

# Chapter 4

## **Tournament Rules** (Revised August 2014)

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## SECTION – 1.0

### 1.1 - INTRODUCTION

THE SPIRIT of these rules is not designed to punish the innocent, yet is intended to minimize dialog between players and partners during the play of pinochle. We realize that playing the game of pinochle around our family and friends tends to lead to some dialog; however, the dialog should not pose a potential advantage that could be considered cheating. It should be remembered that the game of pinochle is a game of integrity and it is expected that all players participating in NPA tournaments will play with the highest integrity; and no form of unfair advantages or indiscretion(s) will be tolerated. Any player found consistently violating these rules is subject to suspension or expulsion.

We recognize that all players may not agree with all of the rules and meld values documented herein. However, if we all play by the SAME consistent rules, no unfair advantage to any particular player is shown. We also recognize that we are here to have fun; however, there should be no LOUD talking during the play of the hand. To this end, the following rules will be enforced. Any violations of these rules will have a penalty imposed as defined herein and will be documented by the referee for file and monitoring of repeat violations. Any disputes arising during the course of play will be resolved by the referees.

### 1.2 – TOURNAMENT CONDUCT

IN THE SPIRIT of fair play, please

- Be on time
- Be courteous
- Play the game with integrity
- Refrain from Table Talk and gamesmanship
- Play fair
- Shuffle the cards and not try to stack the deck to gain an advantage
- Verify (re-add) scorekeeper's total then sign the score sheet
- Treat ALL players with respect
- Be aware that all players are not at the same skill level

### 1.3 – REFEREES' AND NATIONAL TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR'S DECISIONS

If a disagreement occurs, players should try to settle it at their table. However, if it cannot be resolved, a Referee should be called. The Referee must bring a copy of the rules to the table if he is making a ruling. If a player is not satisfied, with the referee's decision, he may call for another Referee. If these two (2) Referees **agree**, their ruling is final. If these two Referees **disagree and a decision cannot be made**, the NTD or in his absence, the NPA Vice President or other Appointee should be called to make a FINAL decision. **THEIR DECISION IS FINAL.** The National Tournament Director or person assuming the NTD's responsibilities, WILL SETTLE ALL CONTROVERSIES BETWEEN REFEREES!!!

If a player refuses to accept the Referees', the NTD's or appointee's decision and refuses to play and/or continue the tournament, he will be disqualified from the tournament. If a player is disqualified, he is not eligible for a refund.

## **SECTION – 2.0**

### **2.1 - START OF PLAY**

The Start of Play begins when the player to the “left” of the dealer receives the first set of cards (either 4 or 5 cards). This is the **Start of Play**. If a player is at the “wrong table”, at the Start of Play, he is deemed “playing at the wrong table” and the penalty is **100 Points**.

### **2.2 – THE SHUFFLE**

**All handling of the cards (shuffle, washing, cut) are to be done with the cards face down.**

Each player has the opportunity to “wash” and “shuffle” the cards prior to the first (1<sup>st</sup>) deal of the first (1<sup>st</sup>) round, only. After the first deal, the cards should only be handled by the dealer. Exception to this rule will be made for handicapped players whose partner may shuffle, cut and/or deal for the handicapped player.

All players must be at the table when the cards are shuffled. The cards are to be **“RIFFLED”** and not patted.” The cards must be riffled a **minimum** of three (3) times. **The last shuffle must be made with the shuffler.** If a player refuses to use the shuffler, he is disqualified from playing in the tournament. If a club fails to use the shufflers, they are penalized **\$100.00**. Patting of cards is allowed between riffles, but again, cards must be riffled at least three (3) times or more. The cards **must be cut** by the player to the dealer’s right. The cards are to be cut only one (1) time, by the upper portion or the deck being lifted clear of the lower portion, leaving no less than four (4) cards in the lower portion of the deck. The former lower portion is then placed on top of the former upper portion.

**Washing** is defined as mixing the card on the table.

**Riffling** is defined as holding part of the deck in each hand and raising the edges by interweaving each section before releasing them to fall alternately in one stack.

**Patting** is defined as splitting the deck in half and restacking it many times or taking out the middle of the deck and restacking the deck.

**NOTE:** Each player should observe the shuffling/riffling of the cards. Any player may call for a re-shuffle before the deal begins. The dealer must honor the request. After the deal has begun, a re-shuffle cannot be called.

