

DISTRICT 11 TOURNAMENT HANDBOOK
(updated 6/13/17)

Contents

I. Definitions and Useful Terms	2
A) “Bracketed”.....	2
B) “DIC”.....	2
C) “DTC”.....	2
D) “Flighted”.....	2
E) “Gold Rush/Gold[en] Opportunity”.....	2
F) “Handicapped”.....	2
G) “Junior”.....	3
H) “Orphan Session”.....	3
I) “Playthrough”.....	3
J) “Regional”.....	3
K) “Sectional”.....	3
L) “Side Game”.....	3
M) “SO”.....	3
N) “STaC”.....	4
O) “Stratified”.....	4
P) “Stratiflighted”.....	4
Q) “UTC”.....	4
R) “Youth”.....	4
II. District-Unit Relationship	4
A) Division of Responsibilities.....	4
B) Role of the DTC and UTCs	5
III. Sanctioning a Tournament	6
A) Picking a Date for Your Tournament.....	6
B) The Online Sanction Application.....	6
C) Making Changes to a Sanction	6
D) Distribution of District 11 Tournament Calendar	7
IV. Tournament Operations.....	7
A) Tournament Advertising.....	7
B) Choice of DIC.....	7
C) SO-DIC Relationship.....	8
D) Sponsor Options.....	8
E) Supplies and Bidding Boxes	11
F) Entry Fees	11
G) District 11 Surcharge	11
H) Entry Fee Discounts.....	11
V. Regionals.....	12
A) Allocation of Regionals	12
B) Special Regionals.....	12
C) Split Regionals.....	12
D) Regional Venue	12
E) Sanction Fees	13
F) Regional Flyers.....	13
G) Regional Game Schedule.....	13
H) Stratifications	13
I) Competing Tournaments and Club Games	14
J) Free Plays	14
K) Caddies	14
VI. Sectionals	14
A) Allocation of Sectionals.....	14
B) STaCs.....	15
C) Allocation of STaCs.....	15

D) Scheduling Sectionals on the Same Weekend	16
E) NLM Sectionals	16
F) Sanction Fees	16
G) Other Sectional Details	16
VII. Other District-Wide Games.....	16

I. Definitions and Useful Terms

A) “Bracketed”

A team game format that divides the field into two or more groups, generally according to the average masterpoints of the players on each team. Each bracket comprises a separate event with its own masterpoint awards, with 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. Knockouts are the most familiar bracketed game, but bracketed Swiss teams are held at some sectionals as well. Modified bracketed events may also be held, e.g., bracketing the bottom 8 teams in a Swiss and stratifying the rest of the field. “Playing up” in bracketed events is usually permitted only with the consent of the director and/or SO.

B) “DIC”

The Director-in-Charge of a tournament or special event. The DIC is assigned by the ACBL but the SO can request a specific director.

C) “DTC”

The District Tournament Coordinator. The District 11 DTC is appointed by the District 11 Board.

D) “Flighted”

A game format that divides the field into two or more groups, or “events,” generally according to the highest number of masterpoints of a player in each partnership or on each team. Flighting is similar to bracketing, though flighting generally uses the highest number of masterpoints of a person in a pair or team to determine eligibility in a flight, whereas bracketing uses the average number of masterpoints. Flighted games also offer pairs or team the option to play in a higher flight.

E) “Gold Rush/Gold[en] Opportunity”

A relatively new game format limited to players with under 750 masterpoints and awarding gold points. Gold Rush events, also known as “Golden Opportunity” events, can be either two-session pairs or Swiss team games. Gold Rush events typically have 3 stratifications (100/300/750) and pay gold points for overall awards and sections tops. Gold rush events provide players with a chance to play in a single day event in a field that is not prohibitively competitive.

F) “Handicapped”

An event in which extra IMPs are awarded to a less experienced team. The handicap is assigned to each team based on a formula that takes into account the relative experience of each team, based on average masterpoints. The winner is determined by the score after the handicap has been added in. In most District 11 regionals and

sectionals, knockouts that have only 1 bracket are usually handicapped. The decision whether to handicap an event is typically made by the director, but the SO may come up with guidelines or rules on the question.

G) “Junior”

Any ACBL member under the age of 26, i.e., 25 years or younger.

H) “Orphan Session”

The session not included in the championship event or “prime time” schedule. Some tournaments pair the 1:00 and 7:00 sessions, with two-session pair events and other championship events scheduled for these starting times. Under this schedule, the 9:00 morning session becomes the “orphan” session, with multi-day morning events run horizontally. In other tournaments, however, SOs determine that a 10:00 and 2:30 “prime time” session framework works better. When this occurs, the evening 7:00 or 7:30 session becomes the “orphan session.”

I) “Playthrough”

An event in which all the players are expected to play for the duration of the event. Many people incorrectly believe that “playthrough” refers to the absence of a substantial meal break provided during the event, such as when a Sunday Swiss runs continuously from beginning to end. This has no relation to whether an event is “playthrough” or “qualifying.”

J) “Regional”

An ACBL-sanctioned tournament that is allocated to a district. Gold and red points are awarded at regionals. Historically, District 11 has chosen not to operate the regionals allocated to it, but instead has distributed them to member units. Currently, District 11 regionals are allocated as follows: Winter/Spring: Indianapolis; Spring/Summer: Cincinnati; Late Summer/Fall: Dayton/Columbus (shared); Fall: Louisville/Lexington (shared). Evansville is allocated a split regional every 2 years, which alternates between Dayton/Columbus and Cincinnati.

