

# UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION CONDITIONS OF CONTEST FOR THE 2024 OPEN UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

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

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## **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 2023 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 team as USA2 for the 2023 Bermuda Bowl. This World Championship is scheduled to take place August 20-Sept 2, 2023, in Marrakech, Morocco.

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 team 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 2023 Open USBC.

## **II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### ~~Vaccination Requirement~~

~~All players in the 2023 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.~~

### **A. 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 2024~~3~~ Open USBC, teams must enter on or before 11:59 pm EDT on Tuesday, ~~March 21~~~~March 26~~, 2024~~3~~.

#### **2. Late Entry Date**

Teams may continue to enter until 11:59 EDT on Sunday, April ~~7~~~~2~~, 2024~~3~~, but only if fewer than 16 teams have entered by ~~March 21~~~~March 26~~.

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Entries after ~~March 24~~March 26, 2024~~3~~ will be accepted on a provisional basis, and only until 16 teams have entered. If all late entries cannot be accepted, later entries will be rejected before earlier ones.

## **B. Roster Changes**

### **1. Before Play Starts**

Registered teams may add or subtract players as they wish, (advising the USBF by [sending an email to the USBF Secretary](#)), until ~~March 30~~April 15, 2024~~3~~ if there is an online stage, or until April 28, 2024~~3~~ if there is not an online stage.

### **2. Between ~~Round Robin and KO~~Online and Face-to-Face**

After completion of the ~~Round Robin~~online stage, teams that are qualified for the Knockout stages of play may make roster changes only subject to the following rules:

1. The change is to a team that qualified based on seeding points and the team would still qualify based on seeding points after the change, or
2. The change is a replacement for a player who has died,; or
3. the change is a replacement for a player who had to withdraw for another reason and the replacement has been approved by the USBF Board of Directors, and;
4. If the change is to a team that qualified based on online play, aAt least 3 players on a 4 person team or 4 players on a 5 or 6 person team who met the play requirement in the ~~Round Robin~~online stage remain on the team for the face-to-face stages.

### **3. During the KO Stages**

No roster changes are allowed after the KO has commenced. Substitutes may be allowed subject to the provisions of the General Conditions of Contest.

## **C. Date, Schedule, and Length of Matches**

### **1. Online Stages of Play**

If more than 16 teams have entered (counting a team with a bye to the Quarterfinal as 2 teams), there will be an online ~~Round Robin~~stage to reduce the field to 16 teams. The online stage will be as follows, based on the number of teams to be eliminated to reduce the field to 16 teams (counting a team with a bye to the Quarterfinal as 2 teams):

If 1 team is to be eliminated, the bottom 2 teams based on seeding points will play a 64-board KO match The online Round Robin will be held between March 28 and April 7~~4~~, 2024~~3~~. If the teams cannot agree on a date, the match will be played on April 2nd.

If 2 teams are to be eliminated, the bottom 4 teams will play a double elimination KO with 60 board matches between March 28 and April 7. If the teams cannot agree on dates, the matches will be played on April 2, 3, and 4.

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If more than 2 teams are to be eliminated, the bottom 11 teams will play a Round Robin to eliminate enough teams to leave 16.

~~If between 20 and 26 teams enter the 2023 Open USBC, the Round Robin will be a complete Round Robin, played over as many days as needed to have 10 board matches (5 matches per day). If between 17 and 20 teams enter, the Round Robin will be a complete Round Robin with match length and number of days determined based on the number of teams. If more than 26 teams enter, the Round Robin will be played in 2 stages with the format for each stage based on the number of teams, with the intent of eliminating no more than 40% of the teams in each stage, and having matches no shorter than 7 boards.~~

~~Within a week after March 23, 2023, the USBF website will summarize the format of the Round Robin.~~

