

**UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION
CONDITIONS OF CONTEST FOR
THE 2021 OPEN UNITED STATES BRIDGE
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*Adopted by the Board of Directors of the
United States Bridge Federation*

Board of Directors of the United States Bridge Federation

International Team Trials Committee & Technical & Advisory Committee

USBC Conventions Committee

USBF Credentials Committee

Tournament Appeals Coordinators

Tournament Appeals Committee Panel

Tournament Planning Committee

Grievance & Appeals Committee

USBF Recorder

Hospitality Committee

Vugraph Committee

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2021 Open USBC Conditions of Contest

I. AUTHORITY AND OVERVIEW

These Conditions of Contest may not be changed after commencement of play except for emergency changes. The [General Conditions of Contest](#) for USBF events apply to this event but are subject to these Conditions of Contest.

The 2021 Open United States Bridge Championship (USBC) is held under the authority of the United States Bridge Federation (USBF). The USBF has agreed, unless special conditions arise, to nominate the winning USA1 and USA2 teams as USA1 and USA2 for the 2021 Bermuda Bowl. This World Championship is scheduled to take place March 26 - April 9, 2022, in Salsomaggiore, Italy.

Under current USBF procedures, if the USBF Board of Directors believes there is any reason not to nominate all of the players on the winning teams for the Bermuda Bowl, the Board will submit the name(s) of any players about whom the Board has questions to the Credentials Committee for its review. The Credentials Committee review shall be limited to the players' ethics, conduct, deportment and hygiene and shall not take into consideration their bridge ability. Normally, the USBF Board will only follow this procedure based on behavior at or after the USBC or information received after the USBC.

A team with a player who is later not invited or approved by the WBF and/or the USBF for any reason (such as residency, conduct, ethics, hygiene, etc.) may be disqualified should it win the 2021 Open USBC.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Vaccination Requirement

All players in the 2021 Open USBC must have submitted evidence of completed vaccination against CoVid19 to the USBF Secretary before play commences. There are no exceptions to this rule.

B. Registration

Teams enter the event by [registering online](#) on the USBF.org website. This link will only work if you are logged in to the USBF site.

1. Guaranteed Entry Date

To assure entry in the 2021 Open USBC, teams must enter on or before 11:59 pm EDT on July 24, 2021.

2. Late Entry Date

Teams may continue to enter until 11:59 EDT on Saturday, August 21, 2021, but only if additional teams cause the Round Robin to run more smoothly.

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Entries after July 24, 2021 will be accepted on a provisional basis, subject to review to determine whether they improve the Round Robin format. If all late entries cannot be accepted, later entries will be rejected before earlier ones.

C. Roster Changes

Registered teams may add or subtract players as they wish, (advising the USBF by [sending an email to the USBF Secretary](#)), until Sept. 11, 2021. After completion of the Round Robin, teams that are qualified for the face-to-face stages of play may make roster changes subject to the following rules:

1. At least 4 players who met the play requirement in the Round Robin remain on the team for the face-to-face stages.
2. Player(s) are added for the face-to-face stages to improve the team's expected performance at the table.
3. No added player played on a different team in the online stages of the event.

D. Date, Schedule, and Length of Matches

1. Online Stages of Play

Beginning September 13, 2021, there will be an online Round Robin to reduce the field to 8 teams. Unless there are more than 24 teams entered in the 2021 Open USBC, the Round Robin will be in two stages, each 3 days long. Each stage will be a complete Round Robin among the participating teams. Round Robin 1 will reduce the field to 12 or 14 teams; Round Robin 2 will reduce the field to 8 teams. There will be no carryover from Round Robin 1 to Round Robin 2 except that if 2 or more teams are tied for eighth in Round Robin 2, the team that won their Round Robin 1 match will win the tie, and if they are still tied, they will be ranked in order of their Round Robin 1 Victory Points to break the tie.

Within a week after entries close on July 24, 2021, the USBF website will summarize the format of the Round Robin. At that time, the website will also state whether additional entries will be accepted.

