

**UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION
CONDITIONS OF CONTEST FOR
THE 2015 WOMEN'S 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 2015 United States Women's Bridge Championship (WUSBC) 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 USA1 for the 2015 Venice Cup and the USA2 winning team as USA2 for the 2015 Venice Cup. 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 2015 Venice Cup, 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 WUSBC or information received after the WUSBC.

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 USA1 or USA2 bracket of WUSBC.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Registration.

Teams enter the event by registering online on the USBF.org website at: http://usbf.org/index.php?option=com_entries&task=entryform&event=41. To register, a player must be logged in to the USBF website and must have paid 2015 dues.

1. Guaranteed Entry Date

To assure entry in the 2015 WUSBC, teams must enter on or before 11:59 EDST on Saturday, March 28, 2015. The Credentials Committee may adjust or void the Positioning Points (PPs) of a team with a bye if new players are added or Eligible Players are removed after March 28th.

Registered teams not requesting byes may add or subtract players as they wish, (using the "update" button on the team list, which is available only to team captains who are logged into the USBF.org website), until April 9, 2015. After April 9th, teams may apply to the Credentials Committee to change their team roster.

Late entries may be accepted after Match 28th, but only if additional teams would improve the format of the event.

B. Date, Schedule and Length of Matches.

The 2015 WUSBC will start on Sunday, April 12, 2015 and most likely will end on Saturday, April 18, 2015.

1. Preliminary Stage

If more than 10 teams (counting a team with a bye to the Semi-final as two teams) enter the 2015 WUSBC, the first stage will be a Preliminary Stage, the format of which is described in Appendix B.

2. Quarter-final

If 5 to 10 teams (counting a team with a bye to the Semi-final as two teams) enter the 2015 WUSBC, the first stage will be the Quarter-final, the format of which is described in Appendix A. After entries close on April 28th, the USBF website will show the schedule of the event and the format for the Quarter-final.

3. USA1 Semi-final

If there is a Quarter-final stage, the USA1 Semi-final will be a 1 day, 64 board, Knockout match, which will be on April 14th if there is no Preliminary Stage.

If exactly 4 teams enter the event, the Semi-Final will be the first stage of the event and will be a 2 day, 120 board match. Teams will be seeded based on the players' Wagat seeding points, including results from the 2015 Spring NABC. The team with the most seeding points will be seeded number 1, the team with the next-highest seeding points will be seeded number 2, the other two teams will be randomly assigned numbers 3 and 4.

4. USA1 Final and USA2 Semi-final

The USA1 Final will be a 2 day, 120 board, Knockout match. The losing Semi-finalists will play a 2 day, 120 board, USA2 Semi-final at the same time as the USA1 Final.

5. USA2 Final

The loser of the USA1 Final will play the winner of the USA2 Semi-final in a 2-day, 120 board, USA2 Final.

C. Prepaid Entry and Fees.

Fees for the 2015 WUSBC are an event entry fee of \$360 per team and session fees of \$150 per team per session (\$300 per day). The advance entry fee for the event is \$960, consisting of the event fee and prepayment of session fees for the first two days of play. The event fee is normally not refundable after the entry closing date, but an appeal for a refund may be made to the Credentials Committee. The advance payment of session fees is refundable if the team withdraws at any time prior to the start of play.

D. Site and Hotel Reservations.

The site of the 2015 WUSBC is the Bahia Mar Doubletree, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Reservation website & phone will be posted on usbf.org as soon as they are known.

E. Captain’s Meeting.

The Director In Charge or his or her designee (DIC) may convene a captain’s meeting before each RR stage and any subsequent stage. Topics may include: conditions clarifications, seed selection, seating, system summary form, convention summary forms, tampering, reporting of scores, score corrections and slow play procedures.

