



VEGAS MASTERS - Road to Nationals

Revised January 2013

The Vegas Masters (VM) State Championship & National Qualifier team tournaments are where the best of the best come together to compete in the summer just before the TAP League Nationals. On average, 1 out of every 15 to 18 teams in 8-ball and 9-ball will qualify.

Winning teams receive trophies, travel packages to compete in the National event held in an exciting different city every year and an invitation to TAP's exclusive National Welcome Party. TAP Las Vegas generally provides airfare, up to 3 hotel rooms for 4-5 nights (depending on the scheduled dates along with the start and end times) and the entry fee to TAP League Nationals for eligible members of the winning team(s) or players. **All other costs are to be paid for by the team.** Partial packages for 8-ball 3rd place and 9-ball may be awarded based on team counts and the associated budget.

To protect the National Fund, each member (participating in Nationals) on the winning teams will be required to pay a *\$100 **refundable** (if player attends Nationals) good faith deposit each to TAP Las Vegas **no later than 2 weeks** after winning the Vegas Masters. If the deposits are not made by that time, TAP Las Vegas reserves the right to award the prize to the team that placed next in the tournament. Once the deposits have been made, airline tickets will be purchased by TAP Las Vegas (airline tickets *are non-refundable and non-transferrable*). Teams/players **cannot** purchase or arrange their own transportation unless they do so at their own expense or request to do so in writing and obtain written approval from the league office. Some restrictions apply.

The deposits WILL BE refunded to each of the players when they ARRIVE at Nationals. If players do not attend, the deposit WILL NOT be refunded. Any deposits not refunded due to a lack of participation will be added to the National Travel Fund for future use and the player will owe TAP Las Vegas the balance of the airline ticket cost to be paid by the end of the current year.

This process is in place to insure we have a full team in attendance and to preserve the National Fund for TAP Las Vegas league players.

Players winning multiple events in the Vegas Masters tournament series will receive shared accommodations, one round trip flight (if applicable) and their paid entry into applicable tournaments.

TAP Las Vegas reserves the right to take away a team's National spot and give it to another team, if the team in question is unable to field a complete team for the National event.

*NOTE: Players from the 3rd place team will be required to submit an additional \$250 by August 31 to pay their airfare. Any unused funds will be return at the time of purchase. Any winning player who received league paid or partially paid airfare to Nationals in the past, but did not use it will be required to pay a \$350 deposit. The deposit less any monies owed will be reimbursed at Nationals for those receiving full airfare. Players not attending Nationals will not be reimbursed.

For clarification purposes, this document is subject to change at the discretion of the league office.

A final copy will be provided at the time of registration.

VM 8/9-Ball Eligibility (10-Ball session counts towards all 9-ball eligibility requirements listed):

