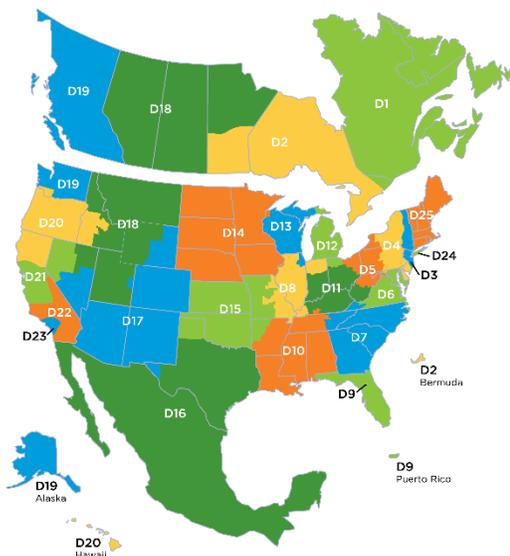


Bridge Terms You Should Know But Nobody Thought to Explain

by Bob Gruber

ACBL



American Contract Bridge League.

The American Contract Bridge League, headquartered in Horn Lake, Mississippi, was founded in 1937. It is the overarching organization for North America, including Canada and Mexico. North America is divided into 25 geographic areas called Districts. Within each District are smaller geographic entities called Units. Within a Unit there will be one or more clubs conducting duplicate bridge games on a regular basis.

Three times a year, the ACBL conducts national tournaments (of 10 or 11 days duration and known as NABCs) that attract players from around the globe. Each of the 25 Districts conducts a number of "Regional Tournaments," lasting about 7 days. Each Unit will conduct 1 to 3 "Sectional Tournaments," typically lasting 2 or 3 days.

The organization publishes a monthly bulletin covering a variety of bridge-related topics.

The ACBL also certifies Directors (a combination of manager and referee) to oversee these tournaments. Certified Directors also oversee the games run at local clubs.



Ace of Clubs Awards
[Helen Shanbrom
Ace of Clubs Awards]

Yearly awards given to the players in a Unit who have won the most masterpoints at club games in the various Masterpoint achievement categories from Rookie (0-5) up to Diamond Life Master (5000-7500) and possibly on to Grand Life Master (10000 points and a National title). [Created in 1984, renamed in 2011 in honor of Grand Life Master Helen Shanbrom of Tamarac FL who won the top category of the Ace of Clubs more times than any other member in ACBL history.]

AFC

American Football Conference (avoid scheduling the Ventura Unit Election Dinner game on the day of the Conference championship game, 2nd last weekend in Jan.)

BA II

Bridge Academy II (in Thousand Oaks)

Board-a-Match
(BAM)

A form of team game scoring in which each board is considered a match onto itself. During the course of the game, your pair and your teammate pair will play the same board(s) against the same opponent team (but not at the same time). Each board is scored in matchpoints (against a single opponent team) so your score on each board will be zero (they beat you), ½ (you tied), 1 (you beat them).

Club Appreciation
Month
[Jane Johnson Club
Appreciation Month]

During October, clubs may hold Club Appreciation games. They offer masterpoint awards calculated at 81.8% sectional-rated black points. In Club Appreciation Team Games, overall awards include 5% gold (not to exceed .25 gold points); the rest are sectional-rated black points. The games run during this month recognize the contributions of Jane Johnson, longtime manager of ACBL's Club Membership Department.