K) “Sectional”

An ACBL-sanctioned tournament that is allocated to a unit. Silver points are awarded at sectionals. The ACBL requires every unit to conduct at least one sectional every two years (ACBL Handbook, ch. 3, sec. 2, I), unless exempted by its district.

L) “Side Game”

A single-session pairs event that may not be restricted by age, gender or masterpoint holding. The event is stratified for session awards. A “side game series” is a grouping of at least three side games, with overall rankings compiled on an individual basis by adding together the player’s two best games played in that series. Players may play with the same or different partners in each side game of the series.

M) “SO”

The Sponsoring Organization for an event or tournament, also called the Tournament Organizer. The SO is responsible for sanctioning, planning and marketing the event or tournament as well as its administrative details. Operational decisions and details should be made collaboratively between the SO and DIC. In District 11, the District is the SO for the NAP and GNT District 11 Finals, whereas the units are the SO for sectionals and regionals. The SO selects the Chair of the Tournament.

N) “STaC”

Sectional Tournament at Clubs. Regular sectional tournaments are held at a single location. In a STaC, individual sections are held at clubs that participate in the STaC. A STaC feels very much like a regular club game, but the hands you play are also played at or about the same time at all other participating clubs. Your results are first scored at your local club, which will be stratified, with silver points awarded for each section. The club director will then send in those local results to an ACBL director, who will combine them with the results from all of the other clubs playing at or about the same time and tally overall results for all the club-sections. Because the number of tables in play increase, the points awarded for overall winners can be considerable. Entry fees for STaC games are usually higher than the regular club entry fee. ACBL sanction fees are higher for STaCs, as a DIC must be paid to coordinate the gathering and issuing of points.

O) “Stratified”

An event that produces more than one set of winners. Pairs or teams compete against any pair or team in the event, but are scored only against pairs or teams in the same stratification (or “strat”) or a higher one. Overall in the top stratum is determined by comparing the scores from all pairs or teams. The scores from the top stratum are then eliminated and a second ranking is compiled for the remaining pairs or teams. Finally, the scores from the second stratum are eliminated and a third ranking is compiled. Stratification in pairs events is determined either by the highest number of masterpoints in a pair or the average number of masterpoints in a pair, at the discretion of the SO. Stratification in team events is determined by the average number of masterpoints on a team.

P) “Stratiflighted”

A game format that is both flighted and stratified. Teams in the top flight compete against each other in a separate event, which is then stratified within that flight. A separate flight also competes against each other, again with stratified results. Flighting of a pair or team into the correct event is determined by the highest number of masterpoints of a person in a pair or team. Stratification of the pair or team is usually then determined by the average number of masterpoints of the pair or team. Gold Rush events are stratiflighted, as are familiar final day A/X BCD Swiss Teams.

Q) “UTC”

The Unit Tournament Coordinator. Each unit selects its own UTC.

R) “Youth”

Any ACBL member under the age of 20, i.e., 19 years or younger.

II. District-Unit Relationship

A) Division of Responsibilities

It is critical to understand the different roles of districts and units with respect to tournaments. The ACBL allocates regionals to districts and sectionals to units. However, the ACBL permits districts to re-allocate some or all of its regionals to its member units if desired. As of 2013, 13 of the ACBL’s 25 districts have taken this option (including 1 district that allocates only some of its regionals to units). District 11 has historically been among this group.

Because the district retains controls over its regionals, its re-allocation of those regionals may come with limitations or conditions. The District 11 Board must accommodate its 8 member units with respect to the 4

regionals allocated to it, and it must decide disagreements among member units regarding the allocation of its regionals from time to time. The current allocation of District 11 regionals is set out in section V.(A) below.

Units running regionals generally have the discretion to schedule their tournaments within the same general time period each year (as the District 11 tournament calendar allows). Requests to move a regional more than several weeks away from the time period in which it has been historically held have met with disapproval from the District 11 Board, as the Board attempts to spread its regionals evenly throughout the year (District 11 Board meetings are traditionally held during regionals). In any event, significant changes to the District 11 regional calendar should be brought to the District 11 Board's attention.

District 11 leaves most operational details of regionals in the hands of the unit(s). Decisions about the tournament venue, game schedule, chair and tournament committee, pricing, and other details have historically been made solely by the unit(s). The District 11 Board has reserved the right to approve the game schedule for regionals, but does not presently do so. The DTC reviews Regional game schedules to ensure compliance with ACBL and District policy and to correct obvious errors. In addition, the DTC and/or District 11 President have occasionally been consulted regarding questions or conflicts about other decisions affecting regionals. If necessary, the District 11 Board will be asked to make the decision.

Some operational details of District 11 regionals are determined by the ACBL or by District 11. For example, policies regarding surcharges to non-ACBL members are set by the ACBL, and District 11 has set uniform stratifications for all regionals in the district.

Because the ACBL allocates sectionals to units, District 11 plays a greatly diminished role with respect to sectionals. The only limitation placed by District 11 on units is the number of sectionals it may sanction each year. (See section VI.(A), "Allocation of sectionals, below).

B) Role of the DTC and UTCs

The DTC is responsible for maintaining the District 11 tournament calendar, communicating with UTCs in coordinating tournaments, and ensuring that all ACBL rules and regulations governing tournaments are followed.

