

# UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CONTEST FOR ALL UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

*Adopted by the Board of Directors  
of the United States Bridge Federation*

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## I. OVERVIEW AND APPLICATION

These General Conditions of Contest apply to all USBF Championships. Each USBF Championship also has Special Conditions of Contest, which govern areas not covered by these General Conditions of Contest as well as modifications to these General Conditions of Contest applicable to the specific event. When the Special Conditions of Contest for an event are different from these General Conditions of Contest, the Special Conditions of Contest control.

## II. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply throughout these General Conditions of Contest.

- 1) USBF           The United States Bridge Federation
- 2) USBF Championship       The USBC, USWBC, USJBC and USSBC
- 3) USBC           The United States Bridge Championship, which selects teams for Open WBF Championships and is regulated by the ITTC, a subcommittee of the USBF Tournament Committee.
- 4) USWBC         The United States Women's Bridge Championship, which selects teams for Women's WBF Championships and is regulated by the WITTC, a subcommittee of the USBF Tournament Committee.
- 5) USJBC         The United States Junior Bridge Championship, which selects teams for Junior WBF Championships and is regulated by the JITTC, a subcommittee of the USBF Tournament Committee.
- 6) USSBC         The United States Senior Bridge Championship, which selects teams for Senior WBF Championships and is regulated by the SITTC, a subcommittee of the USBF Tournament Committee.
- 7) NPC           Non Playing Captain
- 8) DIC           Director in Charge of a USBF Championship
- 9) ACBL          American Contract Bridge League
- 10) ABA          American Bridge Association
- 11) WBF          World Bridge Federation
- 12) Selection trial         An event that selects teams for a WBF Championship, subject to approval by the USBF Board of Directors.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY**

#### **A. All Participants**

All participants in any USBF Championship (players and NPCs) must meet the following requirements at the time of the USBF Championship:

- 1) Be either an Active or Resident member of USBF who is in good standing.
- 2) Not be under suspension by USBF, ACBL or ABA.
- 3) Not be excluded from playing in the specific USBF Championship by a committee of USBF, ACBL or ABA.

#### **B. Players**

Each player in a USBF Championship must be eligible to compete in the WBF championship for which the USBF Championship is a selection trial. Players in the USWBC must be women. Players in the USSBC and USJBC must have been born at a time that will make them the appropriate age for the WBF Senior or Junior Championship at the time of the WBF Championship.

#### **C. Substitutes**

With the approval of the DIC, substitutes may be allowed when there are temporarily fewer than four players able to play on a team. A substitute must be eligible to play in the event and must not be a participant in the event whose team has not been eliminated. A substitute must be of no greater expertise than the least expert player on the team who is not then playing. Substitutes may not play (in the aggregate) more than 50% of the boards in a Round Robin or in any KO match. E.g., one substitute may play for up to half a KO match or Round Robin, or two substitutes may each play for up to one quarter of a KO match or Round Robin match.

Substitutes may be used in more than one match or RR stage, subject to the aggregate limits above. For instance, a substitute could play the last quarter of one match and the first quarter of the following match, but that team would be allowed no further substitutions in any match.

No team may field more than two substitutes at one time.

## **IV. WITHDRAWAL**

### **A. Before the Event Starts**

A registered player or team may withdraw before the USBF Championship starts. However, the Credentials Committee will review withdrawals made within 72 hours of the start of the event or no-shows by entire teams (especially a team with a bye). Players on such a team may be barred from future USBF Championships, or otherwise penalized, but late withdrawal for valid reasons is acceptable provided the Credentials Committee is notified as soon as possible by the players involved. Timeliness and circumstances will be considered before assessing any penalty against a team withdrawing from a USBF Championship or failing to show up for the event once having registered.

### **B. After the Event Starts**

A team may withdraw from the USBC at any time with the permission of the DIC.

In all stages of the event, the DIC will take into consideration health related matters related to a team's request to withdraw. During the KO stage the DIC may grant a withdrawal if the request was made because the team is substantially behind.

Any team that fails to play a portion or all of a match without having received the permission of the DIC to do so shall appear before the tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee and be subject to whatever penalty that committee deems appropriate.

If a team withdraws during a Round Robin scores will be awarded in accordance with section VIII. F (Scores of Unplayed Matches) below.

If a team withdraws after a Round Robin has been completed and the team has qualified for the next stage of competition, the highest placed non-qualifier from the Round Robin will qualify for the next stage of competition. If the withdrawal takes place just before the K/O stage and before the bracket has been drawn, the highest placed non-qualifier takes its proper place in the bracket. If the withdrawal takes place after the bracket has been drawn, the highest placed non-qualifier replaces the withdrawn team in the bracket. If the highest placed non-qualifier is not available to compete in the next stage of competition, there shall be no replacement for the withdrawn team; in that case, if the next stage of competition is a Round Robin, it will proceed with one fewer teams, if the next stage of competition is a KO match, the team assigned to play the withdrawn team shall be the winner of the KO match.

If a team withdraws during a KO match, its opponent shall be deemed to have won the match.

If a team withdraws after winning a KO match, but before starting the next match, its next opponent shall be deemed to have won the next match.

