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DUPLICATE BRIDGE

DUPLICATE BRIDGE is a competitive form of bridge in which the same hands are played successively by different partnerships.

The term duplicate comes from a characteristic of organized bridge that differentiates it from social or Rubber Bridge - hands are dealt once and then played a number of times without redealing. In other words, a single hand of bridge is "duplicated" so it can be played a dozen or more times in a session of bridge.

Duplication of hands takes the luck of the cards out of play, thus providing fair competition. When you and your partner play a hand that is subsequently played by a dozen other pairs, the resulting range of scores represents a true picture of the relative skill of all the pairs playing that hand and "the luck of the cards" is eliminated.

PAIR GAMES EXPLAINED

49er PAIRS

This is an otherwise open event, but all players must have fewer than 50 masterpoints.

99er PAIRS

All players must have fewer than 100 masterpoints.

199er PAIRS

All players must have fewer than 200 masterpoints.

299er PAIRS

All pairs consist of players who have fewer than 300 masterpoints.

BAROMETER PAIRS

The Barometer Pairs game is differentiated from other pair games by the method of distributing the boards and by the scoring.

In the usual type of pair event, all or most of the boards are in play every round. The boards are moved from table to table on a predetermined schedule so that eventually all pairs play most of the boards at some time during the session.

In a Barometer game the boards don't move from table to table after each round. All pairs play the same boards at the same time throughout the event. The director and his staff will have preduplicated many sets of boards prior to the game. Quite often each table will have its own set of boards. Equally often, two or three tables will share one set of boards. Each set of boards goes out of play after one round.

As a result, all scores for a given set of boards are available as soon as the round is over. The director retrieves the score tickets and enters them immediately. Quite often the scores will be posted for inspection by the players after each round, so each pair knows where it stands at all times. Any given pair's fortunes will rise and fall as the game goes on—hence the name Barometer.

BRIDGE+ PAIRS

The Bridge Plus+ Pairs is specially designed for new players who have just finished taking a series of lessons. The bridge is very relaxed. The director, who often also was the teacher, is available to answer questions and offer assistance.

CHARITY PAIRS

The Charity Pairs is a regular pair game, the only difference being that a minimum amount of the proceeds from the selling of entries is earmarked for a specified charity, such as the ACBL Charity Foundation.

CONSOLATION PAIRS

Some multi-session pair games have qualifying sessions instead of being play-through. A certain number of pairs in each group qualifies to play in the final session or sessions. Usually a special game for non-qualifiers is run alongside the final. This game, a regular pair game as far as movement and scoring are concerned, is called a consolation.

FAST PAIRS

In the Fast Pairs game the speed of play is increased by a major factor. Instead of the usual seven to eight minutes allowed to play each board, the game is set up so that boards must be completed in five minutes. Sometimes this permits more boards to be played. More often this type of game results in a game finishing at an earlier time. Such a game often is called a Speedball Pairs.

FLIGHTED PAIRS

The event is broken down into two or three fields based on masterpoints. Each field competes as a separate event. The flight for which a pair is eligible is determined by the masterpoint holding of the player with more masterpoints. Pairs may opt to play in a higher category but not in a lower one.

Often, but not always, the breakdown is as follows: Flight A—0 to infinity; B—0-750; C—0-300. All pairs are eligible to compete in Flight A. Only pairs with fewer than 750 points (Flight B limit) are eligible to play in Flight B. Only pairs with fewer than 300 points (Flight C limit) are eligible to play in Flight C. Pairs eligible for Flight A may compete in Flight A only. Masterpoints are awarded based on the number of tables in the flight entered added to the number of tables in all lower flights.

HANDICAP PAIRS

The Handicap Pairs is conducted like an Open Pairs game, but the scoring method is different. The game produces two sets of winners, scratch and handicap. The scratch standings are the same as they would be in an open game. However, the handicap standings are based on the scratch score plus handicaps that are awarded to make the event more evenly contested.