### 2. Face-to-Face Stages of Play

If 14 or more teams have entered the event, ~~and no more than 2 of them have a bye to the Quarterfinal~~, starting on May 1, 2024~~3~~, there will be face-to-face 2-day, 120-board Round of 16, Quarterfinal, Semifinal, and Final matches. With 14 or 15 teams entered, the top 1 or 2 teams will have a bye to the Quarterfinal, ~~even if they had not earned it based on PPs.~~

If 9-13 teams have entered the event, ~~and no team has earned a bye to the Quarterfinal~~, the first 2 days will be a complete Round Robin to qualify the top 8 teams for the Quarterfinal. ~~If 9-13 teams have entered the event and one team has earned a bye to the Quarterfinal, the first 2 days will be a complete Round Robin to qualify 7 teams for the Quarterfinal. If 9-13 teams have entered the event and two teams have earned byes to the Quarterfinal, the first 2 days will be a complete Round Robin to qualify 6 teams for the Quarterfinal.~~

The format of the Round Robin will be:

~~7 or 8 teams, 14 matches of 7 boards each, with each team playing each other team twice, once on May 1 and once on May 2. Each player on each team must play at least one of the two matches against each other team. With 7 teams, each team will have a sit out match each day.~~

9 or 10 teams, 9 matches of 11 boards each. With 9 teams, each team will have one sit out match;

11 or 12 teams, 11 matches of 9 boards each. With 11 teams, each team will have one sit out match;

13 teams, 12 matches of 8 boards each, scheduled as 13 matches, each team will have one sit out match;

In all cases, the 2024~~3~~ Open USBC will end on May 8, 2024~~3~~.

Face to face play will be on LoveBridge electronic devices with 2 players (screenmates) in each room.

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## **D. 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. 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 XI~~VI~~.B.1.c.3 of the General Conditions of Contest.

## **E. Prepaid Entry and Fees**

The advance entry fee for the 2024~~3~~ Open USBC is \$500 per team, which covers the online stages as well as the start up costs for the face-to-face stages. The advance entry fee is due by March 26~~1~~, 2023 and is fully refundable if a team withdraws before March 26~~1~~, 2024~~3~~ or if a team withdraws after March 26~~1~~, 2024~~3~~ and is replaced, or if a team withdraws after March 26~~1~~, 2024~~3~~ and that improves the format.

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

## **F. Site and Hotel Reservations**

The site of the 2024~~3~~ Open USBC is the Hyatt Regency located in Schaumburg, IL. The room rate is \$14~~14~~~~36~~ plus tax per night and includes internet access. There is no charge for early departure. Reservation website is linked from the usbf.org website

## **G. Captain's Meeting(s)**

The Director In Charge (DIC) or DIC's designee may convene a captain's meeting before the ~~Round Robin~~online stage, the Round of 16 stage, and any other stage. Topics may include: use of electronic devices, 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. POSITIONING POINTS**

Positioning Points (PPs) are used to rank the teams for the purpose of obtaining byes to the Semifinal, Quarterfinal, and Round of 16, as well as seeding the K/O bracket.

### **A. Positioning Points from Regular Cycle Events**

PPs for the qualifying events will be as follows:

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| Place | Spingold,<br>Vanderbilt, &<br>Soloway | Reisinger | USBC  | Explanations  |
|-------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-------|---|
| 1st   | 100                                   | 85        | 18*** | *** The winner of the 2022 & 2023 Open USBCs receive USBC Positioning Points for the 2024 USBC.<br>** Positioning points for the USBC are awarded for winning a K/O match. Thus, the team that wins its final match receives 18 PPs, in addition to any PPs it may have received for winning an earlier match; each team that wins its Semifinal match receives 14 PPs; a team that wins its quarter final match receives 11 PPs; a team that wins its Round of 16 match receives 8 PPs. A team without a bye that wins the USBC receives a total of 51 PPs.<br>PPs earned in a prior USBC will not count when determining byes to the Quarterfinal or Semifinal. |
| 2nd   | 70                                    | 60        | 14**  |   |
| 3rd   | 46                                    | 42        | 11**  |   |
| 4th   | 46                                    | 29        | 11**  |   |
| 5th   | 27                                    | 21        | 8**   |   |
| 6th   | 27                                    | 17        | 8**   |   |
| 7th   | 27                                    | 14        | 8**   |   |
| 8th   | 27                                    | 12        | 8**   |   |
| 9th   | 12                                    | 11        |       |   |
| 10th  | 12                                    | 10*       |       | *<br>Positioning points for the Reisinger are awarded only to teams that qualify for the Final  |
| 11th  | 12                                    | 9*        |       |   |
| 12th  | 12                                    | 8*        |       |   |
| 13th  | 12                                    | 7*        |       |   |
| 14th  | 12                                    | 6*        |       |   |
| 15th  | 12                                    | 5*        |       |   |
| 16th  | 12                                    | 4*        |       |   |

