

The Nuts Poker League

Tournament Rules

Date of Issue: 01/08/2011



General Concepts

1 Tournament Directors – TD's are to consider the best interest of the game and fairness as the top priority in the decision making process. Unusual circumstances can on occasion dictate that decisions in the interest of fairness take priority over the technical rules. The TD's decision is final.

2 Under 18's – are permitted to play in league events, dependant on venue's own policy. Under 18's may not become involved in games where cash is staked. Such players shall receive only the basic 50 points for playing regardless of finishing position.

3 Conduct - Players who act in a disruptive manner or appear intoxicated may be excluded from play and/or disqualified without refund from tournaments subject to the Tournament Director's discretion. Players shall further be subject to a lifetime ban from the Nuts Poker League for the above or if subject to Collusive/Illicit conduct. The Nuts Poker League operates a Zero Tolerance approach to physical and verbal abuse, and incidents maybe reported to the local police.

4 Official Language - The English-only rule will be enforced in the United Kingdom during our Finals. English will be used during play along with the local or native language, including Welsh and Gaelic, where appropriate.

5 Official Terminology of Tournament Poker - Official terms are simple, unmistakable, time-honoured declarations like: bet, raise, call, fold, check, all-in, pot (in pot-limit only), and complete. Regional terms may also meet this standard. The use of non-standard language is at player's risk because it may result in a ruling other than what the player intended. It is the responsibility of players to make their intentions clear.

6 Communication - Players may not talk on the phone whilst at the table, players should move at least a tables length away from their table to talk on the phone, ensuring they do not interfere with another table in play. Use of electronic devices is permitted (for example tweeting, texting) where a player is not in the hand and this does not interfere with play.

Seating; Breaking & Balancing Tables

7 Random Correct Seating – Tournament seats will be randomly assigned.

8 Special Needs - Accommodations for players with special needs will be made when possible.

9 Breaking Tables - Players going from a broken table to fill in seats assume the rights and responsibilities of the position. They can get the big blind, the small blind, or the button. The only place they cannot get a hand is between the small blind and the button.

10 Balancing Tables - When possible each table should have equal player numbers, when moving a player from one table to another, it is the player due to be big blind next that is moved. If more than 1 vacant seat, they sit in the 1st seat which is vacant to the left of the big blind (The worst position (worst position is never the small blind)). They assume the new position immediately, including dealer & blinds, unless it interferes with the blind positions of the remaining players, in which case they have to wait for the button to pass.

11 Redraws - re-draws for position & seating shall be under the direction of the Tournament Director only

Pots / Showdowns

12 Declarations – Cards Speak. Verbal declarations as to the content of a player's hand are not binding; however, any player deliberately miscalling their hand or discussing their own hand shall be penalised.

13 Face Up For All-Ins - All cards will be turned face up once a player is all-in and all betting action for the hand is complete. The dealer & players should insist on timely compliance with this rule.

14 Showdown - At the end of last round of betting, the player who made the last aggressive action in that betting round must show first. If there was no bet, the player to the left of the button shows first and so on clockwise. A player who thinks they have a probable winner is encouraged to show their hand without delay. At Showdown, players must show both hole cards to claim the pot or part of the pot. If all other players have folded when facing a bet or raise, a player may show any portion of their hole cards without having to show the remainder; provided they hold the only live hand remaining at the table. In Stud events the high board shows first, in Razz events the Low Board shows first.

15 Side Pots - Each side pot will be split separately.

16 Contested Showdown / Playing the Board - All hole cards must be shown to win a contested showdown even if playing the board.

17 Uncontested Showdown - In a non all-in showdown, when all opponent(s) cards have been mucked without being revealed, the last live hand wins. Opponents who muck at showdown without revealing their hands also lose the right to ask to see the winning hand.

18 Asking to See a Hand - Asking to see a hand is a privilege granted at TD's discretion to protect the integrity of the game (suspicion of invalid hand, collusion, etc). This privilege is not to be abused.

19 Killing Winning Hand - Dealers cannot kill a winning hand that was tabled and was obviously the winning hand. Players are encouraged to assist in reading tabled hands if it appears that an error is about to be made.

20 Awarding Odd Chips - The odd chip goes to the high hand. In flop games when there are 2 or more high hands or 2 or more low hands, the odd chip(s) will go to the left of the button. In stud, the odd chip goes to the high card by suit. However, when hands have identical value (ex: a wheel in Omaha/8) the pot will be split as evenly as possible.

21 Side Pots - Each side pot will be split separately.

22 Disputed Pots - The right to dispute a hand ends when a new hand begins. (See New Hand)

General Procedures

23 New Hand & New Limits - When time has elapsed in a round and a new level is announced by a member of the tournament staff or software, the new level applies to the next hand. A hand begins with the first riffle (shuffle). If an automatic shuffler is being used, the hand begins when the green button is pushed. Posting blinds in lieu shall not qualify for retention of the previous level.

