



Frequently Asked Questions

These questions are actually not asked all that frequently. When they are, I like to refer players to this document to remain transparent as to how and why we do things. It's also important for players to understand that I'm not "making stuff up on the fly". The most frequently asked questions have to do with handicaps. Detailed information can be found on the topic on the website on the "Registration-Skill Level Info" header towards the top of the PACS website.

Q. Why are teams ranked by win % and not match points?

*A. In divisions with an odd number of teams, there will be one team with a bye each week. In these divisions, some teams will most likely have more byes than others. It would not be fair to award teams with a "3-2" win for a bye because teams with more byes would have more "3-2"s than teams with less byes (and thus would have an unfair advantage). By ranking teams according to win percentage, the recipe for success is simple. Take care of business when your team plays. **By ranking teams according to win percentage, no team has an advantage or disadvantage over any other team simply due to the number of byes.***

Q. How can a player have a record of 3-7 for the session and after her next win, she moves up in skill level and another player can go 7-5 for the session and loses his next match and goes down in skill level?

*A. There is a sophisticated algorithm that determines skill levels. It takes into account a variety of data points such as **tournament performance**, and various "power rankings" over 3 different rolling periods (last 5, last 10, and last 20 matches for 8 ball). The power rankings are **primarily** formulated by match wins and losses and strength (skill level) of opponents. So while it may appear that the player who was 7-5 should not have moved down, it's possible that the player is only 7-13 in their last 20 matches. Very detailed information about skill levels can be found on the website by going to the "Registration – Skill Level Info" Page.*

Q. Why does a team only get .7 wins and .3 losses for a forfeit? It doesn't seem fair for us to have players present and not get awarded a full point.

A. PACS believes in being as fair as possible to all of the players and does not believe that it is fair to the other teams if one team gets awarded a full point simply for being present and another team was not lucky enough to get those same forfeit (or several) point(s). There is still a marginal benefit by awarding the team .7 wins and .3 losses instead of a full (1) point. Among PACS players who have played at least 50 matches, there are less than 2% of players who have averaged .7 pts per match played. Among players who have played 100+ matches, less than 1% average at least .7 pts/match. Most if not all teams would be very happy if they were told at the beginning of the session that they were

going to be the lone beneficiary of the only forfeit win in the division. The inequality is even more pronounced if a team gets 3 or 4 wins by forfeit over other team(s) that do not get any forfeits. It would be a shame for a team to play an entire 18 week schedule and miss the playoffs because another team with numerous forfeit wins edged them out for the final playoff spot. Another important consideration to me as the league operator is that it may be necessary to remove a team from the schedule because they are not paying their dues or they are forfeiting too many matches. If we are awarding teams a full (1) point for every forfeit win, it makes it very difficult for me to remove a team at any time because of the unfairness it will create towards some teams because some teams will likely be at a strong advantage/disadvantage simply because of the timing that I remove that team from the schedule. The team that is forfeiting will always receive 0 points and must pay the \$7. The beneficiary of the forfeit (.7 point) does not have to pay the \$7 for that match. Until someone can persuade the league office that a full point (instead of .7 pts) being awarded for a forfeit win serves the league as a whole better, we will continue to use .7 pts for a forfeit win. I don't expect that to change. PACS does not try to emulate other leagues, it strives to be better. If a team is going to forfeit, it may do so at any time against any player. As a form of strategy, if a team knows it must forfeit, it makes perfect sense to use that forfeit against a player who they think would probably be the toughest to defeat. In baseball, there is the intentional walk. In football, there is the "kneel down". In basketball, the intentional foul. These are all things that teams do that are within the rules to try to gain an advantage. Be happy with the .7 points, it's much higher than the average outcome (.5 pts/match played).

Q. How does PACS determine the dates for the end of session tournaments (Invitationals)?

A. In an ideal world, the Invitational would be scheduled within 2-3 weeks after all of the divisions have finished the session. Unfortunately, there are many other things to consider when scheduling the end of session tournaments. A weekend must be chosen in which...

- there is a **feasible cost effective** venue available. (The more that the venue charges PACS, the less the amount of the payouts.)

- the pool table vendor is not renting his tables to another league or tournament.

- the MAJORITY of players will be happy with the dates chosen. (PACS will try to schedule the Invitational on a weekend that will not coincide with another large tournament or other large league tournaments. However, this will not always be the best option. PACS will always try to choose a weekend which will be the best option for the league as a whole. However, there will likely be times when the most feasible option will be to schedule on a weekend in which some people who play in multiple leagues (APA or TAP for example) will have to choose which tournament they want to play in. As a reminder, PACS pays out **much more** per person than the aforementioned leagues.

Q. What is the "Penalty Points" area of the Rosters for?

A. Teams may be assessed Penalty Points for any amount that the league office deems necessary. It is extremely rare that a team will be assessed Penalty Points. Examples of reasons that a team may be assessed Penalty Points would be (but are not limited to) being extremely behind in dues payments or an extreme show of unsportsmanlike behavior. If Penalty Points are assessed, it will have a balancing effect (so that if a team were assessed 2 penalty points, they would have 2 less wins and 2 more losses added to their session totals).

Q. What is the purpose of the "position round" of the scheduling in the last week? Wouldn't it make more sense for higher seeded teams to play lower seeded teams in the last week?

