

Common Bridge Terms

Ace of Clubs

The vast majority of ACBL members play in local club games most of the time. To recognize achievement at the club level, the Ace of Clubs competition was created in 1984. These club champions are recognized at the unit level, district level and ACBL-wide. All points won at the club level are counted in this contest with the exception of those won during STAC weeks.

Board-a-Match

Board-a-Match is a form of duplicate scoring used in team contests in which one matchpoint is awarded for winning the hand and 1/2 matchpoint is awarded for a tie.

Black Points

Master points awarded at club and unit level games are black.

Bracketed Knockout Teams

This event is run as a knockout team event with one exception. All teams will play against similarly rated opponents. Each team's bracket is determined by averaging the entire team's master point holdings. This is the most popular event in which to play to earn gold points at regional and national tournaments.

The Bridge Bulletin

The ACBL's monthly magazine which is filled with information on bidding and play for all levels of players, information regarding upcoming tournaments, bridge book and software reviews and reports on special bridge competitions. The magazine also gives each member a personalized master point update in each issue.

Compact KO (Knockout)

A compact KO is a two-session bracketed KO designed to be completed in one day. This can be a gold-point event but is limited to four-person teams.

Computer Hands

Hand records prepared by the computer provide not only truly random deals but also a practical, quick, inexpensive method of producing duplicated hands for a multi-section bridge event.

Districts

The ACBL is divided into 25 districts. Each district elects one member to serve on the ACBL Board of Directors, three members to serve on the Board of Governors and two alternate directors who are eligible to attend Board of Governors meetings. Each is elected for a three-year term. When someone joins the ACBL, they become a member of a specific unit and the district in which the unit is geographically located.

Etiquette

Much of the popularity of contract bridge is attributable to the high standards of etiquette which are observed by the players. A player should maintain at all times a courteous attitude toward partner and the opponents. A player should carefully avoid any remark or action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player or that might interfere with another player enjoying the game. Players who fail to uphold these standards should be reported to the director under the ACBL Zero Tolerance policy. As a matter of courtesy, a player should refrain from:

- ♠ Paying insufficient attention;
- ♠ Making gratuitous comments during the play as to the auction or the adequacy of the contract;
- ♠ Detaching a card from the hand before it is that player's turn;
- ♠ Arranging the cards played to previous tricks in a disorderly manner or mixing the cards together before the result has been agreed to;
- ♠ Making a questionable claim or concession;
- ♠ Prolonging the play unnecessarily.

Face-Down Leads

Face-down opening leads are required in tournament play. Once the lead is made face down, partner may ask questions about the auction. This ensures that the partner of the leader will not influence the opening leader's choice of lead. A face-down opening lead made by the wrong player may be picked up without penalty upon instruction of the director.

Flighted

In a flighted event, contestants compete only against other pairs/teams within the same point range. For example, if Flight C is 0–200 master points, no player with more than 200 master points may be included in the group. A player may always play up in flighted events (*e.g.*, a Flight B player could elect to enter Flight A), if the player wishes. The higher the flight, the more difficult the competition and the more master points awarded to the winners.

Handicap Games

ACBL clubs may offer handicap games where the contestants are given a handicap (either plus or minus) based on previous performance or degree of competence to create a more level competitive group.

Howell Movement

The Howell movement is a type of progression in duplicate where all pairs except one move and where all pairs meet. In large Howell-type movements, most of the pairs move and most of the pairs meet.

Instant Matchpoint Game

An Instant Matchpoint Game is a game in which players are given their matchpoint score on each board immediately after playing each deal.

Knockout Teams

A Knockout Team event is one where one team plays an entire session against one other team. The winning team from each match advances to play the next round and the defeated team is eliminated.

Mitchell Movement

The Mitchell movement is a duplicate progression in which the players seated North-South remain stationary and those sitting East-West move each round to the higher numbered table. The players get “older” and the boards get “younger.”