The handicap can be figured in either of two ways. First, it can be based on the players' ranks (a measure of expertise), with more matchpoints awarded the lower the rank. Second, it can be based on recent performance as compiled either by the director or the computer. Full awards are given for scratch scores that place overall.

Fifty-percent awards are given for handicap scores that place overall. A pair that is eligible for matchpoints, both scratch and handicap, receives the higher of the two awards, not both.

IMP PAIRS

An IMP Pairs event is played like a regular pair event but is scored in a totally different way. A basic score is set for each board—usually an average of all the scores compiled on that board. Sometimes the top and bottom scores are eliminated before the average is taken so that extreme scores will have less impact on the average. Then your score is algebraically compared with the average and translated into International Matchpoints (IMPs) according to the IMP formula. The IMP scale is printed on the ACBL convention card.

INSTANT MATCHPOINT PAIRS

A very special method of scoring is used for the Instant Matchpoint Pairs, a rare event—it is run only three times annually by the ACBL.

Identical hands are played throughout the ACBL (throughout the world in the Worldwide Pairs). As soon as the hand is played, the players can learn their Instant Matchpoint result by looking at the traveling score. All hands are scored in advance. A good-looking program book is distributed to all players at the conclusion of the game in which each and every hand is thoroughly analyzed by an expert.

INTERMEDIATE PAIRS

Only new and inexperienced players are eligible to play in the Intermediate Pairs. Upper masterpoint limits vary.

JUNIOR PAIRS

Both members of all pairs must be under 26 years of age in order to compete in the Junior Pairs. It is run along the lines of an Open Pairs.

LIFE MASTER PAIRS

All contestants must be Life Masters.

MASTER PAIRS

A Master Pairs is usually run in conjunction with a Non-Master Pairs. An arbitrary lower limit of masterpoints is set, and at least one member of every pair must have at least that number of masterpoints. The game itself is run along the lines of an Open Pairs.

MIXED PAIRS

All pairs must consist of one man and one woman.

NEWCOMER PAIRS

A Newcomer Pairs, which is run along the lines of an open pairs, is for new players only. Usually the upper masterpoint limit is 5.

NON-MASTER PAIRS

A Non-Master Pairs is usually run in conjunction with a Master Pairs. An arbitrary upper limit of masterpoints is set, and both members of every pair must have that number of masterpoints or less. The game itself is run along the lines of an Open Pairs.

OPEN PAIRS

Any two players can compete as partners—no restrictions of any kind.

PRO-AM PAIRS

One member of each pair is a top-flight player—the pro, so to speak—and the other is a new or relatively new player—the amateur. The purpose is to enable the new player to meet and get to know some of the better players in the area. The new player also gets the benefit of good advice and tips from his or her “pro.” The game itself is run along the lines of an Open Pairs.

SENIOR PAIRS

Both members of each pair must be at least 55 years old.

SIDE GAME SERIES

(The Side Game Series is always a multi-session event. Each session is a regular pair game, and awards are given for each individual session. In addition, there are overall awards for those who perform best during the various sessions. Each individual receives credit for his/her best two scores, and the overall ranking is done from these figures. Each player may play with as many different partners as there are sessions since the overall standings are determined on an individual basis.

The series must consist of three or more sessions. At North American Bridge Championships, session awards are paid in red points, but overall awards incorporating the scores from all sessions are paid in gold points. Masterpoint awards are based on the formula for a two-session open event.

STRATIFIED PAIRS

This type of game is different from most others because it produces more than one set of winners. The field is divided into two or three strata, each with a predetermined maximum and minimum masterpoint limitation. The tournament directors attempt to seed the field in such a manner that approximately equal numbers of players from each stratum are competing in each direction. During the course of the event, pairs from each strata play pairs from all other strata.

All pairs in the event are ranked when computing the overalls in the top stratum. The pairs in the top stratum are then eliminated, and a second set of rankings is determined for the pairs remaining. Next, the pairs in the second stratum are eliminated, and a third ranking is done for the third stratum. It is possible for pairs in the second and third strata to place in a higher stratum, but pairs in the top stratum are eligible for awards only in the top stratum.

