

2026 GRAND NATIONAL OPEN TEAMS NATIONAL QUALIFYING SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

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1 General

- 1.1 The Grand National Open Teams National Qualifying (GNNQ) is conducted by the Australian Bridge Federation Incorporated (ABF) in accordance with the ABF Tournament Regulations (ABF TR) as augmented by these Supplementary Regulations.
- 1.2 The dates of the event are Friday to Sunday, September 18-20, 2026.
- 1.3 GNNQ qualifies teams to compete in Grand National Open Teams National Final (GNNF), to be held in Brisbane on the weekend of November 27-29, 2026. Eight teams will qualify to GNNF – National Final and twelve eligible teams will qualify to GNNF – Non-Metropolitan Teams Final.
- 1.4 The competition will be held under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, 2017. The ABF Tournament Regulations (ABF TR) will apply as augmented by these Supplementary Regulations. In the case of any inconsistency, these Supplementary Regulations will take precedence.
- 1.5 The competition will be conducted on the RealBridge online platform. All events will be held on Normal mode.
- 1.6 Results on the RealBridge website are provisional only. The official results will be at <https://www.abfevents.com.au/events/results/results.asp?yr=2026&dir=gnt>
- 1.7 Expressions used in these Regulations and not defined shall have their ordinary meaning in bridge terminology (which may include expressions defined in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, 2017). Unless repugnant to the context or obvious meaning, all terms defined in the ABF TR shall have the same meaning for the purpose of these Supplementary Regulations. In the event of any doubt or dispute as to such meaning or the interpretation of the application of any regulation, the decision of the Chief Tournament Director (CTD) shall be final and conclusive.

2 Officials

- 2.1 The National Coordinator (NC) and Tournament Organiser (TO) is Fraser Rew.
- 2.2 The Chief Tournament Director is Matthew McManus.
- 2.3 The Reviewer is Laurie Kelso.
- 2.4 The Recorder is Chris Hughes.

3 Eligibility, Augmentation and Substitutions

- 3.1 At the time of commencement of an event, each Australian resident entrant must be a financial member of the ABF Masterpoint Scheme and of an organisation affiliated to the ABF or to an Australian State Bridge Association.
- 3.2 Teams in GNNQ will have qualified via their Regional Playoff event(s).
- 3.3 The list of competing regions is listed in the Appendix. Subject to 3.4, teams from designated Non-Metropolitan regions are eligible to qualify to GNNF – Non-Metropolitan Teams Final.
- 3.4 Teams from regions designated as Provincial will be eligible to compete in the Non-Metropolitan Final only if each member of the team either a) lives outside a designated capital city or other major metropolitan area; or b) has a bona fide home club outside a designated area. For these purposes, designated capital cities and major metropolitan areas are Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Gold Coast, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney
- 3.5 If any team from a region designated as Non-Metropolitan has one or more players who a) lives in a designated area as per 3.4 above; and b) has had recent success in national Open events, then the TO may decide at their discretion that the team is not eligible to qualify to GNNF – Non-Metropolitan Teams Final.
- 3.6 After receipt of entries has been acknowledged by the National Coordinator (NC) but before play has commenced, a team from any region may augment up to a maximum of 6 players, with the consent and at the discretion of the NC. Any player so added must be a member of a club located in that region and must either reside in that region or be a regular player at that club.
- 3.7 A substitute for cause, not convenience, may be allowed with prior approval of the CTD for a maximum of three 12-board stanzas. A substitute must be qualified to represent the team's region.
- 3.8 The CTD may allow emergency substitutions for substantial cause and may impose any conditions in doing so and may take whatever other action is considered necessary to keep the tournament in motion.
- 3.9 The TO may nominate a "house contestant" to compete in GNNQ in order to ensure the smooth running of the tournament. The TO will make every effort to nominate eligible players. The conditions under which the "house contestant" competes will, subject to ABF TR 1.9, be at the discretion of the TO.
- 3.10 To be eligible to play in either of the GNNF events should their team qualify, a player must have played at least 50% of the boards played by the team in GNNQ. At the TO's complete discretion, an exception may be made for a player who failed to satisfy this criterion if the team is able to supply evidence that the player played at least 50% of the boards in qualification events leading up to GNNQ.

4 Systems and Defences

- 4.1 GREEN, BLUE and RED systems and BROWN STICKER conventions are permitted throughout.
- 4.2 YELLOW systems will not be permitted.