1. 8-Ball teams placing 1st through 3rd and winners of the Wild Card drawing in each division have the opportunity to compete in this tournament provided they meet all requirements below. *All 9-ball teams are eligible to compete* provided they meet all other qualifications listed herein.
2. Teams must play a minimum of 2 of the 3 sessions prior to the VM. Exception: A new team that joins in the Spring Session can participate if they compete in the Summer Session and meet the minimum match qualifications listed in #5 below.
3. Should a qualified 8-ball team split to form 2 teams within the same division, both teams will be eligible to play in the VM with a minimum of 3 original members on each team **or** the original team can come together, so long as all players meet their match requirements outlined herein to compete at the VM.
4. Qualifying teams must have a minimum of 3 original members (from the qualifying session) in order to maintain their qualification.
5. Players must have (6) matches with the same team during a minimum of two of the three sessions prior to the Vegas Masters. Exceptions: members who join a team in the Spring Session must have 6 matches in the Summer Session on the same team by the registration deadline. To support the in-house, 9-ball players are exempt from having to play with the *same* team.
6. If a situation arises whereby a player(s) from your team is unable to play with the qualified team in a session, but are able to play with another TAP team during a session, they may be able to maintain their qualification with your team under specific circumstances. Special circumstances may be considered however, **league office approval is required** to ensure eligibility and will be decided on a case by case basis. *Requests must be submitted in writing by the team Captain for consideration.*
7. All players must be *current and active (in the game they are competing)* members at the time of the Vegas Masters and Nationals. Current members with 0 matches are considered **inactive**, thus, are ineligible to compete in the VM.
8. Players from the winning VM teams must have 6 matches played in the 16 weeks prior to the registration date of Nationals, which is typically 1 month prior to the event.
9. **Vegas Masters Rosters/Handicaps:**
 - a. *Registration forms will be sent to the captains approximately 2 months prior to the event.*
 - b. *Upon registration, your captain will determine which roster they will be using in the competition. Teams can use any one of the 3 rosters from the qualifying sessions or the current roster.*
 - c. **NOTE: ALL PLAYERS MUST HAVE 6 MATCHES PLAYED ON THE ROSTER SELECTED.** *If the current roster is selected, players must be able to play 6 matches by the end of the session, as players with less than 6 matches will be ineligible to play at Nationals with the team.*
 - d. Players cannot compete on two teams from the **same division**. If qualified for multiple teams in the same division, a player must choose one team to compete with.
 - e. *Teams cannot mix rosters from different sessions.*
 - f. *All players must meet the qualifications herein to participate.*
 - g. *Changes to rosters must be submitted in writing or via email to cindy@taplasvegas.com by the registration deadline.*
 - h. *Once all teams have registered, final on-line rosters will be generated and the contact person listed at the time of registration will be notified via email.*
 - i. *The final on-line tournament rosters will include all qualified players and list their "tournament handicaps." These handicaps are based on players' overall playing abilities and may be different from the handicap on league night.*

10.² Registration: *A \$40.00 team registration fee is required in order to compete in this tournament. These funds are added to the National Prize Fund and used for the tournament.*

**For clarification purposes, this document is subject to change at the discretion of the league office.
A final copy will be provided at the time of registration.**

8-BALL TEAM EVENT FORMAT: Day 1 - Round Robin / Day 2 – Single Elimination

1. Each team will be on a 4-team board. Teams will consist of a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place and wild card from different divisions whenever possible. Each team will play a round robin format with the other (3) teams on their board. A total of 5 individual matches will be played in each team match. The total possible points attainable per team are 15.
2. The top 50% plus ties will advance to the **Championship Team Board**. The remaining teams will play in the **Best of the Rest Team Board**. These tournaments are single elimination, a race to 3 match wins. In smaller tournaments, their will only be a Championship Team Board.
3. Teams will be seeded for placement on the tournament board with a few exceptions, as NCAA seeded tournaments do not include common players on teams. Because we allow common players to be on teams, every effort will be made to allow both teams the opportunity to place in the tournament. If common players exist on the two opposing teams when seeded, the second team will be moved to the next available position on the chart where they will not be competing with themselves *whenever possible*. There may be situations where this is not possible and common players may meet at some point to compete. It will be the captain's decision as to play the common players as outlined herein under "Putting Up Players."
4. If a team refuses to play a team match in the Round Robin, the opposing team will get an average of what the team gave up in points with a .5 going to the next number. For instance:
1st team beats said team 5-0, 2nd team beats said team 4-1, team then doesn't show up to play final round, opposing team would get $(5) + (4) \text{ Divided by } 2 = 4.5$ Total of 5 points to opposing team
5. If a team drops in the round robin without completing their matches or it is determined by the referee or tournament director that they are losing on purpose, said team will not be allowed to move on to the next level, Best of the Rest or Championship Boards. If you suspect a team is cheating by throwing their match, notify the referee or tournament director during said match.

Note: During the Team Semi-Finals & Finals, Sudden Death **will not** decide a winner. If the 4th match has not started at the 3 hours and 30 minute mark, the subsequent matches must be played on two tables at the same time.

9-BALL TEAM EVENT FORMAT - to be played in a standard double elimination format.

Rules

The Association for P.O.O.L.'s general rules for 8-Ball and 9-Ball shall govern the conduct of each match played in all tournament events. Due to time constraints, some rule modifications must be implemented. These **additional** rules are also in effect for the duration of the tournament.