The stratum in which a pair plays is determined by the member of the pair who has the most masterpoints. Unlike flighted events, pairs do not have a choice of strata—they are automatically placed in the lowest stratum for which they are eligible.

The game is run like an ordinary Open Pairs, although the field is carefully seeded so that each Strat A pair plays against all Strat A pairs in the section against which they are competing.

STRATIFIED BY EXPERTISE PAIRS

A preset limit on masterpoints is set. If both members of the partnership are over the limit, they are in Strat A. If one is over and one is under, they are in Strat B. If both are under, then the pair is in Strat C. Otherwise the conditions are similar to those of regular Stratified Pairs.

STRATIFLIGHTED PAIRS

The Stratiflighted Pairs is almost identical to a Stratified Pairs with one major difference — the pairs in the top flight compete in a separate event, totally apart from the other strata. The top flight can be divided into two strata if preferred. The remaining pairs play a stratified game handled exactly like a Stratified Pairs. In other words, there are two games, both of which are run along the lines of an open pairs.

SWISS PAIRS

The Swiss Pairs is run along the lines of a Swiss Teams. Pairs play against each other in short matches, with various methods of scoring determining the winner. As in Swiss Teams, pairs with approximately the same records are paired against each other for subsequent matches. This type of event has not proved popular and is seldom used at tournaments today.

TEAM OF TWO PAIRS

Both of a team's two pairs sit in the same direction in different sections in this unusual type of pair event. Everyone plays a session of matchpoint duplicate—just like a pair game. Of each team's two results on a board, only the better is entered to determine the matchpoint score. Naturally, the score not used for your team is the “better” score for your opponents. Strategy is necessary to maximize potential matchpoints. To be successful, a team should not play or defend the same contract or make the same play at both tables. In other words, the methods used by the two pairs should be different to increase the possibility of a favorable result. This event is usually sanctioned only at sectionals.

WOMEN'S PAIRS

All pairs consist of two women. The game is run along the lines of an Open Pairs.

TEAM GAMES EXPLAINED

SWISS TEAMS

For many years Swiss Teams has been the most popular form of team event, but in recent years it has been overtaken by Knockout Teams. A Swiss Teams event is a partial Round-robin setup in such a way that winners play winners and losers play losers. It is based on the Swiss concept that governs play in most chess tournaments.

After each round, the game directors sort the team records and set up new matches between teams of approximately equal records. In general, teams are not permitted to play against each other more than once.

The length of matches is determined by the size of the field and the number of sessions. The most common match length is seven boards, but five, six, eight and nine are not uncommon.

At the end of a match, the East-West pair returns to their home table where they compare their scores with their teammates. The event is scored on International Matchpoints (IMPs). This is a special conversion system designed to translate totals into a scoring system that gives fairer comparisons. The IMP scale is printed on the ACBL convention card.

To figure the score, the algebraic difference is taken on each board and then translated into IMPs. When all the boards have been scored, the pluses and minuses are added. If the total is a plus, that team is the winner. If the total is a minus, that team is a loser.

There are three different ways to compute the final score of a match. These scoring methods will be covered in Board-A-Match Swiss Teams, Victory Point Swiss Teams and Win-Loss Swiss Teams.

Sometimes the field for a Swiss Teams is very small. Quite often in such a situation the game is changed into a full Round-robin. Each team plays every other team in a short match. The winner is determined in the same manner as in a Swiss Teams. The same types of scoring used in Swiss Teams are used in a Round-robin event.

KNOCKOUT TEAMS

The name of this event is most apropos—the winners advance to the next round and the losers are knocked out of the competition. There are many kinds of Knockout events, but basically they come down to this—two teams face each other in head-to-head competition, and only one survives. There are variations on this theme, but the above explanation fits the vast majority of Knockout situations.