## **V. AUGMENTATION/RESIGNATION**

A team representing the United States in international competition shall be composed of six players. If the team winning a USBF Championship has fewer than 6 players, the USBF Credentials Committee will fill out the team by appointing players after taking into account any suggestions made by the team captain.

A majority of players who were on the winning team are required for a team to be eligible to represent the United States (4 of 6, 3 of 4 or 5). If, after resignations, fewer than a majority remain on a team, the runner up team in the USBF Championship shall become eligible to represent the United States in international competition.

Circumstances surrounding a player who resigns from a winning team will be reviewed by the USBF Credentials Committee and may affect that team's certification to represent the United States and that player's ability to participate in future USBF Championships.

Any player may be added to the winning team by the Credentials Committee provided that the player:

- Is acceptable to the team being augmented,
- Is approved by the USBF Credentials Committee, and
- Is approved by the USBF Board of Directors.

## **VI. COMPLIANCE WITH WBF REQUIREMENTS**

Each player in a USBF Championship, by entering the event, agrees that in the event the player represents the United States in a WBF Championship, he or she will comply with WBF requirements for the championship. These requirements include, among other things:

**Drug Testing:** Each player must be willing to submit to drug testing mandated by WBF.

**Publicity:** Players may be videotaped at any time during the championship and agree to the use of video footage or other photographs to publicize the championships and for any other reasonable purpose of the WBF.

## VII. SYSTEMS AND CONVENTIONS

### A. Methods Allowed

#### 1. In Long Knockout Matches

Any method included on the ACBL Super Chart is allowed in a Knockout match of 60 or more boards.

#### 2. In Round Robins and Short Knockout Matches

Only methods included on the ACBL Mid Chart are allowed in any Round Robin phase or in a knockout match of fewer than 60 boards.

### B. System Summary Form

#### 1. System Summary

Each pair is required to complete a System Summary Form, file it with the USBF web-mistress <shortsuit@Voyager.net> at least 2 weeks in advance of the Championship and make it available to their opponents both the day before a match and immediately before play. The System Summary Form is attached to these General Conditions of Contest as Appendix A and is available for download as a Word file from the USBF web site.

Each participant in the Championship is responsible for reviewing his or her opponents' System Summary Forms in advance. Any time in excess of 5 minutes spent at the table on preparation for methods properly described on the System Summary Form shall be charged to the players preparing for the methods and not to the players using the methods.

### C. Advance Submission Form and Recommended Defense

#### 1. Requirement for Advance Submission Forms and Defenses

Any pair employing a bidding method other than the following must submit an Advance Submission Form describing the method and provide a Recommended Defense to the method. Advance Submission Forms are attached as Appendix B to these General Conditions of Contest, and may be downloaded as Word documents from the USBF website. Instructions for completion of Advance Submission Forms are included on the forms.

Bids that do not require an Advance Submission Form or Recommended Defense are:

- a) Methods included on the ACBL General Convention Chart
- b) Defenses to an opening bid of 1NT
- c) A bid that shows at least 5 cards in the suit named
- d) Any bid for which there is an approved defense on the ACBL website at the closing date for entries to the USBF Championship.
- e) A response that promises at least 4 cards in a known suit.
- f) Any constructive bid subsequent to the first round of bidding.
- g) Any artificial game forcing bid.

#### 2. Methods for Which ACBL has an Approved Defense

If there is an approved defense to a specific method posted on the ACBL website at the closing date for entries to the USBF Championship, that defense will be acceptable as the Recommended Defense for that method and will be deemed adequate. Players using such methods must make that defense available to their opponents at the tournament, both on the day before a match and at the table.

#### 3. Submission Procedure

Advance Submission Forms and Recommended Defenses shall be submitted to the USBF web-mistress <shortsuit@Voyager.net> at least four weeks in advance of the Championship. Upon submission, they will be posted on the USBF web site and subject to section 4 below.

#### 4. Review and Adequacy

Each participant in a USBF Championship is responsible for reviewing the Advance Submission Forms and

Recommended Defenses submitted by other participants. Any participant who has an objection to the completeness of the Advance Submission Form or the adequacy of the Recommended Defense shall make that objection to the Conventions Committee of the USBF Championship within 1 week after the date upon which the Advance Submission Form or Defense was posted on the USBF website or 3 weeks prior to the Championship, whichever is later. If the Conventions Committee deems that the Advance Submission Form or Recommended Defense is not adequate it will require the players submitting the Advance Submission Form or Recommended Defense to improve it. No pair may employ a method if an objection has been made to the Advance Submission Form or Recommended Defense unless and until the Conventions Committee approves the Advance Submission Form or Recommended Defense.

If no objection is made to a Recommended Defense by 1 week after the date upon which it was posted on the USBF website or 3 weeks prior to the Championship, whichever is later, the Recommended Defense shall be deemed adequate, unless there were serious errors or omissions in the Advance Submission Form describing the bid for which the defense is recommended.

#### **5. At the Championship**

Each pair employing a method requiring an Advance Submission Form and Recommended Defense must bring copies of the Advance Submission Form and Recommended Defense to the Championship and make them available to their opponents both on the day preceding a match and at the table immediately prior to play.