### B. Eligibility for Positioning Points

A team may earn PPs for the 2024<sup>3</sup> USBC based on its performance in the 2022 (first place only) and 2023<sup>2</sup> USBCs, 2023<sup>2</sup> Spingold, 2023<sup>2</sup> Soloway, 2023<sup>2</sup> Reisinger, and 2024<sup>3</sup> Vanderbilt. To earn PPs from any of these “cycle” events, at least 4 members of the 2024<sup>3</sup> USBC team must have played on the cycle-event team, and must be Eligible Players who were USBF Active or Resident Members on a date no later than 2 weeks after conclusion of the event for which PPs were awarded. For example, if players ABCD played together on a 2023<sup>2</sup> USBC team, and players ABEF played together on a 2023<sup>2</sup> Spingold team, and players CDEF played together on a 2023<sup>2</sup> Reisinger team, then a 6-person 2024<sup>3</sup> USBC team of ABCDEF could use PPs earned in all three events to count towards earning a bye.

An Eligible Player is a player who is eligible to compete for the USA in the WBF championship for which the USBC is a selection trial and who has not already qualified for the WBF event for which the USBC is the selection trial. In addition to being subject



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to Section III., paragraphs D., E. and F., below, to be counted as a member of a team in an event that awards PPs, a player must fulfill the ACBL minimum-play requirements for the overall rank for which PPs are awarded. For example, if a team with eligible players A, B, C & D and ineligible player E wins an event, and player A did not fulfill the minimum play requirement in the Final, but did fulfill the minimum play requirement through the Semifinal, the team earns PPs for winning its Semifinal match (finishing 2nd), but does not earn PPs for winning the Final. The Credentials Committee determines Eligibility.

## **C. Dilution of PPs**

Teams normally earn full PPs for any event in which at least four Eligible Players who are also USBF Active Members compete on the same team. There are two exceptions:

### **1) Effect of Ineligible Players**

A team with one or two Ineligible Players will earn diluted PPs according to the following schedule:

75% of PPs earned if there is 1 Ineligible Player  
50% of PPs earned if there are 2 Ineligible Players  
No PPs if there are 3 or more Ineligible Players

In addition, PPs earned on a team with 1 or 2 ineligible players will not count when determining byes to the Quarterfinal or Semifinal.

### **2) Effect of Bridge Expertise**

When a player has been added to a team that earned PPs without that player, the Credentials Committee shall first determine whether the team added the player in order to improve its chances of winning at the table. If the Credentials Committee determines that is the case, the team's PPs shall not be reduced under this section. In all other situations, based on criteria described in this section, the Credentials Committee may determine, for PPs purposes, that any team member of a team entered in the 2024<sup>43</sup> USBC has expertise that is significantly less than that of the majority of the team.

- a) If such a team member did not play in a Major Event (USBC, Spingold, Soloway, Reisinger, or Vanderbilt) in which his or her teammates earned PPs, the team will receive 50% of the PPs for the team's finishing position in the event.
- b) If such a team member earned some PPs and then did not play the required percentage of boards to qualify for that team's final position in a Major Event, the team will receive the greater of the PPs earned up to the point such team member did not play the required percentage of boards, or, 50% of the PPs for the team's finishing positioning position in the event.

