

Stratified Games

In stratified events the field is subdivided into stratas or strats so that participants have more chances for placing within the event. Each strat (or stratum) has a masterpoint limit with the highest strat (called the A strat) being unlimited. Each entry's strat is determined by the partner or teammate with the most masterpoints. Each pair or team is then entered into its strat and all higher strats. Players in Strat C can win points in Strats C, B, and A and players in Strat B can win points in Strats B and A. Players in Strat A win points only in that strat.

Players in all three strats play against each other. This provides players in lower strats a chance to benefit by playing against more experienced players as well as the opportunity to do well and win the event. At the same time the players in the lower strats are not giving up the chance to compete for points within their peer group or strat. Players in the higher strats also benefit because the stratified events provide larger fields and thus higher masterpoint awards.

A stratified pairs game is first scored on the total number of tables in play and masterpoints are computed for the "A" or top strat using the appropriate masterpoint award schedule for that game, just as if it were an open pairs event. However, since the game is considered 'stratified', there are strats within the total game and each is awarded points based upon that strat only. For instance, awards for the second or "B" strat include all of the remaining tables in the game while awards for the third or "C" strat include only those in the lowest masterpoint category. The masterpoint awards of the lower strats are reduced from that of an open game. A sample game structure of a 14 table stratified pairs event might look like this:

<u>Strat Limitation</u>	<u>Tables</u>	<u>Pairs</u>	<u>Prs. Prs.</u>	
			<u>N/S</u>	<u>E/W</u>
Strat A = 0-unlimited	14	28	14	14
Strat B = 0-750	10	20	10	10
Strat C = 0-150	5	10	5	5

A stratified pairs game may be conducted with either two or three strats. The lowest strat may have any upper masterpoint limitation suitable for a club, but it must have at least five pairs in that strat. (Six is certainly better as the pairs can be evenly split between the North/South and East/West directions.) It is recommended that the masterpoint limit of each succeeding strat be at least four times the preceding limit, but this limit may be reduced to less than four times if

there are at least five pairs in each strat.

Stratified team games are like stratified pair events with the major difference being team play as opposed to matchpoint pair play. The strats are set similarly to those of pair events and have the same restrictions.

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