

The GRAND NATIONAL PAIRS - 2009

Dear Club Secretary,

Encouraged by the success of the inaugural Grand National Pairs in 2008, the ABF will be running this event again (with some minor changes) in 2009. The event is open to all players below the rank of Life Master at 1st January 2009. Run on similar lines to the GNOT (Grand National Open Teams), this event is the only other chance that “restricted” players will have to gain GOLD masterpoints in their local clubs.

Within the Sydney region, we have up to 55 clubs that can participate in this competition. Each club will have the chance to qualify a number of pairs to the Regional Final, which will be held on Sunday 22nd November at the North Shore Bridge Club. This Regional Final will qualify at least 8 pairs to the National Final to be held in January as part of the Summer Festival of Bridge in Canberra.

It would certainly be appreciated if your Committee could give due consideration to scheduling at least one qualifying event within your current sessions and provide this opportunity to your restricted players to earn some gold points. While a number of senior players may frown on the masterpoint scheme, I still find that for the less experienced players it is a “big buzz” and sense of achievement to win them.

Clubs wishing to participate should appoint a GNP Club Coordinator with whom I can liaise directly and advise me by email of his/her name, email address and phone number. If your club does not intend to participate, I would appreciate a note to that effect and perhaps a short reason as to why not.

All the conditions of entry and club selection events can be found on the internet at <http://www.abf.com.au/events/gnp/GNP.pdf>, but the main points are summarised below:

- Club qualifying events must be matchpoint pairs of between three and seven sessions. They may be stand alone events or normal sessions with just the restricted players being eligible to win the Gold masterpoints. Masterpoints are awarded to 75% of the field.
- Clubs will qualify between 2 and 20 pairs to the Regional Final.
- The Regional Final will qualify 8 pairs to the National Final. In addition, it is likely the ABF will offer at least another 4 places to pairs in the Sydney Regional Final (on a no-subsidy basis) to fill gaps in the National Final.
- Entry fee for the Regional Final is \$40 per pair, payable by the Club. It is recommended that clubs charge a tournament entry fee of \$2 per player per session to cover this charge.
- Table money for the Regional Final is \$40 per pair, payable by the players.
- Entry fee for the National Final is \$400 per pair, payable by the NSWBA.

If you require any future information either to set up an event or generally ask questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Mobile 0437 274343 or email to office@bridgeclub.com.au

In the meantime, here is to promoting the restricted members of our bridge community.

Yours sincerely,

John McIlrath
GNP Coordinator for Metropolitan Sydney