A. The purpose of the positioning round of the schedule in the last week of the regular session is to reduce the chance that a team would purposely “tank” matches to benefit their opponent. For example, if the last place team is playing a “bubble team” in the last week, there would be a chance that the bubble team could work out a deal (free beer for the last place team) in exchange for the last place team not giving their best effort. The positioning round makes this less likely. In other words, it encourages teams to do the right thing.

Q. Why is an “8 on break” a win if PACS uses BCAPL rules?

A. Although the BCAPL rules state that an 8 on the break is NOT a win, many players have always played under the rule that it IS a win. Personally, I (Ed Kearney) would rather see it NOT be a win. People often feel very strongly on this issue though and in many cases, it would be like trying to change ones religion or political affiliation. On this issue, PACS uses the democratic process and the “yes” votes have outnumbered the “no”s on this issue. (However, this may be tabled for a vote again in the future. –3/26/19)

Q. What do “new teams” have to do to qualify for the “new team” cash incentive?

A. Teams must play the entire session and pay all weekly dues that are owed. They must also not have an excessive amount of forfeits and are responsible for any lost revenue to the league due to matches they forfeited. The team must be comprised primarily of new players who are simply not quitting one PACS team to join the new team. A team that takes a session or so off, then returns is also **not** eligible for the cash incentive. The idea for the cash incentive is to promote growth of new teams to the league. Any cash incentives that are paid for new teams will be paid at the end of the session in which the “new team” played. If it is decided that the team did not meet the conditions above to qualify for the “new cash” incentive, it will not be paid and the issue will not be revisited at a later time for that team. The advertised new team incentive amount is based on the assumption of an 18 week session. If the session is shorter than 18 weeks, any incentives paid will be prorated. For example, an advertised \$200 incentive will be $(12/18 \times 200) \$ 133$ if the session is only a 12 week session. If a “new team” finishes the session “in the money”, the \$200 new team incentive will be deducted from any monies earned in that first session.

Q. Can you explain the recycle rule?

A. The recycle rule was revised when we returned playing after the COVID pandemic. It was changed to provide maximum flexibility. The rules are

A team may recycle up to 4 times per session but never more than once in a single match. The recycled player can be any skill level (other than a 7.5) as long as the 26.0 rule is met. The RECYCLING team chooses the player they wish to recycle. The player can be recycled in back to back matches and can be recycled any time during the night (does not have to be in match #5). The team can recycle for any reason (even if all 9 players are present) and does not have to give any advance notice to the opposing team that they may recycle. Players may not be recycled in the last 2 weeks of the session.

The reason for the rule changes...

Forfeits are bad for the league and should be avoided at all costs. The new recycle rule helps avoid forfeits. The rule is fair because it is applied uniformly to all teams and is spelled out. If you do not like the rule or are fortunate to always have plenty of players available, that does not make the rule unfair. It is better for the overall health of the league if the

rule is “too flexible” instead of “not flexible enough” if it helps a team that is struggling to get enough players on match night. Sometimes a team may have no intention of recycling at the beginning of the match but a player has circumstances that unexpectedly makes it necessary for him/her to leave without playing. I am not in a position nor is anyone on the opposing team in a position to be the arbiter of whether a player truly had an emergency or if they were simply trying to gain an advantage by sending their “weaker” shooter(s) home early. The new rule is designed to be extremely flexible so that it is easy to understand by all teams and so that teams aren’t arguing on whether a team is trying to gain an advantage. As mentioned, all teams have the same right to recycle their “star” players if they wish so it is fair. Use it if you wish, don’t use it if you don’t want to.

Q. Why do PACS scoresheets not have a place to record innings, misses, safes, etc? Shouldn’t that be an important piece of information in determining handicaps?

*A. PACS uses a rating system similar to the very popular **Fargo Rating System** that is used to rank amateur and professional players internationally. Fargo is only concerned with two things.*

- 1. Did the player win or lose the rack?*
- 2. What was the fargo rating of the opponent?*

While it is true that only knowing if player A beat player B does not tell a whole lot about how each player played in that game, it is also true that over time, it is the best predictor of a person’s future performance. The Fargo Rating System has a high rate of success in predicting if player A will beat Player B. The problem with using innings, safes, misses, etc. as part of the algorithm are numerous. Here are a couple huge ones....

- a. It is dependent on the honesty of the player. A sandbagger playing in a league that uses innings as a major determinant of a person’s skill level will become amazingly adept at “missing” while still winning a high percentage of the time. I’ve played in another league that rewards this behavior and I want no part of it.*
- b. It is dependent on the accuracy and judgement of the scorekeeper. Similar to the above, a dishonest scorekeeper will manipulate the scoresheet in the way that benefits his players. If the argument is “But how many people would do this?”, the answer is “More than you think...especially if it ALWAYS increases the chance to win money”. Again, PACS has no interest in rewarding cheaters or dishonesty.*

*Not only are the PACS scoresheets amazingly simple to complete (thus freeing up time for the scorekeeper to actually have fun), but **over time** they will give a truer gauge of a players true skill level than a league that uses innings, misses, safes, etc. in their ranking system. PACS is not trying to emulate other leagues, it is trying to be superior. If faced with the option of running a sandbagging league or running no league at all, I’ll choose the latter. The best way to have success in PACS is not to have sandbaggers, but to build a team of highly skilled pool players while also being able to meet the “26.0” requirement.*