New Players Services are provided by the appointed committee members at all games and activities held at the club.

When: A club manager may want to appoint one host or hostess to officiate at each session during the week. The host or hostess would be responsible for recruiting additional committee members to serve with them as needed.

Units: The club NPS committee may serve as the start of a unit-wide program to ease new ACBL members into the local bridge family. The unit education liaison would introduce the idea to the unit board for approval. After the program has been accepted, a budget is created and the committee members are appointed, inducted, receive their pins and begin to implement the program as coordinated by the education liaison.

Games for New Players and Students

Your games need a steady flow of new players to keep them healthy. It's important to start newcomers and students off with a positive playing experience. Here are some ideas that have been used successfully.

Stationary Duplicate

Type I - Jerry Helms, well-known player and teacher from Charlotte NC, has devised one type of stationary duplicate game. He reuses selected boards kept intact from one of the regular duplicate games he runs locally. The matchpointed traveler remains with each board.

A group of four students can play these boards and experience a type of duplicate bridge. They can see what other players have done on a hand and they can see the number of matchpoints awarded for a particular score. The students enter their result on the traveler and see whether the result is above or below average. When Jerry has several tables, he rematchpoints the students' scores in with the results from the regular game. This gives them a total score which can be compared with the results of the players from the original game.

The number of boards played in a session of stationary duplicate can vary with the experience level of the players. They should, however, be encouraged to move toward playing a deal every 10 minutes before they can be comfortable in a newcomer game.

Type II - A second way of playing stationary duplicate is to attach a table of students to a regular duplicate game in progress at the local club. The students relay a board or two each round with one of the tables in the regular duplicate game. (Choose a N-S pair with the temperament to enjoy relaying with beginners.)

The names of the students will not show up on the recap sheet. They can start a half hour later than the regular game and finish after about two hours (or whenever they become weary). The students will see the scores of the other players and will be able to compare their results, but they will at no point play against any players from the regular duplicate game. The students' scores do not appear on the official score slip. The students play among themselves and stay at one table.

Supervised Play

Sets of E-Z Deal “Play” cards and analyses booklets for 32 deals have been developed for use with the ACBL Bridge Series courses. They are “The Club Play,” “The Diamond Play,” “The Heart Play,” “Play Course for Advancing Players I” and “Play Course for Advancing Players II.”

All five sets are available through the ACBL Sales Department. Each provides everything the teacher needs to offer a four-week course where the students can practice what they have learned in a duplicate-style game.

Tip for running a successful supervised play game:

Barbara Seagram of Toronto ON found that the following guidelines have made her supervised play games very popular:

- Start with a 15-minute pre-game bridge tip.
- Allow players to change their lead, change their bid or change their mind.
- Help as much as necessary throughout the room.
- Stay after the game ends to fuss over the players as the results are read.
- Hand out masterpoints.

Bridge Plus+ Games

General format: Bridge Plus+ games offer new players a duplicate game with a social atmosphere. The hands are not normally pre-dealt. Random hands are used. The players move as in a regular newcomer or open game. The games should never run longer than two hours...shorter is better than longer when using this format.

The games can be run as part of a lesson program or as part of the regular activities at a bridge club or tournament. The ideal situation is to have games available for the students on a weekly basis.

Bridge Plus+ is normally divided into two segments:

- The Bridge Tip – This starts 30 minutes prior to the game and lasts 20 minutes.
- The Game – A two-hour duplicate game with 12 to 16 deals.

Bridge Plus+ sanctions: Bridge Plus+ games award masterpoints. Sanctions are issued through the ACBL Club and Member Services Department to ACBL Accredited Teachers.

Bridge Plus+ information: ACBL offers two booklets to help you with this game:

“The Handbook for Lesson Games and Bridge Plus+ Games” (\$5) provides all of the information you need to run an effective game. It includes the philosophy of Bridge Plus+, details on how to run this format and a sample bridge tip for your first game.

“The Handbook of Bridge Plus+ Tips” (\$5) gives you 10 tips written by Audrey Grant to present to your student players before the game begins.

Easy-going Games

Some new players will want an easy-going type of duplicate game that *doesn't* award masterpoints.

Post only the winners and runners-up.

Respect the players' privacy and never post all the results. No one wants it known that they didn't do well.

Don't let the same person win the prize each time.

Sometimes give a prize for overall; vary this with a prize for the person with the best result on a randomly drawn traveling scoreslip.

There are no masterpoint restrictions.

New players and LMs are welcome.

There are no conventions except Stayman and Blackwood.

The format is to "Bid What You See."

Always use the Mitchell movement.

There are no relays and bye-stands and no Howell movements for any reason.

Play no more than 16 boards and give no formal rulings.

If there is an infraction such as a lead out of turn, the director restores order without penalty or choice. (Return the card and play from the right hand.)

Declarer is not expected to play dummy's cards if the person who puts down the dummy has to leave the table.

The director should be ready to sit in to avoid that situation.

This game can't be held at the same time as an open game.

There is no situation that qualifies as an exception.

The game always starts on time.

No reservations and no entries sold in advance.

Train the players to know that the game will begin promptly.

The game is never stopped to adjust the movement for a late table.

A new table and boards are simply added at the end.

Gear the game for success by cherishing the tables you get rather than hungering for more by looking longingly towards the door.

Disguise the room to look like you expect half the number of tables that could show up. Put books, flowers, plants and newspapers out. Make extra tables available if needed — but not "empty" if not needed.

Give the same 10 basic bridge tips over and over.

Send players who ask advanced questions to the Newcomer game. Don't raise the game level.

Let the players know they are slow.

If the first hand isn't finished in 7 minutes, quietly sort the second board into suits. If the first hand isn't finished in 8½ minutes, tell the players there may not be time to play the second board.

Newcomer Games

Newcomer games are usually run on a regular basis by an experienced director/teacher in a club-type atmosphere.

The main difference between a newcomer game and an open game is the level of experience of the players and the number of boards played. The laws of the game start to be enforced more stringently at this level, although still with some leeway for the level of experience of the participant. Regular masterpoints are awarded in a newcomer game.

Easybridge!