The DTC's approval is required before any regional and sectional tournament sanction request is approved. When a sanction request is submitted through TourneyTrax, and after the UTC approves the request, the DTC receives an automated e-mail indicating that a sanction request is pending. The DTC will check the District 11 calendar and tournaments in adjoining districts for conflicts. The DTC also reviews the tentative details for the tournament to ensure that obvious errors have not been made. If necessary, the DTC will resolve any intra-district conflicts among competing tournament Chairs. The DTC will also communicate with DTCs from adjoining districts to attempt to resolve any inter-district conflicts.

Once the DTC approves the sanction request, it is submitted to the ACBL for approval and formal sanctioning. Any changes to an existing sanctioned tournament should be communicated to the DTC, not the ACBL.

Once a flyer for a regional has been developed by the SO, a copy should be submitted to the DTC for review. The DTC will proofread the flyer, ensure that District and ACBL policies have been complied with, and provide any requested feedback. **Do not submit flyers to the ACBL or print copies until the DTC has approved it.** The final step before printing is submission to the ACBL Tournament Department for formal approval.

The DTC communicates changes in ACBL or District 11 rules governing tournaments through the UTCs. Every unit is required to appoint a tournament coordinator, who is typically responsible for approving and submitting the sanction applications for all of the unit's sectionals or allocated regionals. When a sanction request is submitted through TourneyTrax, the UTC receives an automated e-mail indicating that a sanction request is pending. This step will be skipped if the UTC personally submits the sanction application. The application will then be forwarded to the DTC for approval.

The UTC may also keep a unit calendar of all special and unit events and/or submit the applications (for unit championships and higher) in an effort to avoid conflicts. In many units, the UTC also assumes responsibility for unit games, unit championships, club-type games, ACBLwide events, charity events, and North American Pairs (NAP) qualifying games. The precise role of the UTC will vary from unit to unit.

III. Sanctioning a Tournament

A) Picking a Date for Your Tournament

Venue availability is obviously a primary consideration in picking a date for your tournament. Other considerations specific to your unit will also play a major role. However, some general principles for all tournaments apply.

The most valuable resource for picking a date for your tournament is the District 11 Tournament calendar. The DTC sends a copy of the updated calendar at least 5 times a year to the UTCs. This calendar has consolidated information about all District 11 tournaments, regionals in adjoining districts, special club events, holidays, etc. Tournament chairs should attempt to avoid conflicts with nearby regionals and sectionals as much as possible.

District 11 has not historically permitted sectionals to be held during any week of a District 11 regional or during the District 11 NAP or GNT Finals. District 11 does not have a rule prohibiting sectionals in weeks adjoining District 11 regionals, though SOs should be sensitive to the effect that nearby regionals will have on sectional attendance held in adjoining weeks.

B) The Online Sanction Application

All tournament sanction applications must be made through TourneyTrax at <http://tournaments.acbl.org/UserLogin/>. Any ACBL member may submit a tournament sanction application. Completing the application is straightforward – simply provide the information requested in the online form and submit it when finished. Please note that application for a STaC sanction uses a separate form than the regular tournament application – please use the “STaC Application” link provided on the TourneyTrax main navigation page.

The application is then automatically forwarded to the UTC for approval. If the person submitting the application is the UTC, the application will automatically be forwarded to the DTC for approval. Please allow the DTC up to one month to review and act on an application – the ACBL notification system for new sanction requests is still a work in progress, and the DTC isn't informed about pending applications at all. In addition, sanction applications sometimes require coordination with other tournament chairs, so it may take several weeks to iron out conflicts.

Once the DTC acts on an application, the ACBL Tournament Department will formally approve the request or send the denial back to the person who submitted the application. If approved, the Tournament Department will notify you by e-mail of final sanctioning. Within 24 hours, that tournament should be listed when you log in to TourneyTrax.

C) Making Changes to a Sanction

Once the ACBL has approved the sanction application, a sanction number for the tournament will be issued, and the tournament will show up under the “My Tournaments” menu for the Tournament Chair identified in the sanction application. Many changes, such as location changes, tournament personnel, and other details can be made to the tournament by simply correcting the information using the online form.

Changes to the date of an already-sanctioned tournament should be communicated to the DTC. If the new starting date is in the same month as the sanctioned tournament, there will usually be no change in the

sanction number. If the starting date is in a different month, the tournament will have to be cancelled and a new sanction application may have to be completed. Please ask the DTC for more information.

D) Distribution of District 11 Tournament Calendar

The DTC forwards an electronic version of the updated District 11 tournament calendar to the UTCs 5-6 times each year. Typically, an e-mail will be sent out in the days following each District 11 regional, at the beginning of the calendar year, and when substantial changes to the calendar have been made. Updated calendars are also available at any time on request.

This calendar has consolidated information about all District 11 tournaments, regionals in adjoining districts, special club events, holidays, etc. covering the next 6-7 years. Currently, each of the tournaments for the next year have embedded links to the ACBL tournament page for that tournament. UTCs are encouraged to forward these calendars to unit webmasters, tournament chairs, unit presidents, club managers, or anyone else whom the UTCs believe will find it useful. The District 11 webmaster regularly publishes a copy of the calendar on the District 11 website.