#### **D. Exception to Advance Submission Requirement**

If any pair desires to employ a Midchart or Superchart method for which they did not submit an Advance Submission Form and Recommended Defense as required under section C above, they may do so if and only if:

- 1) at least one other pair in the Championship submitted an Advance Submission Form and Recommended Defense for the method in a timely manner, and
- 2) if the pair desiring to play the method had submitted an Advance Submission Form it would have been identical to that submitted with regard to weak meanings of the method.

#### **E. Additional Convention Regulations**

##### **1. ACBL Convention Card**

Each pair is required to complete and bring to the table with them an ACBL convention card. On request, each pair shall make a copy of their ACBL convention card available to their opponents the day before a match.

##### **2. Use of Method without Compliance with Section C above**

If a pair uses a method requiring an Advance Submission Form and written defense without having complied with Section C above, in addition to any possible score correction under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, the DIC shall impose a 3 imp procedural penalty for each offense. Requests for application of this penalty shall expire at the beginning of the next segment of play.

##### **3. Requirement to Know Own System.**

Players are expected to know their system, especially early in the bidding. If the Director or a Committee determines that the opponents have been disadvantaged by ambiguous or differing explanations, score adjustments may be applied.

##### **4. Accessibility of System Notes.**

If requested by a director, appeals committee or recorder, pairs shall produce any written agreements or system notes. Pairs who do not make their notes available or do not have their system notes on site may get the worst of any ruling or inquiry dependent on partnership understandings.



## VIII. ROUND ROBIN PROCEDURES

### A. Victory Point Scales

The Victory Point Scales set forth in Appendix C shall be used in Round Robin matches.

### B. Balanced Play Requirement

Any time that two teams will meet for more than one segment in the same Round Robin stage of a USBF Championship, either because the matches in a Round Robin are played in two or more separate sessions, or because there are two or more complete Round Robins comprising one stage of the Championship, each player on a team must play at least one segment against each other team.

### C. Seating

In case of dispute, teams shall submit line-ups in advance to directors.

N-S may seat themselves last at their table.

### D. Tie Breaking

A tie is when there is no mathematical difference between teams according to the VP scale in use. Ties shall be broken only if the exact finish of the teams is relevant to which teams advance to the next phase of the competition or to the seeding of the next phase of competition. In those events, ties will be broken by VP's against all tied teams, then by successive two-board matches

### E. General Format for Round Robins

#### 1. Closed Room for Final Session of Play

The final session of play of any Round Robin shall include at least 15 boards during the play of which one room shall be Closed, with no substitution of players allowed in that room. Substitution of players will be allowed between matches in the Open Room. No score comparison shall be allowed during this final session of play.

#### 2. Round Robins with Short Matches

If a Round Robin consists of matches of less than 11 boards, each match shall be played straight through, and two or more matches may be played in each session of play, so that each session of play contains between 15 and 24 boards. Lineup changes and score comparison are not allowed during a session.

#### 3. Round Robins with Long Matches

If a Round Robin consists of matches of more than 16 boards, each match shall be played in two halves and paragraph B above shall apply.

#### 4. Round Robins with Mid Length Matches

If a Round Robin consists of matches of between 12 and 15 boards, the DIC shall decide whether each match is to be played straight through or whether the matches are to be played in two halves. If the matches are played in halves, paragraph B above shall apply.

### F. Scores of Unplayed Matches

#### 1. If a team withdraws before it has played any matches

If a team withdraws from the event before it has played any matches in a Round Robin, no score shall be assigned to the teams that remain in the Round Robin because they do not play the team that has withdrawn.

#### 2. If a team withdraws after having played one or more matches

If a team withdraws from the event after it has played one or more matches in a Round Robin, the scores or matches that have been played shall not be affected by the withdrawal. Any team that does not play its scheduled match against the withdrawn team shall be assigned the greater of the average of the Victory Points earned by the team(s) that did play

against the withdrawn team or the average of the Victory Points it earned against all other teams for the missed match.

## **IX. KNOCKOUT PROCEDURES**

The following procedures apply to any Knockout matches in a USBF Championship.

### **A. Setting the Bracket**

The bracket shall be set in accordance with the Special Conditions of Contest for the USBF Championship.

### **B. Knockout Seeding.**

- 1) For each segment of KO play, there is an Away team, (the unseeded team) which seats its players first, and a Home team, (the seeded team) which seats its players second.
- 2) In 120 or 128 board KO matches, the team with the lower seeding number elects either to choose one fifteen or sixteen board segment in which it is the Home team, or passes the first choice to the other team. Next, the second team to choose chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments in which it is the Home team, after which the first team chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments in which it is the Home team, after which the second team chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments. The team choosing first is Home in the remaining fifteen or sixteen board segment.
- 3) In 90 or 96 board KO matches, the team with the lower seeding number elects either to choose one fifteen or sixteen board segment in which it is the Home team or passes the first choice to the other team. Next, the second team to choose chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments in which it is the Home team, after which the first team chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments in which it is the Home team. The team choosing second is Home in the remaining fifteen or sixteen board segment.
- 4) In 60 or 64 board KO matches, the team with the lower seeding number elects either to choose one fifteen or sixteen board segment in which it is the Home team or passes the first choice to the other team. Next, the second team to choose chooses two fifteen or sixteen board segments in which it is the Home team. The team choosing first is Home in the remaining fifteen or sixteen board segment.
- 5) In matches where there are seeding rights, teams are encouraged to make their line-ups known to their opponents as soon as possible. A member of the Away team must be in the playing area with its line-up ten minutes before the start of a segment. A member of the Home team must advise the away team of its line-up five minutes before the start of a segment. Failure to comply will be treated as tardiness. Should there be a line-up board available, the line-ups must be noted on the board within the above time limits in order to be timely.