2. Face-to-Face Stages of Play

Starting on Oct. 5, 2021, there will be face-to-face 2-day, 120-board USA 1 Quarterfinal, Semifinal and Final matches; concurrent with the USA1 Semifinal & Final there will be a 2-day, 120 board USA2 Round of 16 KO match and 1-day, 60 board USA2 Quarterfinal and Semifinal matches; after completion of the USA1 Final, there will be a 2 day, 120 board USA2 Final. The 2021 Open USBC will end on Oct. 12, 2021.

Face to face play will be on LoveBridge tablets.

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E. Play Requirement

Each player must play 50% of the matches in any Round Robin stage to be eligible to continue on the team for subsequent Round Robin stages and for the face-to-face stages (a player who does not meet the Round Robin play requirement may be added back to their team for the face-to-face stages, subject to Section C above). If any Round Robin stage has an odd number of matches, this requirement is rounded down.

Each player must play 50% of the boards in any KO match to remain on the team for the following match (boards not played in a match may be assigned to any player on the team). This play requirement can only be waived by the Tournament Conduct and Ethics Committee in accordance with Section XII.B.3 of the General Conditions of Contest.

F. Prepaid Entry and Fees

The advance entry fee for the event is \$500 per team, which covers the online stages. The advance entry fee is fully refundable if a team withdraws before July 24, 2021 or if a team withdraws after July 24, 2021 and is replaced, or if a team withdraws after July 24, 2021 and that improves the Round Robin format. A team that is eliminated after playing only 3 days in the event will receive a credit of \$200 against entry fees in future 2021 and 2022 USBF events. A team that is eliminated after playing only 4 days in the event will receive a credit of \$100 against entry fees in future 2021 and 2022 USBF events.

There will be a \$400 per team per day entry fee for the face-to-face stages of the event.

G. Site and Hotel Reservations

The site of the 2021 Open USBC is the Hyatt Regency located in Schaumburg, IL. The room rate is \$124 plus tax per night and includes internet access. Reservation website is <<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/CHIRW/G-UBFF>> and is linked from the usbf.org website

H. Captain's Meeting(s)

The Director In Charge (DIC) or DIC's designee may convene a captain's meeting before the Round Robin stage, the Quarterfinal stage, and any other stage. Topics may include: use of tablets, conditions clarifications, seed selection, seating, system summary form, convention cards, tampering, reporting of scores, score corrections and slow play procedures. All Captain's Meetings will be held on Zoom.

III. USA1 FORMAT

A. Setting the Bracket for Knockout Rounds

The bracket is set before the start of the first knockout round. The bracket is determined by seeding points.

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1. Seeding the Quarterfinal - Ranking by Seeding Points

All teams shall be ranked by average Seeding Points (SPs). Each player's SPs shall be calculated as the sum of the following:

- a. ACBL Seeding Method One: ACBL seeding points, (a.k.a V/S/R points), including masterpoints given via the ACBL Masterpoint Log. Resident's seeding points awarded (not earned) by the ACBL shall count toward a player's ACBL seeding point totals.
- b. Round Robin Points earned for high finishes in each stage of the Round Robin shall be awarded as follows:
 - 1) Round Robin 2 finishers receive: 7 seeding points for first, 5 seeding points for second, 3 seeding points for third, 2 seeding points for fourth, 1 seeding point for fifth.
 - 2) Round Robin 1 finishers receive: 3 seeding points for first, 2 seeding points for second, and 1 seeding point for third.
- c. Seeding Point Reductions and Exclusions
 - 1) A player shall forfeit all seeding points earned in an event when the team for that event included a player who has been found guilty of cheating by the USBF, the ACBL, the ABA, the WBF or a member NBO of the WBF.
 - 2) Seeding points awarded for online play in ACBL events shall not count.

A team's average Seeding Points (SPs) are equal to the SP totals for each player (capped at 50) divided by the number of players on the team. Round Robin points earned shall not be subject to the 50 SP cap.

3. Seeding the Quarterfinal - Shuffling

The teams are plugged into the Bracket based on seeding points:

- a. Teams 1 and 2 are fixed.
- b. Teams that are ranked 3 and 4 are assigned to positions 3 and 4 by lot.
- c. Lower ranked teams are assigned their bracket positions in pairs by lot.