Easybridge! is a program created by Edith McMullin. It was funded by the ACBL from 1998 through mid-2002 and is currently being administered by Marti Ronemus. Contact her by e-mail at mronemus@suscom.net for more details.

Easybridge! is a proven marketing device for starting a new club game. It can be used with people who know nothing about the game and people who have played socially and are interested in learning about duplicate. Easybridge! is a sanctioned duplicate game at week four; the presenter must be a club director—or do the program in the room with a club director.

Easybridge! is a 35-week program divided into three courses. EB1 is 15 weeks; EB2 is 10 weeks; EB3 is 10 weeks. During EB1, the presenter tries to achieve three things: bond the players to himself, bond them to each other and show the joy of duplicate bridge.

Easybridge! is marketing, not education. It creates the climate for the players to motivate themselves to play—and perhaps learn—more bridge. Each presenter or designee is expected to start a series of workshops at week five in order to review and to teach. No formal teaching occurs during the Easybridge! program itself. It remains the Garden of Eden where nothing is wrong and everything is worth a try. There are only two rules in Easybridge! (1) you must accept a breath mint from you partner if he offers you one, and (2) you must bid up the ladder.

Easybridge! students tend to go out to play in other games at the club starting at the fifth week. By six months, many are playing several times a week. The presenter is also encouraged to take the Easybridge! group to a tournament in the first three months of play.

Home-Style Swiss Pairs (Rubber Bridge)

Overview

This is a highly recommended form of bridge that can be offered as an alternative to duplicate. It's a fun game that is easy to run. Social and rubber bridge players can adapt to it easily.

Equipment

All you need in the way of equipment are two decks of playing cards for each table, a recap sheet, score pads or scorecards and pencils. Assignment cards are helpful, but the director can verbally make the next round's assignments.

Format of the game

For the first round, pairs should be assigned at random. The N-S pair at Table 1 should be listed as Pair 1, the E-W Pair at Table 1 should be listed as Pair 2. The N-S pair at Table 2 should be Pair 3, etc.

Players cut for the deal and play four deals of bridge per round.

At the end of the round, they will total up their scores and report the total point difference to the director. The director will then convert the score to Victory Points, using the scale included in this article, and then record the VP total on the recap sheet. After all of the results have been turned in, pair up the pairs that have the closest scores, starting with the two highest totals. Keep a record of the pair assignments for each round and do not let the same pairs play against each other more than once in the same session.

Give the players their seating assignments and start the next round.

Club masterpoint awards

There will be overall and match awards. Match awards are based upon actual scores before conversion to Victory Points. In the event of an exact tie, divide the individual match award. Please use the Swiss match awards schedule found in the club award charts in Chapter 4 of the ACBL Handbook found online at www.acbl.org. Overall placings are determined by the highest total of Victory Points in a session of play. Players in the overall standings earn either the overall award or the total of the match awards, whichever is greater. For the overall awards, please refer to the appropriate one winner movement in the club award charts. (Chapter 5 of the ACBL Handbook.)

Guidelines for the Chicago Rubber Bridge Tournament

Four deals constitute a rubber. On the first deal, neither side is vulnerable. On the second and third deals, dealer's side is vulnerable and the other side is not. On the fourth deal, both sides are vulnerable.

There is a bonus of 300 for making a nonvulnerable game and 500 for a vulnerable game. On the fourth deal only, there is a bonus of 100 for making a part score that does not complete a game. Tricks, penalties, slams and honors are scored as in rubber bridge, but there is no rubber bonus. Partscores carry over, but any game wipes out previous partscores. A hand that is passed out will be redealt by the same dealer.

Converting Rubber Bridge Points into Victory Points.

| Size of Rubber Won | Victory Points |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 0–40..... | 10–10 |
| 50–140..... | 11–9 |
| 150–240..... | 12–8 |
| 250–340..... | 13–7 |
| 350–540..... | 14–6 |
| 550–740..... | 15–5 |
| 750–940..... | 16–4 |
| 950–1240..... | 17–3 |
| 1250–1540..... | 18–2 |
| 1550– or more..... | 19–1 |

With a half-table movement, award 12 Victory Points to the sitout pair for their bye round. With groups of three or four tables, let them play six-deal Chicago. No one is vulnerable on the first two deals, the dealer's side is vulnerable on the third and fourth deals and everyone is vulnerable on the fifth and sixth deals. Five matches of four deals each are recommended, but judgment may be exercised. Flexibility is all important, and you should be cognizant of the needs of your particular group of players.

Administration of Your Game

Overview of Chapters 4 & 5 - ACBL Handbook

For a complete description of the rules of administering your game, see Chapters 4 & 5 of the ACBL Handbook. The club director should be particularly aware of the material in Chapter 4, 1 - IV and VI.

Chapter 4 of the ACBL Handbook will give you information on:

- How many club championships you are allowed each year.
- Obligation to run an ACBL Charity Club Championship.
- Different types and classes of games.
- The rights, obligations and limitations on the club manager and the club.
- What to do if you wish to change your venue or time of a session.
- How to get a sanction for your game (and costs and waiting time involved).
- Different qualifications for sea cruises and land cruises.
- Masterpoints for cruise games.
- All the different types of games available to a club.
- Information on college and school programs.
- Describes how to use a three-person pair in a newcomer game.
- Regulations for awarding masterpoints in all situations.
- What to do when a pair is too experienced to play in a newcomer game even though their masterpoints do not reflect it.
- When the game fees are waived.
- Details the operation of club games (including cash prizes, cancellations, records, insurance).
- Club discipline.
- Systems and conventions allowed.
- Series games.
- Unit-club relations.

Chapter 5 of the ACBL Handbook has:

- A complete listing of points awarded for all types and classes of games in all situations: regular game, club championship, charity club championship.

**Check the ACBL's web site at www.acbl.org
for the most current version of
Chapters 4 & 5 of the ACBL Handbook.**

Clubs and Club Regulations

Sanction fees

Any individual ACBL member or group of ACBL members may apply for a game sanction. Sanctions are not exclusive; the ACBL will sanction multiple games in the same area at the same time of the week. There is a fee of \$11.50 (per year) per session to sanction a game. This fee is submitted with the sanction application or renewal. In addition, there is a charge of \$1.25 per game plus \$.65 per table, each time a game is held. This fee is submitted with the club's Monthly Report.