IV. Tournament Operations

A) Tournament Advertising

Each unit has developed different advertising and marketing approaches and techniques. Some of these include printed flyers, direct mail postcards, advertising in the ACBL's Bridge Bulletin or other bridge publications, newspaper and radio advertising, banner ads on BBO, Bridgewinners, or other bridge-related websites, dedicated webpages on unit websites, vinyl banners, etc.

Several forms of advertising are free and should be used by every SO. First, District 11's Midwest Monitor will display every tournament flyer available for upcoming sectionals alongside that unit's column or for upcoming regionals in the front few pages. The Midwest Monitor is now published electronically and is available at <http://www.district11bridge.com/>. The Midwest Monitor editor pulls these flyers directly from the ACBL website dedicated for each tournament, so make sure that a correct flyer has been sent to the ACBL Tournament Department. Regional flyers must first be approved by the DTC; sectional flyers can be sent directly to the ACBL.

Second, the ACBL Tournament Email Notice Program will send out an email to all ACBL members who have opted to receive such notices announcing your tournament and linking to your flyer for free. You must send a request to emailservices@acbl.org at least 6 weeks prior to a sectional start date or at least 8 weeks prior to a regional start date. Please check with the ACBL for specific requirements for email notices. The ACBL will send an email to all members within a 500-mile radius of your unit.

Third, webmasters of all units in District 11 have been asked to provide a link on their homepage (or prominently located on their website) to the ACBL calendar listing of all District-wide events. Please contact the DTC if your webmaster requires assistance.

B) Choice of DIC

Once the ACBL sanctions a tournament, it will begin staffing the event. Every tournament (with 2 exceptions, noted below) must be staffed with ACBL Tournament Directors, who have various ranks within the ACBL Tournament Department based on seniority and expertise. The person submitting the sanction application has an opportunity on the application to request a specific DIC, but the ultimate decision is made by an ACBL Tournament Department Field Supervisor.

The Tournament Chair may also request that the ACBL Tournament Department assign or not assign particular individuals to staff their tournaments. These requests and the reasons for making them should be sent to the ACBL Tournament Department in writing.

If possible, the ACBL attempts to comply with these requests. However, because tournament directors are ACBL employees, the final authority for assigning staff remains with the ACBL.

Exceptions: (1) STaC games are run by regular club directors, but the ACBL will assign an ACBL Director to assume overall responsibility for the entire STaC (including compiling the results across all participating clubs).

(2) SOs of NLM sectionals and limited-point sectionals can request that a “local director” run the tournament. This person is usually an experienced club director, and the ACBL must approve the SO’s choice. This is often desirable to the SO because they can make their own financial arrangements with their local director instead of having to pay the ACBL Director session fees.

C) SO-DIC Relationship

The relationship between the SO and the DIC is critical to ensure a smooth tournament and to avoid conflicts and miscommunication. Many tournament chairs do not appreciate the range of decisions they are empowered to make (the ACBL refers to these decisions as “Sponsor options”), and in the absence of any guidance from the SO, the DIC will often simply make those decisions unilaterally. Sponsor options are described in more detail in the next section.

Tournament chairs are strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting with the DIC prior to the first session of every tournament to discuss these sponsor options, any problems that may arise during the tournament, venue limitations, etc. Reviewing the tournament schedule and general conditions of contest is a helpful place to begin the discussion. Although the DIC may not deviate from ACBL regulations governing the operation of events, most DICs are happy to discuss these decisions with the Tournament Chair. Remember, the DIC and Director staff work for you, the SO, and you should be satisfied with their performance.

D) Sponsor Options

Many SOs do not realize that they can fine-tune a tournament by choosing among different options on a variety of topics. As noted above, these decisions should be made after consultation with the DIC before the tournament begins. Over time, the sponsor preferences may become known to the DIC and little or no discussion is necessary. While the final option on many of these decisions rests with the SO, the SO should recognize the professional expertise of the DIC and make all efforts to reach a collaborative conclusion. In unusual or unexpected circumstances (e.g., fire, power failure, impending severe weather, etc.) the DIC may temporarily override a SO’s preference to accommodate the situation.

Preparation and Setup

Check-Cashing Policy

Some players may wish to write a check to buy entries, or even for cash. Please let the DIC know if you will accept checks and who the checks should be made out to.

Conventions Permitted

The SO decides whether Mid-Chart conventions will be permitted. Typically, District 11 Regionals permit Mid-Chart in the top bracket of knockouts if more than one bracket has been formed, or if the bracket designator is above a certain number, or according to some other rule. However, the SO may select a different policy.

Electronic Scoring

The SO arranges for electronic scoring devices, if desired, in advance. Some Units have reciprocity agreements with neighboring Units for the use of their scoring devices during Regionals. The SO must tell the DIC in advance what, if any, those arrangements are and if a sufficient quantity will be on hand.

Entry Discounts

Some tournaments provide discounts to newer players under a certain MP holding. District 11 has a policy that youth players (U20) receive a 50% discount at Regionals. SOs of sectionals are strongly urged to follow the 50% discount for Youth used at District-wide events.

Final Tournament Reports and Accounting

The DIC can provide a dizzying array of reports at the conclusion of the tournament. Please discuss your preferences with the DIC before the last day of the tournament.

Free Play Accounting

Free plays are handled in a variety of different ways. It may be helpful to order "Free Play Entries" to hand out to volunteers and to sell in advance of the tournament. These chits also make accounting easier.

