

# NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT

(NICKO)

(INCLUDING THE NICKO PLATE)



## REGULATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Various general regulations and conditions of play apply to all English Bridge Union competitions which involve matches played privately. These are contained in a separate document, [EBU General Regulations](#), which should be read alongside this document which contains the regulations specific to this competition. In the event of a conflict between the regulations in this document and those in the General Regulations document, those in this document shall prevail.

All these regulations and conditions are supplementary to, and in certain cases a replacement of, general EBU regulations as contained in various EBU publications (e.g. [Blue Book](#), [White Book](#), diary, [website](#)). All such general EBU regulations continue to apply unless specifically stated otherwise.

The NICKO and NICKO Plate is by default a face-to-face competition but captains can agree to play matches online. In the first two rounds (of the NICKO and NICKO Plate), teams who have indicated a willingness or preference for playing online will be drawn against each other – thereafter they will be matched if possible within the constraints of the draw, but any team may insist on playing face-to-face from round 3 onwards (in both the NICKO and NICKO Plate). The General Regulations, in particular the online match regulations (Section F), apply to matches played online.

Any correspondence or enquiries regarding this competition should initially be addressed to:

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## **SPECIAL NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT REGULATIONS**

- 1 Entry is limited to clubs affiliated to the EBU, who may enter an unlimited number of teams, to be referred to as A, B, C etc. in no particular order of preference. Entries should be submitted by an authorised official of the club, who should be satisfied of the credentials of the players.
- 2 The intention of the competition is that bridge clubs are represented by their regular players or established members. Players must:
  - a be registered members of the club they are to represent continuously throughout the period commencing with the date three months before the published closing date for entries to the competition, and finishing with the last match which they play in the competition;
  - b play regularly at the club or for the club, or contribute to the club regularly in some other way (or have done so in previous years, yet be unable currently to do so through some personal circumstance, e.g. illness, work, childcare, etc.).
- 3 For the purposes of regulation 2a:
  - a “Registered member” means a member of the club who is at all relevant times included on the list of members of the club registered with the EBU for the purposes of the Universal Membership Scheme;
  - b “the competition” includes the Plate.
- 4 Clubs are required to ensure that their representatives meet these criteria and are thus eligible to represent them. If any complaints are received that any members of a team do not meet these criteria, the club will be required to explain why it believes the players to be eligible. If that explanation is not regarded as convincing, disqualification may follow.
- 5 Teams may consist of four, five or six players. At least four of the players must be nominated at the time that the entry is submitted. Teams of fewer than six players may add additional players at any time; such players must be nominated to the EBU Competitions Department before participating.
- 6 No player may represent two different teams in one season. However, a player is not barred from representing a club by virtue of having represented some other club in the Garden Cities Trophy or in any other club competition.
- 7 Matches in Rounds 1-5 will be played over 24 boards, to be played in two stanzas of 12 boards with a compulsory change of opponents at half time. Team captains shall toss for choice of seating rights in the first stanza.

- 8 Where a team has more than four players who intend to play in the match one pair may be replaced by the sitting out pair (or a player by a sitting out player) after six boards of a 12-board stanza provided that notice of this intention is given to the opponents before the start of the stanza. Note, however, that the teams can only compare scores after 12 boards have been played.
- 9 The quarter-finals and semi-finals will be played over 32 boards, to be played in four stanzas of eight.
- 10 The final will be played over 48 boards, to be played in six stanzas of eight.
- 11 Sixteen teams will be seeded. In principle, these will include the finalists from the previous year's competition (if known in time). In order to be seeded on this basis the team must be substantially unchanged from the previous year. This means that at least three players must remain from a team which comprised four registered players in the previous year; and at least four players must remain from a team which comprised five or six registered players.
- 12 The remaining seeds will be determined by Gold Points or similar.
- 13 Late entries, even if accepted (which shall be at the absolute discretion of the EBU Competitions Department), may not be considered for seeding.
- 14 Seeded teams will be exempted until the round of 128 (which this year will be Round 2). Any team defeating a seed shall acquire the status of that seed for themselves. Seeds will not be drawn against one another prior to Round 4, and will only be drawn against each other in Round 4 if the only alternative would cause excessive travelling for one or more teams.
- 15 Non-seeded teams only will play in Round 1. There will be no byes for non-seeded teams in Round 1, except in the event of an odd number of entries, or to accommodate late entries. In order to reduce the field to 64 teams for Round 3, byes will be allocated in Round 2. These will be allocated at random amongst the non-seeded teams, except that a team which received a bye or a walkover in Round 1 will neither receive a bye nor be drawn against a seed in Round 2.
- 16 Subject to the provisions of Regulations 14 and 15 relating to seeding, the draw for Rounds 1-5 will be regionalised as far as possible, and the draw for the quarter-finals onwards will be random.
- 17 Teams from the same club will not be drawn against each other in Rounds 1-2. They will not be drawn against each other prior to the quarter-finals unless the only alternative would cause excessive travelling for one or more teams.

