

**CONDITIONS OF CONTEST  
CLEVELAND WHIST CLUB  
(ACBL UNIT 125)  
2024 ONLINE WINTER VICHILL LEAGUE**

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**I. TYPE OF EVENT**

The 2024 Winter Online Vichill League is a bracketed, unit championship rated team event played in a multi-session event beginning January 24, 2024.

The number of sessions, brackets and teams per bracket are based on the number of teams entered.

Within each bracket, competition is typically conducted as a round robin tournament with teams playing every other team once. Depending on attendance and bracket sizes, some brackets may use an incomplete round robin with matches scheduled randomly (For example, if a bracket has 12 teams, each team would play 9 of its 11 opponents, randomly selected.) **At the discretion of league organizers, the top bracket may be conducted as a Swiss Team event rather than a round robin.**

Regardless of bracket format, each team will play 9 matches with no teams being eliminated. (However, if a bracket has only 9 teams, each team would play only 8 matches and have one bye.)

The team in each bracket with the most victory points wins. Ties are broken based on the winner of the head-to-head match played between tied teams. If the tied teams tied their match, the tie is not broken.

Matches are 24 boards in length. Matches are scored according to an ACBL approved IMP scale and then converted to victory points in accordance with Section VIII, Scoring Calculations. A victory of one IMP or more is considered a win for purposes of master point awards. In cases of late or slow play, the number of boards may be adjusted. (See Section III).

Prior to beginning a match, if team captains cannot agree on which pairs will oppose each other the director will flip a coin to resolve the issue, or if one team wants to switch at the half and the other doesn't then the trailing team has the option. If the teams are tied, the director will flip a coin to resolve the issue.

The Vichill League has one Chairperson who has overall responsibility for the event. In addition, the Chairperson, the Cleveland Whist Club President (President) and additional Cleveland Whist Club members selected by the President and Chairperson constitute a committee (Vichill Committee) to be used as appropriate in making decisions during the year.

## **II. TEAM COMPOSITION**

Each team consists of four to six members. Teams are placed in brackets based on ACBL and ABA master points of their members. The Chairperson may assign teams to higher or lower brackets than their master point holdings suggest if he or she determines that the team is better suited to compete in another bracket.

Anyone is welcome to play, except persons under suspension by ACBL or persons barred by the Chairperson (generally for previous transgressions in Vichill competition). Players need not be ACBL members. This stipulation applies to both team members and substitutes. Non-members are encouraged to join the ACBL so that their master points can be recorded.

A player may be a member of only one team in this event.

## **III. TIME AND PLACE**

All regularly scheduled matches are played on Bridge Base Online on specifically scheduled Wednesday nights.

The league will run for 9 Wednesday nights beginning January 24, 2024 and ending on April 24, 2024, according to the following schedule:

January 24 and 31; February 7 and 21; March 6 and 27; and April 3, 17 and 24. (No games during NABC.)

Starting time for brackets will be staggered between approximately 6:40 pm and 7:30 pm (EST) to facilitate setup and operation of the league. No board may be started three hours after the scheduled start of a match. To respect those teams who are available and ready to play the following rule is enforced:

Upon notification to the director by the team captain that his or her team is ready to play and their opponent has not arrived by 15 minutes after the scheduled start of a match, a penalty of five (5) IMPS and an additional three (3) IMP penalty for each additional five-minute interval, shall be assessed against the late team. A team not available to play by 30 minutes after the scheduled start of a match forfeits the match. The Chairman or Director may waive or modify these rules in their discretion to address circumstances deemed by them to warrant the modification. The number of boards may be reduced, at the director's discretion, to meet the deadline of no board being started after 10:30p.m.

If all boards in the first half of the match have not been completed by 84 minutes after the scheduled start the team captains may notify the director who may make a provisional adjustment in the number of boards for the second half so that all boards may be completed at both tables.

#### **IV. AWARDS**

To be eligible for overall awards, a player must have played at least 50% of the matches played (excluding forfeits and byes) by his/her team. We round that calculation down, so that playing 4 of 9 matches qualifies a person for overall awards. Players who only half of a match will receive credit for playing a half match. Only team members meeting these requirement are eligible for overall awards. All points awarded will be ACBL black (unpigmented) points.