### **C. Knockout Round Tie Breaking.**

Ties in knockout matches will be broken by one (or more, if necessary) additional segments of 8 boards if a match of 120 boards or more or 6 boards if less than a 120-board match.

Ties for byes, seeding, or bracket number will be broken by a coin-flip.

## X. TIME

### A. Time allotted.

In USBF Championships, the schedule of play is based on 9 minutes per board. In a Round Robin where several matches are played in one session, the DIC may schedule additional time for changing tables.

### B. Slow Play.

In knockout play, the directors may choose to ignore pairs that finish a segment five or ten minutes late. But frequent lateness or egregious slow play may result in sanctions by the director, such as removal of a team's seeding privileges in a segment or segments and/or requiring a player or players to be benched or compelled to play the next one or two segments (at the other team's discretion). A fourhanded team may be forced to split partnerships. The director shall take into consideration the ratio of the number of segments and amount of time a pair or player has been slow to the number of sessions such a pair or player has played.

Excessive slow play may result in a pair or player being suspended from participation in future USBCs. Players should call the director when their opponents are playing slowly, but should try to wait until the completion of the hand. The D.I.C. shall investigate and consider the time taken on all hands during the session before assigning fault for slow play. Directors may curtail boards, if necessary, for the orderly progress of the event.

In RR or three-way play, when a match is not completed although time has expired, the Director shall curtail the match by removing boards if the auction has not begun before time expired. If one team is found responsible for the slow play, its opponents will be awarded the greater of 3imps per board removed, or the imps its other-table result would normally earn.

### C. Tardiness.

Play shall begin at the announced starting time. **Players shall arrive five minutes before the announced starting time (10 minutes if playing Mid-Chart/SuperChart conventions) for the purpose of discussing opponents' methods.** Pairs who do not arrive at the table in accordance with the above are deemed to be tardy. A tardy pair may be held responsible if a table's play exceeds the time allotted for the segment. Egregious tardiness may result in sanctions by the director similar to those described above, and may be referred to the USBF Conduct and Ethics Committee for possible disciplinary action. When tardiness exceeds 10 minutes from the announced starting time the Director shall curtail the match by removing one board and one additional board for every 9 minutes later than the original 10 minute tardiness. The opponents will be awarded 3 IMPs per board removed.

## XI. REQUIRED PERCENTAGE OF BOARDS

### A. Counting Boards.

- 1) For the purposes of 5 or 6 handed teams playing in a Round Robin with an odd number of matches, the play requirement is slightly relaxed to matches divided by 2, rounded down to the nearest whole match. As an example, each player is only required to play 4 out of 9 matches.
- 2) In cases of forfeiture, the winning captain shall notify the DIC of the assignment of the "unplayed" playing time to particular team members.
- 3) Boards played in a playoff between tied teams do not count.

### B. Failure to Play Required Percentage of Boards.

- 1) If a member of the winning team has failed to play:
  - a) Either 50% of the matches in any Round Robin (each Round Robin is a separate stage), or,
  - b) At least 50% of the boards in any knockout match,

that player will appear before the Tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee at the conclusion of the match in which such a failure has occurred.

- 2) No exemptions from the play requirement will be granted prior to the start of play for any reason. Once play has begun, if such a failure occurs:
  - a) Prior to the final match, the Tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee will normally not allow that player to continue to be a member of the team, but may allow that player to remain if there is a clear reason for failure to play the required number of boards other than bridge skill. Should that player be permitted to continue, the Committee may increase the percentage of boards required for that player in later matches.
  - b) In the final match, the Tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee will normally decline to submit that player's name to the USBF as a team member, but it may include the player if there is a clear reason for failure to play the required number of boards other than bridge skill.

In either instance, the Tournament or USBF Conduct and Ethics Committee may discipline a player and/or the player's team if such player failed to play the required percentage of boards for non-health related reasons.

The regular partner of a player who failed to play the required percentage of boards for a health related reason shall be considered to have a health problem also.

## **XII. APPEALS AND CONDUCT AND ETHICS COMMITTEES**

### **A. Establishment; Timeliness of Requesting Ruling or Appeal.**

- 1) The time limit for an appeal of, or to request a ruling, expires 30 minutes after the end of any segment, session or match, or when the next segment, session or match begins, whichever is earlier. However, at the DIC's discretion, a later appeal may be heard in regard to issues that were not immediately discovered due to the use of screens.
- 2) The right to appeal for a score correction expires at the start of the next segment of a Round Robin, the next session of the same Knockout match, 15 minutes before the start of the session of a new Knockout match on a different day, one hour before the start of a new Knockout match on a different day, or in the case of the last segment of the final or any repechage final, 60 minutes after completion of play.