- 18 In the event that the exceptions to avoid excessive travelling in regulations 14 (relating to seeded teams) and 17 (relating to teams from the same club) are both engaged in relation to the same draw, that draw will be arranged if practicable according to the following priorities:
- a Two unseeded teams, or one seeded and one unseeded team, from the same club will be drawn against each other in preference to drawing two seeded teams against each other.
  - b Two seeded teams from different clubs will be drawn against each other in preference to drawing two seeded teams from the same club against each other.
- 19 Teams from the same county will not be drawn against each other in Round 1 unless the only alternative would cause excessive travelling for one or more teams. For this purpose the county to which a team belongs means the EBU County Association to which the club it represents is primarily affiliated.
- 20 Level 4 agreements are permitted throughout the competition.
- 21 The dates by which each round must be played will be found on the [main event](#) and [2022-23 results](#) pages of the EBU website. The date of the final should be decided by the team captains by mutual agreement. No play-by date is published for the final, and the rules for offering dates set out in Regulations 6-8 and 11 of the [General Regulations](#) do not apply to the final. However, captains are expected to use their best endeavours to find a mutually acceptable date within a reasonable time of the identity of the finalists becoming known, and if the final is unduly delayed a ruling may be given under Regulation 42 of the [General Regulations](#).
- 22 Master Points will be awarded in the form of Green Points for each round won as follows:

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	QF	SF	Final
1	2	2	3	3	4	6	8

All awards quoted are per player, subject to that player having played at least one-third of the total number of boards in the match concerned. All Master Points will be direct-credited as soon as practicable after the conclusion of each round.

- 23 Prizes will be awarded to the top four teams. All prizes are quoted per team, and will be credited to the EBU accounts of the team captains following the conclusion of the event.

Prizes for 2022/23: Winners £600, Runners-up £300, Semi-finalists £160.

Prizes for 2023/24: to be determined when entries are known.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT PLATE REGULATIONS

24 The NICKO Plate competition is open to all unseeded teams who are defeated in their first match of the main event, whether this is in Round 1, or following a Round 1 bye or walkover, in Round 2. Teams conceding their Round 1 match in the main event are eligible for the Plate. There is no additional entry fee for the Plate, and it will be assumed that all eligible teams will wish to enter the Plate unless the EBU Competitions Department is advised to the contrary.

25 Regulations 1-10, 17 and 20-23 shall apply to the Plate as they do to the main event, subject to the amendments in Regulations 27 and 31-33.

26 For the purposes of regulations 5 and 6, a team is considered to be a single team throughout its participation in the main event and the Plate.

27 In the quarter-finals only the captains may agree in advance to play a 24 or 28 board match, to be played in four stanzas of six or seven boards, respectively.

28 There will be no seeds in the Plate.

29 There will be no byes in Round 1 of the Plate, except in the event of an odd number of entries, or to accommodate a team which received a bye or a walkover in Round 1 of the main event. In order to reduce the field to 32 teams for Round 3, byes will be allocated in Round 2, at random, except that a team which received a bye in Round 1 will not receive a bye in Round 2.

30 The draw for Rounds 1-4 and the quarter-finals will be regionalised as far as possible, and the draw for the semi-finals will be random.

31 Teams from the same club will not be drawn against each other in Rounds 1-2. They will not be drawn against each other prior to the semi-finals unless the only alternative would cause excessive travelling for one or more teams.

32 Green Points will be awarded as follows:

R1	R2	R3	R4	Quarter- final	Semi- final	Final
1	1	1.5	1.5	2	3	4

33 Prizes will be awarded to the top two teams.

Prizes for 2022-23:      Winners £200,      Runners-up £100.

Prizes for 2023-24: to be determined when entries are known.



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