The setup is similar to Swiss Teams in that two members of your team sit North-South at one table, and two others are East-West at a different table. The team against which you are playing fills the other four seats at the two tables.

Knockout matches usually are much longer than Swiss matches—24 boards are common but sometimes it is as many as 64. After the match is finished, the East-West pairs return to their home tables to compare scores. Once again the IMP scale is used, just as in Swiss Teams. The team with the greater number of IMPs is the winner and advances to play in the next round. The losers are no longer in the event.

Specific conditions of contest may vary. Each team has a responsibility to be aware of the conditions and to conform accordingly.

BOARD-A-MATCH TEAMS

Board-a-Match Teams is the toughest type of event in Tournament Bridge, which may account for its lack of popularity. A team plays a small number of boards—usually two, three or four—against one opponent then moves on to take on another opponent. The movement is set up in such a way that your team always plays any given board against two opposition pairs of the same team. Often the movement is similar to the Mitchell movement used in pair games, but with some major differences that are always explained by the tournament director.

At the end of a session, the members of a team gather to compare scores. Each board is scored separately as a win, a tie or a loss.

The reason why the game is so tough is that every board is equally important. Some boards in Swiss and Knockout events are not all that important—very little may be at stake. But every board in a Board-a-Match game is worth one full matchpoint, and a high degree of concentration is necessary throughout every board of a session.

All special team games are forms of one of the three basic types discussed above. [Click here](#) for definitions of the special games.

Types of Team Games

49er TEAMS

All players have fewer than 50 masterpoints.

99er TEAMS

All members of every team have fewer than 100 masterpoints. The event usually is run either as a Swiss or a Knockout.

199er TEAMS

All members of every team have fewer than 200 masterpoints. The event can be run as any one of the three basic types.

299er TEAMS

All members of every team have fewer than 300 masterpoints. The event can be run as any one of the three basic team categories

BOARD-A-MATCH SWISS TEAMS

The basic formula for the way in which Board-a-Match Swiss Teams is conducted can be found under Swiss Teams. The difference between this type of Swiss Teams event and others is the method of scoring.

The scoring for this type of event is radically different from the other two forms of Swiss Teams. After play is finished and the team compares scores, one matchpoint is awarded for each board won and half a matchpoint for each board tied. The margin of difference on any board is of no consequence—winning a board by 10 is the same as winning a board by 4000—it's one matchpoint. This type of game is rare. Occasionally it is run at an NABC, but seldom elsewhere.

BRACKETED KNOCKOUT TEAMS

Some method of seeding based on ability and experience is used to divide the total field into two or more groups. The breakdown is according to the average masterpoints of all players on each team. Each bracket comprises a separate event with its own masterpoint awards. There is no interplay between brackets.

The size of each bracket and the number of brackets depend on the number of teams entered. The purpose of bracketing is to establish groups within which each team is competitive.

COMPACT KNOCKOUT TEAMS

The usual match in a Knockout event runs for at least one full session. However, in a Compact event the matches are shortened so that two matches can be played in one session, with just four players per team. This makes it possible to determine a winner in a 16-team game in just two sessions. This means the entire event can be finished in one day.

FLIGHTED TEAMS

An event that is broken down into two or three fields based on masterpoints. Each field competes as a separate event. The flight for which a team is eligible is determined by the masterpoint holding of the player with the most masterpoints. Teams may opt to play in a higher classification but not in a lower one. Often the breakdown is as follows:

- Flight A—0 to infinity
- Flight B—0-750
- Flight C—0-300

All teams are eligible to compete in Flight A. Only teams with fewer than 750 points for each player (Flight B limit) are eligible to play in Flight B. Only teams with fewer than 300 points for each player (Flight C limit) are eligible to play in Flight C. Teams eligible for Flight A only may compete in Flight A only.