1. Rosters

- a. No roster verifications or changes will be made at the Vegas Masters. It is the captain's and team's responsibility to review the rosters on-line in advance of the tournament.
- b. Players may be on multiple rosters, qualified on different teams from separate divisions. However, should the teams with common players compete; it is at the team captain's discretion whether or not to play the common player. Should the team captain be the common player, it is recommended that he/she temporarily appoint another player on the team as captain to minimize any controversy. Upon completion, the original captain resumes his/her position.
- c. Players cannot play on 2 tables at the same time.
- d. The roster(s) for the T.A.P. Nationals will be the roster of the winning Vegas Masters team(s). Under extenuating circumstances and with special requirements being met, team players who are ineligible to play and win in the Vegas Masters may be eligible to participate in Nationals at their own expense. These requests must be in writing and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the league office and if approved, submitted to the corporate office for final approval.

2. **Sportsmanship**: This league is about Sportsmanship, Courtesy and Respect towards your fellow players and the rules. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Penalties can range from a warning, to ball in hand foul, to forfeiture of games, matches or disqualification. Everyone is expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Rulings made by referees will not be made on petty technicalities. All players should win or lose on the table based on his or her abilities.

3. **Time Outs**: All players receive **one 1-minute time** out per game. If the coach exceeds the one minute time limit, the opposing Captain, after timing the coach, can challenge for excessive use of time. At this point, the coach has 10 seconds to complete their advice to the shooting player. If there is a controversy, a Referee must be called. Remember that real time and perceived time are two different things. Don't be offended if you get called for taking too much time on a time-out. The match belongs to the players on the table, not the coach.

Handicap 2 players still receive unlimited coaching within the 45-second shot clock however, the Coach CANNOT approach the table to give advice. All coaching during a non-time-out must occur away from the playing area.

4. Putting up Players:

- a. Only the Captain or a specific member of the team appointed by the Captain can make player selections for each match. This is to avoid controversy.
- b. Once a captain has selected their player for a match, they cannot change their selection once the opposing captain has made his/her selection. Once both captains have made their selection – neither captain can change.
- c. **NOTE: TEAM SURVIVAL CANNOT BE USED. THE "BURNOUT STRATEGY" OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL RULE BOOK CAN BE USED AT THIS TOURNAMENT AND AT NATIONALS. GET FAMILIAR WITH IT!**

- d. If two teams face one another and the teams have any common player(s), the player(s) are **eligible** to play for both teams without penalty as long as the player(s) meet the following two criteria:
 - i. The player(s) have met the proper requirements to be eligible to play in the tournament.
 - ii. If the Captain elects to put a player up for a match, the other Captain **cannot** match the player to play him/herself.
- e. It is suggested to avoid controversy over favoritism, that if the common player is the captain, that he/she appoint another player to be captain for that match.

5. **Coaching:**

- a. Only the coach or the player can call a time out.
- b. Neither the coach nor player can refuse a time out. Once a time out has been called or suggested, it must be taken.
- c. If the coach or player calls a time out when they have already used their time out for that game, one warning will be given to the team. Any future violations throughout the entire teams matches will result in ball-in-hand foul to the opponent.
- d. A second player can consult with the coach, but the coach is the only player who can communicate directly to the player or approach the table. Only the (2) shooting players and their coaches are allowed in the playing area.
- e. Only the coach or the player can ask for a third party to watch a close hit or verify a frozen ball. If another team member asks, one warning will be given. On the second infraction, ball in hand foul.
- f. The only communication between the player and the coach is during a time out situation by either team or between GAMES.
- g. When coaching a handicap 2 level player, the coach must declare when they are taking their one official time out so the opposing player can consult with their coach. The opposing player **cannot** consult with their coach during sideline coaching within the 45 seconds shot clock.
- h. Should the coach see a foul and a time out remains for their player, they may call the foul. This basically burns the player's time out. Should there be controversy over whether or not the foul occurred and the player did not see the foul, shot goes to the shooter. In general, players need to pay attention to the game and call their own fouls.