Masterpoints are issued for each winning match, or based on overall rank, whichever is higher. Substitutes are eligible for points for winning individual matches, except as stated in Section X. A player who begins the league as a substitute may nonetheless be considered a full team member for purposes of masterpoint awards if they play at least 4 of their team's matches. Points are based on ACBL schedules and will come directly from ACBL.

## V. REGISTRATION AND FEES

All teams must designate a captain and be registered with the Chairperson prior to the first scheduled match.

Fees are \$180 per team for the league (no reduction for brackets with a bye) payable in advance for the complete league schedule prior to the first session. No refunds will be made if a team forfeits. Checks may be made payable to Unit 125.

## VI. TEAM CAPTAIN'S DUTIES

- Properly register his/her team prior to the published deadline and check the published roster at the Unit 125 website ([www.whistclub.org](http://www.whistclub.org)). Any corrections to the roster are to be given to the Vichill Chairperson as soon as a discrepancy is discovered.
- Post his/her team lineup on the Unit 125 website ([www.whistclub.org](http://www.whistclub.org)) no later than Tuesday night before each Wednesday match and field his/her team punctually on the scheduled date.
- Advise each opposing team captain no later than the day before each match, if any of the team's partnerships play a highly unusual bidding system, and provide summary written explanations and/or convention cards along with such advance advice.
- Inform the chairperson of any desired substitution as provided in Section X.
- Make sure a team entry containing the names of all players and subs who are participating in the match is completed. ACBL numbers and BBO screennames should be given for all substitutes.
- Verify the accuracy of posted scores. Scores are posted on the Cleveland Whist Club web site as soon as possible following a match and no later than the next scheduled match. If a Captain believes a posted score is incorrect, he or she must notify the Chairperson as soon as possible after discovering the possible error. The Chairperson will review the posted scores and determine if a correction needs to be made.
- Notify both the Chairperson and opposing team captain in the event his or her team is forfeiting.

## VII. HANDICAP CALCULATIONS

No handicaps are planned for this event, since teams will already be grouped in brackets of players with roughly equivalent master point levels. However, an ACBL approved handicap system may be used in a bracket if the Chairperson determines it is appropriate because of an unusually large masterpoint disparity in a bracket.

The master points held by the persons playing as of the most recent ACBL posting will be used in computing any handicap. Note that there is no handicap involving teams that both average 5000 or more master points per player in the session.

## VIII. SCORING CALCULATIONS

The total final victory points for each team are calculated as follows:

1. Net IMP's (after incorporating the handicap, if any) are converted to victory points according to the scale(s) submitted and approved by the ACBL for this event.
2. If the schedule for a bracket provides a bye for every team in the bracket, byes will be scored as 15 VP. If the schedule for a bracket includes one or more teams with no bye, then byes in that bracket will be scored at the higher of (a) 15 VP, or (b) the team's average VP total for its other matches.
3. Forfeits are provisionally scored at 20 VP during the year for the non-forfeiting team and zero (0) for the forfeiting team. At the end of the year, the non-forfeiting team will have the value of each winning forfeit recalculated based upon the highest of the following: (a) 20 victory points, (b) average of their victory points for all non-forfeited matches, or (c) the reciprocal of each of the forfeiting team's average victory points in all non-forfeited matches. The "reciprocal" is calculated as thirty minus the forfeiting team's average victory points in non-forfeited matches. Losing forfeits will retain the value of zero (0) victory points. (Note that non-forfeited matches do not include byes.)
4. A match that is underway may not be forfeited prior to its completion without the consent of the Chairperson. (This rule is necessary due to the round robin nature of the competition.) The Chairperson may apply

an appropriate penalty if an underway match is not completed because of one team's failure to continue play to conclusion.

## **IX. SPECIAL PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO ONLINE PLAY**

The ACBL Online Events Special Conditions of Contest (attached) will apply to the extent that they are not applicable to a team game on Bridge Base Online. The following portions of the Online Events Special Conditions of Contest are not applicable: General: Sections 1, 5 and 7; Security: Players may not communicate with partners or teammates in any manner that would provide information about a hand until the hand has been played at both tables.

