

## **District 25 Grand National Teams 2024 Conditions of Contest**

ACBL 2023-2024 GNT Special Conditions of Contest are part of these conditions. In case of conflict, the ACBL Special Conditions will take precedence. (<https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/coc/gnt/GNT2023-24.pdf>)

### **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

This event will be played online using BBO. BBO requirements and practices may require some adjustments to these conditions. As such, changes to these conditions to ensure a smooth process of the events may be made by the GNT Coordinator and Director-in-Charge (DIC). Any such decisions will be final.

### **DESCRIPTION**

This is a team event in which District 25 will name a team(s) district champion in each of four separate flights:

Championship – Unlimited

Flight A – Under 6,000 MPs

Flight B – Under 2,500 MPs (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> overall qualify to the National Finals if more than 8 teams enter the District Finals)

Flight C – Non LM – Under 500 MPs (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> overall qualify to the National Finals if more than 8 teams enter the District Finals)

Masterpoint requirements are based on what is reflected in the ACBL's September 2023 masterpoint cycle, which is established on or about August 6, 2023.

These district champions then may compete in the National Final of their respective flight.

## **LOCATION AND DATES**

The Grand National Teams for All Flights will be held on BBO on the following dates:

Championship/Open Flight: March 9-10 with a second weekend April 6-7; if 17 or more teams sign up, the two final teams will have to play an additional match between April 8 and May 31.

### **(New for this year)**

If both of the teams in a semi-final match prefer to play face-to-face, at a tournament or club, they may do so provided they make their own arrangements and complete the match on or before April 1. If they cannot agree on a site or date for such a face-to-face match, they must play on BBO on April 6.

Similarly, if both finalists after April 6 wish to play their final face-to-face, they may do so provided they agree on a site and date to complete the match before April 30. If they cannot agree on a site or date for such a face-to-face match, they must play on BBO on April 7.

Flight A: February 17 and 18

Flight B: March 9 and 10; if 17 or more teams sign up, the four semifinalists will have to play another match, after March 10 and before May 31, on BBO, at a mutually agreeable date and time.

Flight C: April 7

Championship Flight, Flight A, and Flight B will presume to play a straight KO format based on the attached schedule.

All matches will be head-to-head or 4-way matches. BBO does not provide a facility for 3-way matches.

A 4-way match is a set of head-to-head matches, each with 50% of the boards for a match in that event. The two winners automatically advance to

the next round. The two losers play another head-to-head match, of the same length, and the winner of that also moves on to the next round. Thus, 3 of the 4 teams advance.

If an odd number of teams enter an event, for the first match, the top seeded team will have a bye. **(New for this year)** Additionally, for the Championship Flight only, the winner of the District Final from the previous year, assuming at least 3 original members are on the team, will receive a bye into the second round, independent of the number of teams entered. As such, if an even number of teams enters, the top seed, other than the defending team, will also receive a bye into the second round.

Between a bye for the top seed if the total number is odd, and head-to-head and 4-way matches, there should be no other times when a team has to sit out.

In a 4-way, even though the winners of the first head-to-head “half” matches will only play 50% of that round, they will be credited for full participation for the whole match (and will have to pay a fee for the entire match).

Flight C will play a two session Swiss on Sunday, April 7, starting at 10AM, with the second session starting time TBD and announced during the first round.

NOTE: For the Championship Flight and Flights A & B, starting times are TBD for ALL sessions (other than the initial match) and are subject to change at the discretion of the DIC. Starting times for Flight A on February 17, Flight B on March 9 and the Championship Flight on March 9 will be 10AM.

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## **CONDITIONS OF ENTRY**

1. Event is open to teams of four, five or six players.

2. All players must be members in good standing of the ACBL.
3. All players must have residency in one of the 6 New England states as of September 1, 2023. A player who is a full-time student, a member of the armed services, has dual residency, or a person whose full-time employment requires temporary relocation, who is residing temporarily in District 25 may participate in the event. This player must get approval prior to entering the competition from the GNT Coordinator or the District Director. It is expected that there will be no exceptions to the residency requirements for participation in this event. Any player who has a question as to whether or not he/she is eligible to play in District 25 should contact the GNT Coordinator or the District Director as far in advance as possible.

Under no circumstances may a player participate in the GNT District event in more than one district.

4. The contest is split into four flights as defined below. The player must meet the conditions as reflected in the ACBL's September 2023 masterpoint cycle, which is established on or about August 6, 2023. The limits apply to all players entering a particular flight, i.e., they are not "averages" of all the players on the team but the highest allowable masterpoints for any player on the team.

Championship: Unlimited

Flight A: Under 6000 masterpoints

Flight B: Under 2500 masterpoints

Flight C: Non-Life Master under 500 masterpoints

5. If a player has masterpoints won from other bridge organizations, such as the ABA or the WBF, he/she must make this known to the GNT Coordinator and/or the Director-In-Charge prior to the beginning of competing in the GNT. This information may be considered for placement in the flights. The Director-in-Charge is authorized to make the decision on the player's classification.