Hand Records

Electronic sets of hand records must be purchased from the ACBL and provided by the DIC. Typically the DIC arranges for copies to be printed for after-game distribution. If boards are not pre-duplicated the DIC arranges for necessary hand records to be printed. The SO pays all costs.

Hospitality Breaks

These may be specified by the SO, but only after consultation with the DIC. The number and/or length of breaks is often determined by distance to and number of restroom facilities.

Masterpoint Averaging

Most District 11 tournaments now use average MPs for stratifying all events. However, the SO should discuss this with the DIC well in advance of the tournament. Masterpoint averaging, if used, must be noted in the tournament advertising.

Pre-Duplicated Boards

The SO may arrange to have boards pre-duplicated. The DIC must approve the security and reliability of the arrangements and supplies the ACBL pre-dealt hands.

Room Setup and Physical Setup of Games

The DIC will typically have a better idea of how to use the available space than the SO. However, the SO may know of limitations or requirements in the venue contract that should be communicated to the DIC. In any event, the Tournament Chair and DIC should discuss any concerns before the tournament starts.

Pair Games

Number of Boards Played

Typically, 24-27 boards are played in open games; 24 are played in gold rush games; and 24 maximum are played in I/N games. The SO may choose that 24 or 26/27 be played in open games, but it should be determined for the tournament in general, and not on a session-by-session basis. Orphan session pair games are usually limited to 24 boards. The number of rounds in a game is a function of the size of the section.

Type of Movement

The environment in which our games begin requires that movement decisions be made by the DIC. If the SO has specific suggestions in this regard, the SO should discuss this with the DIC in advance.

Combined Scoring

Typically sections are combined (scored across the field) for scoring and ranking in 2-session open flight pair games. Sections are not combined in gold rush and I/N events. Side games vary by circumstance.

Time per Round

Typically, the time allowed for pair games is 15 minutes for two-board rounds and 21 minutes for three-board rounds. SOs wishing to deviate from these suggestions should consult with the DIC prior to the tournament.

Swiss and Round Robin Team Games

Number of Rounds and Boards per Round

For two-session events, common choices range between 48 and 56 boards. Top flights often play more boards per round than concurrent lower flights (e.g., seven rounds of eight and seven rounds of seven). When a small event and a larger event share close quarters, they often both play six rounds of nine (or six rounds of eight instead of 7 x 7).

Round robin or Swiss, day of the week, getaway day, length of break, player desires and other factors should be considered by the SO, in consultation with the DIC.

Single session Swiss events are four rounds of six.

Time per Round

A set amount of time in which to play, compare and report has become the norm. The typical time allotted is eight minutes per board; this includes playing the boards, comparing scores and turning in the results. Often an additional minute or two needs to be given to inexperienced groups and a minute or two less when the SO has requested an early departure. SOs wishing to deviate from these suggestions should consult with the DIC prior to the tournament.

Victory Point Scale (20 or 30)

This decision should be made by the SO in consultation with the DIC in advance of the event.

Pairing

Complete (and almost complete) round robins are paired entirely in advance. Swiss events typically are random in round one and paired by Swiss team rules thereafter. The TD, based on game size and other considerations, sets various parameters of loose or tight pairings in ACBLscore.

Bracketing

Brackets are typically determined by the TD when entries close, but usually in brackets of 8. Larger events may wish to consider running the top bracket as a true Swiss, with complete brackets of 8 underneath. Smaller events, such as those played in sectionals, may wish to consider a single bottom bracket of 8, with the rest of the field played as a Swiss. This arrangement allows less experienced teams to play against each other without causing a bracket “cutoff” problem (e.g., the 8th team in the top bracket may have significantly fewer MPs than the other 7 teams and resents having to play the “sharks” all day).

Knockout Events

Number of Boards

Typically, KOs play 24 boards per match. Compact KOs are also 24 boards.

Handicapping

The ACBL requires that all regionals note the handicap policy for KO events on tournament flyers. District 11 recommends that SOs use either the statement, “Top Bracket May Be Handicapped,” or “KO Events May Be Handicapped” to comply with the ACBL policy.

Replays

Replays are not typically permitted until necessary (usually in the Finals).

Bracketing

How to bracket KOs is sometimes a contentious issue. In all cases, the TD must bracket the field in a manner that will displease the fewest contestants. Brackets of at least 9 teams are highly recommended, though smaller brackets may sometimes be the most viable solution. When this occurs, the event will be reduced to 3 sessions.

E) Supplies and Bidding Boxes

Tournaments typically arrange for tournament supplies in one of two ways: (1) either the SO owns or purchases the necessary supplies itself; or (2) it contracts with the DIC to “supply” the tournament, for a separate fee. Some SOs also lease supplies or tables from a private contractor.

District 11 owns approximately 360 bidding boxes (the number can fluctuate due to the vagaries of mismarked and misplaced boxes). These boxes are reserved for use at District 11 regionals and any District-operated events, if needed. Other requests for their use should be directed to the DTC. The Chair of the next-scheduled regional is responsible for arranging their transportation from their current location.

District 11 also owns several stand-alone timers that also travel from one regional to another. These should also be used for D11 regionals only. Finally, several Upcoming Regional banners also travel with the bidding boxes and timers. These should be set up at the beginning of each tournament. The DTC should order replacement banners approximately every 6 months to keep the dates relatively current.