NABC

This is the term for the North American Bridge Championships that are operated annually by the ACBL. These tournaments are held in the spring, summer and fall and are rotated around the United States and Canada. Each NABC offers events for all levels of players and features the NABC+ events and an IN (Intermediate-Newcomer) program for players with fewer than 300 master points.

Pro-Am Game

Pro-Am games are frequently run at clubs as part of a mentoring program. They consist of “Pro” players (experienced players) with a specified minimum number of points (e.g., over 300) and “Am” players (newcomers or less experienced players) with fewer points. These games pay 80% of the master points awarded for open events.

Red Points

Master points won in all events at regional tournaments and in regional-rated events at the three annual North American Bridge Championships are red, unless they are gold.

Side Game Series

Side Game Series, formerly Continuous Pairs, is a series of at least three one-session games open to all players. Participants may enter as many sessions as they wish and play with the same or different partners. Overall ranking is done on an individual basis by computing the sum of each player’s two best games. At NABC and regional tournaments, gold points are awarded to section top placing players who have competed in at least two sessions of this event. Each session of a series is also run as a one-session stratified pairs.

Silver Points

Silver points are master points awarded at sectional tournaments, progressive sectionals and STaCs (Sectional Tournaments at Clubs).

Skip Bid Warning

The Skip Bid Warning is used whenever a player “skips” the bidding – when you open at the two-level, for example, you either say “Skip bid, please wait,” or use the red Stop card in the bidding box. The opponent waits 10 seconds before bidding. This gives the

opponent an opportunity to recover from the “surprise” of your jump and prevents the “fast pass” (translation: I may have been surprised but I didn’t have anything to bid anyway).

Stratified

This is a type of game movement where all players are assigned to a group (strat) based on their current master point holdings. Each contestant plays against players of all point ranges. Master points are awarded to leaders of each strat. If a Strat C player scored better than one of the leaders in Strat B (a higher ranked strat), the C player will be awarded the points for Strat B.

Stratiflighted

An event that is a combination of flighted and stratified is called stratiflighted. The upper level strat has no master point restriction and is played as a separate game. The other players are subdivided into two or three strats with specific lower and upper master point limits. Participants may enter either the unrestricted (“play alone”) group or the stratified group with a master point restriction for which they are eligible.

Swiss Teams

In a Swiss team event, each team will play approximately 6 to 9 board matches against a number of teams during the event. Matches are arranged by pairing teams with approximately equal records as the game progresses.

Team Games

A team consists of two pairs who play in different directions at different tables for a common score. One pair plays North-South for a designated number of boards and the other pair plays East-West for the same boards at a different table. If team A plays Team B, a deal is played at table A-1 with the North-South pair from Team A and the East-West pair from Team B. Then it is replayed at table B-1 with the North-South pair from Team B and the East-West pair from Team A. Each team plays the deal from each direction and the scores are compared.

Unit Championships

Each unit may conduct 24 unit championship sessions per year. These games award master points based on 85% of sectional rating. These games may be held at one centralized location or with “split-sites” at various clubs throughout the unit.

Victory Points

“Victory Points” is the scoring method favored by many experts in contests where there are many teams and each team plays a relatively small number of deals against each of the other teams. When using Victory Point scoring, the IMP score on each board is calculated. The total IMP score on the boards of the match are then converted to victory points in accordance with a predetermined scale.

Zero Tolerance

This is a policy recommended by ACBL and followed at the Lansing Bridge Center and tournaments. It strives to promote a friendly atmosphere at the table, while eliminating unacceptable behavior including rudeness, intimidation, gloating, profanity and a variety of other offenses. Automatic penalties are part of the program. If you feel an infraction of Zero Tolerance has occurred at your table, please call the director.

Many other terms are defined at the following website which you are encouraged to check out:

<http://web2.acbl.org/documentlibrary/about/atozguide.pdf>

Also see Useful Links in the Menu for a link to "Encyclopedia of Bridge Terms"