

For December 2024: Why do some local games cost more than others?

Our unit offers one of the best bridge game bargains around: \$5 per person (which at most sites includes coffee and snacks!). But every now and then, there is a scramble for \$1 bills when a director announces the day's game fee is \$6. What's that all about – and what are we getting for that extra dollar?

ACBL allows units and clubs to hold special games, as well as take part in ACBL-created events. For example, a unit can designate a game as a Club Championship Game, a Club Appreciation Game, or a Unit Championship Game. Another example: Clubs can decide they will participate in STaC (Sectional Tournaments at Clubs) games that are organized by ACBL Districts or Regions. They can also opt into North American Pairs qualifying games sponsored by ACBL.

The extra \$1 players are asked to pay goes to the ACBL to cover its fees for special games, with any leftover funds going to the unit. Most of us may not be aware that every "sanctioned" ACBL duplicate game involves a fee paid to ACBL. For our normal weekly game, the fee is \$1.15 per table. Special games may cost the same (Club Championships), or a little more (\$2.40 per table for Unit Championships), or a lot more (\$5.15 per table for North American Pairs).

What do we, as players, get from paying more? The biggest benefit is the added points that can be earned. For example, Club Championships increase available points by 63.6%, and Club Appreciation Games increase points by 81.8%. In addition, players are supporting the unit's budget for buying new cards, keeping equipment running, and hosting social events, among other activities.

So the next time a director announces a special game, be assured we players are getting value for the added dollar fee!