

2024 AUSTRALIA INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS– SELECTION PROCESS AND ABF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND TARGET EVENT INFORMATION

Background

As we emerge from Covid, the ABF, like many other organisations, anticipate our 2023 Financial Year ending December will see a second substantial deficit. We also anticipate a breakeven budget for 2024 and return to surplus in 2025. As part of this we are looking to manage all costs. Financial assistance to our international representative teams is one such area and transparency around what team members can expect in 2024 is an important goal.

Selection Process

Following the precedent set by the selection process for the 2023 Australian representative teams, the following selection events have been announced:

- Open Team selection using a knockout format for up to 8 eligible teams ranked by PQPs – Canberra Bridge Club, Saturday November 11 to Thursday November 16 inclusive. Entries open on Thursday October 26 via the Open Playoffs webpage and close at 6pm AEDT on Friday November 3.
- Mixed Teams selection using a knockout format for up to 8 eligible teams ranked by PQPs – Canberra Bridge Club, Saturday December 9 to Thursday December 14 inclusive. Entries open on Friday November 17 via the Mixed Playoffs webpage and close at 6pm AEDT on Friday December 1.
- Both the Seniors and Womens Team will be selected via separate:
 - 3-day open entry qualifying events at the Summer Festival of Bridge at the Canberra Rex Hotel on Tuesday January 9 to Thursday January 11 2024 inclusive. The top **four** placed eligible teams in each qualifying event go forward to:
 - a Seniors Playoff and a Womens Playoff each comprising a knockout one and a half-day semi-final (96 boards in 6 stanzas) at the same venue on Friday/Saturday January 12/13 2024 with the two winning teams further contesting a one and a half day final (96 boards in 6 stanzas) on Saturday/Sunday January 13/14 2024.
 - Entries are open for the 3 day qualifying events through MyABF Summer Festival of Bridge.

Financial assistance for players competing in the 2024 selection events

The ABF has decided to continue the primary financial assistance payments to all players (except those living in Canberra) competing in the Open and Mixed Playoffs. The actual player subsidy amounts are the same as were given in 2022 and are in a table on the individual Playoff webpages. The need for the ABF to find cost savings, however, has seen some important changes:

- Primary financial assistance payments will only be paid to any single eligible player **once** i.e. if a player received financial assistance for the Open Playoff they cannot receive any assistance for competing in the Mixed Playoff;

- Partial entry fee refunds would no longer be given as teams are knocked out;
- No additional subsidies for teams making the final knockout match.

For players competing in the Womens and Seniors qualifying events and the Seniors and Womens Playoffs at the Summer Festival, as for 2023, there will be no financial assistance offered.

2024 Target Event Information

The four Australian representative teams that are successful at the abovementioned selection events earn rights to represent Australia in official target events in 2024. They also get the right of first refusal if the ABF is invited to field an Australian team in various non-target or invitational international events.

World Bridge Federation (WBF) events

There is only one official WBF Target event for each of the four Australian representative teams in 2024 – this is the World Bridge Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina from October 19 to November 3, 2024. The individual events are:

- The Vanderbilt Trophy – The Open Teams
- The Torlontano Trophy – The Women’s Teams
- The Seniors Teams
- World Mixed Teams Championship

The ABF has set a per team member financial assistance amount of \$2,500.

Asia Pacific Bridge Federation (APBF) events

2024 is notionally an APBF Congress year featuring open entry to teams from member countries and invited non-member countries. To date, the APBF has not formally advised if an APBF Congress or some other bridge event for 2024 will be held. In previous Congress years, non-representative APBF events were not granted target status.

Hence the expectation of Australian representative teams in 2024 should be that:

- no financial assistance amount will be forthcoming from the ABF for non-representative APBF events;
- if invited to participate by the APBF as an “Australian” team, right of first refusal goes to the Australian representative teams to go with other teams from Australia being not so designated.

Other 2024 international invitee events

The ABF’s policy on non-target events applies to non-WBF and non-APBF invitee bridge events as articulated in the two bullet points immediately above.