

I. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- 1.1 Initial seating is determined by random draw. A change of seat is not allowed after play starts, except as assigned by the Tournament Director.
- 1.2 The starting position of the button will be determined by dealing for High Card. High card ties will be determined by suit. The rank of suits (in descending order) are:
 1. Spades
 2. Hearts
 3. Diamonds
 4. Clubs (thus, an Ace of Spades is higher than an Ace of Hearts).

**These suit rankings only apply to starting position determination (Rule 1.2), the chip race-off (Rules 4.1-4.5), and consolidation of tables/players (Rule 3.2). Of course, the suit rankings do not apply to normal poker hands played in the tournament.

- 1.3 Blinds are raised at regularly scheduled intervals. See the Blind Structure Page on the website.
- 1.4 If there is a signal designating the end of a betting level, the new limits apply on the next deal. A deal begins with the **first riffle** of the shuffle.
- 1.5 **“Dealers clean up their own mess”** The cards shall be shuffled by the person who just dealt the previous hand. After the cards are shuffled, the deck shall be cut by the Player to the RIGHT of the shuffler. The new dealer is not allowed to cut the cards for the hand about to be dealt.
- 1.6 Heads Up: When the tournament is down to only two players, the Dealer/Button will be on the **Small Blind**.
- 1.7 All ties on hands result in split pots. Odd chip is given to smallest stack prior to the hand.
- 1.8 **“Cards Speak”** in all instances.
- 1.9 **“Show one, show all”** A player who shows 1 or both of his cards to anyone else (either active in the tournament or not) must, upon request, show his/her hand to the table at the conclusion of the hand, even if the hand is folded. This rule does not apply when the tournament is “Heads Up.”
- 1.10 If a hand is "shown down" to the River, the last bettor/raiser should show his/her hand first. Losing hands may be mucked.

II. ABSENT PLAYERS

- 2.1 The appropriate starting amount of chips will be given to the players or placed on the table for each paid entrant at the beginning of the tournament, whether the person is present or not. **Absent players will be dealt in, and all chips necessary for blinds will be put into the pot as they become due.**
- 2.2 If a paid entrant is absent when the tournament starts, at some point an effort will be made to locate and contact the player. If the player requests the chips be left in place until arrival, the request will be honored. If the player is unable to be contacted, the chips may be removed from play at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director at any time.
- 2.3 A player is always dealt a hand (whether they're absent or merely away from their seat), and will be "blinded off" if they are not present when the action is on them.
- 2.4 If you are not present when it becomes your turn to act, your hand may be declared dead. However, if the person is expected to return to the seat within 1 minute, the table should exercise courtesy by waiting up to 1 minute before declaring the hand dead. Use common sense here.
- 2.5 If the Big Blind is not present to act on his "Option", his hand is declared dead (even if the pot has not been raised), since an absent player cannot exercise the option to raise.

III. CONSOLIDATION OF PLAYERS/TABLES

- 3.1 As players are eliminated, tables will be broken down, with players from the broken tables assigned to empty seats at other tables. The number of players at each table will be kept reasonably balanced by the transfer of players as needed. If any table ever has 2 or more players more than another table, players will be moved to balance the tables.
- 3.2 When balancing tables (to equalize the players), the tournament director will use the following guidelines:

If moving 1 player: the player with the smallest chip stack at the table shall move to the new table. If moving two players, the two players with the smallest chip stacks shall move to the new table(s). And so on.

If an entire table needs to be broken down, the move will be determined by "high-card." One card will be dealt to each remaining player at the expiring table. The high card will go to one table and the low card will go to the other table. If there are more than 2 people, the highest cards will go to one table, and the lowest cards to another. Of course, this will be dictated by available seating at individual tables.

- 3.3 The specifics of the table consolidation procedure will be in the sole discretion of the Tournament Director, and every effort will be made to ensure that moved players are not forced to pay the Big Blind twice in a row. However, a player must go to the seat he was assigned regardless of where the blinds are currently located.
- 3.4 New players at a table are dealt in immediately unless they sit down in the Small Blind, on the Button, or in between the Small Blind and the Button. In this case, the new player must wait until the Button passes before the player is dealt in the hand. A new player coming in on the Big Blind will simply post the Big Blind.
- 3.5 **There are no "dead" buttons!** If a player is knocked out of the tournament, the button moves to the next active player to the left. The next two players, regardless of who posted on the last hand, always post small and big blinds.
- 3.6 When only **8** Players remain, those Players will be consolidated to the ultra prestigious "final table." Because the tournament pays out to 8th place, everyone who makes the final table will be "in the money."