6. Each team must select a captain, playing or non-playing, who is the team's official representative. The captain is responsible for the timely entry of the team.
7. **Pre-registration is required** in all 4 Flights. Pre-registration will close 2 days before each event starts, so, for example, as the Flight A event starts on February 17, all teams must be pre-registered no later than Thursday, February 15. Pre-registration is available on the District 25 website at [www.nebridge.org](http://www.nebridge.org).

For Flight C, pre-registration is done by email to the Flight C Fairy GoldMother at <mailto:inchair@nebridge.org>.

For all other flights, pre-registration is done by filling out the registration form on the District 25 website at [District 25 GNT Registration](#). Pre-registration requires the name, BBO id (the one the player plans to use for GNT play), ACBL player number, phone number and email address for ALL players on the team. Remember to include 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> members if your team will have them.

Finally, all teams must pay for their initial matches (for Flight C, their entire 1-day event) before they will be allowed to play. The entry fee is \$20/player/session or \$80/team/session. (There is no additional fee for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> players.) Payment for subsequent rounds must be made after the team qualifies to move on to the next match. Players who participate in more than one Flight will be allowed to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent events for free. Additionally, the District standard discounts for juniors under 19 (free plays) and full-time students under 26 (\$5/session, \$15/session discount) will apply for the first event. Payment may be made individually, for a pair, or for a whole team.

All payment must be made by credit card through PayPal; no cash or checks. There is a button on the District 25 website home page where you can go to click on to pay your fees. That payment link is [District 25 GNT Payments](#). Any team that has not paid will be disqualified from further participation in the event and may be reported to the ACBL for appropriate disciplinary action.

## **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. ACBL requirements shall govern.
2. For any given overall award, a player must play at least 50% of each match of a KO (excluding the 1st round) and 50% of the total boards played by the team. No player may play any match after it has become mathematically impossible for him to play at least 50% of the boards (excluding play-off boards) played by his team or failed to play in at least half of each match other than the first. Team captains may apply to the GNT Coordinator for exemption from the 50% in semi-final and final match provision in the case of a medical emergency. An exempted player must still play 50% of the semi-final and finals combined.
3. Each team member must have played at least 50% of the boards, excluding playoff boards and disconnections from BBO, for as long as the team survived, to qualify for overall masterpoint awards and to be eligible for the monetary subsidy. No contestant may play any match after it has become mathematically impossible for him/her to play at least 50% of the boards (excluding playoff boards) played by his/her team.
4. A player who fails to maintain participation eligibility in an event receives match awards only and is not entitled to any honors or recognition.
5. Any team which attempts to withdraw from any round of the event once it has started (unless for a medical emergency) will be subject to disciplinary action.
6. For teams participating in a 4-way match, if their team wins the first match, and hence plays only 50% of the boards for that match, having a bye for the second half when the two losers play to determine the third team to qualify out of the 4-way, the teams that win in the first half will be credited with participation for all boards in the match, not just the 50% that they actually played.

## **CONVENTIONS**

Championship Flight -- Open+ Convention Chart  
Flight A -- Open Convention Chart

Flight B -- Basic+ Convention Chart  
Flight C – Basic+ Convention Chart

Each pair is required to have a filled-out convention card posted in their BBO match from the beginning of the match. All alertable/announceable bids, per BBO standards, are self-alerted and explained. Explanations about bids, and requests for such explanations, should be made in private messages, not open messages to the table.

For any convention requiring it, contestants are expected to provide two copies of the ACBL-approved defense to their opponents and the DIC.

## **SCORING AND PLAYING**

### General

1. IMP penalties assessed are subtracted from the offending team's score.
2. Since play will be on BBO, BBO will display the match results when each segment completes. The captain of each team is responsible to confirm the results with the DIC at the end of each segment and to confirm the total result, across multiple segments, at the end of each segment. (BBO does not calculate combination of results across segments.)
3. Breaks shall be scheduled by the DIC.
4. Time allowed will be 7 minutes per board, though may be modified as necessary by the director.
5. See Addendum 1 for details on match scheduling.

### Knockout Head-to-Head Matches:

1. Each head-to-head match is a single elimination KO with any difference constituting a win.
2. In case of a tie, an 8-board playoff will be held in matches lasting more than 48 boards, a 4-board playoff for matches of 24-48 boards and a 2-board playoff for matches if less than 24 boards. Tie-breaking boards will be played immediately following the session.

3. If a tie should remain after the 4 or 8 board playoffs, 2 board playoffs will continue until a winner is decided.

## **SECURITY**

Since the COVID pandemic began and online bridge exploded in popularity, there has been a lot of concern about security of online games. Obviously, this concern is heightened for major events like the GNTs. The National Conditions of Contest provide a procedure for online events that is, for D25, totally unworkable.

For the Championship, Flight A and Flight B events, teams will be strongly encouraged to set up their own mutual security arrangements between the two teams. This could be done using ZOOM meetings, set up by someone from the participating teams, with members of each team participating and observing each other, the closest we can come to face-to-face bridge in BBO. Or, as a middle ground, one player from each team could arrange a Facetime phone conversation with a member of the other team providing some visual and audible window into each other's playing environment. At the least, two players, one from each team, are encouraged to exchange phone numbers and maintain an open call during the play, so they can at least hear the background environment of the other player.