5 Disciplinary and Procedural Penalties

- 5.1 In the Swiss Repechage, penalties are included in the overall ranking, but the draw is determined by the scores excluding penalties
- 5.2 The general provisions of ABF TR 10 concerning punctuality and slow play apply. The table of penalties is listed in the Appendices.

6 Correction Period and Time for Requesting a Review

- 6.1 The Correction Period (Law 79C) and time for lodging a request for a review of a Director's ruling (Law 92B) expire: i) for KO rounds 1, 3 and 5, 15 minutes after the conclusion of play in the second stanza; or ii) in all other cases, 30 minutes after the conclusion of play on the day on which the relevant board was played.

7 Unplayed Boards

- 7.1 In the case of multiple unplayed boards where the Director awards an artificial adjusted score of average plus, artificial adjusted scores are awarded as detailed in the Appendices.
- 7.2 Where unplayed boards result in direct comparisons being available on fewer than one-half of the boards in the match, the match will be scored in accordance with ABF TR 15.1 (Forfeits).

8 Event format

There are 64 teams representing the various regions as listed in the Appendices. The field will be seeded taking into account form, past performance, and region of origin. The draw for all matches in Knock-out (KO) rounds 1 to 5 is pre-determined. (The mechanics of the draw are detailed in the Appendices.)

8.1 Knock-out section

All matches in the Knock-out section will be played over 24 boards, played in two stanzas of 12.

- 8.1.1 KO Rounds 1-3: The winning teams progress to the next KO round. The losing teams enter the Swiss repechage.
- 8.1.2 KO Round 4: The 4 winning teams qualify to the GNNF – National Final and will not compete in any further rounds. The 4 losing teams enter the Swiss repechage.

8.1.3 Seating:

- a) subject to 8.1.3 (b), changes of pairs and of partnerships will be permitted between stanzas;
- b) unless permission is given by the CTD, a player who competes in the first stanza of a match and is scheduled to play in the second stanza must retain the same compass position for the whole match;
- c) the RealBridge setting will be implemented whereby the pairs in each team will play different players from the opposing team in the second stanza;
- d) once a stanza has commenced, a pair must continue to play at that table unless permitted by the CTD in the case of emergency or misadventure.

8.2 Swiss Repechage

8.2.1 The Swiss Repechage comprises eight 12-board matches.

8.2.2 The net IMP result in each match will be converted to Victory Points in accordance with the WBF 12 Board Victory Point scale.

8.2.3 At the conclusion of the Swiss Repechage, the four highest placed teams qualify to the GNNF – National Final. Subject to 9.1.1, the twelve highest placed eligible teams from the KO section and the Swiss Repechage qualify to the GNNF – Non-Metropolitan Teams Final.

8.2.4 Draw

- the draw for Round 1 will be random;
- the draw for subsequent rounds will be based on the Swiss principle, with the proviso that a team may not be drawn against a team previously played in the Knock-out section;
- losing teams from KO round 4 entering the Swiss Repechage may not be drawn to play one another in Swiss round 7.

8.2.5 Seating:

- there shall be no seating rights;
- match-ups will be made as the players are seated at the starting time of each match;
- if a team has neither pair seated at start time, the CTD will randomly assign NS and EW to the two pairs;
- in the case of dispute, the CTD shall randomly assign directions to the four pairs in the match;
- once a match has started, a pair must continue to play at that table unless permitted by the CTD in the case of emergency or misadventure.

8.2.6 Carry-over:

- losers in KO Round 1 enter the Swiss repechage with a score of 0 VPs and 0 IMPs;
- losers in KO Round 2 enter the Swiss repechage with a VP and IMP score equal to 90% of the leader's score;
- losers in KO Round 3 enter the Swiss repechage with a VP and IMP score equal to 95% of the leader's score;
- losers in KO Round 4 enter the Swiss repechage on the same VP and IMP score as the leader.

8.2.7 Withdrawals: Teams may elect to withdraw from the Swiss Repechage at either of two points:

- after they have been defeated in the KO round;
- at the conclusion of Swiss Round 4 (ie. at the end of Day 2).

The CTD must be advised on a team's intention to withdraw within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the previous match. Any team which withdraws is no longer eligible to play in the GNNF.