### **B. Jurisdiction of Committees and Regulations.**

By participating in a USBF Championship players agree to the following regulations and procedures. Two committees will be available at any USBF Championship to hear director's rulings and appeals of assessed penalties, conduct disciplinary proceedings and similar matters.

- 1) The Appeals Committee for the USBF Championship will appoint a Tournament Appeals Committee and its Chair. The Tournament Appeals Committee will handle matters usually referred to committees at tournaments (e.g., appeals of director's rulings, review of late play penalties, etc.). The Tournament Appeals Committee Chair shall organize appeals committees in such a way as to have a procedure as close to that which would exist if all of the members of the Committee hearing an appeal were at the tournament. Normally, this will involve a telephone conference call. If a telephone conference call is not feasible, the Tournament Appeals Committee Chair may use some other procedure, but shall attempt to use a procedure that allows interaction among the committee members. The members of the Tournament Appeals Committee will normally be listed on the front page of the Special Conditions of Contest for the USBF Championship, but the Tournament Appeals Committee Chair may appoint people not listed to a committee for a specific appeal, if it is not possible to form a committee from listed Tournament Appeals Committee members.
- 2) The Tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee will hear serious matters such as those that might result in disqualification of a team or player, (including when such a player has failed to play the required percentage of boards), or such as would affect the participant's USBF playing or membership rights. Matters may be brought to this committee through the DIC or may be referred to it by an Appeals Committee. Conduct and Ethics Committee members are appointed by the DIC and the Tournament Appeals Committee Chairman. Sanctions by this committee may be appealed to the USBF Grievance and Appeals Committee in writing up to 15 days after the conclusion of the event. By entering a USBF Championship, participants agree to be subject to the Bylaws, rules, and procedures of the USBF. Such Bylaws require an aggrieved participant to seek binding arbitration after exhaustion of all other administrative remedies.

Playing in a manner to advance the interest of one's opponent, or inducing or attempting to induce another to play against their best interest or against the best interest of their own team is subject to discipline.

Players are subject to the regulations in Section XII – Security and the regulations and By-Laws of the USBF.

USBF Championships will be governed by the ACBL interpretation of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge.

### XIII. BIDDING BOX AND SCREEN PROCEDURES

#### A. Bidding Boxes (no screens)

- 1) Players must choose a call before touching any card in the box. A call is considered made when a bidding card has been taken out of the bidding box with intent.
- 2) A call 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 the player's partner has not made a call.
- 3) The skip-bid warning is given using bidding boxes by displaying the Stop Card, making a call and then replacing the Stop Card in the bidding box. LHO is obligated to wait 10 seconds (while giving the appearance of studying his hand) before making a call.

#### B. Screen Procedures

The screen is placed diagonally across the table in such fashion that North and East, South and West are screen mates (*unless otherwise required as a reasonable accommodation to a disabled player*). The board is placed in the middle of a moveable tray. The screen is closed so that the bidding tray can just pass under it. The players now remove their cards from the board.

Starting with the dealer, players place bidding cards silently on their section of the tray, from the extreme left-hand edge, neatly overlapping so that all calls are visible and faced towards partner. A call is considered made when a player releases it onto the tray (but law 25 may apply). North and South pass the tray under the screen after their screen mate has called, and the tray should be placed so that all calls are visible on the other side. There shall be no oral communication at the table during the auction period. After the final pass, players remove their bidding cards. At this point, the declaring side may exchange information about their own explanations.

The opening lead shall be made face-down. The declaring side may initiate a review of the alerts made by their side and may question their non-screen mate about the defender's alerts. Opening leader's screen mate announces that the lead has been made, a defender raises the screen, and play proceeds. The screen is raised only to a level that permits all players to see all the cards. The International Code of Duplicate laws is in effect except as specified below:

LAW 9A(2)(b)(1) LAW 42B(3); LAW 43A(1)(b)

Dummy may call attention to a defender's card prematurely exposed.

LAW 13:

The artificial adjusted score and penalty prescribed in the first paragraph apply only if the call has been transmitted to the other side of the screen.

LAW 16:

A bidding tray returned in 15 seconds or less normally creates the presumption that there is no Unauthorized Information (UI). A tray returned after a longer period may be considered to have made UI available if it is apparent that one side is responsible for the delay.

In tempo-sensitive situations and at random times, players may delay the tray but only to insure that it remains on their side of the screen for up to 15 seconds. A player whose actions (e.g., asking or answering questions audibly, clicking bid cards against bid box or tray, etc.) permit players on the other side of the screen to identify when a specific action on his side was taken may be liable for UI and/or may abrogate his side's right to claim damage due to UI.

Under certain circumstances, questions asked may be considered the equivalent of holding the tray.

LAW 20:

Review of the Auction:

Until the bidding cards are removed from the tray, a player obtains a review of the auction by inspecting them. At trick one, when a player is still entitled to obtain a review and an inspection of the bidding cards is no longer feasible, a player obtains a written review of the auction from his screen mate.

Explanation of Calls:

1. During the Auction:

At any time a player may request, in writing, of his screen mate a full explanation of an opponent's call. The reply, also, is in writing.

