

# Grand National Teams

The District 17 Grand National Teams Event will be conducted in two stages, a Club Level Qualifying Stage and a District Finals Stage. ACBL conditions of contest are part these conditions of contest.

## STAGE 1 – CLUB LEVEL QUALIFYING

- A. Clubs or Units may conduct Club Level Qualifying Games. There is no limit on the number of Club Level Qualifying Games that a Club or Unit may hold. Players qualifying at the club level stage are eligible to participate in the District Finals. Anyone from anywhere is permitted to play at a Club Level Game. New teams may be formed at the unit or district finals from qualified players of the previous level. Players may play in as many games as desired, except that in no case can players compete in more than one District Final. Clubs and units are not required to hold GNT qualifying games, but are strongly encouraged to do so. Non-members may play at the club level, but must be paid-up ACBL members to continue to the next stage.
- B. GNT Teams will be composed of four, five or six eligible members. Each team must select a captain. At the beginning of each game, the captain is responsible to assure that entry blanks are clearly filled out, listing all players' names and numbers.
- C. Club/unit level events must be held between **September 1, 2018 and April 30, 2019**, but may not be held during the Fall or Spring NABC tournaments. Club/unit Level qualifying events may not be scheduled during the United States Women's Bridge Championship, the Senior Trials United States Senior Bridge Championships, Canadian Bridge Week or the Junior Bridge Championships which would preclude continued participation in these events.
- D. The GNT competition is divided into four categories:

Championship Flight (unlimited masterpoints).  
Flight A will be open to players with fewer than 6,000 masterpoints.  
Flight B will be open to players with fewer than 2,500 masterpoints.  
Flight C will be open to Non-Life Masters with fewer than 500 masterpoints.

For eligibility in Flights A, B and C, stated limitations must be met as of the September masterpoint cycle determined **August 6, 2018**. Masterpoints won after this cycle will not impact flight eligibility for these events. Be sure to verify your flight eligibility to keep from being disqualified at the D17 Finals.

E. Clubs and Units have the following options for club level games:

1. Stratified Games, where the Championship Flight and Flight A will be combined as one flight at the unit or club level.
2. Flighted Games where all four flights compete simultaneously, but separately.
3. Flighted Games where each flight is conducted as a separate event; either on separate days, or where one, two or three flights are held on one day and the other flight(s) are held on other days.
4. Strati-flighted Games where one flight plays by itself, and the other flights play a stratified game.
5. Games may be conducted as Swiss Team or Round Robin events.
6. Games may be held as one or two session events.

F. If the event is stratified, the Open Flight and Flight A are combined as one group for the purposes of scoring and awarding masterpoints.

G. If the event is flighted, and only one team is entered in any one flight, that team will be automatically qualified for the District Final. That team must pay the club qualifying fee, even though they will not have to play in that event to qualify.

H. Matches will be scored by Victory Points – 20 point scale. Ties will not be broken.

I. Fifty percent (50%) of the teams entered (rounded up), including those teams tied for the last qualifying position, will qualify for the next stage of competition.

J. ACBLscore will automatically assign the appropriate scoring and determine qualifiers. If a club or unit does not use ACBLscore, please contact your GNT Chairman to obtain proper forms. Points awarded at the club level stage are half red and half black, at sectional rating.

K. ACBL rules and regulations govern play at every level of the event, and supercede district conditions in cases of conflict.

## PLAY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLUB AND DISTRICT STAGES

- For any overall award, a player must play at least 50% of the boards played by the team at the time he/she (and the team) earned that award.
- For the first place award, when the team wins the final, a player must play at least 50% of the combined boards in the semifinal and final matches.
- For any given overall award, the players 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.
- In stages consisting of two or more sessions of unequal numbers of boards played, half of the sessions is deemed to be half the boards played.

## ZERO TOLERANCE

ACBL policy on Zero Tolerance will be observed at all levels of the GNT competition. For the purpose of any Zero Tolerance penalties accrued, Stage 1 and Stage 2 will be considered as one total event.

## CONVENTIONS

Conventions on the ACBL General Convention Chart must be allowed at all stages. Use of ACBL Mid-Chart conventions will be allowed only in the Championship Flight and in Flight A, and only during the District Final competition.

## STAGE 2 – DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP

The District Finals for all Flights will be held at the **Denver Regionals**, in **May, 2019**. If you need to add one or two qualified players to your team, contact the District 17 GNT Chairman, who has volunteered to serve as an "Online Partnership Desk". **In the event a player was not able to play in a qualifying game due to extenuating circumstances, the team with at least**

**2 qualifying players may request an exception from the GNT Chairman to add additional players who were not able to be qualified at the club level.**

The Finals will be conducted in separate, but simultaneous events for all flights. Based on the number of teams participating in the Open Championship and A Flights, the District Finals may be played over a period of three days, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Flights B and C will be two days, on Friday and Saturday. Starting times will coincide with starting times for prime time Regional Evening.