F) Entry Fees

District 11 does not regulate the entry fees charged by the SO of a tournament. However, entry fees at District 11 regionals are recommended to be within \$1 of each other. As of June 1, 2017, most District 11 regionals charge \$13/session. The DTC should be notified prior to an increase in entry fees. Entry fees are not required to be listed on tournament flyers, though if it is listed, the ACBL surcharge for non-members must also be noted.

District 11 has no uniform policy concerning the pricing of 5 and 6 person teams. The SO retains the discretion to follow the current policy at ACBL-sponsored events to charge per person for team events or continue the traditional policy of charging per team, regardless of the number of players.

SOs may choose whatever entry fee they want for sectionals. As of 2017, \$10 was a typical sectional entry fee, though some sectionals charge more and a few charge less.

G) District 11 Surcharge

District 11 collects \$.40/table plus a flat-fee surcharge of \$250 for each regional from the SO. The District does not collect a per table fee from the Units for sectionals.

When an NABC has been scheduled for a location in the District, regionals and sectionals have paid (additionally, in the case of regionals) \$1.00/table to the NABC Committee for a fixed period of time to help support fundraising efforts for the NABC. This is, of course, subject to District Board vote.

H) Entry Fee Discounts

With the exception of the Youth Discount Policy, SOs have their own policies governing discounts and free plays at their tournaments.

District 11 has adopted a Youth (U21) Discount Policy:

- Youth players receive a 50% discount on entries at District 11 regionals. The SO bears the cost of this discount.
- Youth players receive a 50% discount on entries at NAP and GNT District 11 Finals. Because District

11 is the SO of these events, it bears the cost of this discount.

- SOs of sectionals are strongly urged to follow the 50% discount for Youth used at District-wide events.

(District 11 Minutes, March 2014)

V. Regionals

A) Allocation of Regionals

The ACBL allocates four Open (or Senior) regionals to District 11 annually. District 11, in turn, allocates these regionals to its member units, to be held approximately one per calendar quarter. They are currently allocated as follows: Winter/Spring: Indianapolis; Spring/Summer: Cincinnati; Summer/Fall: Dayton/Columbus (shared); Fall: Louisville/Lexington (shared). Evansville is allocated a split regional every third year, which alternates between Dayton/Columbus and Cincinnati. (District 11 Minutes, November 2006, March 2007 (missing), March 2012, March 2013).

No regionals (including limited regionals) may run concurrently with an NABC. An ACBL tournament director of an Associate National rank or higher is required to run any regional (including limited regionals).

District 11 has historically chosen not to operate regionals itself, choosing instead to allocate them to its member units. Because there are 8 units in District 11, the way in which the 4 regionals were allocated among them have varied over the years. Unit 227 (West Virginia/Appalachia) and Unit 193 (Southern Indiana/Western Kentucky) have not expressed interest in being part of an annual regional (though Unit 193 currently splits a regional every 3 years, see below). The Dayton and Columbus Units have historically agreed to cooperate share a regional, as have the Louisville and Lexington Units. These Units share the operational and administrative responsibilities for their regionals and share profits according to agreements worked out between them. The Indianapolis and Cincinnati Units run the other regionals.

B) Special Regionals

Units wishing to run a limited (non-Open) regional should contact the DTC. In addition to its allocation of 4 Open regionals from the ACBL, each district is permitted to hold limited regionals (e.g., Junior, NLM) each year. A Senior regional counts as an Open regional. Lexington hosted District 11's first NLM Regional in many years in April 2017; any unit interested in pursuing this opportunity should contact the DTC. When a Unit runs a special Regional, such as an NLM Regional, it counts as the "extra" sectional they are permitted to run in addition to their 4-sectional allocation (see § IV(A), below).

C) Split Regionals

The ACBL permits a district to "split" one of its regionals each year. District 11 has used this option to accommodate the preferences of Unit 193 (Southern Indiana/Western Kentucky), which has expressed interest in running a regional every second year. Because of the proximity of Evansville to both Indianapolis and Louisville, it is not feasible to split a regional with the regionals allocated to those Units. Instead, Unit 193 is currently allocated a split regional every second year, which alternates between the Dayton/Columbus (2018) and Cincinnati (2020) regionals.

Effective 2016, ACBL policy allows split regionals to run a different schedule than its corresponding split-site location. No events can be combined between the two sites, and the masterpoint reduction for split regional events has been eliminated.

D) Regional Venue

Selecting a regional venue is one of the most important decisions made by an SO. Many factors figure into the decision, including availability, cost, food service, location, nearby attractions, convenience, access to hotels, suitability, parking cost and convenience, relationship with staff, etc. Players' impression of a tournament is probably influenced by the venue more than by any other factor.

The ACBL has a host of technical requirements for tournament venues; most tournament venues easily exceed the minimum requirements. Beyond that, neither the ACBL nor District 11 approves tournament venues, instead relying on market forces to indicate whether a particular venue is suitable. On occasion, the DTC and/or District 11 President have been consulted to resolve conflicts involving the selection of a specific tournament venue.

E) Sanction Fees

As of 2017, the ACBL charges a per-table sanction fee of \$4.40/table at regionals. As noted above, District 11 also collects \$.40/table plus a flat-fee surcharge of \$250 for each regional from the SO.