F. Positioning Points

Positioning Points (PPs) are used to rank the teams for the purpose of obtaining byes to the Second Round Robin if there is a First Round Robin and the semi-final. PPs for the qualifying events will be as follows:

Place	Wagar	WBAM & Swiss	Vand & Spin	Reisinger	GNT
1 st	80	44	124	108	100
2 nd	60	32	100	88	80
3 rd	40	24	80	68	64
4 th	40	20	80	48	64
5 th	20	16	60	44	48
6 th	20	12	60	40	48
7 th	20	8	60	36	48
8 th	20	4	60	32	48
9 th		3		28	24
10 th		2		24	24
11 th					24
12 th					24
9-16 th	8		32		
17-32			8		
13-24					8

G. Eligibility for PPs

A team may earn PPs for the 2015 WUSBC based on its performance in the the 2013 Wagar, GNT, Spingold, Women’s Swiss and Vanderbilt Women’s Board-A-Match and Reisinger and the 2014 Women’s Swiss, Vanderbilt, Wagar, GNT and Spingold. To earn PPs from any of these “cycle” events, at least 4 members of the 2015 WUSBC team must play 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 2013 BAM team, and players ABEF played together on a 2013 Wagar team, and players CDEF played together on a 2014 Swiss team, then a 6-person 2014 WUSBC team of ABCDEF could use PPs earned in all three events to count towards earning a bye (subject to V.B.1 and V.B.2 below).

An Eligible Player is a player who is eligible to compete for the USA in the WBF championship for which the WUSBC is a selection trial. Men players on an Open team with 4 or 5 women players are “ineligible players” as are players who are not USBF Resident or Active members. In addition to being subject to Section III., paragraphs B., C. and D., 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 semi-final, the team earns PPs for winning its semi-final match (finishing 2nd), but does not earn PPs for winning the final. The Credentials Committee determines Eligibility.

H. 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:

- a) 75% of PPs earned if there is 1 Ineligible Player
- b) 50% of PPs earned if there are 2 Ineligible Players
- c) No PPs if there are 3 or more Ineligible Players

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 2015 WUSBC has expertise that is significantly less than that of the majority of the team.

- a) If such a team member did not play in an event in which 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 an event in which the team earned PPs, 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 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 remainder 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 qualifying Event with her team, her team may earn PPs only in the first qualifying Event she 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.

I. Pre-Registration.

In order to receive PPs for bye considerations, a team containing a player who did not play in the 2013 Wagar or BAM or the 2014 Women's Swiss who then joins her team for play in a later event and whose bridge expertise is determined to be significantly less than that of the remainder of the team, must have submitted a WUSBC entry to the USBF prior to the first qualifying event that she did not play in. ("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.

J. Requirement to be an Active or Resident Member of USBF.

Players entering the WUSBC must be dues paying 2015 Active or Resident Members of the USBF. For a team to be credited with Positioning Points (PPs) for bye purposes for the 2015 WUSBC, 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 born after 1987, \$10 for players born after 1993), or \$150 when paid within two weeks after an event in which PPs were earned. 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 online at: http://usbf.org/index.php?option=com_paydues&Itemid=73. To access this page, you must be logged into the USBF website.

III. BYES

A. Byes to the Semi-finals

Any team with 144 or more PPs and two "wins" gets a bye to the Semi-finals. A "win" is defined as a first or second place finish in the Wagar or a first place finish in the Women's Swiss or BAM or a fifth place or higher finish in an Open team event.

B. Byes to the Quarter-finals

Any team with 72 or more PPs that does not have a bye to the Semi-final has a bye to the Quarter-finals.

IV. ROUND ROBINS

A. Seeding and Format

There will be no seeding for any Round Robin. Pairings will follow a schedule published after the number of entrants is known. The order of play on the second day will be the opposite of that on the first day.

B. Tie Breaking

Ties for the last team to advance out of a RR will be broken as follows:

- a) Total net IMPs in the final stage of the Round Robin (if there was a final stage with fewer teams than in the initial stage)
- b) Total net IMPs for the entire Round Robin
- c) IMPs against other tied teams;
- d) 4 board playoffs.

Ties in a KO match shall be broken by one or more additional 8-board segments.

Ties for seeding purposes in either Round Robin shall be broken by a coin toss.

A team eliminated from a tie by a method of tie breaking shall not be considered in subsequent tie-breaks.

Any fraction of an IMP difference is sufficient to break a tie.

V. SETTING THE BRACKET FOR KNOCKOUT ROUNDS

The Semi-final pairings are determined as follows, based on whether any team(s) have byes to the Semi-final:

A. If Two Teams have Byes to the Semi-finals

If 2 teams have received byes to the Semi-finals, the team with the most PPs shall be seeded 1 and shall select its opponent from the two Round Robin teams that advance to the Semi-finals and the other team with a bye to the Semi-finals shall be seeded 2 and shall play the remaining Round Robin team. A coin toss will be used to break a tie in PPs between two teams with byes to the Semi-finals.

