



**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS
(FEBRUARY 2014)**

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1. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- a. "SABA" shall mean the South Australian Bridge Association.
- b. "SABF" shall mean the South Australian Bridge Federation.
- c. "ABF" shall mean the Australian Bridge Federation.
- d. "WBF" shall mean the World Bridge Federation.
- e. "Management Committee" shall mean the Management Committee of SABA.
- f. "Ordinary club session" shall mean sessions that are conducted at any time from Monday to Friday or on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, but excluding sessions conducted for special events and most Thursday night sessions.
- g. "Special events" shall mean events such as, but not limited to:
 - all weekend congresses
 - the Grand National Open Teams (GNOT) Qualifying.
- h. "Tournament Committee" or "TC" shall mean the tournament sub-committee appointed by the Management Committee.
- i. "Convenor" shall mean the convenor of the Tournament Committee.
- j. "Tournament Director" or "TD" means the Chief Tournament Director or an assistant tournament director.
- k. "Appeals Committee" shall mean the appeals sub-committee appointed by the Management Committee.
- l. "Clubrooms" shall mean SABA's place(s) of business.
- m. "IMP" shall mean International Match Points.
- n. "VP" shall mean Victory Point.

2. APPLICABLE LAW

- a. All bridge events and sessions conducted under the auspices of SABA shall be conducted in accordance with the International Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, the regulations published by the ABF, the regulations published by the SABF and the regulations published herein in the "South Australian Bridge Association Tournament Regulations", supplementary regulations for specific events promulgated by the TC and other regulations promulgated by the TC. The International Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge shall apply to all areas not specifically covered by these regulations.
- b. The International Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge shall mean the latest edition of the International Laws at the time of the event, and which shall be available in the clubrooms for use by directors and for perusal by any member.
- c. Any event may be conducted with rules that conflict with these regulations, provided that such rules are approved by the TC and are notified in advance of the start of the competition.
- d. The Tournament Committee shall have the power to publish amendments or additions to these rules and to vary any condition.
- e. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, the TC may at any time make any determination concerning the conduct of bridge events and sessions.

3. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- a. In accordance with these regulations, the TC shall determine the form of all competitions and publish any supplementary conditions of play before each event begins.
- b. The TC or Club Manager may call for nominations in advance of any event and publish a closing date for nominations. When there is a call for nominations, late entries may only be accepted at the discretion of the TC.
- c. The TC shall:
 - decide handicaps in any handicap events,
 - determining seeding where necessary, including into sections, and
 - supervise the draw for any competition.
- d. The TC may delegate any of its functions to the TD, who may in turn delegate to one or more assistant tournament directors.

4. SYSTEMS

4.1. Classification of Systems

- a. Systems shall be classified as green, blue, red or yellow in accordance with the regulations made by the ABF and applying in ABF events, subject to any system or convention specifically being classified below. The applicable ABF regulations shall be available in the clubrooms.
- b. The TD shall classify systems. In the event of a dispute concerning the classification of a system the decision of the TC shall be final, but until such classification by the TC has taken place, the decision of the TD shall be enforced.

- c. The onus for having their system classified lies with the players using such system. It shall not be a defence to a breach of these regulations that any pair was unaware or mistaken as to the classification of their system.
- d. For the purpose of these regulations, the conventions that cause a system to be classified as red shall be known as "red conventions".
- e. A coloured marker shall identify pairs (and their system cards) employing complex systems.

4.2. Brown Sticker Conventions and Treatments.

- a. Certain types of conventional calls or treatments which are considered to place demands upon the opponents' defensive preparations are categorised as 'Brown Sticker' (BS) conventions.
- b. Any of the following characteristics qualifies a convention/treatment as BS, if it is a matter of partnership agreement:
 - i. Any opening bid of two clubs through three spades that could be weak and does not promise at least four cards in a known suit. (Exceptions: All the weak options guarantee at least four cards in one known suit and only the strong options do not; a two level opening bid in a minor may show a weak hand with five cards in either major only, or as an option among a number of strong hands)
 - ii. An overcall of a natural opening bid of one of a suit which does not promise at least four cards in a known suit. (Exceptions: A natural NT overcall; any cue bid showing a strong hand; a cue bid of an opponent's known suit that asks partner to bid 3NT with a stopper in that suit).
 - iii. Any weak two suited bid (whether an overcall, opening bid or a response) at the two or three level that may be an agreement made with three cards or fewer in one of the suits).
 - iv. The above i to iii do not apply to conventional defences against strong forcing artificial opening bids, defences against "brown Sticker" or HUM conventions, or 1NT openings.