F) Regional Flyers

Developing the regional flyer is often viewed as the largest responsibility of the tournament chair. The process of reviewing the prior year's tournament flyer and making changes based on experiences and lessons learned from that tournament can provide a framework for planning upcoming tournaments.

The regional flyer should obviously contain the contact information of key tournament personnel, such as the Tournament Chair, Partnership Chair, I/N Program Chair, etc. The host hotel(s) should be identified, and room rates should be listed (where available). The schedule of events should be listed, along with any special programs or features of the tournament that might be of interest to players. The proliferation of GPS and internet maps have made listing detailed driving directions unnecessary and should be eliminated.

Styles and designs of flyers vary greatly among tournaments. Although flyers need to convey quite a bit of information, an attractive design will go a long way to make your tournament flyer stand out.

G) Regional Game Schedule

SOs are well-situated to understand the dynamics specific to their tournament and take into account local factors that make one game schedule preferable to another. For this reason, District 11 leaves the decisions affecting the schedule of games at regionals to the SO.

This deference mirrors the approach taken by the ACBL with respect to NABCs. The ACBL largely defers to local tournament organizers in determining the "prime time" schedule at NABCs. In some cities, the 1:00 and 7:00 sessions are paired, with the NABC Championship events and 2-day regional KOs scheduled for these starting times. Under this schedule, the 9:00 morning session becomes the "orphan" session, with multi-day morning events run horizontally. In other NABC cities, however, local organizers determine that a 10:00 and 2:30 "prime time" session framework works better. When this occurs, the evening 7:00 or 7:30 session becomes the "orphan session."

SOs are recommended to continuously monitor conditions in their local area to determine the game schedule that works best for their tournaments.

H) Stratifications

District 11 has established uniform stratifications for events held in District 11 regionals. They are:

Open Events w/o Gold Rush: 0-750/750-2000/2000+
Gold Rush/Open Pairs and Gold Rush/Open Swiss: GR: 0-300/300-750 Open: 0-2500/2500+
Stratiflighted Swiss: B/C/D 0-300/300-750/750-1500 A/X 0-3000/3000+

Under a new ACBL stratification policy effective in 2015, Gold Rush events may be stratified into 3 tiers, and open games opposite Gold Rush may also have 3 stratifications. The ACBL policy suggests 100/300/750 strats for Gold Rush events and 1500/3000/Open strats for the open games, but gives SOs the discretion to use different strats. There is no “official” District 11 policy for these 3-strats Gold Rush events, though one may be adopted in the future.

District 11 policy doesn't specify whether average or highest masterpoints should be used for stratification. However, in recent years, most of our regionals have moved to averaging masterpoints for all events. Masterpoint averaging, if used, must be noted in the tournament advertising.

I) Competing Tournaments and Club Games

Neither the ACBL nor District 11 require that clubs cancel their regularly scheduled games when a regional or sectional is held nearby, or even within the same unit. The ACBL does prohibit a club from running “special” or extra masterpoint games when a sectional (excluding STaCs or Limited/Restricted sectionals) or higher rated event is being conducted within 25 miles of that club’s playing site.

Some units have developed tacit agreements among clubs within the unit to support sectionals or regionals held within that unit.

J) Free Plays

Policies concerning free plays at tournaments vary greatly from unit to unit. The District 11 representative to the ACBL Board of Directors has customarily received free plays at District 11 regionals to acknowledge the service of the Director on behalf of District 11.

K) Caddies

The hiring, selection, and compensation of caddies is within the discretion of the SO. Under ACBL policy, SOs are required to pay caddies directly instead of through the DIC. The DIC can account for payments made to caddies on the tournament balance sheet.

VI. Sectionals

A) Allocation of Sectionals

Under District 11 policy, each unit may run up to 4 sectionals per year, and may also run an NLM sectional in addition to its regular sectional allocation. (District 11 Bylaws, Appendix “District 11 Rules for Tournament Allocation to Units,” rev. 8/6/06).

A sectional is an opportunity offered by units for players to earn silver points. Although the ACBL places no restrictions on the number of sectional tournaments a unit may conduct, (ACBL Handbook, ch. 6, sec. 3, I), each district, as a practical matter, places parameters on sectionals because of competing demands for silver point opportunities across units. If units were permitted to sanction an unlimited number of sectionals, district tournament calendars will quickly be overwhelmed, and the economic viability of existing sectionals would be threatened.

Since 2008, District 11 has formalized these limitations and allocates 4 sectional sanctions per year to each unit (regional tournaments do not count toward the sectional allocation; STaCs DO count toward the sectional allocation). Each unit is not required to use all 4 of its allocated sanctions (note that the ACBL, however, requires every unit to conduct at least one sectional every two years, ACBL Handbook, ch. 3, sec. 2, I), but any unused sanctions may not be transferred to other units.

Unit 130 (Central Indiana Bridge Association) has historically run “Progressive Sectionals,” a unique form of sectional tournament, throughout the year. District 11 counted 2 of these Progressive sectionals as 1 sectional toward its District allocation. However, the ACBL has adopted a “1 Progressive per Unit” rule, effective 2015, that renders the District 11 policy moot. Unit 130 has been exempted from this rule for 2015.

Some units have “re-allocated” sectionals to clubs or organizations within their unit. The unit remains responsible for the sanctioning of the tournament and retains formal authority over the tournament (e.g., the unit must provide an Appeals Committee if necessary), but the operational details and organization of the sectional can be delegated to an entity other than the unit board.