B. If One Team has a Bye to the Semi-finals

If 1 team has received a bye to the Semi-finals, that team shall be seeded 1 and shall select its opponent from the teams finishing 2nd and 3rd in Round Robin; the Round Robin winner shall be seeded 2

C. If No Team has a Bye to the Semi-finals

If no team has received a bye to the Semi-finals, the Round Robin winner will be seeded 1 and will select its opponent from the teams that finished 3rd and 4th in the Round Robin.

VI. INTERPRETATION OF CONDITIONS.

A. Tardiness

Play shall begin at the announced starting time. All pairs shall be prepared to commence play at the announced starting time. If a player arrives at the table more than 1 minute after the announced starting time, her team will be penalized 1VP (during Round Robin) or 3 IMPs (during knockout phases) if she is less than 5 minutes late, 2 VPs or 6 IMPs if she is between 5 and 10 minutes late, 3 VPs or 9 IMPs if she is between 10 and 15 minutes late, and an additional 1 VP or 3 IMPs for each subsequent 5 minutes, in addition to all other penalties for slow play and tardiness. Egregious tardiness will be referred to the USBF Conduct and Ethics Committee for possible disciplinary action.

B. Interpretation of Conditions

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

1. Prior to the end of the 2015 Women's Swiss, the WITTC shall make determinations.
2. After the end of the 2015 Women's Swiss but before entries close, the DIC shall make determinations after consulting with the WITTC. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.
3. After entries close, the DIC shall make such determinations. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.

C. Headings for Convenience.

Headings are for convenience only and are not to be considered for purposes of interpreting the conditions.

D. Conditions Interpreted in Entirety.

These Conditions of Contest are to be interpreted in their entirety and including the USBF General Conditions of Contest. No section or appendix of these conditions shall be interpreted in such a manner as to render any other section or appendix to be meaningless.

E. Omissions.

1. The omission of a condition, restriction, rule, or regulation in one section or paragraph of the conditions which condition, restriction, rule, or regulation is expressly stated in another section of the conditions is deemed intentional.
2. Decision makers shall be guided by similar WBF or ACBL policies, procedures or regulations, as well as the Laws of Duplicate Bridge when ruling on matters or issues not expressly addressed in these conditions.

APPENDIX A. QUARTER-FINAL FORMAT

A. If The Quarter-final Has 4 Teams & 2 Advance

If there are 4 teams in the Quarter-final, with 2 teams to advance to the Semi-final, the Quarter-final shall be played as a partial double elimination Knockout, as follows. The teams shall be seeded based on Wagar Seeding Points.

1. First Match

Team 1 shall play a 40 board match against Team 4 and Team 2 shall play a 40 board match against Team 3. The matches shall be played in two 20 board halves. Teams 1 and 2 shall have seating rights in the first half, unless a team chooses to waive the seed. Teams 3 and 4 shall have seating rights in the second half unless their opponent waived the seed for the first half. Each player on each team must play at least one half of the match.

2. Second Match

The winners of the First Match shall play a 40 board match and the losers of the First Match shall play a 40 board match. The first half shall be played on one day and the second half on the second day. Seating rights shall be as for the First Match. The winner of the match between the two winning teams shall advance to the Semi-finals. The loser of the match between the two losing teams shall be eliminated.

3. Third Match

The loser of the match between the two winners of the First Match and the winner of the match between the two losers of the First Match shall play a 40 board match. The winner of this match shall advance to the semi-finals. The loser shall be eliminated.

B. If A Does not Apply

Otherwise, the Quarter-final shall be played as two complete Round Robins among the teams entered in the WUSBC that have byes to the Quarter-final and the teams that are eligible for the Quarter-final as a result of their performance in the Preliminary Stage if there is one, or all of the teams without byes to the Semi-final if there is no Preliminary Stage. The number of boards played in each match shall be the largest number possible such that no more than 60 boards are scheduled for a day. Matches will be scored at IMPs converted to VPs based on the VP scales set forth in the USBF General Conditions of Contest. The VPs earned by each team on each day shall be added together to determine the team's total VPs for the event.

