

Club Ladders and Championships

There is an almost bewildering variety of championships that bridge clubs can and do run for their members, and it is a good idea to organise at least a few championships, rewarded with cups and prizes, to bring some extra excitement and variety to events at the club. We summarise the most common forms of ladder and championship here.

A club may wish to restrict its championship competitions to members only, possibly allowing visitors to play in these events but without being able to win.

Ladders

Most clubs run some kind of ladder competition taking an average of results over a period of time, usually a year or six months, to decide on the winners. A ladder can be run as a competition for individuals, pairs or teams, usually with a specified minimum number of plays determining eligibility, e.g. a player, pair or team may need to play a minimum of 20 duplicates during the year to qualify for the competition.

One can run the competition as a straight average of percentages achieved in duplicates, but it is also common for only a specified number of best results to count, e.g. the best 20 results during the year. The latter tends to encourage and reward more regular attendance since, once the stipulated number of plays is exceeded, a competitor's poorest results are discounted as higher percentages are achieved.

Some clubs like to encourage their members to play with many different partners to stimulate a more sociable atmosphere at the club. Thus one could stipulate that to be eligible for a particular ladder competition, a player must have played with at least a certain number of other players during the ladder period.

If a club plays several sessions a week, it makes sense to have a separate ladder for each session, e.g. a separate Monday evening ladder and a separate Wednesday afternoon ladder, since relatively few people can manage to play very regularly in more than one session a week. However, please note that EBU Master Point regulations only allow clubs to award additional Master Points for the top places in two ladder competitions in a year (see below).

Some clubs like to run a Master Point Ladder, rewarding the person who gains the largest number of Master Points playing in the club's events during the course of a year. This can also be done on the basis of the highest average by simply dividing the Master Points gained by the number of times played, usually specifying a minimum number of plays.

Calculating Ladder Results

Ladder results can be calculated in most scoring programs. If a club uses a BridgeWebs website, it is perhaps easier to use the facility provided there since you can set the website up to calculate the ladders for you and update the results for all to see each time a session is uploaded to the website.

Ascendancy Competitions

As a way of rewarding players who have improved their game, a club can award Ascenders' Prizes to those who have improved their average most when comparing two successive ladders. Again, your scoring program should be able to help you calculate ascendancy results although it is not difficult to do using a spreadsheet.

Championship Events

In addition to the above ladder competitions, most clubs like to hold one or more annual championships. These may take place on one of the club's regular sessions, or the club may set aside a Saturday or Sunday to hold a major championship playing more boards than there is time for on a normal club evening. Types of championship include:

- Open Pairs Championship
- Ladies' Pairs Championship
- Men's Pairs Championship
- Mixed Pairs Championship (possibly including a 'Fritch' prize)
- Swiss Pairs Championship
- Multiple Teams Championship
- Swiss Teams Championship
- Individual Championship

If you run a championship with a break at half time, you may wish to provide an additional ascender's prize for the individual, pair or team who improve their score most in the second half.

Awarding Master Points for Ladders

Master Points are awarded by clubs for each regular duplicate at Club Level and registered with the EBU by uploading the session p2p files. In addition, clubs are authorised to award additional Master Points based on the final ranking list of a club ladder, but are limited (for Master Point purposes) to two such events per annum.

Note that at least six separate results must be taken into account in order to qualify for such additional Master Points. Note also that an event of this nature may not be a major championship (see below).

See the [EBU Master Point Handbook](#) for ladder Master Point scales.

Ladder Master Points can be submitted to the EBU using the recommended scoring program Scorebridge. Simply set up a 'new event', taking care to tick the box marked 'Results only', and input the names of the players who have obtained Master Points in the ladder competition and the numbers of points for each. You can then create a p2p file and upload it to the EBU in the usual fashion.

Awarding Master Points for Major Championships

Affiliated Clubs may nominate one pairs event and one teams event per annum as being a 'major championship'. Such events must be of at least 36-boards overall duration, cannot be ladders and must be unrestricted (other than to full/primary members only). The Master Point status of such an event is increased by one level, i.e. from Club to District, and this level can be set for the event in your scoring program.

The nature of an unrestricted event must be such that all members have an opportunity to win the event. Thus it may not be a Mixed Pairs event, for example.

Except in the case of a knock-out event, no more than three sessions may be played per event at the enhanced status level. If the event as a whole comprises more than three sessions, then only the final stage(s) may enjoy the enhanced status level, provided that any such stage(s) is of no more than three sessions.