## **Pre-registration is required for the Open Flight**

Teams must mail the team listing of players to the GNT Chairman no later than May 1st, along with a check made out to District 17 GNT for the first session entry fee (currently \$52). In the event that there is only one team pre-registered, they will be declared the winner and will not be required to show up at the District Finals, but must pay the initial session entry fee.

### **ENTRY FEES**

**The District Board has waived the entry fees for all Flight C teams.** Entry fees for other flights will be the same as those charged by the subject regional.

### **QUALIFICATION**

All players must be members of a District 17 unit, and must be paid-up members in good standing of the ACBL. Exception: Certain exceptions are allowed as described in the Grand National ACBL 2018-2019 ACBL Special Conditions of Contest. See elsewhere in these conditions for membership requirements.

### **FLIGHT MASTERPOINT REQUIREMENTS**

Flight masterpoint requirements for Stage 2 (district finals) are the same as for Stage 1.

### **DISTRICT WINNERS**

Winning teams of each flight category of the District Finals are eligible to compete in the National Finals.

## RULES OF PLAY FOR DISTRICT FINALS

1. More than 8 teams in a flight: On Friday, all teams in all flights with more than 8 teams will play a two-session Swiss qualifier with victory point (20 point scale) scoring. In the Championship Flight and Flight A, 8 teams will qualify for one-session quarter-final knockouts followed by one-session semi-finals on Saturday, with a two-session Final on Sunday. If Flight B and/or C start with more than 12 teams, 8 teams will qualify for a two-session complete round robin final, with VP scoring, on Saturday. If Flight B and/or C start with 9 to 12 teams, inclusive, 4 teams will qualify for a one-session semi-final knockout and a one-session final on Saturday.
2. Between 5 and 8 teams in a flight: On Friday all flights with 5 to 8 teams, inclusive, will play a two-session double round robin to qualify four teams. On Saturday, Flights A, B and C will play a one-session semi and a one-session final. On Saturday the Championship Flight will play a two-session semi-final with a two-session final on Sunday.
3. Less than 5 teams in a flight: Flights of 3 or 4 teams will play a double-session round robin on Friday with 2 teams qualifying. On Saturday the Championship Flight and Flight A will play a two-session Final, and Flights B and C will play a one-session Final. In the event only two teams are entered in any one flight, they will play a double session knockout on Friday for the Championship. In the event only one team is entered in any one flight on Friday, that team will be declared the District Representative to the National Finals in that flight, provided they pay card fees for the first session of the District finals.
4. Knockout matches for all flights except C, will be 28 boards per session. Flight C will play 24 boards per session. If a KO match ends in a tie, a four board playoff will be used to determine the winner. Should subsequent playoffs be required to break the tie, each playoff will be four boards.
5. Points awarded 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, and do NOT award overall masterpoints. Beginning 2019, the point awards for the District Finals are as follows:

**Championship Flight:** 2 Sessions – 32 MPs, 3 Sessions – 40 MPs, 4 or more Sessions – 48 MPs

**Flight A:** 2 Sessions – 27 MPs, 3 Sessions – 33 MPs, 4 or more Sessions – 40 MPs

**Flight B:** 2 Sessions – 22.5 MPs, 3 Sessions – 28 MPs, 4 or more Sessions – 33.5 MPs

**Flight C:** 2 Sessions – 15 MPs, 3 Sessions – 17.5 MPs, 4 or more Sessions – 20 MPs

6. The first and second place finishers in the Championship flight and Flight A, earn Blue Ribbon Qualification. The first place finisher in Flight B, earns Blue Ribbon qualifications. The first place finisher in Flight C earns Red Ribbon Qualification.

## RESOLVING TIES

Definitions:

Net IMPs: the difference between the total number of IMPs won and the total number of IMPs lost.

IMP Quotient: The total number of IMPs won divided by the total number of IMPs lost.

### A. Qualifying Play

1. Head-to-head match: a 4-board play-off will be played.
2. 2-way ties in round-robin (not 3-way) play
  - a. Result of head to head matches
  - b. Net IMPs for the day.
3. 3-way ties in round-robin play: focus on matches between the three
  - a. When two teams progress and one team has not lost both matches
    1. If each team has won a match:
      - Net IMPs among the three matches
      - Net IMPs for the day
    2. If one team has won two matches and the other 2 teams tied:
      - Net IMPs among the 3 matches
      - Net IMPs for the day
  - b. When one team progresses and one team has not won both matches:
    1. If each team has won a match:
      - Result of the head-to-head match
      - Net IMPs for the day
    2. Of two teams beat the third team and tie their match:
      - Net IMPs for the day

-IMP Quotient

## **REIMBURSEMENTS**

Teams advancing to the District Finals will receive a nominal mileage reimbursement, to be determined at the event.

## **SUBSTITUTION DURING PLAY AT DISTRICT FINALS**

New teams may be formed for the district finals from qualified players at the club level.