IV. USA2 FORMAT

A. USA1 Quarterfinal Teams Play in USA2

Only the teams that qualify for face-to-face play are eligible to play in the USA2 bracket.

B. Format

All of the Quarterfinal losers play in USA2. The USA2 stages, format and the number of teams in each are as follows:

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1. Stage 1

The 120 board Stage 1 takes place during the USA1 Semifinal. There are 4 teams in Stage 1, the 4 losers from the USA1 Quarterfinal.

2. Quarterfinal

The 60 board USA2 Quarterfinal takes place during the first day of the USA1 Final. There are 4 teams in the USA2 Quarterfinal, the two USA1 Semifinal losers and the two USA2 Stage 1 winners. Each USA1 Semifinal loser will play a USA2 Stage 1 winner. Which teams play will be randomly assigned, unless one assignment would result in a replay of a USA1 Quarterfinal match, in which case the other assignment will apply.

3. Semifinal

The 60 board USA2 Semifinal takes place during the second day of the USA1 Final. There are 2 teams in the USA2 Semifinal, the winners of the USA2 Quarterfinal.

4. Final

The 120 board USA2 Final match takes place on the two days following the completion of the USA2 Semifinal. There are 2 teams in the Final, the winner of the USA2 Semifinal and the loser of the USA1 Final.

V. SPECIAL RULES FOR ONLINE PLAY

A. Audio & Video Screenmate Communication

Screenmates (N & E, S & W) shall have audio communication with each other throughout the bidding and play, except that when one of them is dummy, they may leave the table and mute themselves, but if they do so they lose their dummy rights. Screenmates should attempt to have video communication with each other throughout the bidding and play, but may turn off video if they are having connection or computer issues.

B. Use of Electronic Devices

Except when a player is dummy, or to consult the opponent's system filings, or for health related devices that have been approved by the DIC in advance, no player may use an electronic device for any purpose other than playing on RealBridge.

C. Closed Notes

Players may not consult their own notes or any other aids to memory at any time during play, except when they are dummy.

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D. Undos for Misclicks Will be Allowed

Any player who accidentally clicks on the wrong bid or card (“misclick”) may ask for an undo and the opponents shall either allow the undo or summon the director to rule on whether it should be allowed. The request for an undo must be made before the partner of the person requesting the undo has acted. If the undo request is for a bid that has not yet been shown to the players on the other side of the screen, the screenmate of the player requesting the undo shall accept or reject it without input from their partner. If there are any concerns about whether an undo should be allowed, the players should summon the Director.

E. Self Alerts and Explanations

Each player will explain and alert their own bids. Players should explain any bid about which they have information they believe the opponent might not expect. Bids that have been explained or alerted will be highlighted in the bidding diagram for the bidder’s opponents, but not for the bidder’s partner. A bid that is alerted but not explained will be highlighted in the diagram in the same way as an explained bid - it is not necessary to alert a bid that is explained.

F. Logging onto RealBridge

Each player will receive an email each day with links to log in for each segment of play. The link will take the player directly to his or her seat. All players should be logged onto RealBridge by the scheduled start for the segment. Play for a segment will not be started until all of the players in all of the matches are on RealBridge. If a player is late for the scheduled start of a segment, his or her team will lose 1 VP for each 5 minutes the player is late, unless the start has been delayed by the organizers.

G. Round Robin Played in 2 Halves

1. The “Balanced Play Requirement” set forth in the General Conditions of Contest applies to a Round Robin that is played in 2 halves.
2. There will be no seating rights for a Round Robin that is played in 2 halves.
3. If a Round Robin is played in 2 halves, the scores for each half will be converted to Victory Points and the team’s score for the full Round Robin will be the sum of its VP scores in each half of each match.

H. Submitting Lineups

1. Each team must submit its lineup on the team’s online lineup page for the first match of the day by 11:00 am.
2. Each team must submit its lineup on the team’s online lineup page for subsequent matches before the scheduled starting time for the current match.
3. If a team has not submitted its lineup by the time it is due, the lineup will be the same as for the preceding match. If a team has not submitted its lineup for the

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first match of any stage of the Round Robin, the Tournament Organizer and DIC will assign positions to players for that match.