Classes of games

There are four classes of regular club games: Open, Invitational/Restricted, Newcomer, and Bridge Plus+. An Open game is open to all ACBL members and to non-members. The Invitational or Restricted game places a restriction of some sort upon participation in its events. This restriction may be based on ability (measured by masterpoints), or may be something completely different (sex, age, club members, etc.). See Chapter 4 of the ACBL Handbook for details. Newcomer games are limited to players holding fewer than 20 masterpoints. Bridge Plus+ games provide a transition from ACBL beginning bridge classes to newcomer games conducted as ACBL-sanctioned games. These games are restricted to players with fewer than 5 masterpoints. Bridge Plus+ games are operated by ACBL-accredited teachers often working with a club director. Players are encouraged to ask the teacher for advice on bidding and play after play has been completed.

Types of games

A club may run various types of games. Pair games may be Open, or they may be run as Stratified Pairs or Handicapped Pairs. A club may also run team games or individual games. There are also a variety of different special games a club may run; these award more masterpoints to the club's players than a regular game. (See Chapter 4 of the ACBL Handbook.)

Stratified pairs

Stratified games may be run with two or three strata. (See *Stratifying Your Club Games*.) The lowest stratum may have any masterpoint restriction suitable for a club, but must contain at least 5 pairs. There should be approximately the same number of pairs in each stratum sitting each direction of the game. Players in lower strata are automatically entered in the higher strata and earn the greater of any awards for the various ranks they achieve.

Handicapped games

The game is scored twice, once with raw scores and once with the handicaps added in. Masterpoints may be issued entirely on the handicapped results, or may be split, half to the raw score placers and half to the handicapped ones. In this case, if a pair places in both sets of ranks, the masterpoint awards are added together. There are several approved methods of determining handicaps. (See *Handicapping Your Club Games*.)

Minimum tables

A pair game may issue masterpoints if it is composed of at least 2½ tables (five pairs). An eight-player individual movement, or a two-table team game may also issue masterpoints.

Masterpoints

Each game must be directed by an accredited game director (or teacher, for Bridge Plus+) in order to issue masterpoints. Points must be issued to all eligible participants, including non-members of the ACBL. The club manager has the responsibility to ensure that points are correctly and promptly issued. Use the ACBLscore program to print PCON slips to give to non-members; this will help them claim the masterpoints they have already earned after they join the ACBL.

All sanctioned duplicate games award masterpoints to 40% of the contestants in each comparison group (rounded to the nearest whole number with .5 rounded up).

Open games award .10 per pair in competition to the first place pair, with a maximum of 1.50 masterpoints. The award depends solely on the number of pairs in play in the field. For example, an eight table Mitchell is composed of two fields of 8 pairs. It will award three places each direction. A six table Howell is composed of one 12-pair field; points will be awarded to five places.

A game with half a table is always treated as the next whole number. (For example, a 7½ table Mitchell will award masterpoints each direction as an 8-table game.)

Awards for lower positions

The second place pair receives 70% of the award for first place. The third place pair receives 50% of the award for first place. The fourth place pair receives 35% of the award for first place. Lower awards are computed by dividing the first place award by the number of the place (fifth is 1/5 of first, sixth is 1/6 of first, etc.).

Tied positions

Any margin of .01 of a matchpoint or larger is sufficient to break a tie.

When two pairs tie for a position, add the masterpoints for the two ranking positions and divide by two. Each pair receives this number. If three pairs tie, they share the points for the three positions. Fractional overages of .50 or more are rounded up.

When there is a tie for the last position awarding masterpoints, the next theoretical award is projected. This theoretical award is added to the last real award, and the sum is divided by two to determine the actual award for the tied contestants.

Overall awards

Club games composed of more than one section may issue overall awards. These awards are based on the total number of tables in the game, with a limit of 1.50 masterpoints. Pairs receive either their section award or their overall award, whichever is greater. (For example, a 19-table game is divided into two sections, one of nine tables and one of 10 tables. The pair winning each nine table field will receive .90 masterpoints; the pair winning each 10-table field will receive 1.00 masterpoints. But the best overall pair (out of the 38 pairs) will instead receive 1.50 masterpoints as first overall, and the second best pair will receive 1.05 masterpoints (70% of 1.50) instead of the section award they earned.

Awards for restricted games

Restricted games award masterpoints at a reduced rate. If the restriction has nothing to do with bridge ability (example: seniors, club members only), each award in the game is 80% of the points a similar open game would award. If the restriction is based on ability (masterpoints), points are awarded based on the following scale:

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 0-5 | .03 |
| 0-10 | .04 |
| 0-20 | .05 |
| 0-100 | .06 |
| 0-200 | .07 |
| 0- any larger number | .08 |

In stratified games, the same above percentages of the open awards apply. The depth of awards in a stratified game is based on the number of pairs in a comparison group that are eligible for that particular strat, with 40% of the pairs (rounded as above) receiving masterpoints. A pair that earns multiple awards receives the single biggest one.

Team games award overall awards in the same manner, to 40% of the teams. They also award match awards at .01 per board in the match (a six-board match is worth .06). A two-table team game awards match awards only.

Reporting the results

All masterpoints from club games are issued by the ACBL.

ACBLScore can automatically calculate the points earned by individual players participating at your club. It will accumulate the points earned for the month. The club manager mails the totals for the month to the ACBL on a disk with the monthly report. The points will then appear on the insert of that player's monthly Bridge Bulletin magazine.

For clubs not using ACBLScore, the club manger must generate a list of all masterpoints won during the month. From this list, the ACBL will issue the masterpoints.

For players who are not yet members, ACBLScore can generate a PCON slip. Players will be allowed to register up to 20 masterpoints earned in the previous twelve months at the time they join the ACBL.

No masterpoints will be issued to non-paid up ACBL members or to Life Masters whose service fees are unpaid. For players whose membership has lapsed, the ACBL will continue to track masterpoints (which can be reclaimed upon rejoining) for a period of 90 days. If the player's membership has lapsed more than 90 days, points are only issued if the fees for the lapsed period are paid in full.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the club director play in the game?

