

ONLINE-BRIDGE & MASTER POINTS

The SBU Master Points Policy Committee has drawn up rules for awarding MP for online events, and these have been ratified by the SBU Council.

The SBU has reached a formal agreement with BBO so that the SBU can run private tournaments for SBU members in a protected area. This will provide a more pleasurable environment for players than that available in the “Free” Section of BBO.

The intention is that with the SBU being able to organise events limited to SBU members and decide the amount of table money for each event, we will also award MP according to our own rules. Over time, as we expand the number of trained SBU TDs, competitions can be run at a district and club level.

Initially, funds received from SBU-run events will be used to pay for the training of TDs. If clubs or districts run events (and therefore logically they supply the TD) then the proceeds will accrue to the club/district; this is, naturally, after the BBO takes its share.

The chief obstacle to the SBU, including districts and clubs offering tournaments on every day is, of course, the availability of qualified TDs, and the eventual demand from our members. Since the duration of these difficult times is unknown, no-one knows whether we can get back to what we now call face-to-face bridge (F2F).

Master Points will be awarded for qualifying online events, Local Points only, and using the basic club scale. However, the minimum number of boards in pairs events is being dropped to 18 to align better with BBO standards and their movements. Larger events are now more likely and thus the cap of 100 points for the winners is being lifted with the top MP score calculated with a formula, but the reward ratio (top one-third of the field) is still maintained.

A new environment encourages new habits, and smaller pairs events of 12-17 boards are particularly useful and easy to arrange online, and therefore in future, these will also be rewarded with local MP, albeit on a lower scale and to fewer players in the event. Online-bridge is easier in some aspects and more difficult in others, but for inexperienced bridge players, provided if all the other players are of similar standing, the competition can be set with generous playing times. It can thus be enjoyable and rewarding without too much strain and we wish to encourage this kind of online tournament.

These provisions and changes apply only to online events, they will be described in more detail in amendments to the MP Manual (HOTMPS) with publication later in June.

Charges for playing in SBU-BBO events will vary from \$3 to \$5, we have no pricing policy as such at the moment. MP certificates will be charged to districts or clubs when they run BBO events.

Technical details including the process for feeding the data to Mempad will change.

The decisions explained above apply to SBU authorised tournaments from now on. We are aware that there have been several ‘informal’ tournaments, events, leagues, team events etc during the period from the time that lockdown started and the SBU stopped all F2F events. The SBU Council wishes to recognise that some of these events had form and structure and were much appreciated by members who participated. It could well be that some of these are deserving of recognition in the form of MP.

Organisers of such events from April to now are invited to submit information to membership@sbu.org.uk describing an event they have run during that period. This will allow the Mempad Operations Committee to make a judgement as to whether MP can be awarded. Firstly, we need some details of the event, to come to a conclusion about whether MP awards are justified, and to ensure that we treat all requests equitably. Then secondly, if a positive decision is reached we would need details of the results and of course either the SBU number or the BBO username of the players involved.

Initial Information Required.

- A) Pairs, Teams, swiss, or not, one time or multiple events.
- B) The number of tables, pairs or teams involved.
- C) Method of scoring, match points, Imps, etc
- D) Boards played.
- E) SBU-only, if so club whether or district restricted; or whether non-SBU members were allowed
- F) Dates played
- G) Income generated or not, for whom?
- H) Name or names of Organiser, be it individual, a club or district.

Further information will be provided to clubs and districts via similar Bulletins over time.

Bill Whyte
Member Services

P.S. As you may know the SBU now runs regular Tuesday evening pairs events, and on Saturdays, there is Swiss Pairs over 7 sessions, the first one having taken place on 13th June.
See the SBU website for details.