Club Championship	Each club is allowed to hold 4 club championship games per year per sanctioned session, 1 per calendar quarter. These games pay extra points for no extra card fees.
Club Number	Each club in the ACBL is assigned a 6-digit identifier. This identifier is also the sanction number for regular club games. In the Ventura Unit—Unit 547—vicinity, some clubs are: LP= 143636, PV= 243386, Ojai=127100 (Mondays, Gillmon), Oak View=273037 (Fridays, Shaffer), SH= 234658, Townehouse=248807, Ventura Unit=131102 In general, these club numbers are only of interest to directors and club managers
CoC	Conditions of Contest. CoC specify the parameters a director should follow in setting up a game. One of these parameters is the stratification break points. For regular club games, the director determines the stratification break points. Some “external” games, such as a STaC, GNT or NAP have fixed strats because participation is open to all of ACBL or a significantly large subset. A fixed stratification standard is deemed to be in order under these conditions.
Compact KOs	A form of KO teams, in which a reduced number of boards is played (say 12 instead of 24). The compact format allows about twice the number of matches to be played in a given time span. With this format, a Compact KO can crown a winner in a shorter time, usually a single day instead of 2 or more days.
Crane Top 500	The Crane Top 500 is awarded to the ACBL player winning the most Masterpoints each calendar year. Named after Barry Crane, a TV producer (Hogan’s Heroes and others) and Matchpoint player extraordinaire.
DIC	Director in Charge, usually used in conjunction with tournaments. Other definitions are possible.
District	ACBL divides North America into 25 geographic areas called Districts. See the map in the ACBL entry.
EBU	European Bridge Union
Event	Often synonymous with a single session of bridge, but an event can be multiple sessions over 1 or more days, or there can be multiple events running simultaneously, such as an Open game and a point restricted game.
Fast Pairs	For a normal game, ACBL recommends 7½ minutes/board for a 2-board movement and 7 minutes/board for movements of 3 or more boards. For a Fast Pairs game, the recommended time is 5 minutes/board.
Flighted Event	Flighted and stratified refer to grouping pairs or teams based on their Masterpoint holdings. In flighted events, the various flights do not mix/intermix. Within a flight there may be multiple stratifications. At a tournament you may



have an A/Ax flight and a flight of B/C/D stratification. A/Ax is a flight in which all pairs (or teams) can play one another. In this case A is a stratification and Ax is a stratification. Ax can win “up,” i.e. can win or place in flight A, but A cannot win “down,” i.e. cannot win or place in flight Ax. Those in the A/Ax flight do not play anyone in the B/C/D flight.

In the B/C/D flight, you have a similar situation. Anyone in these three flights/strats can play anyone else in these three strats. You can win your strat or higher (within your flight), but you cannot win in a lower strat. And, you’re completely separate from the A/Ax flight.

- GNT** Grand National Teams
an annual event that requires qualifying at the club/unit level, then finishing in the top 3 at the district level, and finally playing for the title at one of the 3 North American Bridge Championships (NABCs). Typically, the stratification break points are not at the director’s discretion; the sponsoring organization specifies them.
- Gold Rush Pairs** A popular event at Regional and National tournaments where entry is (currently) limited to players with a maximum of 749.99 Masterpoints, there are typically 3 stratifications and Gold Points are available to a limited number of pairs that score very well in the event
- GW** Great Western (refers to the Western Conference [WC] comprised of seven [7] Districts: 17-23)
- Helen Shanbrom
Ace of Clubs Awards** See Ace of Clubs Awards
- Howell movements** are characterized by most pairs, both E-W and N-S moving. Not only do they both move, they switch directions! Some rounds they play N-S, but other rounds they play E-W.

Howell movements use table guide cards that tell the pairs—both N-S and E-W—exactly where to go next. And they indicate the boards to be played in each round. There are Howells for 2 tables up to about 22, but Mitchells come into play at 5 tables and are dominant from 7 tables up.
- IMP** International Match Point. In team games, how each pair of the team did on each board is converted to a plus or minus for that board. Then, for each board, that difference (whether plus or minus) is located on the IMP Scale to convert it to another number. That other number has a maximum of 24. Limiting really big scores (e.g., 2000 converts to 19 IMPs and 4000+ converts to 24 IMPs) to a maximum of 24 reduces the impact of a huge win on a single board. Without the IMP Scale a team might lose 6 of the 7 boards of a match and yet still win the match by virtue of a huge win on the 7th board. IMP scoring reduces the likelihood of that happening.
- IMP Pairs** Instead of matchpoints, an IMP Pairs game is scored using IMPs. IMPs are a common method for scoring team games. What this means in practice is that you’re playing a pairs game that is scored like a team