Directors who do not play, in general, will do a better job. They can be more objective when giving rulings over disputes or infractions of law. Even if no rulings are called for, they can do a better job maintaining the pace of play, moving boards, checking the movement to be sure nothing bad happens, keeping the coffee pot and the cookie plate filled, answering the phone and doing the myriad of other things a club director needs to do during the game.

That said, it is perfectly legal for a club director to play in a regular club game. In smaller games, the director often serves as the standby player.

Non-playing directors are encouraged but not required for games having not more than one section of 17 tables or fewer for the following special events held at clubs or units: ACBL-wide International Fund Games, ACBL-wide Charity Games, Junior Fund Games, Senior Pairs, Worldwide Pairs, ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Games, Membership Games, NABC Fund Raisers, Club Appreciation Games, Sectional Tournament at Clubs (STACs) Games, the Canadian Olympiad, the COPC, the CNTC, the North American Pairs club and unit qualifying stages, the 49er Pairs, the Grand National Teams (GNT), Club and Unit Charity Championships.

Club directors can play in any of the special events listed above when they have 17 or fewer tables as long as the game is run as one section.

How many special games can I hold?

If your club conducts its sanctioned games in full compliance with ACBL regulations during the calendar year, you are entitled to run a number of special events. See the ACBL Handbook (Chapter 4) or Resources for Clubs online at www.acbl.org for more information.

Are cash prizes permitted?

Cash prizes are permitted. There is no restriction on the amount that may be given.

Can I ban (or allow) certain conventions in my club? Can I bar psychs?

ACBL regulations permit the governing body of the club great latitude to determine what is best for its own clientele. The club has the right to permit or forbid any convention in a regular club game. It is recommended that all of the conventions on the ACBL Limited Convention Chart be permitted, but even that is not required. Sectional and regional tournaments and most clubs, permit the use of any convention on the ACBL General Convention Chart.

In regard to psychic bids, the Laws of Duplicate Bridge state specifically that psychic bids are legal (Law 40). At the same time, nothing in this law says that psychic bids may be used indiscriminately. Partner must be as unprepared as the opponents in terms of expecting the action.

There are a number of free ACBL publications available from the tournament department and online at www.acbl.org that provide information on conventions and the Alert procedure. Note that not only does a club have the authority to permit or bar any conventions, it may even choose not to use the alert procedure at all.

Stratifying Your Club Games

What is a stratified game?

This event is similar to a flighted pairs except that the flights are intermixed and play against each other, just as if it were a plain vanilla open game. When scoring is completed, there are multiple rankings so that the lower flight(s) are eligible to win masterpoints just as they would have been had they played separately – only against their peers. However, any lower flight pair also has the possibility of winning the greater award of a higher flight if their score enables them to rank there.

Club manager's or director's report.

You do not need special permission to stratify a game. If you don't use ACBLscore, mark clearly that the game was stratified when you send in your result/report forms. You **must** list the number of pairs in each strat and **indicate** the strat level for each pair in order for your players to receive the appropriate masterpoint awards.

Purpose of a stratified game.

One purpose is to give newer players an opportunity to play against the experts (or better players) without it costing them a chance at the points they would have won playing only among themselves. Another is the immediate benefit to all players (and thus to clubs) that the game is larger. Big games get bigger, small games get smaller. The open players are playing for more masterpoints because they are playing in a bigger game. An often overlooked benefit is that there is some protection for the intermediate players who have graduated from the novice game but are not yet competitive with the open players (50-300 MP, for example).

Note: It is still far better to run a separate newcomer game when attendance permits. New duplicate players need time and training among their non-judgmental peers to get “rooted.” Tread very cautiously in stratifying these players into the open game too soon, or you'll lose them and have no one left to stratify!

How a stratified game works.

1. Pre-select tables to sell in each of your strats (or use Strat Mats if you do not sell entries at your club). The various strats should be distributed throughout the section as evenly as possible (*i.e.*, Strat C at tables 2, 6, 9, etc.).
2. You can use any strat limits you feel are best for your clientele. (see “Choices for Strats” below.)
The lowest strat must have at least five pairs to officially be considered a separate and legal strat.
3. Using Strats A, B and C (and the groupings you select).
 - a. Strat C entries are sold to players with 0-20 MP.
 - b. Strat B entries are sold to players with 20-200 MP.
 - c. Strat A entries are sold to players with 200 MP to infinity.
4. When a pair buys an entry, the strat is automatic, determined by the partner having the higher number of masterpoints.

Choices for stratification

You may pick any numbers that make sense for your strat limits. You can combine open and intermediate players, intermediate and novice players, or even two types of novice players. Some common stratifications are: open & 199er, open and non-LM. 20-99 and 0-20, 10-49 and 0-10, 5-20 and 0-5, or even 1-5 and 0-1 MP (to accommodate brand new players just out of a class).

If your game consists of fewer than the minimum pairs required in the lowest strat, you **should** increase the level of the strat to the next highest legal strat that includes at least five pairs. (Example: A 0 to 20 game should be increased to a 0 to 50 or 0 to 100 game, otherwise you would have to eliminate the lowest strat.) In limited masterpoint games such as 0 to 50, 50 to 100 and 100 to 300, the lowest strat **must** be eliminated if the strat contains fewer than the required number of pairs.

Top and bottom limits

Notice in designating your limits for a stratified game, that there is a lower limit as well as an upper one! Players do not choose where they are placed. Their record decides it for them. When they complain that they want to “play up,” explain that when they buy a “C” entry, they are automatically entered in “B” (and “A”) as well, and can “steal” those higher masterpoint awards.

Selling the entries

The partner with the higher number of masterpoints determines the strat in which the pair will be registered. Try to assign about the same number of A, B and C pairs to each direction. An easy way to accomplish this is to mark the entries as you sell them. When the first pair buys in, mark the appropriate strat not only on their entry but on the entry that will start against them. Then sell that entry to the next pair of that strat. This way, all of your pairs will have about the same conditions of contest.

A Stratified Swiss Team event works in exactly the same way, with the player who has the most masterpoints determining in which strat the team must register. The teams all play together; the director pays no attention to the strats until it is time to rank the game at the end. There are extra ranks awarded, just as in the stratified pair game.