In making the determination as to whether a player has expertise significantly below the majority of the team, the Credentials Committee shall examine many criteria and any special circumstances necessitating the augmentation. A player who has both regularly

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played more than the minimum required boards and regularly played the last segment in meaningful match situations when the player was not required to do so on this or comparable teams in recent years is considered to have expertise not significantly below the majority of the team.

If a team member's bridge expertise is determined to be significantly less than that of the majority of the team, that member must be a member of the team before any PPs are won (See Pre-registration, below). If such a member does not play in a Major Event with his team, his team may earn PPs only in the first Major Event he does not play in. In that first event, the team earns the lesser of one half the PPs earned or the largest number of PPs earned in any event in which such a player played.

#### **D. Pre-Registration**

In order to receive PPs for bye considerations, a team containing a player who did not play in the 2023<sup>2</sup> USBC, Spingold, Soloway, or Reisinger who then joins the team for play in a later Major event and whose bridge expertise is determined to be significantly less than that of the remainder of the team, must have submitted a USBC entry to the USBF prior to the first Major event that the team played in without such player. ("Pre-registered").

In the event a Pre-registered team wishes to make changes to its roster, such team is subject to all other terms of these conditions.

#### **E. Requirement to be an Active or Resident Member of USBF.**

Players entering the USBC must be dues paying 2024<sup>3</sup> Active or Resident Members of the USBF. For a team to be credited with Positioning Points (PPs) for bye purposes for the 2024<sup>3</sup> USBC, at least 4 Eligible Players on the team must have paid their USBF Active or Resident Member dues prior to the start of the event in which they earned PPs or (for an additional fee) within two weeks after the event in which they earned PPs.

USBF Active and Resident Member Dues cover a calendar year.

USBF Active and Resident Member Dues are \$50 (\$25 for players under age 26 and \$15 for players under age 20 on January 1 of the year for which dues are paid), or \$150 when paid within two weeks after an event in which PPs were earned, or \$130 for 3 years. Dues may be paid by sending a check made payable to the USBF to Stan Subeck, 106 Penn Court, Glenview, IL 60026 or by using a credit card on the usbf website, or by cash or credit card in person.

#### **F. Ties**

Ties shall be broken first by most PPs won in the Spingold, then if still tied, most PPs won in the Vanderbilt, then if still tied, most PPs won in the Soloway, then if still tied, most PPs won in the Reisinger, then if still tied, a coin flip.

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## **IV. BYES**

In order to determine the number of teams needed to emerge from the early stages of the event, it is necessary to focus on the number of “slots” taken up in the Round of 16 (if held). When counting “slots” in the Round of 16, teams with byes to the Semifinal count as four slots, teams with byes to the Quarterfinal count as two slots and teams with byes to the Round of 16 count as one slot. At most 12 slots can be taken up by teams with byes. At least four slots in the Round of 16 are reserved for teams without byes. (If no Round of 16 is held, then the focus is on the teams in the Quarterfinal, counting the teams receiving byes to the Semifinal as two slots in the Quarterfinal.) Byes are given in rank order by PPs. The team with the highest number of PPs is placed ahead of teams with fewer PPs. PP's earned with ineligible player(s) on the team and PPs earned in the USBC cannot be used for Quarterfinal or Semifinal byes.

### **A. Byes to the Semifinal**

There are two PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Semifinal: 186 PPs for one bye and at least 198 each for two byes. In addition a team needs a win in the 2023~~2~~ Spingold, the 2023~~2~~ Soloway, the 2023~~2~~ Reisinger, the 2024~~3~~ Vanderbilt, or the 2023~~2~~ Bermuda Bowl or 2022 Rosenblum. At most two teams may earn a bye to the Semifinal. If three teams have won an event and each has PPs equaling or exceeding 198, the two teams with the highest PP totals shall earn byes to the Semifinal.

