

UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION CONDITIONS OF CONTEST FOR THE 2024 MIXED UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

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

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[USBC Conventions Committee](#)
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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 2024 Mixed 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 USA for the 2024 Mixed Teams at the World Bridge Games. This World Championship is tentatively scheduled to take place in Buenos Aires from Oct. 19-Nov. 2, 2024

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 World Bridge Games, 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 2024 Mixed USBC.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Vaccination Requirement ??

All players in the 2024 Mixed 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 2024 Mixed USBC, teams must enter on or before 11:59 pm EDT on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

2. Late Entry Date

Teams may continue to enter until 11:59 EDT on Sunday, April 14, 2024, but only if it improves the format of the event.

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Entries after April 2, 2024 will be accepted on a provisional basis, subject to review to determine whether they improve the format. If all late entries cannot be accepted, later entries will be rejected before earlier ones.

C. 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 April 8, 2024 if there is an online stage, or until May 8, 2024 if there is not an online stage.

2. Between Round Robin and KO

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

1. The change is a replacement for a player who has died or qualified for the Bermuda Bowl; or 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.
2. At least 4 players, including 2 men and 2 women, who met the play requirement in the Round Robin 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.

D. Date, Schedule, and Length of Matches

1. Online Stages of Play

If more than 16 teams have entered, there will be an online stage to reduce the field to 8 teams.

2. Face-to-Face Stages of Play

If 9 or more teams enter, there will be a face-to-face Round Robin on May 10 and 11. The top 8 teams in the Round Robin will advance to the Quarterfinal. The teams that finish lower than 8th will be eliminated.

The event will continue with 2-day Quarterfinal, Semifinal and Final matches; The 2024 Mixed USBC will end on May 17, 2024.

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

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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. 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 XX of the General Conditions of Contest.

F. Prepaid Entry and Fees

The advance entry fee for the 2024 Mixed USBC is \$500 per team, which covers any online stage as well as the start up costs for the face-to-face stages. The advance entry fee is due by April 2, 2024 and is fully refundable if a team withdraws before April 2, 2024 or if a team withdraws after April 2, 2024 and is replaced, or if a team withdraws after April 2, 2024 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.

G. Site and Hotel Reservations

The site of the 2024 Mixed USBC is the Hyatt Regency located in Schaumburg, IL. The room rate is \$xx plus tax per night and includes internet access. There is no charge for early departure. Reservation website 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 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. FORMAT

A. Face-to-face Stages

1. Fewer than 8 teams enter

If fewer than 8 teams enter, the first 2 days of play will be a 2-day Round Robin. The top 4 teams will qualify for the Semifinal.

2. Exactly 8 teams enter

If exactly 8 teams enter, the first 2 days of play are the Quarterfinal.

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3. 9-16 teams enter, or the field is reduced to 16 teams for face-to-face play

If 9-16 teams are playing in the face-to-face stages, the first 2 days of play will be a 2-day Round Robin. The top 8 teams will qualify for the Quarterfinal; the remaining team(s) will be eliminated.

B. 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 as follows:

The team with the highest number of seeding points is assigned bracket position 1.

The team with the second highest number of seeding points is assigned bracket position 2.

The teams with the third and fourth highest number of seeding points are randomly assigned to bracket positions 3 and 4.

The remaining teams are randomly assigned to bracket positions in pairs.

IV. 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

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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 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

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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.

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.

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.

V. 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.

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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. 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 approximately 7.5 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. 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.

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 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.

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VI. 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 23, 2024, the Conditions of Contest Committee and ITTC Technical & Advisory Committee (TAC) shall make determinations.
2. After March 22, 2024 but before May 10, 2024, 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 10, 2024, the DIC shall make such determinations. Appeals from the DIC's decision may be made to the Tournament Appeals Committee.

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