4.3. Protected Pair

- a. A pair, playing a green system throughout an event, may designate itself as a "Protected Pair". The pair may identify its protected pair status by a green sticker attached to the front of its system card.
- b. The TC may designate weekly sessions or events in which all pairs playing a green system automatically have protected pair status.
- c. The TC may further weekly sessions or events in which pairs playing a green system may claim protected pair status (ie it is not automatic).
- d. Any pair may elect to forgo its protected pair status. The pair may designate this election by displaying a black dot on its system card in addition to the green dot designating their system classification.
- e. The TC shall have the power to overrule a pair's protected pair status.

4.4. System Restrictions

4.4.1. Green and Blue Systems

- a. Green and blue systems are permitted without restriction in all events.

4.4.2. Red Systems

- a. Red systems are permitted only if a concise summary of the "red convention(s)" is lodged with the TD at least one hour before the commencement of the event in which it is to be played. The TD shall maintain a register of "red conventions" for perusal by other players.
- b. Red systems may be used in pairs events, except against protected pairs. In any event or session in which pairs may have protected pairs status, pairs playing a red system are required to ascertain before the start of each round whether their opponents are a protected pair. If so, pairs playing a red system must revert to a green or blue system for that round.
- c. Red systems may be used in any teams event,

4.4.3. Yellow Systems

- a. Yellow systems are permitted only if a SABA approved system card (with no more than two A4 supplementary sheets, typed or written in black ink on one side) has been lodged with the TD at least one hour before the commencement of the event in which it is to be played. The TD shall maintain a register of yellow systems for perusal by other players.
- b. Yellow systems are permitted only in teams and Butler pairs matches of fourteen or more boards duration.
- c. For Swiss events, yellow systems may not be played in the first round, in the second round where round two is played in the same session as round one, or in any matches involving a team in the lower 50% of the field (decimals rounded down), except with the consent of the opposing team, provided always that consent is obtained prior to the commencement of the match and is approved by a TD.
- d. Any team including a pair playing a yellow system in a single session match shall forfeit seating rights if such a pair plays.

4.4.4. Defences

- a. When playing against a yellow or red system, an opposing pair may prepare a written defence against the yellow system or against those calls which cause the system to be categorised as red. A written defence against the defence is permitted in the case of yellow systems, but not in the case of red systems.
- b. A pair's notes of their defence or "defence against the defence" may be written on one side of an A4 sheet, typed or in hand written legibly in black ink.
- c. Notes may be used during the auction period provided that they are:
 - i. lodged with the TD 15 minutes before the scheduled session times and approved by the TD,
 - ii. identical for each player, and
 - iii. available to the opponents during the auction and play.
- d. During the play a player's own notes may only be used to answer a question from the opponents. (No player may refer to the written bidding after the first trick).

- e. For defence against a yellow system, pairs using green, blue or red systems may change any facet of their system but pairs using a yellow system may not change their opening calls. For defence against the defence, pairs are not permitted to change any of the highly artificial aspects of their yellow system.

4.5. Playing the Same System

Both members of a partnership must play the same system, including bidding and card play agreements. Where as a matter of style members frequently adopt different styles from each other, the pair must prepare and make available a properly completed system card as per these regulations, and disclose those differences in style. Note section 5.1.

4.6. Breaches of System Regulations

- a. Any pair found guilty of breaching these system regulations will be liable to procedural and possibly disciplinary penalties.
- b. Any team for which such pair was playing shall be liable to penalties that may include (but not be limited to) forfeiture of the match, or VP fines applied either immediately or at the conclusion of the event.

4.7. Change of Systems

No pair may play two different yellow systems during the course of an event without the expressed permission of the TD.

