

BRACKETED PAIRS FACT SHEET

The Houston Regional is adding a new pair game on Thursday and Sunday. To help you understand the format and reasoning for trying this new event, this fact sheet will provide the background. We hope you will try it and give a Unit Board Member your feedback on whether you would like to see it again!

For many years, ACBL tournaments have had different kinds of bracketed teams...KOs, round-robins and Swiss. Yet, this very popular format was never thought of for pairs. This was an obvious opportunity to create a new event.

The advantages are numerous:

- 1) No fixed flight limits: in a flighted event, someone with 1500 points can't play with a partner with 3001 in a 0-3000 game and has to play in the top flight. But, in bracketed pairs, there are no fixed limits and events are arranged by the average of a pair's points, not the highest player.
- 2) Unlimited events: in a flighted pairs event, you can only have 3 flights. But, in bracketed, you can have an unlimited number of flights, limited only by the number of tables playing.
- 3) At Regional Tournaments, all levels, even the very lowest, offer gold points for overalls (and, in pairs, section tops). This was one of the features of bracketed KOs that led to the explosive growth of Gatlinburg decades ago; 50+ brackets of KOs and even the very bottom provided opportunities to win gold points.
- 4) Players love bracketed events because they only play against "similar level" players. Even in stratified events, C players may play against world champions. But, in bracketed pairs, everyone a pair plays against has close to the same masterpoints, so there are no "experts" to face.

The player response to this event across the ACBL has been totally positive. All of the advantages are quickly evident to the players and they all feel that have a real chance to not only get gold points but to win an event outright, not just be the top pair in a stratum.

We are hoping that this event can be a real incentive for players, particularly those with fewer points, to come out and play tournaments again.