Scoring a stratified game

At the end of the game, the event is ranked three times. First, the whole section is eligible for the “A” ranks. Then Strat B (which includes all the “B” and “C” pairs) is ranked, and finally “C” is ranked by itself.

If a pair finds itself ranked twice (or even three times), they get only the single highest masterpoint award. Thus a “C” pair can “steal” points from “B” or “A,” and a “B” pair can receive an “A” award. Strat “A” pairs can only win points in the whole field, but even this is a gain, because the field is bigger and consequently the award is larger!

Masterpoints for stratified games

Masterpoints are awarded to each group based on the number of tables in that (and all lower) strats. If you have a stratified game with 10 tables in Strat A (this includes all of the players), seven tables in Strat B (all players with fewer than 100 MPs) and three tables in the Strat C (players with fewer than 20 MPs), the awards for Strat A would be based on 10 tables, Strat B would be based on seven tables and Strat C would be based on three tables.

Simplify the start of stratified games with Strat Mats

Make Strat Mats to put on the tables along with the section tablecards when you set up a stratified game if you collect money at the table and don't sell entries. Using three bright paper colors and a publishing program on your computer, make a mat for each of your levels (*i.e.*, open, 99er and non-LM). A typical mat would say — For Strat C: Both starting pairs should have under 100 MPs. You won't get the mix exactly right — so try using a mat that reads: "This is a MIXED STRAT table." Remember to pick up the Strat Mats during the first round.

Handicapping Your Club Games

By using handicapping in some of your club games, you can create an environment that is fun for everyone and very encouraging for your new players.

Handicapping a game

You do not need special permission to handicap one of your games. Handicap games must be held at one of the club's regularly scheduled sessions using one of the following six formats:

1. Create a new game at a time different from existing games with the expectation of drawing players who are not currently playing duplicate. (This requires a new sanction.)
2. Convert one session per week from an existing game to a handicap game.
3. Convert an existing game to a handicap game for half of its sessions.
4. Where the clientele is large enough, convert a section of play to handicap format keeping one section as a regular duplicate bridge game.
5. Create a bridge team league in which all players have handicaps for a round-robin match.
6. Conduct Swiss team sessions at specified intervals with the teams handicapped.

Methods of handicapping

There are two primary ways to establish handicaps for your players: 1. on an average based upon the player's previous performance in comparable club sessions, or 2. on the player's ACBL rank.

Handicaps based on past performances

Use this method if you have someone willing to do the necessary record keeping and computations in exchange for free plays. The handicap is computed on the basis of 90% or 100% of the difference between the player's average performance and an artificial "par" established at 65% of the possible score.

To establish handicaps for existing clientele, go through recap sheets for the game session at which you would start the handicap program. Compute the percent of possible score for each player for the last three (for example) games in which that player took part, and then compute a percentage average. (The percent of possible is obtained by dividing the player's matchpoint score by the possible score.)

The sum of these three percentages divided by three is the average. To compute the handicap, subtract the average from .650 and multiply the result by .90 or 1.00.

To compute the handicap to be applied for a pair, add the three-point decimal handicaps of the two players and divide by two. While the game is being played, convert the percentage handicap for each pair to matchpoints by multiplying the handicap times the matchpoints possible (*i.e.*, 156 average = 312 possible).

Post the handicap matchpoints for each pair in a column where they can be added to the raw score matchpoints. The "after game" calculations will be easy for all to see and merely a matter of adding matchpoint totals together.

Establishing handicaps for players who haven't played in three previous games

These options can be used with players who haven't played in three previous games at your club:

- Explain that these players will compete with no handicap until three games have been completed at the club.
- Establish a handicap based on only one game at the conclusion of that game.
- Base the handicap for the first game on the player's rank (non-members are arbitrarily ranked as Masters).

Awarding masterpoints

When you have a game of players who do and don't have handicaps, it is suggested that you award split club masterpoint awards. This would give you two sets of winners — raw and handicap.

The first-place award in each field would be one half of what it would normally be (maximum in each field for first place will be 50 club masterpoints). Players placing in both fields (it usually happens that a person having a good raw score will also win in the handicap field) will get the total of the two awards on one slip.

Handicaps Based on ACBL Rank

Using this system, every participant is given a handicap based on the ACBL player rank held. Charts have been prepared so the director can easily determine the handicap for any rank of player. The handicaps are cumulative. In other words, the sum of the handicaps of the partners is the handicap for the pair.

Some players in your game may not be ACBL members. It is suggested that they arbitrarily be assigned the rank of Club Master (20 to 49.99 points). However, the Club Manager's experience and judgment should be applied in determining which non-ACBL members should be placed in rankings for handicap purposes.

One option with this form of handicap is to adjust the rankings of players based on the amount of success they have. For example, you could move the winners "up" one classification for the next game in which they play. If two Regional masters win, their handicap would be computed from the Life Master scale for the next succeeding game. This method allows you to include a player's most recent results while using the rank form of handicapping.

A Tip for Running a Handicap Game

Use handicapping to even the field.

By using handicapping in some of your club games, you can create an environment that is fun for everyone and very encouraging for your new players.

Matchpointing

Learning to Matchpoint

Knowing how to matchpoint quickly is a lot less important in this computer age than it was in the past. Matchpointing is not included on the Club Director Test. But a club director still needs to know the basics, to be able to explain how scoring works to the customers or to actually score the game if the computer is down.

Matchpointing

For every pair you beat, you get one matchpoint.

For every pair you tie, you get one half of a matchpoint.

For every pair that beats you, you get nothing.

If a pair has average it has tied with all the other pairs.

You tie with every pair you can not compare with.

If a board is fouled, you cannot compare with the pairs that played the board in different conditions than you did.

Top and bottom

The travellers in this section show which players did better with their cards than the others. We want to reward the pairs appropriately. We will give out marks, called matchpoints, just like a teacher does in school after a test. You give one matchpoint to a pair for every pair they beat, and $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for every pair they tie. The worst matchpoint score on a board ("bottom") will be zero; the best ("top") will be one less than the number of times the board is played. The top will vary from game to game depending on the movement. Bottom never changes.

Examples

Suppose we had a seven-table Mitchell, playing all seven rounds. The boards are played seven times; bottom is 0 and top is 6.

What about a nine table game, playing nine rounds?