5. ADEQUATE DISCLOSURE, SYSTEM CARDS AND SUMMARIES

5.1. Adequate Disclosure

- a. Players must disclose fully the meaning of their conventional agreements, particularly conventions and treatments that may require extensive or unusual defensive preparation by opposing pairs.
- b. To satisfy the principle of adequate disclosure, the onus is on each pair to prepare for the information of opponents an accurate and reasonably comprehensive system card. In addition to the appropriate system card, pairs may use supplementary sheets, where necessary, to achieve the objective of adequate disclosure.

5.2. System Cards

- a. In all sessions, all pairs (except as exempted below) must prepare system cards as specified below, and have two system cards available for the use of their opponents during all sessions. Every player will be granted a grace period for presentation of his/her system card. Should a pair sit down to play without a system card available at all, then the grace period for that pair will expire. If, however there is one system card available, then only one grace period shall expire. Grace periods will be reinstated at the commencement of the next event. Once the grace period for any pair expires, procedural penalties will be enforced.
- b. The TC may designate sessions or events for which pairs playing a green or blue system with opening bids at the one level consistent with Acol, Standard American or Precision are not required to prepare a system card.

- c. System cards shall be prepared legibly, properly identified with the names of the pair and coloured sticker showing the classification of system under these regulations. Supplementary sheets shall be typed or written legibly in black ink on one side of A4 paper.
- d. Only ABF approved system cards are permitted to be used.
- e. After withdrawing the cards from a board and until they are restored to the board at conclusion of its play, a player may not consult their own system card except when specifically permitted under these regulations.

6. ANNOUNCING, ALERTING AND EXPLANATIONS OF THE AUCTION

- a. All sessions and events shall use alerting regulations made by the ABF, subject to any changes noted below.
- b. The following modifications to the ABF regulations shall apply:
 - where there is written bidding, alerts must be indicated by saying "alert" out loud, and circling the artificial bid, and
 - where bidding boxes are used, alerts must be indicated by saying alert out loud , and the alert card placed on the table.
- c. In line with changes to ABF alerting regulations, “announcing” when your side opens 1C or 1NT is compulsory in all SABA sessions, as follows:
 - When a player opens 1C, their partner must automatically announce the essential meaning of the bid. For natural systems, the announcement is the minimum number of clubs, “4+ clubs” or “3+ clubs” or “2+ clubs”. For Precision 1C openings the announcement is “artificial, 16+ HCP”. For other artificial 1C systems the announcement is “Unusual” and the opponents can seek clarification. For artificial 1C openings or when 1C in a natural system can be less than 3, the announcement replaces an alert.
 - When a player opens 1NT, their partner announces the strength range – eg 12-14, or 15-17 (or whatever the range is).
 - Opponents are still able to ask questions, but the basics should already have been supplied. Announcing should help to avoid pointed questions by opponents.
- d. Inadequate disclosure may attract procedural penalties and/or disciplinary penalties including but not limited to immediate suspension from the session and/or score adjustment. Repetition may result in a report to the SABA Ethics Committee.

7. APPEALS

- a. Notice of an appeal against a ruling given by a TD, as provided in the International Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, must be made in writing on the form prescribed by the TC for that purpose and presented to the TD within 30 minutes of the scheduled finish of play, signed by the team captain for teams events and one member of the pair for pairs events.
- b. On receipt of an appeal on the prescribed form and which lies within the jurisdiction of the Appeals Committee, the TD shall:
 - complete the form giving all reasons for the ruling,

- forward a copy of the appeal with confirmation of the ruling to the convenor of the Appeals Committee, and
 - make a copy of the appeal available to the respondents to the appeal forthwith, but in any case within 24 hours of the ruling being made.
- c. The appeal shall be heard by the Appeals Committee as soon as reasonably practicable after the lodging of the appeal, at a time and place nominated by the convenor of the Appeals Committee and notified to the parties thereto. If all parties cannot agree to an earlier time, then the appeal shall be held in seven days time, half an hour before the start of play.
 - d. Appeals Committee members who are directly involved in any dispute shall not participate in the hearing of that dispute.
 - e. The respondents may add their arguments in writing to the prescribed form. Appellants may then add counter arguments in writing to the prescribe form.
 - f. The Appeals Committee shall allow parties to the appeal to present arguments in person.
 - g. In the course of the appeal hearing, the Appeals Committee may not reverse a TD's decision where that decision was based on a point of fact or in the exercise of the TD's discretionary power.
 - h. The TC may impose a fine of up to 3 victory points or half a top if the Appeals Committee determines that the appeal was frivolous.
 - i. Appeals against the scorer's decisions (as distinct from TD's rulings) must be lodged within one week of the scores being posted on the club scoreboard/internet.