During the district finals, GNT Chairman or the Tournament Director may approve a substitute in an emergency. Only one substitute is permitted at any time, and no substitute is permitted if four or more team members of record are available. A substitute may not appreciably strengthen a team, and is subject to the following limitations:

- a) the substitute must be a member of a District 17 Unit;
- b) at the Club Qualifying stage, if a substitute plays more than 50% of the boards, he/she becomes the contestant of record;
- c) the substitute must be eligible to play in the flight in which the team requiring the substitute is competing; and
- d) a substitute is not permitted for more than a 24 hour period or for more than 50% of the boards played, whichever is less. Also, no substitute is allowed when a team member is suspended or expelled per the section below, "Ineligible Players and Disqualifications".

## **REPLACEMENTS**

The permanent replacement of a player who, for cause, cannot continue in the event is permitted only with the permission of the District 17 GNT Chairman. The replacement must be: a) a member of a District 17 Unit; b) must not be eligible for further competition in another flight. He/she may cancel such eligibility by stating to the District GNT Chairman in writing his/her intentions to withdraw from the other flight; and c) must be eligible to compete in the flight in which the team needing the replacement is competing. Also, in the event a team has only two original members, at least one of the replacements must have competed in a 2018-2019 District 17 Qualifying event. A replaced player permanently leaves the event with all masterpoints already earned, and the replacement continues in the event earning points thereafter. Play percentage requirements apply to the replacement only for the portion

yet to be played. A team becomes ineligible to continue in the event: a) when fewer than two original team members (as established at the Club Qualifying Level) can continue and meet the play percentage requirements, or b) when any team member is suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons for actions occurring during the 2018-2019 Club Qualifying games or during the District Finals, regardless of the number of members on the offending player's team.

## AUGMENTATION

Augmentation of a fifth and/or sixth player to a team **after** completion of the District Final will be allowed provided: a) the District GNT Chairman is notified and approves, b) the players to be added are eligible to compete in the flight in which the team wishing to add them is competing, and c) the players to be added are members of a District 17 Unit and paid-up members of ACBL. A player still qualified for further competition in another flight cannot be added unless that player indicates in writing to the District 17 GNT Chairman his/her intentions to drop out of the other flight.

## INELIGIBLE PLAYERS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

An ineligible player is disqualified. The ineligible player's team will be disqualified unless the Director-in-Charge determines that the teammates were unaware of the deficiency of the disqualified member. Any team reduced to fewer than three original members due to disqualification of ineligible player(s) is disqualified. When a player's team is disqualified after the correction period, the disqualified team's position remains vacant. In ongoing events, teams move up one position as appropriate.

## NATIONAL GNT FINALS

- a. The District winners of each flight will be eligible to participate in the National GNT finals, held in **Las Vegas, July 18-28, 2019**. Should the first place team in any flight elect not to advance to the National Finals, the second place team in that flight will be extended the invitation to participate. If neither the first nor second place team in a particular flight elect to advance to the National Finals, District 17 will not be represented in that flight.

Starting 2019, when there are at least eight teams competing in a B or C flight in the district final, a second team in that flight will also be considered eligible to compete in the national final of their respective category.

- b. ACBL provides no subsidy to teams participating in the National Finals, and does not require the Districts to do so. District 17 provides \$2,000 per team in each of the four flights to assist with expenses. If a second team is chosen for either Flight B or C, that team may receive a \$1,500 subsidy from the district. NOTE: A subsidy will not be paid until the teams have actually participated in the National finals. Checks will be issued to the team captain for distribution to team members. District 17 will pay all entry fees at the National Finals, unless paid by ACBL.
- c. Replacement and Augmentation rules detailed above apply to teams advancing to the National Finals. Teams advancing to the National Finals must consist of **at least two** of the team members who participated in the District 17 Finals.
- d. The first place finishers in the Championship Flight, Flight A, Flight B, and the second place finishers in the Championship Flight and Flight A at the National Finals 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 place finishers in the Non-Life Master Flight C at the Nationals will earn Red Ribbon qualification.
- e. The point awards for the first place teams at the National finals are as follows:

**Championship Flight:** 120 gold points

**Flight A:** 85 gold points

**Flight B:** 70 gold points

**Flight C:** 45 points of which one-third are gold points  
and two-thirds are red points

## MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- 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.
- B. 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 Regulations, that I am eligible to play in this district."
- C. 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.
- D. 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.
- E. 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.
- F. The credentials committee may request documentary evidence from the member whose eligibility is in question. If a member requesting clarification as provided in paragraph 4 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. If players wish an exception from the requirements of

section 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 they live and the district in which they wish 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.

Exceptions will be considered in the following three situations:

1. "Snowbirds". Any member with a seasonal residence who spends more than half of the GNT qualifying period 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 the 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. Once this permission is granted the player is eligible to play only in that district and may not change 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 a possibility. Once a player chooses a district in which to play, that player must play only in that district until he no longer has a domicile in that district.