4. For the first match of the day, the Tournament Organizer will email each team captain the match #, the opposing team name and the opposing team lineup approximately 90 minutes before the starting time for the match. For subsequent matches, the Tournament Organizer will email each team captain the match #, the opposing team name and the opposing team lineup approximately 50 minutes before the starting time for the match.

I. Time Allowed

The online play schedule is based on 7.5 minutes per board, with 15 or 20 minutes between matches. A board that has not been started when time expires may not be played. If it is likely that a board may not be played at one table, the DIC will attempt to prevent the other table from playing it. If a board has been played at one table and not the other, the DIC will assign a score based on the Cross-IMPs for the result at the table where the board was played.

J. Video Meetings

Any Captains' Meetings or other meetings will be held on Zoom. All team captains and any player who is interested in attending a Captains' Meeting should accept the invitation to join the Zoom meeting.

K. Kibitzing

There will be delayed kibitzing and Vugraph online. "Live" kibitzing from next to a player is allowed for online play only, and kibitzers should observe the same procedures they would if they were kibitzing a face to face bridge event: they should not speak, they should not point anything out to the player, and they should not have any electronic devices.

VI. SPECIAL RULES FOR FACE-TO-FACE PLAY

A. Play is on Tablets

Face-to-face play will be on electronic tablets; there will be 2 (screenmates) or 4 players in each room; if there are 4 players in a room, there will be a screen table. The tablets will be supplied by USBF, will remain at the table and will be cleaned after each segment of play. Each player will be issued a stylus and/or a mouse to use to enter bids and plays on the tablet and will keep the same stylus and/or mouse throughout the event.

B. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices other than tablets used for play or health-related devices approved in advance by the DIC will be allowed in the playing rooms.

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C. Alerts and Explanations

Each player will explain and alert their own bids. The explanations and alerts will be seen only by the bidder's opponents, not by the bidder's partner. Players should explain any bid about which they have information they believe the opponent might not expect.

D. Time Allowed

The play schedule is based on 8 minutes per board, with 15 minutes between KO segments. A board that has not been started when time for a segment expires may not be played. If it is possible that a board may not be played at one table, the DIC will attempt to prevent the other table from playing it.

E. Kibitzing

There will be delayed kibitzing and Vugraph online. "Live" kibitzing from next to a player is not allowed, except by NPCs.

VII. INTERPRETATION

A. Interpretation of Conditions

On matters involving the interpretation of these conditions or treatments of matters not included in these conditions:

1. Prior to July 24, 2021, the Conditions of Contest Committee and ITTC Technical & Advisory Committee (TAC) shall make determinations.
2. After July 24, 2021 but before Oct. 5, 2021, the DIC shall make determinations after consulting with the TAC. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.
3. Beginning Oct. 5, 2021, the DIC shall make such determinations. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.

**APPENDICES TO
2021 Open USBC CONDITIONS OF CONTEST**

APP I: FORMATS FOR ONLINE STAGES

A. Fewer than Nine Teams Entered

If fewer than nine teams enter the Open USBC, there will be no online stages.

B. Nine to Fourteen Teams Entered

If there are 9 to 14 teams entered in the USBC, there will be an online complete Round Robin to select 8 teams. The Round Robin will be 2 or 3 days long depending on entry size. All matches will be 10-boards long and will be scored at Victory Points using the USBF 10-board Victory Point scale. Teams placing lower than 8th will be eliminated.

C. More than Fourteen Teams Entered

If there are more than 14 teams entered in the USBC, there will be a multi-stage Round Robin to reduce the field to 8 teams. The Conditions of Contest committee will determine the exact format for the number of teams entered, based on the following general principles:

1. No more than 45% of the teams will be eliminated in any one stage.
2. Each match will be 7 boards or longer.
3. There will be no carryover from one stage to the next.
4. If possible, steeper cuts will be in early stages.