### **2.3 – THE DEAL**

The deal must start to the left of the scorekeeper and continue clockwise. There are four (4) deals/hands played per round – with each player dealing one (1) hand per round.

**ONLY FOUR (4) OR FIVE (5)** cards can be dealt at a time. The dealer must make every effort not to misdeal the hand. After the deal is complete the following rules apply:

- Bidding/Play cannot begin until each player has **VERIFIED** having 20 cards in his hand.

**IF A CARD MUST BE PULLED** by a player to complete the 20 cards per hand count, the following rules apply:

- If one (1) player has nineteen (19) cards, and another player has twenty-one (21) cards, the player with nineteen (19) cards must pull one (1) card from the player with twenty-one cards. The hand cannot be dealt over.
- If a player must pull two (2) or more cards to complete a hand, this is called an illegal deal and the cards must be re-shuffled, cut, and re-dealt again by the same dealer.

**PENALTY:** The player(s) having too few or too many cards at the end of a hand will be penalized fifty (50) points, which will be deducted from their individual score.

**CORRECT DEALER SKIPPED:** There is one deal per player per round. If by chance a player is skipped in the dealing process, the hand must be voided and the correct person deals, even if the hand has been played.

## 2.4 –**THE BIDDING**

**Bidding will begin when the scorekeeper declares the hand ready to be played. The scorekeeper will record the bid and the TRUMP.**

The player to the dealer's left bids first and bidding continues clockwise until all players' have passed except the person with the highest bid.

**\*\*If a player makes an incorrect bid, bids out of turn, or tries to correct a previous bid (example: "I thought I bid 57 instead of 56") his partner is silenced for the remainder of the bid process. The incorrect bidder can bid the next legal bid or pass.**

**If the dealer's partner passes, after bidding out of turn, and all of the other players pass, because the dealer is silenced, his partner and he, goes set for 50 points.**

The lowest bid is **50** and continues in multiples of **1** or more until the bidding reaches **60**, then the bidding must continue in multiples of **5** or more until the bidding reached **100**. After the bidding reaches 100, the players may continue bidding in multiples of **10** or more. All bids past 100 must end in 0. (A bid of **105** is not a legal bid.) The highest bidder names the trumps. If the highest bidder has no marriage, the bidding team goes set the amount of the bid. The opposing team receives the amount of the bid plus their natural meld. (No trump can be declared.)**BIDDING A DOUBLE RUN IS NOT NECESSARY.**

If a player wins a bid and the team's meld plus the 50 points in the deck is insufficient to make the bid, the hand cannot be played. This is called Board Set and it should be documented on the score sheet. The bidding team goes set the amount of the bid and the opposing team receives the amount of the bid plus their meld (if 20 or more). If a player wins the bid and has sufficient meld, but the team fails to accumulate 20 points (or more if necessary) during play, the team goes set the bid. The opposing team receives the bid plus their meld (if 20 or more) plus the points accumulated during play (if 20 or more is saved).

**BID WHEN DROPPED ON DEALER:** If no player bids, the dealer must automatically accept a bid of 50. If the dealer has no marriage, the dealer's hand must be shown to the opponents and the dealer and his partner must go set for the 50 points. No trumps can be named; the opposing team receives the 50 points plus their meld (if 20 or more). If the dealer has a marriage, a trump must be named. If the dealer and his partner cannot make board by melding 20 or more points between the team, both hands must be exposed and the team goes set the 50 points. The opposing team receives the 50 points plus their meld (if 20 or more).

## 2.5 –MELDING

The first marriage meld by the winning bidder is declared trump. **NO** player should place any meld on the table before the trump has been declared. Cards melded should remain on the table until all players, including the scorekeeper, has had the opportunity to see and count the meld. The meld is then recorded by the scorekeeper. It is the responsibility and right of both teams to check the recording and totaling of all scores to ensure accuracy. Aces are considered meld as well and **MUST** be melded on the board with the other meld. **No** meld can be declared or counted after the player, naming trumps, plays the first card.

A penalty of fifty (**50**) points will be deducted from the round score against the player who has exposed aces that cannot legally be declared. This penalty will be applied when: (1) a player exposes not enough aces to declare aces around, or (2) a player exposes more than 1 ace in a suit and cannot declare double (1,000) aces.