Bottom is _____. Top is _____. Average is _____.

Average is halfway between top and bottom.

Your answers should have been 0, 8 and 4, in that order.

What about a 12-table relay and bye-stand game?

How many times are the boards played?_____

Bottom is _____. Top is _____. Average is _____. (12, 0, 11, $5\frac{1}{2}$)

In an 11 table game, playing 27 boards with three boards per table, what was top on a board?_____

You needed to work out that they played nine rounds, so the boards were played nine times. (Three boards on a table, 27 boards is nine rounds.) So top was 8.

Let's Matchpoint

In a seven-table Mitchell, all of the tables played the board. When matchpointing, start from the bottom, giving out your zero first. Bottom never changes.

We awarded the following numbers of matchpoints to the N-S pairs: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. They got one MP for each pair they beat. We awarded the bottom of 0 MPs to the N-S pair who didn't beat anybody.

Who was it? _____.

Right, #2. Give that pair a ZERO.

Who was next worst? _____.

Sure. Give 1MP to the pair who beat only #2, and that's pair # 7.

Note: We took into account how big a minus the N-S pair had earned. It's better to be only minus 50 than to be minus 100. So the ones who have the least minus get more matchpoints.

We gave 3 MPs to the pair who beat #2 and #7, 4 matchpoints to the next best, 5 to the second highest, and 6 matchpoints to the pair that beat all six other pairs. So, in order, the N-S pairs got 5, 0, 3, 6, 2, 4 and 1 MPs.

E-W reciprocation

How do we matchpoint E-W?

Do you see that where the N-S pair did the best, the E-W pair that played against them did the worst? And where N-S got a bottom, E-W got a top?

Instead of actually starting from 0 all over again and matchpointing the E-W pairs, we can just give E-W the reciprocal of what their opponents earned. (When N-S gets a 6, that E-W gets a 0. When N-S gets a 2, that E-W gets a 4. When N-S gets a 3, that E-W gets a 3, etc.) So, in order, the E-W pairs got 6, 2, 3, 5, 0, 1 and 4 MPs.

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE

(Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board
No.

6

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | N-S Match Points | E-W Pair No. | E-W Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | | |
| 1 | 3N | N | 5 | | 460 | | | 6 | |
| 2 | 3N | S | | 2 | | 100 | | 1 | |
| 3 | 3N | N | 4 | | 430 | | | 3 | |
| 4 | 4S | N | 6 | | 480 | | | 5 | |
| 5 | 4S | N | 4 | | 420 | | | 7 | |
| 6 | 4S | S | 5 | | 450 | | | 2 | |
| 7 | 4S | S | | 1 | | 50 | | 4 | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | 4 | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | 5 | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | 6 | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | 7 | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | |

Average Boards

When you matchpoint a board with an average awarded on it, here's what you need to know ...

Each other pair that played the board "ties" with the pair with an adjusted score on the board where we have no direct comparison because of the average (or A+ or A-, whatever). That means that the pair getting the adjustment receives ½ an MP for each other pair that played the board (which gives them average) and everyone else gets an extra ½ MP for "tying" the adjusted pair.

Here's how it works:

1. Starting with the N-S pair that did the worst, give each pair a matchpoint for every pair they beat and ½ MP for every pair they tie with, including the (Ave, A+, A-) pair.
2. Determine top on a (regular) board, divide it by 2, and give that score (average) to the adjusted pair or give them ½ MP for every other pair. The board check total for the board with the average is the same as the check total for each other board in the game.

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE (Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board No.

| |
|---|
| 1 |
|---|

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | N-S Match Points | E-W Pair No. | E-W Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | | |
| 1 | 4S | E | | 1 | 50 | | | | |
| 2 | 4S | E | 4 | | | 420 | | | |
| 3 | | | | | Avg | Avg | | | |
| 4 | 3N | W | 3 | | | 400 | | | |
| 5 | 3S | E | 4 | | | 170 | | | |
| 6 | 4S | E | | 2 | 100 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | 4 | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | 5 | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | 6 | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | |

How do Average Plus and Average Minus work?

Average Plus is 60% of top on a board (or the average of a pair's other scores if they're having a better game than 60%). Nearly all of the time it's just 60%. And Average Minus is always 40% of top on a board. So if top on a board is 12, Avg+ is 7.2 and Avg- is 4.8. If top on a board is 7, Avg+ is 4.2 and Avg- is 2.8.

When you have a traveller with an Avg+ or Avg- on it, the procedure works just like the one for a plain average. The only difference is that since the adjusted score is a little better (or worse) than average, the total for the traveller (and hence for the recap) will be off by that same small amount.

Average Score

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE

(Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board No.

2

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | N-S Match Points | E-W Pair No. | E-W Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | | |
| 1 | 4S | S | 4 | | 620 | | 6 | 9 | |
| 2 | | | | | Avg | | 4 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4S | S | | 1 | | 100 | — | 4 | |
| 4 | Pass | | | | 0 | | 2 | 6 | |
| 5 | 2S | S | 4 | | 170 | | 3- | 8 | |
| 6 | 4S | S | 5 | | 650 | | 4- | 3 | |
| 7 | 5cx | W | | 3 | 500 | | 4- | 3 | |
| 8 | Pass | | | | 0 | | 2 | 5 | |
| 9 | 4S | S | 4 | | 620 | | 6 | 7 | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | |

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE

(Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board No.

5

Adjusted Score

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | N-S Match Points | E-W Pair No. | E-W Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | | |
| 1 | 4S | S | 4 | | 620 | | 7 | 9 | |
| 2 | | | | | Av+ | Av- | 4.8 | 2 | |
| 3 | 5cx | W | | 3 | 500 | | 5.5 | 4 | |
| 4 | 4S | S | | 1 | | 100 | 2 | 6 | |
| 5 | | | | | Avg | Avg | 4 | 8 | |
| 6 | 4S | S | | 1 | | 100 | 2 | 1 | |
| 7 | 5cx | W | | 3 | 500 | | 5.5 | 3 | |
| 8 | 4S | S | | 1 | | 100 | 2 | 5 | |
| 9 | Pass | | | | 0 | | 4 | 7 | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | |

Fouled Boards

What is a fouled board?