The Round Robin will not be seeded. The Director in Charge in consultation with the WITTC shall determine pairings for the Round Robin as soon as practicable after the number of teams in the event is known. The order of play on Day 2 shall be exactly opposite from the order of play on day 1. The schedule of play will be posted on the USBF website as soon as it is known. See Section VI.B (Balanced Play

Requirement) of the USBF General Conditions of Contest regarding special play requirement.

APPENDIX B. PRELIMINARY ROUND ROBIN

1. If ten or fewer teams (counting a team with a bye to the semi-finals as two teams) enter the WUSBC, there shall be no Preliminary Stage

2. If 10 or fewer teams play in the Preliminary Stage:

The format of play for the Preliminary Stage shall be the same as that set forth for the Quarter-final, except that the number of teams advancing to the Quarter-final shall be such that the percentage of teams advancing from the Quarter-final to the Semi-final shall not be significantly less than the percentage of teams advancing from the Preliminary Stage.

The specific numbers of teams advancing based on numbers of byes and entrants in RR1 are set forth in Appendix C.

3. If more than 10 teams enter the Preliminary Stage, it will consist of two or three stages of play, with a cut after each stage. Specific formats follow.

a. First stage

If more than 10 teams have entered RR1, the first stage of RR1 shall consist of a 2-day complete round robin. The number of boards shall be as set forth below. IMPs are converted to VPs based on the VP scales set forth in the USBF General Conditions of Contest. Except for the last two matches, each session shall be played straight through except for two short (10 minute) breaks. Teams can change line-up at any time during these sessions. Starting times for each match will be strictly enforced, as will time allowed to play each match.

For the final 2 matches of this stage, the pairs in the closed room are segregated and not allowed to talk to anyone. No player substitution will be allowed in the closed room, but substitution is allowed in the open room.

b. Second stage

At the end of the first stage of play, the VPs earned by the teams are multiplied by 60% to determine the carryover to the second session. The teams are ranked based on VPs. The number of teams set forth in the table below play a second session consisting of a 1-day complete round robin, played in the same format and scored on the same VP scale as the first stage. The VPs from these matches are added to the carryover to determine the qualifiers to the third stage or RR2, depending on the number of teams that entered RR1.

c. Third stage

If 19 teams or more enter RR1, there shall be another 1-day complete round robin. The VPs earned by the teams in the second stage, plus 60% of the VPs in the first stage shall be added together and multiplied by 60% to determine the carry over to the third stage. The third stage shall be played in the same format and scored on the same VP scale as the second stage.

4. NUMBER OF DAYS AND BOARDS

Number entered	Days RR1	Bds/ match 1st stage	# of teams 2nd stage	Bds/ match 2nd stage	# of teams 3rd stage	Bds/ match 3rd stage
10	2	≈120 total	No 2nd stage	No 2nd stage		
11 – 12	3	10	8	8		
13 – 14	3	9	8	8		
15 – 16	3	8	8	8		
17 – 18	3	7	8	8		
19 – 20	4	6	12	5	8	8
21 – 22	4	5	12	5	8	8
23 – 24	4	5	14	4	8	8
25+	4	4	14	4	8	8

APPENDIX C. DETERMINING TEAMS TO ADVANCE FROM PRELIMINARY STAGE

I. General Principles

The number of teams to advance from the Preliminary Stage to the Round Robin shall be such that the percentage of teams advancing from the Round Robin to the semi-finals is not significantly smaller than the percentage of teams advancing from the Preliminary Stage to the Round Robin.

II. Specific Examples

The table below shows how many teams will advance from the Preliminary Stage to the Round Robin depending on the number of teams with byes to the semi-finals, the number of teams with byes to the Round Robin and the number of teams entering the Preliminary Stage:

Semi-Final Byes	RR Byes	PS Entries	Teams Advancing
0	0	11	6
		12-14	7
		15-16	8
	1	10	5
		11-13	6
		14-16	7
	2	9-11	5
		12-15	6
		16	7
	3	8-9	4
		10-12	5
		13-15	6
		16	7
1	0	9-11	5
		12-14	6
		15-16	7
	1	8	4
		9-12	5
		13-16	6
	2	7	3

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		8-12	4
		13-14	5
		15-16	6
2	0	7-11	4
		12-16	5
	1	6-8	3
		9-14	4
		15-16	5
	2	5-6	2
		7-10	3
		11-15	4
		16	5