In applying Section 8, the Director in Charge will consider the online nature of the event in determining if a break in tempo should be rectified under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge.

It is assumed that nobody in these matches cheats and everyone assumes that their opponents don't cheat. **Undos in the bidding are permitted if the bidder's partner has not yet bid. Call then Director if needed. Undos are not allowed in the play.** Everyone is to be patient, understanding and pleasant when playing in the possibly unfamiliar conditions of BBO.

It is not assumed that players are experienced BBO users and will not be interrupted for unknown reasons. Hesitations, even long hesitations are to be considered normal and it is assumed that unauthorized information is not necessarily being passed and that it would not be taken advantage of in any event unless the Director rules otherwise.

The rules for alerting are that any bid an opponent might not understand needs to be alerted and described. If a private understanding exists in the partnership, it should be alerted and described. Players are to over alert using the self-alerting capability of BBO or the chat function to opponents.

Directors will ordinarily set up the games on Bridge Base Online. In the event a match is rescheduled and not contested with other matches at the normal time, then individual team captains are responsible for setting up their matches based on instructions provided to them by the Chairperson.

### Options

- Kibitzers are not allowed.
- Undos are permitted in the bidding (only as described above).

- In the top two brackets, Barometer scoring is OFF unless both Captains agree to turn it on.
- In all other brackets, barometer scoring is ON unless both captains agree to turn it off.
- Matches will consist of 24 boards.
- There will be a break at the half of each match, except in the lowest one or two brackets which may be a play-through. Boards will generally be duplicated within each bracket, so play will not begin for the second half until all matches in a bracket are finished with the first half.

## **X. SUBSTITUTES, REPLACEMENTS, AND ADDITIONS**

To maintain team identity, Captains are encouraged to field as few subs as possible.

Team captains must determine, well in advance of schedule games, whether four players will be available. If not, the captain must make every effort promptly to obtain a substitute.

**As far in advance of the game as possible, a team captain needing to use a substitute must notify the Chairperson of the name(s) of any proposed substitute(s).** The Chairperson will consider the proposed substitutes and approve or disapprove the substitution.

No substitute will be approved who would likely improve the caliber of the team beyond the expected level for the bracket in question.

If called upon to decide, the Chairperson will determine if a proposed substitute would likely improve the caliber of the team beyond the expected level for the bracket based on the following guidelines:

Substitutes typically can not have more master points than 150% of the higher of:

- (1) the masterpoints of the player being substituted for or
- (2) the average team masterpoints in the bracket.

No team may use a substitute in lieu of a team member who wishes to play in a session.

Additional players may be added to the team after the first match, subject to approval of the Vichill Chairperson. Additions that would have affected the bracket assignment are not permitted.

No team member may substitute for another team and no team member may change teams after the first match has been played. However, an existing team member who is not playing with his/her team and is “on hand” during the regular Vichill night may fill-in for a member of a team in a higher bracket. To do this requires:

- An unusual situation causing a team member to not be present
- Approval of the Chairperson if available, or otherwise the Director
- No master points are earned by the substitute, only by the regular members or a non-team substitute

## **XI. APPEALS OF DIRECTOR RULINGS**

Any team Captain who believes a ruling by the director needs further review must inform both the director and the opposing team’s captain prior to the end of that night’s session that it is appealing and ideally should make the notification as soon as a ruling is made. The director will inform the Chairperson if an appeals committee is needed. The Chairperson, or in the absence of a Chairperson the Director, will select one to three qualified people playing that night to act as an appeals committee. The Chairperson may participate in the appeal process as non-voting members of the appeals committee.

The appeals committee will decide as soon as possible after the match unless it determines that due to the unusual nature of the appeal no decision should be reached without consulting the ACBL. If the ACBL is consulted, the Chairperson, and at least one member of the appeals committee, will contact the appropriate person at the ACBL to assist with the final decision. The Chairperson will notify the captains of the decision if it is not made the night of the match.

Updated December 17, 2023.