2. During the Play Period:

Questions during the play period should be in writing with the aperture closed. The screen is raised after the response has been made in writing.

LAWS 26 THROUGH 32; LAW 34; LAWS 36 THROUGH 39:

For the infractions covered by these laws, the following procedures are used:

A. Tray not Passed:

Before the tray is passed, the offender's screen mate shall call attention to the infraction and summon the director. The director shall see that the infraction is rectified without penalty. These calls may not be accepted.

B. Both Sides at Fault:

When the infringing call is nonetheless passed across the screen, both sides being at fault (as when either player commits a bidding infraction and the proper player -- North or South -- moves the tray before rectification), both players on the other side of the screen are responsible for calling attention to the infraction and summoning the director. The director shall return the tray to the offending players for rectification of the irregularity without penalty. These calls may not be accepted.

C. Only One Side at Fault:

When the infringing call is passed across the screen with only one side at fault (the player who committed the bidding infraction -- East or West -- also moved the tray improperly), both players on the other side of the screen are responsible for calling attention to the infraction and summoning the director. The director shall return the tray to the offending player for rectification of the irregularity and the appropriate penalty is applied. These calls may not be accepted.

D. Irregularity not Noticed:

When the infringing call is passed across the screen, and neither player there draws attention to it, the tray eventually being returned to the side of the screen where the bidding irregularity was committed, the auction stands without penalty or rectification. However, in the case of an inadmissible call, Law 35 applies.

E. Information -- Authorized or not:

Information from withdrawn calls is unauthorized for any partnerships at fault but authorized for a player or partnership that has committed no irregularity.

LAW 33:

The subsequent call is canceled without penalty.

LAW 40:

Alerts:

When an Alertable call is made, the player alerts his screen mate. When the tray is passed, both players should immediately alert partner's Alertable call.

LAW 41A:

Opening Lead out of Turn:

The offender's screen mate should attempt to prevent any opening lead out of turn. A face down lead out of turn is retracted without penalty. A faced opening lead out of turn is retracted without penalty if the screen has not been raised. When the screen has been raised after a faced opening lead out of turn -- through no fault of the declaring side:

- a) And the other side has not yet led face up, the lead is considered to be out of turn and Law 54 applies.
- b) And the other side has also led face up, the card becomes a major penalty card.

When the declaring side has incorrectly opened the screen, the lead is accepted. The director shall award an adjusted score if he considers that the player who opened the screen could have known that it would be to his advantage to accept the lead.

LAW 73 D:

During the auction period, after an opponent has acted quickly, it is proper to adjust the tempo back to normal by either delaying one's own call (place the bidding card faced in front of, but not on, the tray) or by waiting before passing the tray.

LAW 76:

Spectators may not sit so they can see both sides of the screen.







## APPENDIX A. SYSTEM SUMMARY FORM

### System Summary Form

Directions for completion: Select all of the text within a box, delete it and replace it with text that describes your methods. File completed form with USBF webmistress <shortsuit@Voyager.net>

**Names:**

**Team:**

#### We play the following methods that may require advance preparation:

List here both methods that are ACBL Pre-alerts and other methods that your opponents may want to consider in advance, such as a 1NT overcall that is the equivalent of a takeout double, transfer responses, 2-way bids (1M-3 $\square$  shows 4 card support, either weak or FG; 1 -2 is either a SJS in hearts or an invitational balanced hand). You may also be required to attach an Announcement Form or Recommended Defense.

#### Our general bidding style is:

Include here something like this:

5 card Majors, Strong NT, 2/1 Forcing to game except 1 -2 $\square$ .

We open balanced hands with 12 HCP and unbalanced hands with 10 or 11 HCP.

May respond with a very weak hand.

1 level overcalls light, 2 level overcalls tend to be sound.

#### Our defensive signaling philosophy is:

Include here something like this:

Standard signals.

Signaling priority is Attitude, Count, Suit Preference.

We give suit preference in the trump suit.

First discard is odd/even.

Vs. NT we lead 4th best, but will often lead high or second high from bad 4 card suits.

Vs. suits, we lead 3rd from even, low from odd, but may lead high from 3 small in partner's raised suit.

Smith vs NT: High cards in declarer's first suit encourage the opening lead suit.

**APPENDIX B. ANNOUNCEMENT FORMS**  
**NON-GCC OPENING BID ANNOUNCEMENT FORM**

**This form is to be completed and sent, by email, to shortsuit@voyager.net in accordance with the Conditions of Contest for the event**

Names:
Team <span style="float: right;">Event</span>
Opening bid of <span style="margin-left: 100px;">in</span> <span style="float: right;">seat at</span>
Shows:
Detailed Description:
<b>Responses and Rebids in Uncontested auctions</b>
With what hands will responder pass the opening bid?
Meanings of other responses and rebids:
<b>Competitive Agreements</b>
Responses after opponent's DBL (including P, RDBL and expected follow-ups)
Responses after opponent's overcall:
Rebids after 4 <sup>th</sup> hand DBLs the response:
Rebids after 4 <sup>th</sup> hand overcalls:
<b>Suggested Defense</b>
May attach a separate sheet. If there is an approved defense to this method in the ACBL Defenses Database (posted on ACBL website), you may reference that defense here and bring a printed copy of that defense to the table.