6. **Sideline Interference:**

- a. Due to the limited space at and around the table, only the players, coaches and scorekeeper will be allowed in the immediate playing area. All others will be asked to leave the area and those players will be expected to limit their conversations, as this can be very disruptive to the shooting player.
- b. Conversations with players are limited to those between the coach and the player during either player's time out.
- c. The **ONLY** thing **ANY** player on the team can say to the shooting player when it is their turn at the table regarding the match is "mark your pocket" when the shooter is on the 8 or 9 Ball. Comments such as nice shot, let's go, etc. are allowed. Use common sense. Don't clap or yell out YES!!!, when the other player misses. Be quiet and show respect to the shooting players.
- d. If any comments are made of any kind that could be considered coaching, by any player on the team, the player may be charged with a time out. The team will be given one warning. Any further comments will result in a ball-in-hand foul to the opposing player. This applies to the remainder of all matches between the two teams, not just the match where the warning was issued. The match belongs to the players. Let them win or lose on the table, based on their individual skills.

- e. Any player making comments from the sidelines that is not on either team playing a match will be given one warning to stop. If it occurs again they will be ejected from the tournament area and the event.

7. **Sudden Death**: Sudden Death will be in effect for the Team event. Matches are set at 4-hour intervals. We need to adhere to this time frame as closely as possible to stay on schedule for the week. At 3 hours and 30 minutes, any match that is currently in progress (defined as the first rack in the match has been broken) will be allowed to its completion. Any additional matches to be played will be determined by one game between the two opponents. The tournament referee staff will monitor times; however it is every team's responsibility to manage your time wisely. Don't intentionally try to stall matches to insure sudden death. Play fair and let your players win or lose on the table. The Referees or Tournament Directors have the final say on calling Sudden Death.

Note: During the Team Semi-Finals & Finals, Sudden Death **will not** decide a winner. If the 4th match has not started at the 3 hours and 30 minute mark, the subsequent matches must be played on two tables at the same time.

8. **Listening Devices**: NO listening devices of any kind will be allowed.

9. **The 45 second shot clock/Slow Play**: If you have timed the opposing player and verified they are exceeding the 45-second shot clock consistently, you must first notify a Referee and report the violation. The Referee will notify the opposing Captain or Coach that their player is under watch. The Captain or Coach should then tell the player after they complete their turn at the table. This is not an official warning, only a notification. The Referee will time the player to determine if a violation has occurred. If so, the Referee will issue the warning to the Captain or Coach and let them tell the player that a warning has been given. The Referee will continue to time the player. The next violation will result in a ball-in-hand to the opposing player unless that shot is considered by the Referee to be of extreme difficulty or critical to the match. The Referee has the final say.

10. **Accidental movement of a ball clarification**:

- a. If the shooting player accidentally moves a ball **prior to their shot**, the opposing player has the option of leaving the ball where it was moved "or" returning it to its original position. If the shooting player grabs the moved ball to replace it, it is not a foul.
- b. If the shooting player accidentally moves a ball **during the execution of their shot, putting the cue ball in motion** and then touches the moved ball while other balls are in motion "or" another ball on the table strikes the ball that was moved or strikes the cue stick, it is a ball-in-hand foul.

11. **Referees**: Referees will be provided during the tournament. If the player or coach sees potential for controversy, please stop the match and request a referee. The referees' ruling is final. In a controversial situation the referee has the option of referring the matter to the Head Referee for further review. The Head Referee's decision on all rulings is final.

12. **Handicaps**: Once all teams have registered, final on-line rosters are generated and captains are notified. These rosters include all qualified players and list their "tournament handicaps." These h/c's are based on players' overall playing abilities and may be different from the handicap on league night. Captains' are given an opportunity to review the rosters and request changes/audits. The league director will make all final handicap assignments.

No changes of any kind made to the team rosters once the event begins unless a manual error by the league director has occurred. All players' membership status and handicaps are verified prior to the start of this event and are not subject to change during the event.