IV. CHIP RACE-OFF

- 4.1 At a certain point, we will no longer need the lowest denomination of chip in play. These "small" chips will be removed from the table according to the following procedure:
- 4.2 All lower denomination chips that are of a sufficient quantity for a new "higher" chip will be changed out directly. (i.e. 5 chips of \$5.00 will be exchanged for one \$25 chip).
- 4.3 **Removal of Odd Chips:**
The remaining odd chips will be put into a main pot at the center of the table. One card will be dealt to a player for each odd chip possessed. Cards are dealt clockwise starting with the seat to the left of the button. Each player will receive all cards due before any cards are dealt to the next player.

- 4.4 The player with the highest card by suit gets enough odd chips to exchange for one new chip, the second highest card gets to exchange for the next chip, and so forth, until all the lower denomination chips are exchanged. Note, the suits are ranked as provided in Rule 1.2 above (Spade, Heart, Diamond, Club).
- 4.5 If an odd (and insufficient) number of lower denomination chips are left after this process, the player with the highest card remaining will collect all the remaining chips and will receive a new chip if he has **half or more** of the quantity of the lower denomination chips needed, **otherwise nothing**.

V. BETTING

- 5.1 The number of raises in any betting round is unlimited.
- 5.2 All bets must be at least equal to the minimum bring in, unless the player is going "All-In"
- 5.3 All raises must be equal to or greater than the size of the previous bet or raise on that betting round (except for a player going "all-in"). For example, if Player A bets \$100 and Player B raises \$500, then Player C can either call \$600 or raise to a minimum of \$1,100 (because the raise must be equal to previous raise of \$500).
- 5.4 A player who has already checked or called may not subsequently raise an all-in bet that is less than the full size of the last bet or raise. Example: Player A bets \$100 and Player B raises \$100 more, making the total bet \$200. If Player C goes all-in for less than \$300 total (i.e. not a full \$100 raise), and Player A calls, then Player B cannot raise again, because he wasn't fully raised. However, Player A could've raised because Player B raised Player A's bet in the first instance.
- 5.5 A wager is not binding until the chips are actually released into the pot, unless the player has made a verbal statement of the action.
- 5.6 If there is a discrepancy between a player's verbal statement and the actual amount put into the pot, the bet will be corrected to the **verbal statement**.
- 5.7 A player who says "raise" is allowed to continue putting chips into the pot with more than one move; the wager is assumed complete when the player's hands come to a rest outside the pot area.

However, **string betting is illegal**. A person is considered to have made a string bet if they put in an amount to call with one motion and then subsequently put in a raise. To avoid this, the player should either put all chips in the pot with a single motion or announce, "I raise" prior to all motions.

- 5.8 Any cards thrown away from the player (face up or down) are assumed to be a fold, unless otherwise stated prior to doing so.
- 5.9 Protect your hand. If your cards touch the muck or are accidentally mucked, they are dead.
- 5.10 If you drop a card on the floor out of your hand, you must still play that card, regardless of whether or not it was seen by anyone else.
- 5.11 A bet of a single chip without comment is considered to be the full amount of the chip allowed. See also Rule 5.17 below.
- 5.12 If a player tries to bet or raise less than the legal minimum and has more chips, the wager must be increased to the proper size. (This does not apply to a player who has unintentionally put too much in to call). The wager is brought up to the sufficient amount only, no greater size.
- 5.13 The other players at the table maintain a right to place a maximum time limit for taking action on your hand. The clock may be put on someone if requested. If the clock is put on you when you are facing a bet, you will have an additional **90 seconds** to act on your hand. You will have a ten second warning, after which your hand is dead if not acted upon. Note, if the tournament is heads up, the time limit will be increased **3 minutes**.
- 5.14 Rapping the table indicates a check.
- 5.15 All verbal statements (e.g. "Raise.") are binding, as long as the action is legal and in turn.
- 5.16 You must declare that you are playing the board before you throw your cards away; otherwise you relinquish all claims to the pot.
- 5.17 A player can call a bet by announcing "Call" even if the actual chip thrown into the pot is larger than the call. In this instance, correct change should be made and the overage should be returned to the player as soon as practicable. For example, if Player A bets \$50, and Player B wishes to call, but only has chips in denominations of \$100, Player B can declare "Call" before throwing a \$100 chip into the pot. As long as the declaration of "Call" is made before the chip is thrown into the pot, this bet will be considered a call, and change will be made and returned to Player B.