# NON-GCC OVERCALL ANNOUNCEMENT FORM

This form is to be completed and sent, by email, to [shortsuit@voyager.net](mailto:shortsuit@voyager.net) in accordance with the Conditions of Contest for the event

Names:
Team _____ Event _____
After opponents opening bid _____ showing _____ of _____
Our overcall of _____ at _____ vulnerability _____
Shows:
Applies: _____ Opposite PH; Opposite UPH; All the time
Detailed Description:
<b>Responses and Rebids When Responder Passes</b>
With what hands will advancer pass the overcall?
Meanings of other advances and follow ups:
<b>Competitive Agreements</b>
Responses after opponent's DBL (including P, RDBL and expected follow-ups)
Responses after opponent's bid:
Rebids after opener DBLs the overcall (1X)-2Y-(P)-P-(DBL)-?
Rebids after opener DBLs advancer's bid:
Rebids after opener's suit rebid:
Suggested Defense
May attach a separate sheet. If there is an approved defense to this method in the ACBL Defenses Database (posted on ACBL website), you may reference that defense here and bring a printed copy of that defense to the table.

# NON-GCC RESPONSE AND REBID ANNOUNCEMENT FORM

This form is to be completed and sent, by email, to [shortsuit@voyager.net](mailto:shortsuit@voyager.net) in accordance with the Conditions of Contest for the event

---

Names:

---

Team

---

Event

---

Response of

---

To opening bid of

---

in

---

seat at

---

vulnerability

---

Opening bid shows:

---

Describe hands shown by opening bid

---

(be complete here)

---

Detailed Description:

---

**(Applies by PH? If a transfer, does it promise suit?)**

---

Rebids in Uncontested auctions

---

With what hands will opener pass the response?

Meanings of other rebids:

---

Competitive Agreements

---

Rebids after opponent's DBL

---

(including P, RDBL and expected follow-ups)

Rebids after opponent's overcall:

---

Suggested Defense

---

Provide a written defense for your opponents to use when this response is used; May attach a separate sheet.