24 Colour up / Chip race – In National/Regional Finals or events under the direction of an experienced Tournament director then chip racing may occur. For pub/venue league games chipping up may take place, meaning when the Tournament Director "chips up" any player with an odd number of chips, will receive a chip of the higher value. e.g. When the '25' chips are no longer in play, a player with an odd 25, 50 or 75 chips will receive one '100' chip in return. Players should arrange the chips to be chipped up into piles of the correct amount to assist the Tournament Director. To ensure a correct count you should be present during the chip up. Errors made when the player is not present will not be corrected. For Chips Races, chips shall be raced off with a maximum of one chip going to any player. The chip race will always start in the No.1 seat. A player cannot be raced out of a tournament: a player who loses his remaining chip(s) in a chip race will be given one chip of the smallest denomination still in play. Players are encouraged to witness the chip race.

25 Chipstacks Kept Visible & Countable - Players are entitled to a reasonable estimation of an opponent's chip count; thus chips should be kept in countable stacks. The TDA recommends clean stacks in multiples of 20 as a standard. Players must keep their higher denomination chips visible and identifiable at all times. Tournament directors will control the number & denomination of chips in play and may colour up at their discretion. Discretionary colour ups are to be announced.

26 Deck Changes – Deck changes will be as prescribed by the house. Players may not ask for a change of deck, unless a deck is damaged.

27 Calling for a Clock - Once a reasonable amount of time has passed & a clock is called for, a player will be given a ***maximum*** of one minute to make a decision. If action has not been taken before time expires, there will be a 10-second countdown followed by a declaration to the effect that the hand is dead. If the player has not acted before the declaration, the hand is dead.

28 Rabbit Hunting - No rabbit hunting is allowed. Rabbit hunting is revealing any cards "that would have come" if the hand had not ended.

29 The Shuffle - The button shall offer the deck after shuffling to the player to their immediate right, for the final cut.

30 Card Ranks – Where draws for button position and chip races take place there shall be no ties, with the ranking of suits being used as (High to Low) Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs. In Flop Games, Card ranks shall not settle ties for position of elimination or split pots.

Player Present / Eligible for Hand

31 At Your Seat - A player must be at their seat by the time all players have been dealt complete initial hands in order to have a live hand. A player must be at their seat to call time.

32 Action Pending - A player must remain at the table if he has a live hand, including folding your hand pre-flop.

Button / Blinds

33 Dead Button - Tournament play will use a dead button, also known as a 'ghost dealer.'

34 Dodging Blinds - A player who intentionally dodges any blind when moving from a broken table will incur a penalty.

35 Button in Heads-up - In heads-up play, the small blind is on the button and acts first. When beginning heads-up play, the button may need to be adjusted to ensure no player takes the big blind twice in a row.

Dealing Rules

36 Misdeals - In flop games, misdeals include but are not necessarily limited to: a) exposure of one of the first two cards dealt; b) two or more exposed or boxed cards; c) first card dealt to the wrong seat; d) cards dealt to a seat not entitled to a hand; e) a seat entitled to a hand is dealt out. Players may be dealt two consecutive cards on the button. If substantial action occurs, a misdeal cannot be declared and the hand must proceed. In stud-type games, if any of the player's two down cards are exposed due to dealer error it is a misdeal.

37 Substantial Action / Incorrect Hand - Substantial Action is defined as either: A) any two actions involving two players each putting chips in the pot (bet, raise, or call); or B) any combination of three actions (check, bet, raise, call, or fold). Once action occurs a misdeal cannot be called. A player with an incorrect starting hand (eg 3 Hole Cards or a Joker) shall have his hand declared dead, and lose any chips they have placed into the pot, with the exception of if that player has raised and the raise has not yet been called, they will be entitled to return of the raise portion of their bet. Where a player fails to protect their right to action and action occurs, they will lose their right to aggressive action. Where action occurs before a player calls time that they have not acted and the dealer places a new board card, that player shall have a dead hand – (For example a player is missed, three players act behind them and the dealer places out the flop, the player who was missed now has a dead hand as 4 actions have occurred (3 players and the dealer))

38 Early Flop Error - If the flop is turned over before betting action is complete, then it must not play, even where the player still to act folds. Subsequent streets must remain however as if no error had occurred. The burn cards, turn and river cards should be placed face down on the table, and the flop be placed back into the stub (not the burn card) and reshuffled with the remaining stub cards and a new flop issued without burning another card once action is complete, the turn and river can then be issued without them being altered by the flop error. If only one or two cards were prematurely exposed only they should be re-shuffled, with as many board cards remaining intact as possible. (See Substantial Action 37)

39 Four-Card Flop - If the flop contains 4 (rather than 3) cards, whether exposed or not, the dealer shall scramble the 4 cards face down. A floorperson will be called to randomly select one card to be used as the next burn card and the remaining 3 cards will become the flop.