	game. That difference requires you to adopt a team strategy rather than a matchpoint strategy when playing IMP pairs.
I/N	Intermediate / Novice
Jane Johnson Club Appreciation Month	See Club Appreciation Month
JCO	Jewish Community of Ojai
KO -or- KOs	Knock Out. A format for team games. One loss and your team is out of the event.
LP	Las Posas—country club that holds an invitational game 1 st , 3 rd & 5 th Wednesdays at 10:30 A.M.
Match	A term used in team games. In Swiss teams, a match is usually between 6 boards and 8 boards per match, which equates to about ¼ of a session. In KO teams, a match is between 24 and 28 boards per match, which equates to an entire session.
Matchpoints	In most pairs games, the method of scoring is called matchpoints. Your pair's score on any give board is compared one by one to the scores all the other pairs in your direction achieved. For each pair you beat, you score 1 point. For each pair you tie, you score ½ matchpoint. For each pair that beat you, you score zero (0) matchpoints. In loose terms, we say your score is compared or matched with all the other scores on each given board.
McKenney Trophy	Bill McKenney, an ACBL executive secretary, had the trophy awarded to the ACBL player winning the most Masterpoints each calendar year named after him. This award has evolved into the Crane Top 500, named after Barry Crane, a TV producer (Hogan's Heroes and others) and Matchpoint player extraordinaire
Mini-McKenney Awards	Yearly awards given to the players in a Unit who have won the most Masterpoints in all sanctioned events in the various Masterpoint achievement categories from Rookie (0-5) up to Diamond Life Master (5000-7500) and possibly on to Grand Life Master (10000 points and a National title)
Mitchell movements	are characterized by all N-S pairs being stationary and all E-W pairs moving. With an odd number of tables, E-W pairs move up 1 table each and every round. With an even number of tables, there is a slight change in the middle of the game. For one round and one round only, E-W pairs skip a table. The Director will announce when the skip will occur. Standard Mitchell movements use table guide cards that just display the Table #. N-S don't move and E-W are expected to know to go "up" one table each round. Howell movements are used for 2 tables up to about 5, then Mitchells come into play and are dominant from 7 tables up.
MLK	Martin Luther King (day)



Movement	In duplicate bridge, a movement tells how the players and boards should move so that the players encounter each set of boards (and opponents) at most once. To accommodate different numbers of contestants in pairs games, there are a large variety of movements, among them Howell Movements, Mitchell Movements, Web Movements and more
NABC	North American Bridge Championship. See <i>National Tournament</i> .
NAOP	North American Open Pairs. Former name for NAP.
NAP	North American Pairs an annual event that requires qualifying at the club/unit level, then finishing in the top 3 at the district level, and finally playing for the title at one of the 3 North American Bridge Championships (NABCs). Typically, the stratification break points are not at the director's discretion; the sponsoring organization specifies them.
National Tournament or just National	Synonymous with NABC, a North American Bridge Championship. Three times a year, the ACBL conducts national tournaments (of 10 or 11 days duration) that attract players from around the globe.
NFC	National Football Conference (avoid scheduling the Ventura Unit Election Dinner game on the day of the Conference championship game, 2 nd last weekend in Jan.,)
NFL	National Football League (avoid scheduling the Ventura Unit Election Dinner game on the day of the League championship game, 1 st Sunday in February)
Open game	An Open game has no restrictions on entry. Restrictions can be on Masterpoints, age, gender or group membership identified as Invitational. Each restriction results in a reduction in the Masterpoint awards. See also Flighted Event.
pdf -or- PDF	Portable document format
Point-restricted Game	Entry in a game can be open to all comers or restricted in some way. The most common restriction is on the upper masterpoints of the player holding the most masterpoints. Flights/strata are allowed and are the norm in restricted events as well as open events.
PV	The privately-owned Pleasant Valley bridge club holds an open game Tuesdays at 11:55 A.M.
PVRPD	Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District (Camarillo)
Regional Tournament	Each of the ACBL's 25 Districts may conduct a "Regional Tournament," lasting about 7 days. See ACBL for a map of the Districts.
Restricted Entry	Entry in a game can be open to all comers or restricted in some way. The most common restriction is on the upper masterpoints of the player holding the most masterpoints. Flights/strata are allowed and are the norm in restricted events as well as open events.