When an E–W player puts his hand back in the wrong slot and vice versa (or even something like when a queen and jack in the same suit are switched), it becomes a new bridge deal and as such it is impossible to directly compare later scores to those which occurred earlier in the game. Eventually someone notices the results are strange and the director is called.

After the fouled board is discovered, what does the director do?

When the fouled board is discovered, it is up to the director to find out after which round the board was fouled. Having done so, the director must matchpoint the board (unless you are using ACBLscore and then the program will take care of the problem).

Matchpointing the fouled board is like matchpointing two completely separate boards which happen to have the same board number. Each group of scores will be matchpointed separately and will have its own separate top. Matchpoint the group that played the board before it was fouled and then matchpoint the other group.

Here's how:

In this traveler, the board was fouled after round 3.

1. Matchpoint, starting with ZERO, the truncated board for the pairs who played it unfouled.
2. Give each pair in that group $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for “tying” every pair who played the deal fouled. (4 pairs x $\frac{1}{2}$ = 2 more points each.)
3. Matchpoint, starting with ZERO, the truncated board for those who played the deal after it was fouled. (4 pairs in this case.)
4. Give these pairs $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for every pair who played the deal unfouled. (3 pairs = $1\frac{1}{2}$ additional points.)

Your check total should be the same as for the unfouled boards in the game.

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE (Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board
No.

10

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | E-W Pair No. | Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|--------------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | |
| 1 | 6S | N | 6 | | 1430 | | 6 | 0 2 |
| 2 | 6NT | N | 6 | | 1440 | | 1 | 1 3 |
| 3 | 6S | N | 7 | | 1460 | | 3 | 2 4 |
| 4 | 4H | W | 4 | | | 620 | 5 | 1 2- |
| 5 | 4H | W | 5 | | | 650 | 7 | 0 1- |
| 6 | 6H | W | | 2 | 200 | | 2 | 3 4- |
| 7 | 4H | W | | 1 | 100 | | 4 | 2 3- |
| | | | | | | | Check total | 21 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | 1 | 3 |
| | | | | | | | 2 | 1- |
| | | | | | | | 3 | 2 |
| | | | | | | | 4 | 2- |
| | | | | | | | 5 | 3- |
| | | | | | | | 6 | 4 |
| | | | | | | | 7 | 4- |
| | | | | | | | | 21 |

The traveler below has been fouled after the fourth round. Matchpoint it and check your results below.

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE (Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board No. 18

| N-S Pair No. | Contract | BY | Made | Down | SCORE | | N-S Match Points | E-W Pair No. | E-W Match Points |
|--------------------|----------|----|------|------|-------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | N-S | E-W | | | |
| 1 | 3NT | N | 3 | | 600 | | | 5 | |
| 2 | 3NT | N | 3 | | 600 | | | 7 | |
| 3 | 2NT | N | 3 | | 150 | | | 2 | |
| 4 | 3NT | N | 4 | | 630 | | | 4 | |
| 5 | 1NT | E | 2 | | | 120 | | 6 | |
| 6 | 1NT | E | 1 | | | 90 | | 1 | |
| 7 | 2NT | E | | 1 | 50 | | | 3 | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | |

Only N-S 5, 6, and 7 and E-W 1, 3, and 6 played the board fouled.

Your awarded matchpoints starting at N-S 1 - 3 ($1\frac{1}{2} + 1\frac{1}{2}$)

N-S 2 - 3 ($1\frac{1}{2} + 1\frac{1}{2}$)

N-S 3 - $1\frac{1}{2}$ ($0 + 1\frac{1}{2}$)

N-S 4 - $4\frac{1}{2}$ ($3 + 1\frac{1}{2}$)

N-S 5 - 2 ($0 + 2$)

N-S 6 - 3 ($1 + 2$)

N-S 7 - 4 ($2 + 2$)

The E-W pairs get the reciprocals.

The board was played 7 times, so top is 6.

E-W 1 - 3

E-W 2 - $4\frac{1}{2}$

E-W 3 - 2

E-W 4 - $1\frac{1}{2}$

E-W 5 - 3

E-W 6 - 4

E-W 7 - 3

Checking Your Matchpointing

Check total on a board

If we add up all of the matchpoints on a board, we will get the “check total” for that board. Each of the boards in any one game will have the same check total.

Look at some check totals. In the seven-table game discussed earlier, we awarded scores of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The sum of these digits is 21. In the 13-table game, where top was 12, we get a check total of 78. When you have players “helping” you at the end of the game, you need them to add up the check totals on the boards they matchpoint before giving them to you to post on the recap sheet. That way, you will have some protection against a big source of errors.

Is there an easy way for you, the director, to calculate the check total on a board? Sure. Simply multiply the average on a board times the number of times it was played.

Think of it this way. In our seven-table game, if all seven pairs had done the same thing on a board, they would each get an average (a “flat” board). Each pair beat no one, but tied 6 pairs, so they got 3 MPs. On a board with a top of 6, average is 3. If all seven pairs got 3, then $7 \times 3 = 21$, the check total for the board. Amazing!

Recap total

It is important to know not only that our matchpointing of each board is accurate, but that our addition was accurate as well. We can check this by adding up all of the pairs’ scores and getting a “recap total.” We then compare the number we get against the number the recap total *should* be.

What should the recap total be? Easy. Take our seven-table game again. If average on a board is 3 and each pair played 28 boards, Average for one pair would be $3 \times 28 = 84$. Since there were seven N–S pairs, the total for all the N–Ss is $7 \times 84 = 588$.

There is another way to get a recap total. Every traveller has a check total. Multiply that number by the number of boards in the game. In our seven-table game, the board check total was 21. There were 28 boards in the game. $21 \times 28 = 588$. Magic!

| |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Check total on a board = Average on the board X the number of times it was played |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Recap total = game average X # pairs in that direction, or Recap total = board check total X # boards in play |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Matchpointing the Howell

When matchpointing a Howell, you just matchpoint the pairs that played N–S on the board, then reciprocate for the pairs that played E–W. Write all of the numbers in the top part of the traveller on the appropriate lines, so they’ll be easy to transfer to the recap sheet.

