

GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS 2008-2009

ACBL SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF CONTEST

Lack of knowledge does not constitute cause for exception to these conditions of contest. These conditions of contest may not be changed at any level of play during the course of this event. The general conditions of contest for swiss team and knockout teams events will apply to this event subject to the following special conditions of contest.

It is the spirit of these conditions that the Grand National Teams be a "grass roots" event, with each participant competing in his/her district of membership. Please see Appendix I to these conditions of contest.

Each participant in the GNT, beyond the club qualifying level, must be a dues paying or service fee paid up ACBL member.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR AUTHORITY

All ACBL tournament regulations, though not specifically included in these conditions, apply throughout this event. Only in the case of an unforeseen situation, the district director (or designee) in consultation with the ACBL GNT coordinator, may make exceptions to these conditions. In emergency situations only, the district director (or designee) may make decisions consistent with the spirit of these conditions of contest. The District Director has final authority on any item not specified in the conditions of contest.

GENERAL

This is a team event in which each ACBL district will name a district champion in each category by means of a fair competition that is not necessarily the same from district to district. These district champions then may compete in the national final of their respective category. A player may represent the district in only one flight at the national final. Teams in the national final will not be subsidized in any way by the ACBL.

A district may elect not to name a district champion in Flight A (0-5000).

The flights are as follows:

FLIGHT	MASTERPOINT LIMITS
Open Championship Flight	Unlimited
Flight A	Under 5000 Masterpoints
Flight B	Under 2000 Masterpoints
Flight C	Non-Life Master under 500 Masterpoints

Flight eligibility will be established by ACBL's September masterpoint cycle. This information will be produced on August 6, 2008 in Memphis TN. Masterpoints won after this cycle will not impact flight eligibility for these events.

At district option, each flight may be played at one or more levels. The Open Championship and Flight A may be combined at club and unit level for play and masterpoint awards. In a stratified field all teams are eligible for qualification to the championship flight. All teams are eligible for Flight A qualification with the exception of a team with a member over 5000 masterpoints. Teams are eligible for Flight B qualification with the exception of a team with a member over 2000 masterpoints. Teams are eligible for Flight C qualification with the

exception of a team with a member over 500 masterpoints or Life Master rank. ACBL rules and regulations apply to all play in the event and supersede district conditions in cases of conflict.

CONVENTIONS

At district option, the ACBL Midchart may apply at the district level of the GNT - Open Championship and Flight A provided that this has been included in the district conditions of contest.

DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

Each district shall determine the nature of the event by which it declares its district champions. Prior to Sept. 1, each district must provide ACBL Headquarters with an outline of their conditions of play. The name, address and phone number of the person to whom questions should be directed concerning the district's event should be included. Districts are not required to subsidize players at any level, including the national final, and are not required to ensure that the district is represented at the national final. All districts must notify ACBL Headquarters by June 15, 2009 of each team in any flight that will be participating in the GNT North American finals.

SCHEDULING

District events commence Sept. 1 and may schedule play at any time thereafter. No level or stage may be scheduled which would prevent a player from attending one or more days of a North American Bridge Championships or participating in the United States Bridge Championship, the United States Women's Bridge Championship or the Senior Trials. The national final for all flights will begin on the Wednesday afternoon prior to the Summer NABC.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The Championship Flight is open to any player, except as previously noted. Flight A is open only to a player who has fewer than 5000 masterpoints recorded as of the September cycle. NOTE: If the event is stratified, the Open Championship and Flight A are combined at club and unit level. Flight B is open only to players who have fewer than 2000 masterpoints as of the September cycle. Flight C is open only to players with fewer than 500 masterpoints who have not attained the rank of Life Master as of the September cycle. Teams may consist of four, five or six eligible players.

Masterpoints won in other bridge organizations, either domestic or foreign, must be taken into account for placement in the flights. A player's bridge experience will be taken into account to determine a suitable flight. The director-in-charge is authorized to make the decision on the player's classification.

The first-place finishers in the Championship Flight, Flight A, Flight B, and the second place finisher in the Championship Flight of the district final earn Blue Ribbon Pairs qualifications. The first place finishers in the Non-Life Master Flight in a district final earn Red Ribbon Pairs qualification. The first-place finishers in the Championship, A and B flights, and the second place finishers in the Championship at the NABC final will earn Blue Ribbon qualification. These teams will earn qualifying points, if applicable, for international competition on the same scale as in the Blue Ribbon Pairs and the Life Master Pairs. The first and second place finishers in the Non-Life Master Flight at the National Final will earn Red Ribbon qualification.

Overall awards will be based on the participation of each member (see page 7).

REPLACEMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Issues regarding replacements and/or substitutions not addressed by the District conditions of contest are resolved as follows: Every team member must play at least half of the boards of each match (exclusive of play-offs) in order to continue participating on that team for the remainder of the event. The team captain may submit an application for exemption from the requirements of this paragraph to the District Coordinator who will then submit the request to the Director in Charge of the NABC but must do so (other than for emergencies) prior to arrival at the NABC for the GNT's.
2. A team member granted an exemption under the previous paragraph must still play at least 40% of the boards, (excluding play-off boards), for as long as the team survived to qualify for overall masterpoint awards and other privileges. No contestant may play any match after it has become mathematically impossible to play at least 40% of the boards (excluding play-off boards) played by the team.
3. An ineligible player is disqualified. The ineligible player's team will be disqualified unless the Director-In-Charge determines that teammates were unaware of the deficiency of the disqualified member. Any team reduced to fewer than three original members due to disqualification of ineligible players is disqualified.
4. Substitutes will be permitted at the discretion of the Director-In -Charge of the NABC. No more than two substitutes at a time will be permitted on a team
5. A team reduced to three members for cause at the site of the NABC will be permitted a replacement at the discretion of the Director- In- Charge. A replacement for the Finals receives match awards only. In no case is a team permitted to replace more than one player at the site of the NABC.

INELIGIBLE PLAYERS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

An ineligible player is disqualified. The ineligible player's team will be disqualified unless the director-in-charge determines that teammates were unknowledgeable about the deficiency of the disqualified member. Any team reduced to fewer than three original members due to disqualification of ineligible players may not continue and is disqualified.

When a team is disqualified after the correction period, the disqualified team's rank remains vacant. In ongoing events, teams move up one qualifying position as appropriate.

MASTERPOINTS

FLIGHT	RATING
Championship (Open) Flight	100% of Open Rating
Flight A - (0-5000)	97.14% of Open Rating
Flight B - (0-2000)	84.34% of Open Rating
Flight C - (NLM 0-500)	60.56 % of Open Rating

If stratified, the Championship and Flight A will be combined as one flight at unit level and club level. Size and depth of overall awards below the district final are based on the number of teams entered in that game except when unit finals are held. Masterpoints for unit finals will be as in regular stratified team events even if all flights are not held concurrently. (NOTE:

Higher flights will receive the table count of all lower flights even though they are not playing concurrently.)

Points awarded at club level games are half red and half black, at sectional rating. A club game conducted by invitation awards only black points, at 80% of sectional open rating for the Championship/Flight A, 65% of sectional open rating for Flight B, and 48% of sectional open rating for Flight C.

One session unit finals will award red points only at sectional rating.

Overall masterpoints awarded at two or more session unit finals are 20% gold, 80% red for the Open Championship and Flight A. Flight B awards are 10% gold, 90% red; and flight C is 5% gold, 95% red at sectional rating. Match awards are red at sectional rating. Consolations of these games award black points at sectional consolation rating.

A game at any level or stage may give overall awards only if qualifying teams from that game will join teams from another site or other sites at a further level or stage. The size and depth of overall awards at any stage below the district stage in which teams play swiss matches to qualify into a knockout will be as follows:

- If two teams qualify into the KO, the award for first will be based on four teams with two overall positions.
- If four teams qualify, the award will be based on eight teams, with four overall positions.
- If eight teams qualify, the award will be based on 16 teams with four overall positions.
- If 16 or more teams qualify, awards are based on 32 teams with eight overall positions.
- In no case will any stage pay overalls based on more than the eligible teams in actual competition.
- The qualifying phase will pay match awards only. Teams entering the KO phase will be entitled only to the sum of all match awards or the overall award, whichever is greater.

Silver points will be available at any unit level game played in conjunction with and at the site of an open Sectional tournament.

Points awarded at the stage in which the district champion is declared are gold for overalls and red for match awards at regional rating. Swiss team events that qualify to a knockout are considered to be a part of the district finals whether they are conducted at the same site or not and do NOT award overall masterpoints. Consolations of these games award half red and half black points at Regional consolation rating. The award for first place overall for the district champion is arbitrary and is based on the number of sessions in the district final as follows:

Championship Flight:

2 sessions - 24.00 masterpoints

3 sessions non KO event - 30.00 masterpoints

KO or other longer events - 36.00 masterpoints

Overall awards are gold. Match awards are 100% regional rated.

Flight A:

2 sessions - 20.00 masterpoints

3 sessions non KO event - 25.00 masterpoints

KO or other longer events - 30.00 masterpoints

Overall awards are gold. Match awards are 97% of regional rating.

Flight B:

2 sessions - 18.00 masterpoints

3 session non KO event - 22.00 masterpoints

KO or other longer events - 26.00 masterpoints

Overall awards are gold. Match awards are 84% regional rated.

Flight C:

2 sessions - 10.00 masterpoints

3 session non KO event - 12.50 masterpoints

KO or other longer events - 15.00 masterpoints

Overall awards are 25% gold and 75% red. Match awards are 60% regional rated.

The winners of the Championship Flight at the NABC final will receive 100 masterpoints; the winners of Flight A at the final will receive 75 masterpoints, the Flight B winners 60; Flight C winners 40. For the Championship Flight, Flight A and Flight B event, overalls will be gold and will extend to the top eight teams if the entry is 16 or more teams and to the top four teams with an entry of eight to 15 teams. Match awards will be red at National rating. Flight C awards will be 1/3 gold and 2/3 red for the NABC final overall.

SANCTIONS, DIRECTORS AND FEES

Requests for rated ACBL Tournament Directors should be received in Memphis six months before the event.