40 Turn Error- If the dealer turns the fourth (turn) card on the board before the betting round is complete, the card which was improperly dealt shall be set aside, and the dealer shall burn and place the river facedown. After the turn betting is completed, the dealer shall then shuffle the improperly dealt card back into the deck, and shall deal a turn card without burning. The card that was burned before the improper dealing shall not be included in the shuffle. (See Substantial Action 37)

41 River Error - If the fifth card (river) is turned up prematurely, the turn betting is correctly completed, the dealer shall shuffle the improperly dealt card back into the deck, then turn a new river card without burning. (See Substantial Action 37)

Play: Bets & Raises

42 Verbal Declarations / Acting in Turn - Verbal declarations in turn are binding. Players are required to act in turn. Action out of turn examples :

Calling out of turn – If player 4 calls, before player 3 has acted, then player 4 is committed to the call. However if player 3 then raises, player 4 must either call the raise or fold and lose the chips of their initial call.

Raising out of turn – If Player 4 raises before player 3 acts, player 4 is committed to the amount of raise declared, or a minimum raise if no amount is stated. However if player 3 then raises, player 4 can only call the raise of player 3 or fold and lose the chips of their initial raise.

All in out of turn – If a player states “all in” or puts all of their chips into play they are then committed to this action.

Players who repeatedly act out of turn will be penalised.

43 Methods of Raising - In no-limit or pot-limit, a raise must be made by (1) placing the full amount in the pot in one motion; or (2) verbally declaring the full amount prior to the initial placement of chips into the pot; or (3) verbally declaring “raise” prior to the placement of the amount to call into the pot and then completing the action with one additional motion. It is the player's responsibility to make his intentions clear. String Bets and Raises are not allowed. String betting is when a player places chips into the pot, in more than one movement.

44 Raises - A raise must be at least the size of the largest previous bet or raise of the current betting round. Pre flop the 1st player to raise must at least double the size of the big blind. (example blinds 100/200 first player raises to 500 total, the next raise must be at least 300 more (800 total). If a player puts in a raise of 50% or more of the previous bet but less than the minimum raise, he or she must make a full raise. The raise will be exactly the minimum raise allowed. An all-in wager of less than a full raise does not reopen the betting to a player who has already acted. There is no cap on the number of raises in no-limit games.

45 Chip Movement - Chip release is employed as the method for betting and raising, forward motion may be binding if another player acts on it – for example a player may lift a full stack (20) chips then cut off 10 chips and withdraw the remainder, where a player moves their stack or part of their stack forward and this causes a reaction from another player still to act, this action may be binding, subject to the Tournament Director's discretion.

46 Oversized Chip Betting - Anytime when facing a bet or blind, placing a single oversized chip in the pot is a call if a raise isn't first verbally declared. To raise with an oversized chip, raise must be declared before the chip hits the table surface. If raise is declared (but no amount), the raise is the maximum allowable for that chip. When not facing a bet, placing an oversized chip in the pot without declaration is a bet of the maximum for the chip.

47 Multiple Chip Betting - When facing a bet, unless a raise is first declared, multiple same-denomination chips is a call if removing one chip leaves less than the call amount. Example of a call: preflop, blinds are 200-400: A raises to 1200 total (an 800 raise), B puts out two 1000 chips without declaring raise. This is just a call because removing one 1000 chip leaves less than the amount needed to call the 1200 bet. Placing mixed denomination chips in the pot is governed by the 50% standard in Rule 'Raises (44)'.

48 Number of Raises in Limit and No-Limit - There is no cap on the number of raises in no-limit. In limit events there will be a limit to raises even when heads-up until the tournament is down to 2 players; the house limit applies.

49 Accepted Action - Poker is a game of alert, continuous observation. It is the caller's responsibility to determine the correct amount of an opponent's bet before calling, regardless of what is stated by the dealer or players. If a caller requests a count but receives incorrect information from the dealer or players, then places that amount in the pot, the caller is assumed to accept the full correct action & is subject to the correct wager or all-in amount. Rule 1 may apply in certain situations at tournament director's discretion.

50 Pot Size & Pot-Limit Bets - Players are entitled to be informed of the pot size in pot-limit games only. Dealers will not count the pot in limit and no-limit games. Declaring “I bet the pot” is not a valid bet in no-limit but it does bind the player to making a bet of a valid amount. In No-limit and Limit games players may request the pot be spread in order to make it more easily counted.