8. CORRECTION OF SCORES

Correction of errors on the original score sheets or electronic scorers may be made up to 24 hours after the posting of the results. Individual board results shall be kept in electronic form for one week.

9. BIDDING

9.1. Spoken Bidding

- a. Spoken bidding may be allowed by the TD in certain circumstances.
- b. Where written bidding is used:
 - If a player is incapable of writing a bid, any other player may repeat the spoken call in writing.
 - A player who cannot read the written bidding may request that bids be repeated aloud.

9.2. Written Bidding

- a. The first bid made whether spoken or written shall be treated as a legal call, but must be repeated in writing, or if required, repeated aloud.
- b. A written bid, if made simultaneously with a different spoken bid, shall prevail unless the written bid was inadvertent.

- c. Should a player begin to write a bid out of turn, without completing it, it is not treated as a call out of rotation, but it may constitute unauthorised information.
- d. A player may change a partly written bid without penalty, provided the full bid has not been completed, but the unauthorised information laws may apply.
- e. If there is any dispute concerning any bid, the written record shall take precedence.

9.3. Bidding Boxes

- a. Bidding boxes are located on all tables at the clubrooms and are the designated method of bidding unless all players at the table agree to use written bidding. Written bidding may be allowed by the TD at a table where only one pair wish to use it.
- b. Regulations similar to those concerning written bidding above shall apply to the use of bidding boxes. A player who cannot read bidding cards may request that bids be also spoken out loud.

10. CONDITIONS OF PLAY

- a. The International Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge do not allow players to leave the table needlessly (Law 74, part c, paragraph 8). Leaving the table to smoke is not considered sufficient reason and penalties consistent with slow play may be applied, even if play was not delayed.
- b. A player may leave the table to smoke only with the permission of all other players at the table. However, this permission shall not prevent penalties being applied if play is delayed, for example, if a move is called while a player is absent.

11. MATCHPOINT PAIRS EVENTS

11.1. Nominations

- a. Conditions of play shall specify whether entry to an event is restricted to pairs nominating by a specified closing date, or whether the event is open to players on a walk-in basis. Conditions of play may also specify that some or all sessions of an event are available for play on a walk-in basis, notwithstanding that entry in advance is required for the event.
- b. After nominations have closed, a member of a nominating pair may be replaced only with the permission of the TC. This power is delegated to the TD in all events unless the TD is informed otherwise by the TC.

11.2. Late Arrival

Any pair arriving for an event less than five minutes before the scheduled starting time may be refused admission to the tournament at the discretion of the TD. Nevertheless, the TD will make every effort to accommodate pairs.

11.3. Scoring

- a. Percentages for each session shall be calculated to the nearest two decimal places.

- b. The winning pair of any standard pairs competition shall be that pair which gains the highest aggregate of sessional percentage scores at the completion of the stipulated number of rounds, subject to the further rules herein (11.4 to 11.9).

11.4. Named Events

Named events (ie events named after a person or persons or sponsors) can only be won by a pair playing in the A grade for the entire event.

Where one or more pairs from a lower grade finish(es) above the highest finishing A grade pair, those pairs shall be relegated to 2nd, 3rd, etc. This rule applies only to eligibility to win the named event. The other pairs in A grade retain their nominal finishing positions.

11.5. Eclectic Scoring

- a. For some events, as noted in the SABA program, or as nominated by the TC before the start of the event, the final places shall be calculated on an eclectic basis as described below.
- b. The scores for an eclectic event shall be calculated according to the following rules, where N is the number of sessions in the event:
 - Where a pair has played N sessions, their final aggregate shall be the total of their best (N-1) scores.
 - Where a pair has played (N-1) sessions, their final aggregate shall be the total of the (N-1) scores including any score obtained with a substitute as defined in section 11.6.
 - Where a pair has played (N-2) sessions, their final aggregate shall be the total of the (N-2) scores including any score obtained with a substitute as defined in section 11.6, plus an imputed score of 90% of the average of the (N-2) scores.