B) STaCs

A STaC is a Sectional Tournament at Club. Games at regular tournaments may have multiple sections, but all the sections are in the same location. Individual sections of a STaC occur at clubs throughout a district, at or about the same time, instead of together at one location. Your results are first scored at your local club, which will be stratified, with silver points awarded for each section. The club director will then send in those local results to an ACBL director, who will combine them with the results from all of the other clubs playing at or about the same time and tally overall results for all the club-sections. Because the number of tables in play increase, the points awarded for overall winners can be considerable.

All clubs within District 11 are eligible to participate in a District 11 STaC, though they are not required to do so. A club has the right to participate in any session in which it has a regularly scheduled game, and may hold games in additional sessions. Prior to 2015, clubs in Unit 154 (Northern Indiana) have traditionally been invited to participate in our STaCs even though they are in District 8. However, the District 8 Board of Directors voted in 2015 to rescind its permission for Unit 154 to participate in District 11 STaCs. Advance registration through MyACBL is required for all clubs that wish to participate in District 11 STaCs.

The STaC structure means that multiple layers of the ACBL are involved. Local club games are run by their regular directors, who must download the hand file for the session corresponding to their game through MyACBL. At the conclusion of each game, each local club director must forward the completed game to an ACBL Director assigned to run the STaC. The ACBL Director will collect all the game files, compile the overall results, and post those results to the ACBL website, in addition to resolving any administrative issues arising at participating clubs (e.g., clubs using the wrong hands, scoring changes). Each local club director must also submit the sanction fee for the STaC to the STaC Chair (or their designee, usually the SOing Unit Treasurer) instead of directly to the ACBL (as is done for regular club games). The STaC Chair is then responsible for collecting the sanction fees from the participating clubs (raised to \$6/table, as of June 1, 2015) and remitting the amount due to the ACBL (currently \$3.09-4.46/table, depending on the total number of tables). The SOing Unit pockets the difference as profit.

A STaC thus involves coordination and communication among club directors, the ACBL, the ACBL Director, the STaC Chair, and typically the SOing Unit Treasurer. Individual units may even have STaC coordinators to handle issues arising among participating clubs in that unit.

C) Allocation of STaCs

District 11 currently has 3 STaC tournaments per year. The “Summer” STaC is allocated to Cincinnati, the “Spring” STaC is allocated to Dayton, and the “Winter” STaC is allocated to Appalachia/West Virginia (District 11 Minutes, August 2003, April 2011). Each of these SOing units may charge a \$5/table sanction fee to participating clubs. Increase in STaC sanction fees should be cleared with the DTC.

Because STaCs are District-wide events, they have historically been approved by the District 11 Board. The “Winter” STaC began in 2012 as way to defray costs related to the Midwest Monitor, but is no longer run for that purpose.

D) STaC Stratifications

Our STaCs should use the same strats that are used for Open events in our Regionals. They are: 750/2000/Open. However, our STaCs use highest masterpoints (of a pair) when stratifying. Most of our Regionals have moved to averaging masterpoints for all events.

NLM STaC sections will be stratified at the discretion of the DIC. However, District 11 recommends using 100/300/ NLM <500 for NLM STaC sections.

Effective 2016, the ACBL prohibits clubs having a sanctioned limited or invitational game from declaring that game as open when there is a STaC.

E) Scheduling Sectionals on the Same Weekend

Two sectionals within District 11 may be scheduled to be held at the same time, but they should be at least 200 miles apart, unless the Tournament Chair of both sectionals agree. No more than 2 sectionals may be scheduled to be held at the same time. (District 11 Bylaws, Appendix “District 11 Rules for Tournament Allocation to Units,” rev. 8/6/06, District 11 Minutes, August 2008, November 2010).

The tournament calendar gets crowded, and sectionals must be scheduled simultaneously to accommodate them all. To avoid simultaneous sectionals from “cannibalizing” each other, they should be at least 200 miles apart. The District 11 Tournament Coordinator will resolve disputes between competing units.

F) NLM Sectionals

Each unit may hold an NLM sectional in addition to its 4 regular sectionals allocated to it by District 11. (District 11 Bylaws, Appendix “District 11 Rules for Tournament Allocation to Units,” rev. 8/6/06).

The ACBL allows for a variety of special sectional types, the most common of which is a sectional limited to non-life masters or players under a certain lower masterpoint limit. Despite their smaller size, many units have found that these NLM sectionals are easier to run, AND more profitable, than open sectionals. NLM sectionals have a number of advantages: ACBL sanction fees are lower; local club-certified directors can be used (at whatever rate negotiated by the unit); and the smaller size means that the tournaments can usually be conducted at a central bridge center.

G) Sanction Fees

As of 2015, for open sectionals, the ACBL charges a per-table sanction fee (currently \$2.94/table) in addition to a flat-fee tournament surcharge (currently \$165). NLM sectional sanction fees are lower. District 11 does not charge a fee for sectionals.

H) Other Sectional Details

The production of sectional flyers, selection of game schedule, stratifications, handicapping policy, competing club game policy, and distribution of free plays is within the discretion of the SO.

VII. Other District-Wide Games

District 11 is the SO for 2 events each year: the District 11 Finals for the North American Pairs (NAP) and Grand National Teams (GNT). The sanctioning, organization, and operation of these events is handled by the District 11 NAP/GNT Coordinator.