HANDICAP KNOCKOUT TEAMS

A handicap is assigned to each team based on a formula that takes experience and ability into consideration. The handicap is in the form of International Matchpoints (IMPs) and is added to the IMP total of the less experienced team. The winner is determined by the score after the handicap has been added in.

JUNIOR TEAMS

All members are younger than 26.

KO TEAMS

A shortened form of Knockout Teams.

MASTER TEAMS

A Master Teams usually run in conjunction with a Non-Master Teams. An arbitrary lower limit of masterpoints is set, and at least one member of each team must have at least that number of masterpoints.

MINI-KNOCKOUT TEAMS

The Mini-Knockout Teams consists of a series of very short matches. It is designed to produce a winner in just one session of play. It often is played as a midnight game at regionals and NABCs. It's often called a Lose and Snooze Teams because the winners play on while the losers can get to bed a little earlier.

MIXED TEAMS

A Mixed Teams comprises at least two men and two women. The maximum number of team members is six, and the breakdown by gender must be as even as possible—for instance, with a six-player team, three must be men and three must be women. The team at all times must field mixed pairs—at no time may a pair consist of two men or two women. The event can be a Knockout, a Board-a-Match or a Swiss.

NEWCOMER TEAMS

All members of every team have fewer than a previously determined number of masterpoints. The event usually is run either as a Swiss or a Knockout.

NON-MASTER TEAMS

A Non-Master Teams is usually run in conjunction with a Master Teams. An arbitrary upper limit of masterpoints is set, and all members of each team must have no more than that number of masterpoints.

OPEN TEAMS

In an Open Teams there are no restrictions on the makeup of the teams—except the numerical limit is six. The event can be run as one of the three basic types.

RANDOM DRAW KNOCKOUT TEAMS

The teams that remain in competition are paired for their next match by means of a random draw. Typically, all the possible positions are written on slips of paper, and the captain of each team draws his next assignment at the time he reports his winning match result. The pairings for the first match also are random.

ROUND-ROBIN TEAMS

All teams play a match against each other team in the field. Usually IMPs are translated into Victory Points for each match, and the team with the most Victory Points is the winner. The Win-Loss system also is sometimes used.

SENIOR TEAMS

All members of every team are at least 55 years old. The event can be run as any one of the three basic types.

STRATIFIED TEAMS

A Swiss Team event that produces more than one set of winners. The event is run along the same lines as an Open Swiss Teams. Any team may be paired against teams from any of the other brackets.

The only difference comes in the rankings. First, overall in the top stratum is determined by comparing all scores. Then, the scores from the top stratum are eliminated and a second ranking takes place for the remaining teams. Next, the scores from the second stratum are eliminated and a third ranking takes place.

It is possible for teams in the second and third strata to place in a higher stratum, but teams in the top stratum are eligible for awards only in the top stratum.

The stratum in which a team plays is determined by the player who has the greater number of masterpoints. Teams do not have a choice of strata—they are automatically placed in the lowest strata for which they are eligible.

STRATIFLIGHTED TEAMS

A Stratiflighted Teams is almost identical to a Stratified Teams, with one major difference—the teams in the top stratum compete in a separate event, totally apart from the other strata. The top flight can be divided into two strata if preferred. The remaining teams play a stratified game handled exactly like a Stratified Teams.

UNSEEDED KNOCKOUT TEAMS

Another name for Random Draw Knockout Teams.

VICTORY POINT SWISS TEAMS

The basic formula for the way in which this game is conducted can be found under Swiss Teams. The difference between this type of Swiss Teams event and others is the method of scoring.

Up to a point, it's the same as Win-Loss scoring—the boards are IMPed and an algebraic sum is derived. However, this figure is then translated into Victory Points according to a formula worked out in advance. Subsequent matches are paired according to a team's Victory Point total, not according to its win-loss record. Overall rankings are based on Victory Point totals. The 20-point and 30-point Victory Point scales are printed on the ACBL convention card.

WIN-LOSS SWISS TEAMS

The basic formula for the way in which the Win-Loss Swiss Teams is conducted can be found under Swiss Teams. The difference between this type of Swiss Teams event and others is the method of scoring.