Example: There are three teams with the following PPs: 186, 189 and 199 and each team has won one of the events listed above. Only the team with 199 PPs gets a bye to the Semifinal, because in order for two teams to earn a bye, each would need to have at least 198 PPs. The other two teams would have byes to the Quarterfinal.

### **B. Byes to the Quarterfinal**

There are six PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Quarterfinal: 94, 95, 97, 101, 106, 112. Each slot taken up by a Semifinal bye removes the two lowest threshold numbers.

If no team has a bye to the Semifinal, up to six teams may earn a bye to the Quarterfinal. The six PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Quarterfinal are: at least 94 PPs for one bye, at least 95 PPs each for two byes, at least 97 PPs each for three byes, at least 101 PPs each for four byes, at least 106 PPs each for five byes and at least 112 PPs each for six byes.

If one team has a bye to the Semifinal, up to four teams may earn a bye to the Quarterfinal. The four PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Quarterfinal are: at least 97 PPs for one bye, at least 101 PPs each for two byes, at least 106 PPs each for three byes and at least 112 PPs each for four byes.

If two teams have a bye to the Semifinal, only one or two teams may earn a bye to the Quarterfinal. The two PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Quarterfinal are at least 106 PPs for one bye and 112 PPs each for two byes.

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Teams that did not receive a bye to the Quarterfinal will usually be eligible to receive a bye to the Round of 16. See C. below.

Examples: There are six teams with the following PPs: 80, 85, 94, 96, 100, and 106.

If there are 6 slots available (no bye to the Semifinal), the teams with 106 PPs and 101 PPs would have a bye to the Quarterfinal. The team with 96 PPs could not earn a bye because giving three byes require each team to have at least 106 PPs.

If there are 4 slots available, (one bye to the Semifinal), only the team with 106 PPs would have a bye to the Quarterfinal. The team with 100 PPs could not earn a bye because the fourth slot, 101 PPs, would apply.

If there are two slots available, (two byes to the Semifinal), none of these teams would receive a QF bye, as 112 would become the first threshold.

### **C. Byes to the Round of 16**

If there is a Round of 16, at most 12 slots can be taken up by teams with byes. There are 12 PP thresholds to earn a bye to the Round of 16: 48, 48, 48, 50, 53, 55, 58, 60, 62, 65, 68, 72. Slots taken up by Semifinal byes and/or Quarterfinal byes remove the lowest threshold numbers above.

Example: there are five teams with the following PPs: 52, 58, 67, 72 and 75 and four slots are already taken up by Semifinal or Quarterfinal byes.

The first four PP thresholds for byes to the Round of 16 are removed (48, 48, 48, 50) because of the four slots are taken up by the Semifinal and/or Quarterfinal byes. The eight remaining PP thresholds for byes to the Round of 16 are at least 53 for one bye, at least 55 PPs each for two byes, at least 58 PPs each for three byes, at least 60 PPs each for four byes, at least 62 PPs each for five byes, etc. In this example, there are three teams with at least 58 PPs, but there are not four teams with at least 60 PPs. So the three teams with 75, 72, and 67 PPs would earn a bye to the Round of 16.

## **V. KO FORMAT**

### **A. Number of Teams Playing in Early Stages**

#### **1) Quarterfinal**

The Quarterfinal shall consist of four teams if there are two Semifinal byes, six teams if there is one Semifinal bye, and eight teams if there are no Semifinal byes.

#### **2) Round of 16**

The number of teams in the Round of 16 shall be 16 reduced by four times the number of Semifinal byes plus twice the number of Quarterfinal byes. The resulting number reduced by the number of teams with byes to the Round of 16 is referred to as "Slots in Round of 16."

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### **3) Pre-Round of 16 Online Stages**

The stages of the 2024<sup>3</sup> Open USBC before the Round of 16 will be played online, and will be Round Robin play to reduce the field to the number of slots in the Round of 16<sup>4</sup>. The precise format of the Round Robin(s) will be determined after the number of teams are known. See Section II.D.1 for the format of the online stage.