51 String Bets and Raises - Dealers will be responsible for calling string bets and raises.

52 Non-Standard & Unclear Betting - Players use unofficial betting terms and gestures at their own risk. These may be interpreted to mean other than what the player intended. Also, whenever the size of a declared bet can have multiple meanings, it will be ruled as the lesser value. Example: “I bet five”. If it is unclear whether “five” means \$500 or \$5,000, the bet stands as \$500. See Rules 'Official Terminology (5)' & 'Methods of Raising (43).'

53 Non-Standard Folds - Anytime before the end of the last betting round of a hand, folding in turn when facing a check or folding out of turn are both binding folds and may be subject to penalty.

54 Conditional Statements - Conditional statements regarding future action are strongly discouraged; they may be binding and/or subject to penalty. Example: “if – then” statements such as “If you bet, then I will raise”.

Play: Other

55 Chips in Transit - Players may not hold or transport tournament chips in any manner that takes them out of view. A player who does so will forfeit the chips and will face disqualification. The forfeited chips will be taken out of play.

56 Accidentally Killed / Fouled Hands - Players must protect their own hands at all times. If a dealer kills a hand by mistake, or a hand is fouled, the player will have no redress and is not entitled to a refund of bets. If the player initiated a bet or raise and hasn't been called, the uncalled bet or raise will be returned to the player.

57 Dead Hands in Stud - In stud poker, if a player picks up the upcards while facing action, the hand is dead.

58 Handling of chips/Cards - Only the dealer or the TD may touch the board / burn cards and chips in the pot.

Etiquette & Penalties

59 Penalties and Disqualification - In addition to penalty scenarios described above, a penalty will be invoked if a player exposes any card with action pending, throws a card off the table, violates the one-player-to-a-hand rule, or similar incidents take place. Penalties WILL be invoked in cases of soft play, abuse, or disruptive behaviour. The penalties are: 5-10 players at table, a one round sit out or 2-4 players a 2 round sit out. TD's may also give verbal warnings for incidents which are quite obviously done by accident and not to gain an advantage. For the period of the penalty, the offender shall remain away from the table but will continue to be dealt in.

No Disclosure - Players are obligated to protect other players in the tournament at all times. Players, whether in the hand or not, may not:

Disclose contents of live or folded hands,

Advise or criticize play at any time,

Read a hand that hasn't been tabled.

The one-player-to-a-hand rule will be enforced

60 Exposing Cards - A player who exposes his cards with action pending will incur a penalty, but will not have a dead hand. The penalty will begin at the end of the hand.

61 Ethical Play - Poker is an individual game. Soft play will result in penalties, which may include forfeiture of chips and/or disqualification. Chip dumping and/or all other forms of collusion will result in disqualification.

62 Etiquette Violations - Repeated etiquette violations will result in penalties. Examples include, but are not limited to, unnecessarily touching other players' cards or chips, delay of the game, repeatedly acting out of turn or excessive chatter.

Late Arrivals and Leaving

63 Late Registration & Late Arrival – Late Registration & Late Arrival – Late Registration is available up to the first break period for league games, but shall be penalised by a chip reduction as follows: Level 1 10%, Level 2 30%, Level 3 and after 50%. For players that inform they will be arriving late before commencement, their chips shall be placed in play and blinds posted as normal up to the end of level 1. From level 2 onwards the player arriving late shall be penalised by posting a small blind every hand, excluding when their seat already has a blind. If by the end of the first break the player(s) have not arrived their remaining chips shall be removed from play. (For Regional & National events please consult the appropriate news page of www.thenutspokerleague.com)

64 Player Leaving – Where a player leaves the TD shall remove their chips if they are satisfied they are not returning. Where there is uncertainty they shall remain in play, A player will not receive position of elimination if they do not return before two active players are remaining in the tournament.

Miscellaneous

65 Player Images - All players participating in any Nuts Poker League tournament or event agree to their image / likeness being published by TNPL for promotional purposes including but not limited to web site and newsletter.

66 Player Logos - Tournament participants may wear one item of apparel with a logo no larger than 6 square inches in size. TNPL reserves the right at all times, to change the logo size limit, ban the wearing / display of any or all logos, or to ban any apparel or other means of advertising that contains obscene images or words or is otherwise deemed objectionable. Players reaching the final table will be obliged to wear TNPL logo or apparel and may be asked to cover advertising or logos at TNPL sole discretion.

67 Advertising Logo - TNPL tournament winners and those who qualify to participate in other events through TNPL, will be required to wear TNPL branded apparel, or the branded apparel of any other company at TNPL sole discretion, throughout their period of participation in those Events. Failure to abide by this rule may lead to the removal of the Professional Events prize.

68 Advertising Participation - All tournament winners, will be required to participate in media related activities wearing TNPL branded apparel or the branded apparel of any other company at TNPL sole discretion, for a period of two months following their participation in the event.