VI. ALL-INS

- 6.1 If a player lacks sufficient chips for a blind, the player is entitled to get action on whatever amount of money he puts in. A player who posts a short blind and wins, does not need to make up the blind. If a player posts a short blind, the other blinds will remain their normal amount.
- 6.2 If two or more players are eliminated during the same hand, the player starting the hand with the larger amount of money finishes in the higher tournament place.
- 6.3 A player can only go All-In for the amount of chips he currently possesses. For example, if the player intends to purchase an Add-On or Re-Buy, but has not yet purchased it, he cannot count the Add-On into the value of his current chip stack.

VII. MISDEALS

- 7.1 If the first holecard dealt is exposed, a misdeal results, and the dealer will reshuffle, recut and redeal the cards. If any other holecard is exposed due to dealer error, the deal continues. The exposed card may not be kept, and is to be used as the burncard for the flop. If more than one holecard is exposed, this is a misdeal, and there must be a redeal.
- 7.2 If the flop contains too many cards, the flop must be redealt. Note this applies even if it were possible to know which card was the extra one. If the flop needs to be redealt because the cards were prematurely flopped before the betting was complete, or the flop contained too many cards, the boardcards are mixed with the remainder of the deck. The burncard remains on the table. After shuffling, the dealer cuts the deck and deals a new flop without burning a card.
- 7.3 If the dealer turns the fourth card on the board before the betting round is complete, the card is taken out of play for that round, even if subsequent players elect to fold. The betting is then completed. The dealer turns and burns what would've been the 5th card in the 4th card's place. After this round of betting, the dealer reshuffles the deck, including the card that was taken out of play, but not including the burncards or discards. The dealer then cuts the deck and turns the final card without burning a card.
- 7.4 If the fifth card is turned up prematurely, the deck is reshuffled and dealt in the same manner.

- 7.5 If the dealer mistakenly deals the first player an extra card (after all players have received their starting hands), and the extra card can be determined from the two correct cards, the card will be returned to the deck and used for the burncard. If the first player sees the extra card, it will be turned up for the entire table to see. If the dealer mistakenly deals more than one extra card, it is a misdeal.

VIII. ETIQUETTE

- 8.1 Do not try to inhibit others ability to see all of your chips. At anytime for any reason, a player can ask for a chip count of another player.
- 8.2 Agreeing to split pots will not be allowed in any game. Chopping the big and small blind by taking them back when all other players have folded is not allowed. **The tournament must be played to its conclusion.** There shall be no deals at the final table to split the prize money, etc.
- 8.3 You may be currently considering cutting a deal with your friend to share in each other's winnings. While the intention may be innocent, this is considered **collusion** and a violation of the rules. Collusion occurs when two or more players act as a team in order to give themselves an unfair advantage over the rest of the field. If the Tournament Director determines that collusion has occurred, the players may be disqualified and their chips distributed equally among the remaining active players at that table.
- 8.4 **"One player to a hand"** Nobody shall contribute advice to a player active in a hand. However, advice is allowed in between hands.
- 8.5 By participating in this tournament, you agree to abide by the rules and behave in a courteous manner. A violator may be verbally warned, suspended from play for a specified length of time, or ultimately disqualified from the tournament. Chips from a disqualified participant will be removed from play. No refund will be given to any person who is disqualified from play. The decision to disqualify rests solely with the Tournament Director, and is final.
- 8.6 The tournament director will ultimately settle all disputes based on, in order: these rules, Hoyle's Book of Rules and similar authoritative literature, common etiquette, and our common sense.

- 8.7 All rules are subject to change prior to the start of the tournament and may change by unanimous consent of active players after the start of the tournament. The Tournament Director reserves the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness, even if a strict interpretation of the rules may indicate a different ruling.
- 8.8 Your cards shall remain on the table at all times. Players are not allowed to place their hole cards in their lap, etc.