The director must be a club rated or higher-rated director to run games at the club and intermediate level. A non-playing director is recommended by ACBL, but a club qualifying event with 17 or fewer teams may have a playing director. A tournament director will be assigned by the Tournament Department to officiate at each district final. ACBL will attempt to assign your preferred director. Game reports are to be submitted on the official ACBL GNT report forms, which will be available from the district GNT coordinator. A sanction fee of \$1.25 per table per session must accompany the game report for all games at all levels. A district may add a surcharge for games run by its clubs and/or units.

NABC FINAL

In the NABC final for all flights, teams will play a one day Swiss event to qualify into a seeded KO bracket. Each Swiss event will be 8 7-board matches. The 20 VP scale will be used. There may be playbacks at the bottom of the field.

The bracket seeding will be:

Swiss winner #1 seed

Swiss runner-up #2 seed

Swiss finishers 3rd and 4th will draw into seed positions 3 & 4

Swiss finishers 5th – 8th will draw into seed positions 5 – 8

Seed #16 will be selected by seed #1

Seed #15 will be selected by seed #2

Seed #14 will be selected by seed #3

Seed #13 will be selected by seed #4

The remaining 4 teams will draw into seed positions 9 – 12

Ensuing knock-out matches will be 64 boards in length in the Championship flight; 56 boards in length in all other flights. These events will be governed by the Knockout General Conditions of Contest.

APPENDIX I
Board Item 053-75

The conditions of contest for the GNT are amended to reflect:

- A. For the GNT, a member's principal physical residence as of Sept. 1 of the year prior to the NABC finals shall establish the district in which the member is eligible to participate beyond the qualifying stage.
- C. Entry forms for the unit and district finals shall include the following statement: "By entering this event, I hereby certify, subject to penalties as provided in the conditions of contest for this event and in the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations, that I am eligible to play in this district."
- D. A credentials committee shall be formed and comprised of six (6) members of the ACBL Board of Directors; two each from the Eastern, Central and Western zones. Panels hearing exceptions will be comprised of three of the six members. The president of the ACBL shall select the members of this committee annually. The members shall hear all matters pertaining to the events begun that year.
- E. If a member is unsure which district is the appropriate district in which he may play, the member may seek clarification from the credentials committee prior to the start of the event.
- F. If, at the unit final stage or later, an ACBL member believes that another player is playing in the wrong district, he or she may challenge that player's eligibility to the credentials committee.
- G. The credentials committee may request documentary evidence from the member whose eligibility is in question. If a member requesting clarification as provided in paragraph E above fails to provide the requested evidence, no ruling shall be made and the member shall play at his own risk. If a member is unable to verify to the committee's satisfaction that he or she has played in the district of principal physical residence, the Credentials Committee shall automatically disqualify the member and his teammates (GNTs). If a member is found to be ineligible, the matter may be referred to the ACBL President to make charges to the ACBL Disciplinary Committee.
- H. If players wish an exception from the requirements of sections A above, they must begin the process for the GNT by July 1. Players must seek permission in writing from the district directors of the district in which he lives and the district in which he wishes to play. Both district directors must agree for the exception to be granted. For the Open Championship Flight in the GNT, this written permission from both district directors will be forwarded to the credentials committee for final approval. If the directors do not agree, the exception is not granted. There is no appeal from this decision.

Board Item 071-64

Appendix I of the NAP and GNT is amended as follows:
Exceptions will be considered in the three following situations:

1. "Snowbirds". Any member with a seasonal residences who spends more than half of the GNT qualifying period (considered to be September 1 - February 28) in a district other than the district of their principal physical residence may play in the district of seasonal residence if

they choose to do so, they must play in that district's district final to be eligible to play in the national finals and are not eligible to be augmented to or otherwise added to a team from the district of their principal residence.

2. Players who live near district borders and who are members of a unit in a district in which they do not reside may seek permission to play in the district in which they have a unit membership. Players seeking this exception must have been an active member of the unit in the district in which they wish to play for at least 5 years continuously prior to the start of the competition in the year in which they wish to play and must not have played in the GNT in another district for that period of time. (The 2006/2007 GNT is not considered for this requirement.) Once this permission is granted the player is eligible to play only in that district and may not change unit affiliation unless the player's principal physical residence changes.

3. Players with multiple domiciles should apply to the Credentials Committee for a one time choice of district in which they wish to play. Players may be asked to document their time in each of their residences. A player must live at least three months each year in a district in order to have it considered as a possibility. Once a player chooses a district in which to play, he must play only in that district until he no longer has a domicile in that district.

The General Knockout Conditions of Contest will apply to this event.

1. For any overall award, a player must play at least 50% of all the boards played by the team at the time he or she (and the team) earned that award.
2. For the first place award, when the team wins the final, a player must play at least 50% of the combined boards in the semi-final and final matches.
3. For any given overall award, the player must have played at least 50% of the boards in the match in which they earned the award.
EXAMPLE: A player plays 100% of round one and 100% of round four, the final. If the team loses the final match, that player will receive masterpoints (match awards) only for the first round victory.