Your check total for a board in a Howell is TWICE the average on the board X the number of times it was played. This is because the total includes the matchpoints for the E–W pairs as well as the N–S pairs, and so it will be twice as large as it would be in a Mitchell.

Your recap total for a Howell is the number of pairs in the game X the average for the game.

Bridge on Cruise Ships

Bridge programs

As an ACBL certified director, you can work with cruise agents to run a bridge program aboard a ship or you can, in some circumstances, obtain a sanction for a game on a cruise ship and take your own players aboard with you. A list of cruise agents you can contact for possible assignments is available at the Find a Club section of the ACBL web site.

Bridge sanctions

The ACBL sanctions duplicate games as part of the social program aboard cruise ships. Any ship that conducts sanctioned bridge games must pay an annual sanction fee. This fee permits the ship to conduct sanctioned games on all its cruises for the entire year. A letter of permission from the cruise line authorizing a director to conduct a bridge program on the ship for a calendar year must accompany the sanction application. The ACBL provides a free supply of club masterpoint reports and receipts.

The ACBL will sanction games on a ship for a single cruise that does not exceed 14 days, charging a sanction fee. There is one sanction fee for cruises of one to seven days and a larger sanction fee for cruises of eight to thirty days (See Appendix G of the ACBL Handbook online). Whoever receives sanctions for cruise ships is expected, within the constraints placed upon them by the cruise lines, to actively promote the ACBL for the purpose of recruiting new members.

ACBL defines the duration of a cruise as the period from the time the ship leaves the port of embarkation until it either returns to that port or terminates the advertised cruise at a different port. A 40-day cruise to the Orient, for example, is a single cruise, even though it may involve 18 days going, four days in port and 18 days returning.

Exceptions to ACBL regulations

Cruise ships need not hold club masterpoint games at regularly scheduled intervals. Since the games are part of the social activity, they must suit the convenience of the players. The technical operation of the games must follow the regulations set forth for most sanctioned club games, with the following exceptions:

There are no table and session fees, and the director of the sanctioned cruise game does not have to submit a Monthly Report form, but club masterpoint reports must be submitted to the ACBL at the end of the cruise.

Masterpoint awards are 50% of the award for an open club game. Directors also may hold newcomer games if warranted.

ACBL regulations require that these games have a club or higher rated director.

There is no requirement that a specific number of boards be played during a session. Masterpoint awards for such events are the same as they are for a complete game.

Cruise championship regulations

As a supplement to the cruise games authorized, cruise championships may be scheduled in accordance with the following regulations:

A limit of one cruise championship event of each kind every 14 days may be held during the cruise. The event may be of one or two sessions. Typical cruise championship events are open pairs, men's and women's pairs, mixed pairs and individuals.

Masterpoint awards for cruise championships are 50% of an open game championship. Players who earn masterpoints in a cruise game receive their points from the ACBL.

Directors or managers on cruise ships need not pay the per table session fees, but must submit club masterpoint reports to the ACBL at the end of the cruise.

Land cruises

The sanction fees for land cruises are the same as they are for ship cruises. The only difference is that the "cruise" is held on land. Land cruises that operate at a single site in an ACBL country for more than 14 days will be sanctioned as a club game and report as one. All other land cruises held in an ACBL country that are open to all ACBL members will be able to award masterpoints at full open club value. ACBL would consider, for example, a sanctioned bridge game held over a weekend at a vacation resort as a single land cruise.

Education opportunities

The ACBL highly recommends that teachers and club directors interested in working on cruise ships take the course on this subject offered at NABCs.

Resources for Club Directors Online

Home Page >

Link to Shop ACBL
Link to ACBLscore
Find a Club

Resources for Club Managers and Directors >

Club Managers Newsletter
Club Managers Handbook

Club Managers >

Post Your Information >

Update Your Club Listing
Post Your Club Web Site

Club and Sanction Applications >

New Sanction/Sanction Renewal Application
Sanction Application Instructions
Sanction Change Application

ACBL Handbook of Club Rules and Regulations, Chapters 4 and 5

Specific rules and regulations for the
operation of an ACBL sanctioned club.

Reports >

Masterpoint Report
Membership Game Report
Monthly Financial Report

Club Directors >

Club Directors Handbook
Duplicate Decisions
Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge
in terms easy to understand.

Education >

Become a Club Director
Club Director Update Course
Schedule of Courses
Start an Easybridge! game
Become an Easybridge! presenter
Become a Tournament Director

Guidelines and Procedures >

Alert Procedures
Handicapping Your Games
Home Style Duplicate
Small Duplicate Games
Stratifying Your Game

Convention Charts

Special Events >

Information for Club Managers
Online Registration
Conditions of Contest
Events Schedule

In Print

ACBL from A-Z

Available in hard copy for sale at the ACBL Product Store.

ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations, Chapters 4 and 5

Specific rules and regulations for the operation of an ACBL sanctioned club. Available in hard copy from the ACBL Product Store.

Adventures in Duplicate

Colorful full-size booklet for newcomers. Great as a give-away. Available for sale at the ACBL Product Store.

Club Managers Handbook

Available in hard copy by contacting the Club and Member Services Department.

Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge

Handy pocket-size publication available for sale from the ACBL Product Store.

Duplicate Bridge Direction

By Alex Groner

Complete reference to assist club directors.

Available for sale from the ACBL Product Store.

Duplicate Decisions

Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge in terms easy to understand.

Exciting World of Bridge

Available in limited supplies from the ACBL Marketing Department. Also online under Learn>Introduction to Duplicate Bridge.

In Person

Club Directors Course

Offered at all NABCs and selected regional tournaments.

Club Director Update Course

A must to refresh your knowledge. Offered at all NABCs and selected regional tournaments.

Teacher Accreditation Programs

If you don't have a teacher for your club, you may want to become one yourself. TAPs are offered at all NABCs and selected regional tournaments.

Other Seminars

Seminars on such topics as cruise bridge and club marketing are offered at all NABCs. Check the seminar schedule on NABC web pages.

Contacts

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Monthly reports: club.report@acbl.org

Director education: directorcourses@acbl.org

Club charity games: charity@acbl.org

Special events: [specialevents@acbl.org](mailto:specialevts@acbl.org)

ACBLscore: acblscore@acbl.org

Ruling questions: rulings@acbl.org