8.3 Ties

- 8.3.1 In the Knock-out section, a tie shall be broken by (in order):
- a) using the point-a-board procedure;
 - b) total points;
 - c) if applicable, the team which won their previous KO match by the greater margin will be ranked higher;
 - d) lot.
- 8.3.2 Critical ties after the final round of the Swiss repechage are broken by (in order):
- a) the team which remained in the KO section for the greatest number of rounds will be ranked highest;
 - b) calculating the mean total VP score of all the opponents of each team – the team with the highest total shall be ranked highest;
 - c) calculating the mean total net IMP score of all the opponents of each team – the team with the highest total shall be ranked highest;
 - d) lot.

9 Withdrawals after GNNQ

- 9.1.1 A team eligible for the GNNF – Non-Metropolitan Teams Final that qualifies to GNNF – National Final may elect to play in either event. The TO must be advised within 24 hours of the completion of GNNQ. In the absence of any such advice, they will be deemed to have chosen to compete in GNNF – National Final.
- 9.1.2 In the event that a qualifying team declines to participate in either of the GNNF events, either under 9.1.1 or otherwise, its place will be taken by the next highest placed eligible team in the Swiss Repechage.

10 Session times

The session times are as below. Note that on Day 1, there are only two sessions – 2.45/2.15/12.45 and 4.15/3.45/2.15.

QLD, NSW, ACT, VIC, TAS	NT, SA	WA
11.00 am	10.30 am	9.00 am
12.30 pm	12 noon	10.30 am
2.45 pm	2.15 pm	12.45 pm
4.15 pm	3.45 pm	2.15 pm

Anticipated finishing times: 5.35 pm, 5.05 pm, 3.35 pm

Appendices

Penalties for Late Arrival, Slow Play, Failure to enter or check scores

0-5 mins	warning for first offence, then 3 VPs (3 IMPs) for each subsequent offence
5-10 mins	3 VPs (3 IMPs)
10-15 mins	6 VPs (6 IMPs)
15-20 mins	9 VPs (9 IMPs)
20-30 mins	15 VPs (15 IMPs)

For late arrival in excess of 30 minutes, the CTD may assess a more severe penalty including forfeiture of the match and/or disqualification from the event.

When boards are cancelled by the director due to a failure to complete them on time, the following penalties may be applied at the director's discretion:

One board	3 VPs (3 IMPs)
Subsequent boards	6 VPs (6 IMPs)

Calculation of multiple Average Plus awards during a session or match

Where the Laws require the Director to award an artificial adjusted score of average plus on more than one board in a session or match (as in the case of fouled or otherwise unplayable boards), the score to be awarded for each successive board shall be:

Number of fouled/unplayable bds	IMPs awarded
1	3
2	1
3	1
4	1
5	1
6	0

In matches with multiple fouled boards resulting in the number of direct comparisons available being fewer than one half the number of boards, the match will be scored as a forfeit treating both units as non-offending. Forfeited matches are scored as 13 VPs for each side. Further adjustments at the end of the event may be appropriate in accordance with ABF Tournament Regulation 15.

<https://abfevents.com.au/events/tournregs/ABFTournamentRegs2026.pdf>

KO Section Draw

A standard ranked draw will be used. (That is, the Round 1 draw will be: Team 1 v Team 64, Team 2 v Team 63, etc). If there are fewer than 64 teams, the highest ranked teams (in order) will have a Round 1 bye. After the field has been seeded, the teams seeded 3 and 4 will be randomly assigned to positions 3 and 4 in the draw. Next, the teams seeded 5 to 8 will be randomly assigned to positions 5 to 8. The teams seeded 9 to 16 will then be randomly assigned to positions 9 to 16. Then, the same random assignment will be made to teams seeded 17 to 32, then to teams 33 to 48 and finally to teams 49 and higher. The random assignments are made with the proviso that teams from the same region may not play one another in Round 1.

Competing Regions

* Designated Non-Metropolitan Regions

ACT	Hunter *	Sunshine Coast *
Adelaide	Melbourne	Sydney
Brisbane	Mid-North Coast *	Tablelands Illawarra *
Capricornia *	Mountains *	Tasmania *
Central Coast *	North Inland *	Tasmania North *
Darling Downs *	Northern Rivers *	Tasmania South *
Far North Queensland *	Northern Territory *	WA Country *
Far South Coast *	Northern Victoria *	Western NSW *
Geelong *	Perth	Western Victoria *
Gippsland *	SA Provincial	Whitsunday *
Gold Coast	South West NSW *	Wide Bay *