### **B. Setting the Bracket for Knockout Rounds**

The bracket is set before the start of the first knockout round. The bracket is determined by as follows based on the procedures set forth in the USBC General Conditions of Contest with the additional provision that the winner of the Round Robin has the right to reshuffle as follows:

#### **1) Seeding the Teams with Byes**

Teams with byes are seeded first, based on the stage to which they have a bye, and when more than 1 team has a bye to the same stage, based on the total Positioning Points the teams with byes to that stage have earned.

#### **2) Seeding the Round of 16 – Teams Without Byes – 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 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. PPs earned by an individual (IPPs) during the Cycle. IPPs are the PPs earned by individual members of a team that the individual played on during the Cycle, but if that team contained Ineligible Players, IPPs are diluted by 25% if the team contained one Ineligible Player, 50% if the team contained 2 Ineligible Players and 75% if a team contained 3 Ineligible Players. No IPPs may be earned by players on a team with 4 or 5 Ineligible Players. The IPPs of a player shall be the sum of the IPPs earned during the cycle. IPPs are further limited as follows:
  - The first twenty are counted fully
  - The second twenty are discounted by half
  - The third twenty are discounted by three-quarters
  - No credit shall be earned for more than 60 PPs
  - The maximum IPPs for any player shall be 35.
- c. Round Robin Points

Points earned for high finishes in the final stage of the Round Robin shall be awarded as follows:

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~~If there is a 2 stage Round Robin, Round Robin 1 finishers receive 3 seeding points for first, 2 seeding points for second, and 1 seeding point for third.~~

~~A team's average Seeding Points (SPs) are equal to the SP totals for each player (capped at 90) divided by the number of players on the team. Round Robin points earned shall not be subject to the 90 SP cap.~~

**3) ~~IPP and Seeding Point Reduction for finishes with “tainted players”~~**

~~A player shall forfeit all positioning points and seeding points earned in an event when the team for that event included a player who has been convicted by ACBL, EBL or the player's NBO of collusive cheating.~~

**4) ~~Seeding the Round of 16 – Shuffling~~**

~~The teams from the Round Robin are plugged into the Bracket after the Bye teams have been placed as set forth in 1) above. Regardless of whether they have byes or byes to different stages of the event:~~

- ~~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.~~

~~If there is no Round Robin, the bracket shall be set as determined by the byes and the SPs of the non bye teams, in accordance with this paragraph.~~

**Seeding the Round of 16 - Reshuffle**

After the bracket is set and the shuffling is done as provided ~~above~~in the General Conditions of Contest, the team that won the Round Robin can refuse its drawn opponent by asking for a re-shuffle. If such reshuffle is requested, the Round Robin winner will randomly choose from among its team number and its bracket mate's numbers ~~(i.e., a two or three team group identified in the above paragraph)~~. The number chosen by the Round Robin winner will be swapped with its original number. If the Round Robin winner chooses its own number again, it keeps it.

A team with a bye in a bracket group with the Round Robin winner is exempt from inclusion in a reshuffle (even though it was included in the initial bracket shuffle). In such a case, the reshuffle is among only those teams who do not have byes.

If the Round Robin winner does not have a bracket mate to reshuffle with, because its bracket-mates have byes or are empty bye slots, then the team may reshuffle with the next highest bracketed team below the Round Robin winner that is an even number of bracket slots below the Round Robin winner. (i.e. 2 slots below, or 4 slots below, if 2 does not exist, etc.).

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## **VI. 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. The first violation of this rule will be subject to a procedural penalty of 5 IMPs. Subsequent violations will be subject to procedural penalties to be determined by the DIC.

### **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.

### **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. **Each player must provide a brief explanation of any bid that requires an alert or explanation before making the bid. That explanation should be adequate to allow the player who bids next to consider their bid. The player may expand on the explanation after making the bid.**

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.