This is the usual method of scoring: A team compiles its results and determines whether the total is plus or minus. If the total is plus 3 or more, the match is deemed won and the team receives one matchpoint. If the total is plus 1 or plus 2, the team receives three-quarters of a matchpoint—this result is termed a “winning tie.” If both teams score exactly the same number of IMPs, each team gets half a matchpoint. The team that loses by 1 or 2 is said to have suffered a “losing tie” and is awarded one-fourth of a matchpoint. If the team loses by 3 or more IMPs, they are a loser and get no matchpoints. No losing team receives masterpoints for the match, even if they lose by only 1 or 2 IMPs. Winning teams receive full match masterpoints even if they win by only 1 or 2 IMPs.

WOMEN'S TEAMS

All members of every team are women. The event can be run as any one of the three basic team categories as listed earlier.

ZIP KNOCKOUT TEAMS

Another name for Compact Knockout Teams. This type of event often is staged as a midnight game at regionals and North American Bridge Championships.

ZIP SWISS TEAMS

Speed of play is a major factor. Each match consists of five boards, and an average of only five minutes per board is allowed for play—25 minutes per round. Usually five rounds are played, and the event sometimes is called a five-five-five Swiss. This event frequently is a late-night game during a sectional, regional or NABC. It is sometimes flighted or stratified.

SCORING

MATCHPOINTS

This is the game most usually played by pairs in bridge clubs and tournaments.

Generally you play two or three boards at a table—this is called a round—and then one pair moves to another table and plays other boards against other opponents.

Scores for each hand, or board, are recorded and given to the director to tally the results of the entire game. Each pair has a number to identify them and this must also be entered on the score sheet to show whose result it is. At the end of the whole session, each pair is awarded 1 matchpoint for each pair who scored worse than them on a board, and 1/2 matchpoint for each pair who scored equally. The scoring now is simplified by a program called ACBLscore developed by the ACBL and used internationally.

A completed scoresheet might look like this:

Board No. 1								
Pair No.		North-South					Matchpoints	
NS	EW	Contract	By	Tricks	Plus	Minus	NS	EW

1	8	4S	N	10	420	2.5	3.5
2	13	3NT	S	10	430	4	2
3	11	5C*	E	8	500	6	0
4	9	4S	N	10	420	2.5	3.5
5	14	4S	N	11	450	5	1
6	12	5S	N	10	50	0	6
7	10	3S	N	10	170	1	5

Then the total matchpoints scored by each pair over all the boards are calculated. This is generally converted to a percentage, for each pair, of the points they scored compared to the theoretical maximum. This gives a fair comparison between pairs who have played different numbers of boards.

TEAMS (IMPs)

IMPs: The form of duplicate bridge that uses International Match Points (IMPs) as a scoring method, as distinct from a game scored at Matchpoints (MPs)

Team play has become popular in clubs and tournaments. Two members of your team, playing as a partnership, sit North-South at one table. Two other members of your team, also playing as a partnership, sit East-West at a different table. The two pairs from the opposing team fill the empty spots at the two tables. During the course of the match, exactly the same boards are played at both tables.

Each player should have a score card to record the score on each board. The card has a row for each board. The beginning of North's card from table 1, when completed, might look like this:

Board		Final		Score		IMPs	
Deal #	Vul	Contract	By	Plus	Minus	Plus	Minus
N 1	-	4S	S	420			
E 2	NS	5D*	W	500			
S 3	EW	3NT	W		690		
W 4	All	2H	N	140			

Note that the scoring for actual contract is the same as in duplicate scoring. What will change is how the scores at both tables are compared.