11.6. Scores Gained with Substitutes

- a. For the purpose of determining a score within these rules, a single substitute for one member of a pair in one session shall be regarded and referred to as a substitute. Stand-ins playing in place of both members of a pair in the same session is not regarded as a substitution in a duplicate event.
- b. If a substitute is used by a pair in any session, the score for that session used in the calculation of the competition aggregate shall be the score gained by the substitute, except that it may not exceed the average score gained in sessions played by the nominated pair, and may not be less than 90% of the nominated pair's average, with the following exceptions:
 - For eclectic events the maximum score possible with a substitute shall be the entrant pair's average, whilst the minimum score obtainable shall be 90% of the entrant pair's average. A pair's average, for determining substitution scores, shall be their average score for all the occasions they have played together in the tournament. The score obtained using a substitute shall be treated, after adjustment, for the calculation of the final results in the same way as the pair's other scores.
 - If a substitute is used because either member of the nominated pair is absent participating in any Australian National Championship, or other ABF sanctioned

national event, then the minimum score for that session used in the calculation of the competition aggregate shall be 95% of the nominated pair's average. This rule shall apply to all events.

- If a substitute is used because either member of the nominated pair is absent representing the State or Australia in an SABF or ABF approved competition, then the score used in the calculation of the competition aggregate shall be 100% of the nominated pair's average. This rule shall apply to all events.
- c. The scores obtained by substitutes shall stand for the calculation of sessional results and master points awarded for the session.

11.7. Scores Gained by Absent Pairs

- a. Pairs absent because of participation in Australian National Championships or any other ABF sanctioned national event, or representing the State or Australia in an SABF or ABF approved competition, shall be treated as having had a valid substitute and section 11.6 shall be applied.
- b. Failure of a pair to be represented in any session of a standard pairs event shall result in that pair receiving 90% of their average score for that event.
- c. In eclectic events, a pair's score shall be calculated in accordance with section 11.5.
- d. Scores gained by absent pairs for the purpose of determining a valid score only apply when the entrant pair is eligible for a final placing.

11.8. Eligibility For A Final Placing

To be eligible for a final placing the nominated pair (including one player substitutes) must have played in at least 75% (decimals rounded up) of the required number of rounds, whilst the nominated pair must themselves have played in more than half the number of rounds. For the purpose of this rule the number of rounds in an N session eclectic event shall be (N-1).

11.9. Ties

- a. A tie shall exist for a final placing when two or more pairs have aggregates within 0.03% of each other. Ties shall be broken when necessary on the following basis in turn:
- decided in favour of the pair playing the most sessions.
 - decided in favour of the pair gaining most scores above 60%.
 - decided in favour of the pair gaining most scores above 55%.
 - decided in favour of the pair gaining most scores above 50%.
- b. Master points awarded are not affected by the breaking of ties; the tied pairs shall share the available master points for the positions.

11.10 Players' Responsibilities

- a. During any competition in which a movement card is available, both pairs are responsible for checking that the correct boards are about to be played. In the absence of such cards, the sitting pair shall be responsible. (A movement card is always available for a Howell movement. In a Mitchell movement NS usually remain seated and the boards move to the next lower numbered table in sequence.)
- b. It is the responsibility of the player sitting South to enter the score onto a scoresheet or into an electronic scoring device where one is used, at the end of each hand, and it is the

responsibility of the player sitting East to check the details and sign the score card, or check the electronic score.

11.11. Fouled Boards

Where a board has been fouled such that it is unplayable at the next table, the offending pair(s) may be fined up to half-a-top. Any innocent pairs shall receive a 60% score on the hand in question, or their average score for the session, whichever is the greater.

11.12. Fines

Fines may be applied for various offences at the discretion of the TD. The following maximum fines shall apply:

- Mis-scoring: 1% from each pair (ie final session score is reduced by 1 %age point).
- No score entered: 40% on the board for both pairs.
- Slow Play: Half a top for the third and subsequent offence. Players should be warned about their slowness after each of the first two offences.