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## **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 EDT.
2. Each team must submit its lineup on the team’s online lineup page for the match after the long break by 30 minutes before that match is scheduled to start.
3. Each team must submit its lineup on the team’s online lineup page for other matches before the scheduled starting time for the preceding match.
4. 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 first match of any stage of the Round Robin, the Tournament Organizer and DIC will assign positions to players for that match.
5. 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 55 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 when all lineups have been submitted.

## **I. Time Allowed**

The online play schedule is based on approximately 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. The score for unplayed boards and penalties for slow play are set forth in the General Conditions of Contest.



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~~For this event the VP and IMP penalties set forth in the General Conditions of Contest for slow play shall be reduced by 50%.~~

## **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.

# **VII. SPECIAL RULES FOR FACE-TO-FACE PLAY**

## **A. Play is on Electronic devices**

Face-to-face play will be on electronic devices; there will be 2 players (screenmates) in each room. The electronic devices will be supplied by USBF, and will remain at the table.

## **B. Use of Electronic Devices**

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

Tournament staff will randomly check for electronics on players' persons. If a player is found with an electronic device, the player's team will be penalized 10 imps and the remaining players on the offending team will be checked for electronic devices. If any other player on the offending team is found with an electronic device, the team will be eliminated.

A second infraction by any player on an offending team will result in a penalty of 30 imps. The third time any player on an offending team is found to have an electronic device the team will be eliminated from the event.

Any player who was found with an electronic device more than once will not be allowed to enter any USBF selection trial for 25 months.

## **C. Alerts and Explanations**

Each player will explain and alert their own bids. ~~Each player must provide a brief explanation of any bid that requires an alert or explanation before making the bid. That explanation should be adequate to allow the player who bids next to consider their bid. The player may expand on the explanation after making the bid.~~

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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.

?? Do we need something about permitted questions to the bidder or to ones screenmate?

## **D. Time Allowed**

The play schedule is based on approximately 87.5 minutes per board for one board fewer than in the segment, with 15 minutes between KO segments. A board that has not been started when time for a segment expires may not be played. The score for unplayed boards and penalties for a pair that is found to be at fault are set forth in the General Conditions of Contest. ~~However, for this event the VP and IMP penalties set forth in the General Conditions of Contest for slow play shall be reduced by 50%.~~

## **E. Masks**

Masks are optional except that if a masked player asks their screenmate to wear a mask, the screenmate must do so, absent a compelling reason not to.

## **F. Kibitzing**

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

## **G. If a Player tests Positive for Covid19**

If a player tests positive for Covid-19, or has any other respiratory illness during the KO stages of play, and wants to continue to play, the DIC may, in the DIC's absolute discretion, allow the player to continue to compete from a separate hotel room. In that situation, both the Covid-positive player and that player's screenmate will be video recorded during play.

# **VIII. 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 March 252, 20243, the Conditions of Contest Committee and ITTC Technical & Advisory Committee (TAC) shall make determinations.
2. After March 252, 20243 but before May 1, 2023, 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 May 1, 20243, the DIC shall make such determinations. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.

**DRAFT 1**  
**APPENDIX TO**  
**2022 OPEN USBC CONDITIONS OF CONTEST**

**~~APP I: FORMATS FOR ONLINE STAGES~~**

**~~A. Fewer than 17 Teams Entered~~**

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

**~~B. Seventeen to Twenty-six Teams Entered~~**

~~If there are 17 to 26 teams entered in the USBC, there will be an online complete Round Robin to select 16 teams. If there are 17-20 teams, the Round Robin will 2 or 3 days long and match length will depend on the number of matches to be played. If there are 21-26 teams entered, all matches will be 10 boards long and the number of days will be determined based on the number of teams entered. All matches will be scored at Victory Points using the appropriate USBF Victory Point scale. Teams placing lower than 16th will be eliminated.~~

**~~C. More than Twenty-six Teams Entered~~**

~~If there are more than 26 teams entered in the USBC, there will be a multi-stage Round Robin to reduce the field to 16 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 some carryover from one stage to the next.~~
- ~~4. If possible, steeper cuts will be in early stages.~~