



NSW BRIDGE ASSOCIATION



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Telephone: 9264 8111 E-mail: office@nswba.com.au Web: www.nswba.com.au

ABN 61 000 438 648

August 2016

NSW <100 Masterpoint Pairs Championships

Web: <http://www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2016&E=uhmp>

Note that there are a couple of major changes to the tournament structure since this document was first published in January 2016.

Last year's inaugural running of this event was quite successful, especially in the country regions. Inevitably, the new concept engendered some teething problems, but I believe these have been addressed and the changes made this year will make for an improved tournament.

Over 70% of the registered active players in the state have fewer than 100 masterpoints. Most State Championships require considerable investment by players in terms of time, travel and cost, but this event has been specifically designed to address all these issues. Although participation in club sessions was generally very good in the country areas, this didn't always translate into high attendance at the Local Finals. I'm hoping club officials will promote the social aspects of playing against people from neighbouring clubs and towns in 2016 and encourage eligible players to enter the Finals.

The event is played in two independent stages and in four masterpoint divisions (see table below).

| Masterpoint range | % of registered active NSW players |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 0-9.99 MP | 33% |
| 10-24.99 MP | 13% |
| 25-49.99 MP | 12% |
| 50-99.99 MP | 12% |

The first stage consists of club sessions played in your home club. This requires little extra effort by a club - just select appropriate matchpoint pairs session(s) in the designated weeks. These club sessions are stratified, *i.e.* all players, including non-participants, play against each other. Alternatively, if you run supervised play sessions, consider converting one of them into a UHMP session. It's a good opportunity to get the supervised players to go solo and they will get red masterpoints instead of blue. The preferred weeks for club sessions are 12-18 September and 10-16 October, but any dates during September and October are acceptable.

The second stage consists of a Local Final, played over two sessions on Sunday 27th November. Unlike the club sessions, all Local Finals will play the same boards and the results will be matchpointed across the state. (Hand records, and dealing files if requested, will be sent by the Tournament Organiser.) Local Finals will be truly that, generally within an hour's drive of the participants' home clubs. The aim is to promote interclub competitions in a way that minimises travel and eliminates overnight accommodation costs.

Note the major change from last year - *all players with <100 MPs may enter a Local Final - they do not need to have qualified by first playing in a club session. In effect, the Local Finals are direct entry events whilst the club sessions remain as an opportunity for you to offer red points to those players in your club with fewer than 100 masterpoints.*



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Ideally, Local Finals will be scattered around the state, with each attracting players who live less than 90 minutes away. Most clubs last year charged an entry fee in the range of \$20-25 per person to play in a Local Final. This was in line with standard congress rates and I recommend clubs holding Local Finals set an entry fee of \$25 this year. Note that the NSWBA will be charging \$2 per player - *i.e.* each club holding a Local Final will be invoiced \$4 per pair. The NSWBA will continue to pay for all the B4s masterpoints issued in Local Finals.

If you wish to conduct a Local Final, apply by completing the online registration form at <http://www.nswba.com.au/forms/under100mpfinal.asp>. It would be sensible to discuss your intention to hold a Local Final with other clubs in the region first.

Registration.

All clubs planning to hold one or more club sessions need to register by completing the online form at <http://www.nswba.com.au/forms/under100mp.asp> - there's also a link from the UHMP website: <http://www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2016&E=uhmp>. Participating clubs and all the latest information will also be shown on the UHMP website

Clubs holding Local Finals will be listed on the UHMP website and each Final will be listed separately on the NSWBA calendar page <http://www.nswba.com.au/tourn/calendar.asp?T=S>. Pairs should enter the Local Final appropriate to the location using the NSWBA online entry system.

Masterpoints.

This event is a chance for your players to earn red masterpoints in their local club at State Championship level B4s. Half of the pairs in each of the four divisions will receive masterpoints, so players in the 0-10 group need not worry that they are competing against players in the 50-100 division. Awards increase as the number of pairs increases, so it's to everyone's advantage to encourage all eligible players to pair up and enter the UHMP. Remember, the NSWBA will pay for all the red masterpoints issued.

Costs.

Club Qualifying Events: \$2.00 per player per session (*i.e.* \$4.00 per pair), payable to the NSWBA. Players with >100 masterpoints and those eligible but not wishing to enter the UHMP do not pay anything (other than normal table money to your club).

Local Finals: \$2.00 per player per day (*i.e.* \$4.00 per pair per day). Clubs hosting the Local Finals should factor in this NSWBA charge when setting the entry fee for the day.

The NSWBA will invoice all participating clubs; in November for those holding club sessions, in December for those holding Local Finals. **Do not pay anything until you receive the invoice.**

Dates.

The date of the Local Finals has been deliberately set to coincide with the ABF's Grand National Open Teams Finals. The vast majority of NSW players who compete in the GNOT have too many masterpoints to be eligible for the UHMP Championship, so there should be very few players affected by this clash. There are no congresses approved for this weekend (again due to the GNOT) so there should be no "bridge" reason for players to be unavailable.



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Scoring and handicapping.

The NSWBA recognises that the relative number of pairs in each MP division may differ greatly from one Local Final to another. Clearly all pairs' prospects are directly affected (either negatively or positively) by the overall strength of the Local Final they contest. Consequently all pairs will be given a handicap based on the average strength of their Local Final and their own MP holding. Raw and handicapped results of all Local Finals will be posted on the NSWBA website. All masterpoint awards are based on non-handicapped results.

Prizes

Most prizes will be awarded on the basis of the handicapped results and will be awarded in each of the four divisions. Prizes will include free entry to major Australian Restricted and or Novice events (donated by the ABF), cash, certificates and subscriptions to the online Novice Edition of the Australian Bridge magazine.

In summary, this event is designed to offer red masterpoints (at no cost to your club) to your members who have fewer than 100 masterpoints. Eligible players are then encouraged to leave the relative safety of their home club and participate against players from nearby clubs in a Local Final. It is proposed to return most of the money received in entry fees in the form of masterpoints and prizes. Do your members a service and be a club that participates.

Warren Lazer
(UHMP Tournament Organiser)