## APPENDIX C. VICTORY POINT SCALES

**Victory Point Tables**

Margin	4 Boards		5 Boards		6 Boards		7 Boards		8 Boards		9 Boards		10 Boards	
	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser
0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
1	10.61	9.39	10.55	9.45	10.5	9.5	10.47	9.53	10.44	9.56	10.41	9.59	10.39	9.61
2	11.2	8.8	11.08	8.92	10.99	9.01	10.92	9.08	10.86	9.14	10.81	9.19	10.77	9.23
3	11.76	8.24	11.59	8.41	11.46	8.54	11.35	8.65	11.27	8.73	11.2	8.8	11.14	8.86
4	12.29	7.71	12.07	7.93	11.9	8.1	11.77	8.23	11.67	8.33	11.58	8.42	11.5	8.5
5	12.8	7.2	12.53	7.47	12.33	7.67	12.18	7.82	12.05	7.95	11.94	8.06	11.85	8.15
6	13.29	6.71	12.98	7.02	12.75	7.25	12.57	7.43	12.42	7.58	12.29	7.71	12.18	7.82
7	13.75	6.25	13.41	6.59	13.15	6.85	12.94	7.06	12.77	7.23	12.63	7.37	12.51	7.49
8	14.18	5.82	13.81	6.19	13.53	6.47	13.3	6.7	13.11	6.89	12.96	7.04	12.83	7.17
9	14.6	5.4	14.2	5.8	13.9	6.1	13.65	6.35	13.45	6.55	13.28	6.72	13.14	6.86
10	15	5	14.58	5.42	14.25	5.75	13.99	6.01	13.78	6.22	13.59	6.41	13.44	6.56
11	15.38	4.62	14.94	5.06	14.59	5.41	14.32	5.68	14.09	5.91	13.89	6.11	13.73	6.27
12	15.74	4.26	15.28	4.72	14.92	5.08	14.63	5.37	14.39	5.61	14.18	5.82	14.01	5.99
13	16.09	3.91	15.61	4.39	15.24	4.76	14.93	5.07	14.68	5.32	14.46	5.54	14.28	5.72
14	16.42	3.58	15.93	4.07	15.54	4.46	15.22	4.78	14.96	5.04	14.73	5.27	14.54	5.46
15	16.73	3.27	16.23	3.77	15.83	4.17	15.51	4.49	15.23	4.77	15	5	14.8	5.2
16	17.03	2.97	16.52	3.48	16.11	3.89	15.78	4.22	15.49	4.51	15.26	4.74	15.05	4.95
17	17.31	2.69	16.8	3.2	16.38	3.62	16.04	3.96	15.75	4.25	15.5	4.5	15.29	4.71
18	17.58	2.42	17.07	2.93	16.64	3.36	16.29	3.71	16	4	15.74	4.26	15.52	4.48
19	17.84	2.16	17.33	2.67	16.89	3.11	16.53	3.47	16.23	3.77	15.97	4.03	15.75	4.25
20	18.09	1.91	17.58	2.42	17.13	2.87	16.76	3.24	16.46	3.54	16.2	3.8	15.97	4.03
21	18.33	1.67	17.81	2.19	17.36	2.64	16.99	3.01	16.68	3.32	16.42	3.58	16.18	3.82
22	18.56	1.44	18.02	1.98	17.58	2.42	17.21	2.79	16.9	3.1	16.63	3.37	16.39	3.61
23	18.78	1.22	18.23	1.77	17.79	2.21	17.42	2.58	17.11	2.89	16.83	3.17	16.59	3.41
24	18.98	1.02	18.43	1.57	17.99	2.01	17.62	2.38	17.31	2.69	17.03	2.97	16.78	3.22
25	19.17	0.83	18.63	1.37	18.19	1.81	17.82	2.18	17.5	2.5	17.22	2.78	16.97	3.03
26	19.35	0.65	18.82	1.18	18.38	1.62	18.01	1.99	17.69	2.31	17.41	2.59	17.16	2.84
27	19.52	0.48	19	1	18.56	1.44	18.19	1.81	17.87	2.13	17.59	2.41	17.34	2.66
28	19.69	0.31	19.17	0.83	18.73	1.27	18.36	1.64	18.04	1.96	17.76	2.24	17.51	2.49
29	19.85	0.15	19.33	0.67	18.9	1.1	18.53	1.47	18.21	1.79	17.93	2.07	17.68	2.32
30	20	0	19.49	0.51	19.06	0.94	18.69	1.31	18.37	1.63	18.09	1.91	17.84	2.16
31			19.64	0.36	19.22	0.78	18.85	1.15	18.53	1.47	18.25	1.75	18	2
32			19.79	0.21	19.37	0.63	19	1	18.68	1.32	18.4	1.6	18.15	1.85
33			19.93	0.07	19.51	0.49	19.15	0.85	18.83	1.17	18.55	1.45	18.3	1.7
34			20	0	19.65	0.35	19.29	0.71	18.97	1.03	18.69	1.31	18.44	1.56
35					19.78	0.22	19.43	0.57	19.11	0.89	18.83	1.17	18.58	1.42
36					19.91	0.09	19.56	0.44	19.25	0.75	18.97	1.03	18.72	1.28
37					20	0	19.68	0.32	19.38	0.62	19.1	0.9	18.85	1.15
38							19.8	0.2	19.5	0.5	19.22	0.78	18.98	1.02
39							19.92	0.08	19.62	0.38	19.34	0.66	19.1	0.9
40							20	0	19.74	0.26	19.46	0.54	19.22	0.78
41									19.85	0.15	19.58	0.42	19.33	0.67
42									19.96	0.04	19.69	0.31	19.44	0.56
Margin	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser
43									20	0	19.8	0.2	19.55	0.45
44											19.9	0.1	19.66	0.34
45											20	0	19.76	0.24
46													19.86	0.14
47													19.96	0.04
48													20	0
Margin	11 Boards		12 Boards		14 Boards		15 Boards		16 Boards		20 Boards		30 Boards	
Margin	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser
0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
1	10.37	9.63	10.36	9.64	10.33	9.67	10.32	9.68	10.31	9.69	10.28	9.72	10.23	9.77
2	10.74	9.26	10.71	9.29	10.66	9.34	10.63	9.37	10.61	9.39	10.55	9.45	10.45	9.55
3	11.09	8.91	11.05	8.95	10.97	9.03	10.94	9.06	10.91	9.09	10.82	9.18	10.67	9.33
4	11.43	8.57	11.38	8.62	11.28	8.72	11.24	8.76	11.2	8.8	11.08	8.92	10.89	9.11
5	11.77	8.23	11.7	8.3	11.58	8.42	11.53	8.47	11.48	8.52	11.34	8.66	11.1	8.9
6	12.1	7.9	12.01	7.99	11.87	8.13	11.81	8.19	11.76	8.24	11.59	8.41	11.31	8.69
7	12.42	7.58	12.31	7.69	12.16	7.84	12.09	7.91	12.03	7.97	11.83	8.17	11.52	8.48
8	12.72	7.28	12.61	7.39	12.44	7.56	12.36	7.64	12.29	7.71	12.07	7.93	11.72	8.28
9	13.01	6.99	12.9	7.1	12.71	7.29	12.62	7.38	12.55	7.45	12.3	7.7	11.92	8.08
10	13.3	6.7	13.18	6.82	12.97	7.03	12.88	7.12	12.8	7.2	12.53	7.47	12.11	7.89
11	13.58	6.42	13.45	6.55	13.23	6.77	13.13	6.87	13.04	6.96	12.76	7.24	12.3	7.7
12	13.85	6.15	13.71	6.29	13.48	6.52	13.38	6.62	13.28	6.72	12.98	7.02	12.49	7.51
13	14.11	5.89	13.97	6.03	13.72	6.28	13.62	6.38	13.51	6.49	13.2	6.8	12.67	7.33
14	14.37	5.63	14.22	5.78	13.96	6.04	13.85	6.15	13.74	6.26	13.41	6.59	12.85	7.15
15	14.62	5.38	14.46	5.54	14.19	5.81	14.07	5.93	13.96	6.04	13.61	6.39	13.03	6.97