11.13. Seating

Directors should aim to balance each section so that EW and NS fields are as even as possible in terms of skill level.

12. BUTLER PAIRS EVENTS

Butler Pairs events shall be run in accordance with published SABF Tournament regulations.

13. TEAMS EVENTS

Teams events shall be run in accordance with published SABF Tournament regulations.

14. SABA SPECIAL EVENTS

14.1. Pairs Congresses

- a. The format of the event will be specified by the TC. SABA congresses will generally be run as normal 2-session matchpointed pairs events or as Swiss matchpointed pairs events with 7 board rounds.
- b. Only Green and blue systems can be played – Red systems are forbidden, while Brown sticker conventions can only be played where both opponents are of at least Life master ranking.
- c. Where the event is run as a Swiss matchpointed pairs event, eight matches each of 7 boards shall be played.
- d. For the first four rounds contestants will play in a single field, which will then be divided into three sections, each comprising approximately one third of the field, at the lunch break.
- e. In general, the top one third of the field based on the morning results will be placed into section A, the next third into section B and the remainder into section C. However, at the discretion of the Tournament Committee, certain pairs may be seeded into the A section regardless of their results in the morning session. Similarly certain pairs may be seeded into the B section (and not be permitted to drop to the C section).

- f. Each section will then play its own separate competition in the afternoon. Players will have a full carry-forward of their morning scores, and contestants cannot play a pair they have already played in the morning.
- g. Where the field is too small to divide into 3 sections, it may be divided into an A and B section only, the relative size of each left to the discretion of the TD. At the discretion of the Tournament Committee, certain pairs may be seeded into the A section regardless of their results in the morning session.
- h. Fifty minutes are allocated for each round, and no further boards may be commenced after the forty seven minute mark.
- i. In accordance with the principle of active ethics, players must pre-alert their opponents, before the start of play, to any unusual agreements on self- alerting calls, particularly those calls which opponents may assume have a more standard meaning. The declaring side should offer a full explanation of their auction before the opening lead is made. Expiry time for appeals shall be 15 minutes after the posting of scores for the session concerned. Any cash awards made prior to an appeal shall be conditional on the outcome of the appeal.
- j. Prize money will be given to the top three pairs in each section at the end of the final round, or as varied by the TC depending on the number of entries.
- k. Match scores will be converted to Victory Points (VPs) using the following scale:

| Score % | VPs | Score % | VPs |
|---------------|-------|------------|------|
| 50 to <50.5 | 15-15 | 63 to < 66 | 23-7 |
| 50.5 to <51.5 | 16-14 | 66 to < 70 | 24-6 |
| 51.5 to <53 | 17-13 | 70 to <74 | 25-5 |
| 53 to <55 | 18-12 | 74 to <78 | 25-4 |
| 55 to <57 | 19-11 | 78 to <82 | 25-3 |
| 57 to <59 | 20-10 | 82 to <86 | 25-2 |
| 59 to <61 | 21-9 | 86 to <90 | 25-1 |
| 61 to <63 | 22-8 | 90 to 100 | 25-0 |

14.2. Handicap Pairs

A handicap pairs event (such as the Browntree Handicap) is run as a dual competition, both scratch and handicap. Seating shall be carried out on the basis of scratch scores. Handicaps are assigned prior to the beginning of the event. Any absentees are given 55% for their handicap score. Substitutes should be re-handicapped for their one-night appearance. The normal rules governing substitutes shall be applied in the scratch competition.

14.3. SABA GNOT Qualifying

The TC will determine the format for this qualifying event. At present this is a Swiss Teams event over 5 Thursday nights to qualify teams for the GNOT National Finals. The number of places available to SABA teams depends on total entries, and currently stands at two. The qualifying places are awarded to the highest placed teams at the conclusion of the event. If a qualifying team is not available to take up its place in the Finals, the place is offered to the next team in the final ranking, and so on, until two available teams are selected. A selected team may replace one or more players, but to retain its place in the Finals, the team must be represented by at least three of its original members. SABA will meet the cost of entry into the Finals for the 2 selected teams.