13. Miscellaneous rules:

- a. Avoid controversy and/or show good sportsmanship when shooting by:
 - i. **Clearly identify the ball & pocket you are attempting to shoot at.**
 - ii. **Clearly announce your fouls and defensive shots.**Players who are verbally warned more than once by a referee will be subject to Sportsmanship Violations, which can result in a ball in hand foul, to forfeiture of games, matches or disqualification.
 - b. You must "**MARK THE POCKET**" ON ALL 8 or 9 ball shots. Not marking the pocket on a completed 8-Ball shot is loss of game. If there is any controversy and the pocket has not been marked, that player will lose regardless of any verbal agreements that have been made. In 9-ball, the 9-ball is spotted if the pocket is not marked. Any marker is acceptable **except a standard piece of chalk**. Be sure to clearly identify which pocket you are marking.
 - c. **Double hit/push shots:** Double hitting the cue ball or pushing the cue ball is a foul. When the cue ball and object ball are less than a chalk distance or less apart, it is recommended that players elevate their cues or shoot at an angle to avoid double hitting for pushing. It is further recommended that a referee be called to watch the shots. If a referee deems the shot to be a foul, the call is final. See section 11 above.
 - d. The house cue ball will be used unless agreed upon by BOTH players. Any game started with a different cue ball without this mutual agreement will be allowed to its completion and all subsequent games will be played with the house ball.
 - e. All matches are considered final when both score sheets have been turned into the tournament desk. No protest or challenge will be considered after this occurs.
 - f. Unscrewing a jointed cue **into two pieces** is a concession of your match, *unless you notify your opponent that you are changing shafts*.
 - g. Two-piece Jump cues are allowed. Use of a shaft only is **NOT** allowed.
 - h. If you shoot the wrong category of balls and your opponent does not call a ball-in-hand foul after the first ball is pocketed, the shooting player is now that category of balls for the remainder of that game, unless they admit a ball-in-hand foul.
 - i. Once a match has ended, each team has 5 minutes maximum to field a player.
 - j. Every player has the right to ask for their opponents Photo ID for identification. Any player attempting to misrepresent their own identity or the identity of another player will be immediately disqualified from competition and banned from the Association for P.O.O.L. Inc. for a minimum of (1) year. NO EXCEPTIONS.
 - k. **Smoking:** For those who smoke, please be courteous to those around you and respectful of the equipment. Burning cigarettes **are not allowed at the shooting table** while it is your turn to shoot. They need to be set in an ashtray and fully extinguished when you are done.
 - l. **Outside Food/Beverages:** Outside beverages are NOT allowed inside Mickey's. *Players are encouraged to bring in food for the day, however, please clean up your area* when you are done. Healthy snacks are a good idea.
 - m. **Clean up** – When you are done with your match, please clean up the area. Throw your trash in the receptacles located throughout the room. This will be appreciated by all.
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Disqualification Process

Note: We Do Not Raise Handicaps During the Event

1. Reminder: Everyone here is planning to bring their "A" game so don't be surprised to see some players shooting 1 to 1½ levels higher than their rating simply due to the intensity of this tournament, excessive play for three days straight and personal focus.
2. All scores will be entered into PoolNet.
3. During and at the conclusion of the Round Robin tournament, all scores will be entered. If a player shoots statistically 2 levels above their current rating for 2 matches, they will be disqualified from the event. The team captains will be notified if their player(s) are disqualified.
4. During the Single tournaments, teams are instructed to flag any player who is shooting 2 levels above their current rating. The Captain is to bring the score sheet to the tournament director at the conclusion of the individual match. Do not wait until the entire team match is over. If this happens in the middle of the team match, the tournament director will give you another score sheet to continue scoring the remainder of the matches.
5. Teams will not move forward in the single elimination tournaments until instructed to do so by the tournament director. Should any matches be in question, additional time may be required for data entry to verify the team's and/or player's eligibility to do so.
6. Disqualified players cannot play in any other events.
7. If one player is disqualified, the team remains in the tournament. If a second player on that team is disqualified, the entire team will be disqualified.
8. If a team is disqualified, the players not disqualified on the team can still participate in other events.
9. If a team is disqualified during the round robin event, the teams they played will receive a 3-2 win unless their actual points were more than 3. If the team is disqualified before finishing the Round Robin event, all matches will be recorded as a 3-2 win for teams that would have played the disqualified team.
10. Any points won by a disqualified player during the Round Robin event will be reversed for all teams in that bracket prior to the seeding of the single elimination boards. The same point reversal will occur during single elimination prior to advancing a team to the next round.
11. Any disqualified players will forfeit any and all monies won.
12. For a team that lost to a team that was disqualified during the single elimination Championship and/or Second Chance rounds, they will move the next round provided the next match has not completed. If the next match has completed, the team will place in the next highest round and receive a payback if applicable.