In the contract column 5D* (diamonds) means 5D doubled. The "By" column shows who was declarer. The score is recorded from North's point of view, so when West goes down in 5D, it is positive. The IMPs can be filled in only when this card is compared with one from the other room. Suppose that our teammate East at the other table has a card like this:

Board		Final		Score		IMPs	
Deal #	Vul	Contract	By	Plus	Minus	Plus	Minus
N 1	-	4S	S	450			
E 2	NS	4H	N	620			

S 3	EW	6NT	W	1440
W 4	All	4H	N	100

Now the differences can be converted to IMPs for the team. The following standard table is used:

Point difference	IMPs
0 - 10	0
20 - 40	1
50 - 80	2
90 - 120	3
130 - 160	4
170 - 210	5
220 - 260	6
270 - 310	7
320 - 360	8
370 - 420	9
430 - 490	10
500 - 590	11
600 - 740	12
750 - 890	13
900 - 1090	14
1100 - 1290	15
1300 - 1490	16
1500 - 1740	17
1750 - 1990	18
2000 - 2240	19
2250 - 2490	20
2500 - 2990	21
3000 - 3490	22
3500 - 3990	23
4000 or more	24

So in the example, on the first board the difference between the two tables was 30 against us, and we lose 1 IMP. On the second board we lose 3 IMPs. Although our North-South pair defeated West's 5♦, with the same cards our East-

West pair allowed North to play and make 4♥. On board 3, where we bid the small slam while they stopped in game, we gain 13 IMPs for a 750-point difference. On board 4 both Norths made nine tricks in hearts, but we gain 6 IMPs because our North-South pair just bid 2♥ rather than 4. Overall we are 15 IMPs ahead on those four boards.

At the end of the match, the result is the difference in IMPs between the teams. Sometimes there is then a further conversion of this margin into a match result, in which some fixed number of victory points is apportioned between the teams. There is no standard conversion table, but here is an example table for a 24-board match:

IMP difference	Victory Points
0 - 2	10 - 10
3 - 6	11 - 9
7 - 11	12 - 8
12 - 16	13 - 7
17 - 21	14 - 6
22 - 27	15 - 5
28 - 33	16 - 4
34 - 39	17 - 3
40 - 46	18 - 2
47 - 54	19 - 1
55 or more	20 - 0

In the example, if we were still 13 IMPs ahead having played 24 boards, using this table we would win the match 13-7. If the match was part of some larger competition, such as a league, then we would score 13 victory points and our opponents would score 7.

SPECIAL GAMES EXPLAINED

ACBL offers many different types of Special Games. Masterpoint awards are always higher for special games. Yes, it will cost a little more to play in a Special game. ACBL sanction fees are higher and a director must be paid to coordinate the gathering and issuing of points.

UNIT GAMES

ACBL has allocated 24 unit championship sessions per year to each unit. Units may schedule these sessions at their discretion. Units prepare bridge competitions that are suitable for their membership size and for the size and location availability of their playing areas.

Clubs that conform with ACBL regulations that have proved reliable in submitting Monthly Report Forms and fees, and that have an adequate number of tables may participate in these unit championships. Clubs not sanctioned to meet at the times of unit events must be allowed to participate in these events with unit approval.

Charity Games

Charity Games support the ACBL Charity Foundation and Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund or support local charities. Funds raised are donated to the various charity.

STaC Games

A STaC Tournament is essentially a SECTIONAL Tournament except that the individual sections of the SECTIONAL take place at individual clubs, at or about the same time, instead of together at one large location. Every game at every participating club you attend within your District during STaC Week may be part of the tournament. The results of the game you play in will be combined with the results from all of the other clubs playing at the same time and one giant OVERALL will be tallied. Scoring is first done on a club-by-club basis and SILVER points awarded for each section. Then the results of all four games are combined as if everyone were playing under one roof. Highest percentage score is first overall, next highest is second overall, and so forth. Because you are competing against so many additional people, you can earn a lot of points. All of them, whether they are section awards or overall awards, will be SILVER points.

This is one of your best chances to win a lot of SILVER points and receive a lot of recognition. Winners will be posted on the Internet. STaC week is a good week to make a lot of extra dates.