We do recognize that the technical skills of players are very diverse and what is easy for some may be difficult or even impossible for others. Therefore, whatever security arrangements the teams want to make, they will be totally the responsibility of the teams. If technological or other impediments make such arrangements unworkable, then that match will continue without such arrangements.

For the Flight C Swiss, no specific security procedures will be implemented.

## **AUGMENTATION**



After a team has won their flight, it may augment its team per the following conditions:

1. The augmentee must have participated in any flight of the District Level Qualifiers. If a team wishes to augment a player who could not attend the District Level Qualifiers due to family or other such emergencies, the District Director or GNT Coordinator may be willing to waive this provision.
2. Any player added to an existing team must meet the masterpoint eligibility requirements listed above. An eligible player may augment a team in a different flight from the one in which the player qualified as long as the player's original team remains with at least four players.
3. The District Director and GNT Coordinator must approve the augmentation.
4. Final team roster must be submitted to the ACBL by 6/30/24 by the GNT Coordinator.
5. The DIC will ensure that the GNT Coordinator or the District Director is recused from any ruling or adjudication that would specifically affect that official's team.

## **SEEDING**

The GNT Coordinator will establish a seeding committee as needed for the Championship Flight. Seeding for Flights A & B, as needed, will be done by masterpoints.

There are no seating rights in any event in any match.

## **SLOW PLAY / TARDINESS PENALTIES**

Slow play and tardiness will not be tolerated. The DIC's judgment is final, but he/she will exercise due diligence in ensuring that only teams responsible for delays are penalized.

At the discretion of the director, similar penalties may be assessed for slow play. Slow play penalties do not carry to the next match unless a team is unable to start on time and is judged at fault.

## **DISTRICT SUBSIDY**

The ACBL does not provide a subsidy for the GNT winning teams. Assuming the National Finals are conducted on site at the Toronto NABC in July 2024, after augmentation, equal disbursements to the Winning Team in each of the four flights and the 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in Flight B & C (assuming 2 teams qualify to the National Finals in Flights B and C, which is based on original participation at the District Final level) are normally made around the time of the Summer Regional. To receive this subsidy, at least 3 of the original team members at the district finals must go on to compete at the national finals and each of these players must attend and play in the National Team Finals for as long as his team is still eligible to participate.

## **ADDENDUM 1**

### **Play Format**

**Note:** The Director-in-Charge, with approval of the GNT Coordinator and District Director may modify the formats described below to improve the event.

### **FLIGHT C**

An all-day Swiss Team event will be held on BBO Sunday April 7 to determine the Flight C GNT winner and runner-up. If 8 or more teams enter the event, the top two overall teams will qualify to the National Finals.

Approximately 40 boards will be played on Sunday, in 8 matches played over 2 sessions with a short break in-between.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT & FLIGHT A**

The Championship Flight will be played over two weekends, March 9-10 and April 6-7. All matches will be knock-out format, either head-to-head or 4-ways. Each match will be 56 boards.

Flight A will be played over one weekend, February 17-18. All matches will be knock-out format, either head-to-head or 4-ways. Each match will be 28 boards.

If more than 16 teams enter the event, two teams still in the event after February 18 will have to play a final match on BBO at a mutually agreed date and time.

## **FLIGHT B**

Flight B will be played over one weekend, March 9-10. If 8 or more teams enter the event, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams will qualify to the National Finals. Each match will be 24-boards.

If more than 16 teams enter the event, 4 teams will have to play another match on BBO, after the matches on March 10, at mutually agreed dates and times. The two winners of the semi-final matches in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of March 10 will have to play a final match to determine distinct 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> overall places. Additionally, the two losers of the semi-final matches in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of March 10 will have to play a play-off match to determine a distinct 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> overall.

If there are more than 32 teams, a consistent set of conditions will be implemented by the DIC, with input from the D25 GNT Coordinator and the District Director.

## **ADDENDUM 2**

### **National GNT Finals**

1. The first place finisher in each of the four flights and the 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher in Flights B & C at the District Final (assuming at least 8 teams enter the flight) will be eligible to participate in the 2024 National GNT Finals which are scheduled to be held at the Toronto NABC in July 2024. Traditionally, the GNT events begin on the Wednesday before the first regularly scheduled day of the NABCs.
2. Should the first-place team in any flight, or the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team in Flights B & C, elect not to advance to the National Finals, the second place, or 3<sup>rd</sup>

place for Flights B & C, team in that flight will be extended the invitation to participate. If those teams do not wish to participate in the National Finals, teams will be notified of their “promotion” to the National Finals in order of their overall placing, with the understanding that no team that finishes lower than 4<sup>th</sup> overall will be invited to participate in the National Finals in any flight. In that case, the District will have no representative (or, in B or C, only one representative) in the National Finals.

3. 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 three of the team members who participated in the District 25 Finals.