## 2.6 –VALUE OF MELD

	<b>SINGLE</b>	<b>DOUBLE</b>	<b>TRIPLE</b>	<b>QUADRUPLE</b>
<b>Run</b>	25	250	450	500
<b>Pinochle</b>	15	30	90	500
<b>Aces</b>	10	100	300	500
<b>King</b>	8	80	240	500
<b>Queens</b>	6	60	180	500
<b>Jacks</b>	4	40	120	500
<b>Roundhouse</b>	24	240		

## 2.7 –THE PROGRESSIVE GAME

There shall be no communication between partners except by numerical bidding. The scorekeeper should alert the table that play can begin.

The player awarded the bid/contract plays first, and play continues clockwise. Each player must play a card to the board to constitute a "**BOOK**". "**A Book =4 cards, one by each player**". The book should be turned over immediately and stacked in the order turned. This will allow for review in case a renege is called. The player who won the previous book leads the next book until the end of the hand.

A player must turn over each book before the next card is played to the board. There should NEVER be 5 cards face up on the table. If 5 cards are face up on the table, the first 4 cards played are considered a **DEAD BOOK** and no card(s) can be changed in the **DEAD BOOK**.

**NOTE: The fifth card face up on the table automatically renders the last book as a book that cannot be changed.**

**DEAD BOOK** – a book is considered DEAD when all four cards, one by each player, have been played.

A player may only request to “see” the last DEAD BOOK before the first (1<sup>st</sup>) card of the next book is played. **Only the player who requested to “see” the book may change their card to prevent a forced renege.** Therefore, there is no protecting the partner. There can be **NO DISCUSSION** during the review of the book such as: “what’s trump”, “who played what”, “what led”, etc.

If a player plays a card to the board (whether or not it is their legal turn to play), no card can be changed by a player in any previously played book. If it was not the player’s legal turn to play, the card must remain on the table to be played in the next book. The card can only be changed as not to cause a renege, however, the card must remain on the table and played when it is the player’s turn to play.

Cards are not to be flashed. All cards must be played to the table one at a time. If a player lays down his hand and the opponent can beat “any” one (1) card, the opponent receives all remaining cards.

Trumps can be told by any player at any time.

Cards are not to be slammed on the table in an indicating manner.

The bidding team must save (20) points or more (dependent upon the bid) to complete the bid/contract. If the team fails to make the bid/contract, they lose the amount of the bid/contract to the opponents, plus their meld if they save (20) points or more. If the opponents don’t save (20) or more points, they are awarded the bid only (no meld).

If at the end of the hand a player is without a card or a player has too many cards, all remaining cards will go to the team winning the last full book.

## **SECTION – 3.0**

### **3.1 –RENEGE**

**A renege occurs when a player:**

- **Fails** to follow suit;
- **Fails** to beat the highest card played;
- **Fails** to cut when void of a suit.
- **Fails** to declare Aces before the first card is played.

**A player cannot call a renege on themselves or their partner; therefore, play would not be stopped. Only an opposing player can call a renege.**

If Team A has accumulated ALL the books (Team B does not have **any** books), and Team B (without any books) calls a renege that cannot be proven, Team A should be awarded a Pinochle (Bonus 500 points). The player calling the renege is penalized 200 points.

A renege is called when a player declares, '**I AM CALLING A RENEGE**'; and once a renege is called all play must STOP.

A renege cannot be assumed, the card must be **played**.

Only the player calling the renege, not their partner, can describe the book and scenario in which the renege occurred. The books are reviewed to prove the described scenario. If the player on whom the renege is called disputes the renege, the dispute must be resolved by calling a referee.

The **PENALTY** for a renege is that the opposing team gets the amount of the bid plus their meld. If a renege is called and not proven, the team calling the renege has committed a renege. The opposing team then receives the bid plus their meld.

## **SECTION – 4.0**

### **4.1 – TABLE TALK**

In the SPIRIT of the game, please refrain from the following **Table Talk**:

- Talking during the bidding process
- Speaking/bidding low when you don't want the bid
- Facial expression during the bidding process
- Rolling eyes to convey a message
- Clearing your throat when partner is about to renege
- Asking what is trump when your partner is about to renege
- Leaving the book on the table a long time hoping the partner will see the renege
- Poor mouthing your hand and/or the dealer (No talking during dealing/bidding)

## **SECTION – 5.0**

### **5.1 – TARDINESS**

Players are allowed a five (5) minute grace period following the start of play. After the grace period, the tournament director/referee will assess the tardy player a **ten (10) point** per minute penalty with a maximum penalty of 100 points. After fifteen (**15) minutes** have elapsed, the tardy player will be replaced for the remainder of that round and receives **0 points** for that round.