MASTERPOINTS

Masterpoints or **master points** are points awarded by bridge organizations to individuals for success in competitive bridge tournaments run under their auspices. Generally, recipients must be members in good standing of the issuing organization.

Players who achieve a high placing in an event sanctioned by the national bridge organisation (a club game, sectional tournament, regional tournament, etc.) are awarded masterpoints according to their placing and the number of pairs, individuals or teams who played in the event.

The ACBL awards several categories of masterpoints, each associated with the type of event and designated by a distinct color:

- Black - awarded in club games
- Silver - awarded in sectional tournaments, as well as Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs)
- Red - awarded in regional tournaments (for places other than overall and section tops), as well as North American Open Pairs and Grand National Teams games at clubs
- Gold - awarded for overall and section tops in regionals, as well as in NABCs (North American Bridge Championships) with an upper masterpoint limit of 750 or more
- Platinum - awarded in national-rated events with no upper masterpoint limit
- Unpigmented - awarded in online play

Like most bridge governing bodies, the ACBL assigns ranks to players according to their masterpoint holdings; the requirements for its various ranks are listed below.

ACBL Masterpoint ranks (members who joined before January 1, 2010 whose membership has not since lapsed)

Title	MPs	Notes
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Rookie	<5	
Junior Master	5	
Club Master	20	
Sectional Master	50	5 must be silver
Regional Master	100	15 silver; 5 red, gold, or platinum
NABC Master	200	5 gold or platinum; 15 red, gold, or platinum; 25 silver
Life Master	300	50 black; 50 silver; 25 gold or platinum; 25 red, gold, or platinum
Bronze Life Master	500	
Silver Life Master	1000	200 silver, red, gold or platinum
Gold Life Master	2500	500 silver, red, gold or platinum
Diamond Life Master	5000	250 gold or platinum; 750 silver, red, gold, or platinum

Emerald Life Master	7500	500 gold or platinum; 1000 silver, red, gold, or platinum
Platinum Life Master	10000	100 platinum; 650 gold or platinum; 1250 silver, red, gold, or platinum
Grand Life Master	10000	100 platinum; 650 gold or platinum; 1250 silver, red, gold, or platinum; a victory in a NABC+ event or World Bridge Federation event

ACBL Masterpoint ranks (members who joined, or renewed a lapsed membership, after January 1, 2010)

Title	MPs	Notes
Rookie	<5	
Junior Master	5	
Club Master	20	5 black
Sectional Master	50	10 black; 5 silver
Regional Master	100	15 black; 15 silver; 5 red, gold, or platinum
NABC Master	200	20 black; 25 silver; 15 red, gold, or platinum; 5 gold or platinum
Advanced NABC Master	300	50 black; 50 silver; 25 red, gold, or platinum; 25 gold or platinum

Life Master	500	75 black; 75 silver; 50 red, gold, or platinum; 50 gold or platinum
Silver Life Master	1000	200 silver, red, gold, or platinum
Gold Life Master	2500	500 silver, red, gold, or platinum
Diamond Life Master	5000	750 silver, red, gold, or platinum; 250 gold or platinum
Emerald Life Master	7500	1000 silver, red, gold, or platinum; 500 gold or platinum
Platinum Life Master	10000	100 platinum; 650 gold or platinum; 1250 silver, red, gold, or platinum
Grand Life Master	10000	100 platinum; 650 gold or platinum; 1250 silver, red, gold, or platinum; a victory in a NABC+ event or World Bridge Federation event

Masterpoints are partly a measure of skill, but the system is regarded by many players as a measure of experience and longevity rather than skill. Experience is often related to skill, but not necessarily. Over the course of a lifetime, a player can earn many points, just with average play. For example, the same number of masterpoints, and hence the same rank, may have been achieved by Player A over 2 years and by Player B over 20 years.

It is also argued that some wealthy players hire 'professional' players to be their partners and so artificially inflate their masterpoint holdings owing to the greater skills of their 'professional' partner(s).