Round Robin	In team games, an odd number of teams means either one team sits out each match (while the rest of the teams all play head-to-head matches) or some mechanism is used to have 3 teams play. A round robin has the 3 teams play each other in a rotating (or round robin) fashion over the course of 2 regular matches of head-to-head competition for the rest of the competitors.
Sectional Tournament	Within each ACBL District are smaller geographic entities called Units. Each Unit will conduct 1 to 3 “Sectional Tournaments,” typically lasting 2 or 3 days.
Session	A session of bridge is usually a morning, an afternoon, or an evening. There are, however, sessions that start in mid-morning. If that session is followed by another session, it will start in mid-afternoon.
SH	Spanish Hills—country club that holds an invitational game 2 nd & 4 th Thursdays at 10:30 A.M.
STaC Special Sanction Required	Sectional Tournament at Clubs Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs) are ACBL tournaments sponsored by a District or combination of Districts. Participation is limited to specific districts. A club may participate in each session for which it is sanctioned. Typically, the stratification break points are not at the director’s discretion; the sponsoring organization specifies them. STaCs are sectional rated and are staged over a period of up to seven days, typically starting on Monday and ending on Sunday. Results are transmitted to a central office manned by the Director in Charge (DIC). The director in charge combines the results to determine the winners and overall places for participants. Masterpoints awarded are silver. (Regionals award Red points for designated events; Nationals award Gold and Platinum points for designated events.) STaCs do cost a little more and require a special sanction obtained via the ACBL web site.
Stratified Event	Stratified and flighted refer to grouping pairs or teams based on their Masterpoint holdings. In stratified events, you have multiple strats and they intermix. If you have 3 strats, A/B/C, a C pair (or team) can play a B or even an A pair (or team). You can win or place in your strat or higher, but you cannot win or place in a lower strat.
Swiss Team	A format for team games. No matter how many losses your team suffers, the team is in the event for the duration of the event.
TBD	To Be Determined
TBT	Temple Beth Torah (on Foothill Drive in Ventura)
Team(s) Game	A bridge game for 4-6 players on a team. There are various formats including Swiss Teams, Knock Out (KO) Teams, Board-a-Match Teams. Team games can be a single session, 2 sessions in a single day, or many sessions over multiple days at the bigger tournaments.
T.O.	Thousand Oaks, home of Unit 532 (Southern Gold Coast) & Bridge Academy II (BA II)



Unit	ACBL divides North America into 25 geographic areas called Districts. Within each District are smaller geographic entities called Units. Unit 547, the Ventura Unit, is one of them.
Unit 547	The Ventura Unit
Unit Game Special Sanction Required	Each Unit is allocated 24 Unit Championship games per year. They may be used for Unit functions or individually given to clubs within the Unit. These games “pay” higher Masterpoints, but do cost a little more and require a special sanction obtained via the ACBL web site.
VP	Victory Points. Initially, (Swiss) team games were settled by won/lost record. But too many teams might require more matches to determine a single winner than the number of sessions for the event have time for. Another scoring method was needed. Usually, that method is converting the IMPs for a match to VPs by look up on a VP Scale. At the end of 4 matches for a single session, there is usually a definitive winner. If there is a tie, various tie-breaking criteria are used. Of course, the more matches in the event, the less likely a tie is.
WBF	World Bridge Federation
WC	Western Conference (comprised of seven [7] Districts: 17-23)
Web Movements	are an excellent movement that have major advantages: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) they offer a better comparison of scores than some Mitchell Movements,2) they can shorten a sit-out, and3) they can eliminate a skip Web movements do, however, require pre-dealing 2 or more sets of boards

A point restricted game is not an impediment to stratifying that game. For instance,
for a 49er, the initial strats will probably be set by the director to 50 (required max), 30 and 10.
for a 1499er, the initial strats will probably be set by the director to 1500 (required max), 750 and 300.