## **SECTION – 6.0**

### **6.1 –BONUS POINTS**

A **Pinochle** occurs when a team wins all **50** points in one hand. The team running the pinochle receives their meld, the **50** points, \*\*plus a bonus of **500** points.

A **Skunk** occurs when the opposing team is scoreless at the end of four (4) hands. The winning team receives a bonus of **200** points.

## SECTION – 7.0

### 7.1 –PENALTIES

Penalties can be (I) Individual or (T) Team

Event	Penalty Points	Note
Playing at the wrong table (I)	100	
Exposing aces (I)	50	
Illegal bid/bidding out of turn (T)		Partner is silenced
Card deficiency (less than 20) (I)	50	
Card excess (more than 20) (I)	50	
Player not using a shuffler		Disqualified (no refunds)
Club not using shufflers	\$250	
Tardy five minutes (I)	0	
Tardy 6-15 minutes (I)	10 pts per minute	
Tardy 16+ minutes (I)		0 points for the round
Not proving a renege (T)		Bid plus meld
Calling a renege to stop a Pinochle (I)	200	Pinochle is awarded

\*A person can have a **NEGATIVE** score if they are penalized.

\*\*Partners can have different scores if one has an individual penalty.

## SECTION – 8.0

### 8.1 –FINAL SCORE SHEET

After the round is played, the score sheet is to be completed by the scorekeeper and signed, verified by the opposing team and signed and then turned in to the scoring table.

No scoring corrections should be made to the score sheet, by the players, after it has been signed by both teams.

Only the Scorekeeper or Verifier at the OFFICIAL scoring table (near the scorekeeper) has the authority to change a score on the score sheet. The correction must be brought to the attention of all four players.

## SECTION – 9.0

### 9.1 –GLOSSARY

Term	Section Number
<b>Riffling</b>	Section 2.2 - <b>Riffling</b> is defined by holding part of the deck in each hand and raising the edges by interweaving each section before releasing them to fall alternately in one stack.
<b>Patting</b>	Section 2.2 - <b>Patting</b> is defined as splitting the deck in half and restacking it many times or taking out the middle of the deck and restacking the deck.
<b>Book</b>	Section 2.7 – A <b>book</b> is defined as each player playing a card to the board.
<b>Disqualified Player</b>	Section 1.3 – A players who fails to follow directions from the TD or NTD. He is disqualified from the tournament.
<b>Dead Book</b>	Section 2.7 – The end result of all 4 cards played to the table, one by each player, is a <b>Dead Book</b> . A player may change a card in the dead book so as not to renege, if a card, other than those making up that book has not been played to the board.  There should NEVER be 5 cards face up on the table. If 5 cards are face up on the table, the first 4 cards played are considered a DEAD BOOK and no cards can be changed in the DEAD BOOK.
<b>Pinochle</b>	Section 6.1 - A <b>Pinochle</b> occurs when a team wins all <b>50</b> points in one hand.
<b>Renege</b>	Section 3.0 – Failing to follow suit, fails to beat the highest card played, fails to cut when void of a suit, fails to declare aces before the first card is played.
<b>Skunk</b>	Section 6.1 - A <b>Skunk</b> occurs when the opposing team is scoreless at the end of four (4) hands.
<b>Start of Play</b>	Section 2.1 - The <b>Start of Play</b> begins when the player to the “left” of the dealer receives the first set of cards (either 4 or 5 cards).
<b>Table Talk</b>	Section 4.0 – Displaying verbal and non-verbal signals to communicate with your partner
<b>Washing</b>	Section 2.2 - <b>Washing</b> is defined as mixing the card on the table.

All players are expected to abide by these rules. All questions, interpretations and disputes should be directed to the designated referees.

## **Rege Scenarios**

**Scenario:**

A player plays a queen of hearts on an ace of diamond book.

**Scenario:**

A player plays a ten of diamond on a ten and diamond, takes the book and then plays back because he thinks he has beat the falling card and he did not.

**Scenario:**

A player TAKES OWNERSHIP of a book because he thinks he has CUT with a trump, and then PLAYS a card to the board, it is a RENEGE. Takes ownership means placing the book with all the other books and then playing back a card.