

Getting the Most out of your USBGF Membership

Welcome to the U.S. Backgammon Federation!! We hope you will enjoy your membership and take full advantage of all the resources we have available to members. Basic members can play in online tournaments, participate in the Online Match Series where members vote on checker plays and cube decisions in a match against the #1 All-time American Backgammon Tour player Neil Kazaross, get tips from experts, view over 200 teaching videos that will improve your game, and much more. Premium and Founding Sponsors get all that plus electronic access to the quarterly *PrimeTime Backgammon* magazine and discounts from backgammon vendors. Here's a Guide to Getting the Most out of your USBGF Membership.

Benefits Available to All Members:

1. Backgammon Servers for Online tournaments

- a. To play in the ABT Online! Tour and the USBGF Online Circuit you will need an account on an approved backgammon server where you will play your matches: Backgammon Galaxy, Backgammon Studio, GammonSite, GridGammon, or Safe Harbor Games. Most members set up accounts on both Backgammon Galaxy and GridGammon which are the two most common sites used in online tournaments.
- b. To get a free account instantaneously, go to <http://backgammongalaxy.com> and follow the instructions for creating an account.
- c. To apply for a free GridGammon account, login to the <http://usbgf.org/> website with your username and password (or ask that your password be e-mailed to you in upper right of Home Page) and go to: <http://usbgf.org/trny/gg-acct/>. Fill out all the required fields including a preferred nickname and Submit. GridGammon is a separate organization and has its own policies for granting accounts. Processing can take some time – typically a couple of weeks. They will e-mail you a password. Be sure to set support@gridgammon.com in your Contact directory to avoid having it go into a Spam filter. Contact support@gridgammon.com if you have questions about the status of your account. Once you have an account and password, you can download the software at <http://gridgammon.com/>

2. ABT Online! Tournaments

- a. Go to the Calendar <http://usbgf.org/abtonline-calendar/> on the USBGF website to find upcoming ABT Online! Tournaments sponsored by the USBGF as well as other online tournaments sponsored by local clubs or ABT directors. Follow links to individual events to get a full description of details on format, playing site(s), entry and registration fees and request a list of tournament instructions from the director.

3. USBGF Online Tournament Circuit

- a. Once you have an account on an approved backgammon server, register for USBGF Online Tournament Circuit tournaments at <http://usbgf.org/trny/> Monthly Circuit tournaments are open to the first 128 players to register. In

addition, divisional tournaments are available to play other players at comparable skill level: Masters (Elo of 1650+; Advanced (Elo of 1501-1629); Intermediate (Elo 1500 or below). Most players start at 1500 Elo, but may request a higher level if they have an established rating through online or live play. In addition the OTC offers 32-player Women's Monthly Circuit tournaments open to female members. For a fee, players may enter 32-player FTH Board Blitzes (\$30 entry) with an FTH backgammon board valued at \$950 to the winner. Intermediate level players may play in GammonGuys Intermediate Blitzes (\$25 entry) with an ArtGammon board valued at \$650 to the winner. Membership blitzes (entry fee \$10) are available with a \$60 credit toward membership or USBG Shop merchandise to the winner.

- b. You will receive e-mail notices when new tournaments are open for registration. Enter info@usbgf.org into your Contact list to avoid having notices to into a Spam filter.
- c. Once you are registered for a tournament, the USBGF Online Tournament System will automatically notify you when drawsheets are drawn, the name and nickname of your opponent, and an automatic system for communicating with your opponent regarding a convenient time to play your match on GridGammon or GammonSite or another mutually agreed backgammon server. You typically will have two weeks to play your match. You will also report results of your match using the USBGF Online Tournament System.

4. Online Match Series

- a. Members enjoy playing an Online Match against All-American Backgammon Tour #1 player and member of the USBGF Board of Directors Neil Kazaross. Members vote and comment on checker plays and cube decisions, with majority rule! Jason Lee serves as the Online Match Editor. Experts Grant Hoffman and Kimon Papachristopoulos comment on members' decisions after their vote is finalized and Neil comments on his checker/cube decisions. To participate go to <http://usbgf.org/category/olm/> or check the What's New section on the Home Page for the most recent post.
- b. When you enter, be sure to sign up for e-mails notifying you when new positions are posted.

5. Chris Bray's Learning Curve

- a. Every Monday, renowned British columnist and author Chris Bray posts a position on the USBGF Facebook page. Answers are provided on Tuesdays with explanations of why a given decision is best on the usbgf.org website restricted to USBGF members.

6. USBGF Teaching Videos

- a. Short 15-20 minute teaching videos are available at <http://usbgf.org/category/bg-problems/video/> Over 200 teaching video have been posted. It's a great resource for novices and everyone who is still learning! We are in the process of categorizing the videos into those recommended for

novices and those with more experience playing. New teaching videos are available every week. Follow [Facebook.com/USBGF](https://www.facebook.com/USBGF) for notices.

- b. Beginners may also enjoy the Backgammon Beginners Video Series on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9yKQ8QeIOY>
- c. There are also good resources for Novices in the Learn/Novices section of the website: <http://usbgf.org/learn-backgammon/novice/>
- d. Beginners may also enjoy the [Backgammon Beginners Video Series](#) on YouTube and videos on <https://backgammongalaxy.com/academy>

7. Backgammon Tournaments

- a. Want to play with other backgammon enthusiasts? Check out the USBGF Calendar at <http://usbgf.org/calendar/>. It includes notices of national tournaments on the American Backgammon Tours (ABT) and local tournaments of major backgammon local clubs across the country.
- b. Results of the ABT tournaments are reported promptly after the event at: <http://usbgf.org/category/events/>
- c. For a complete listing of U.S. local club events see: <http://usbgf.org/clubs/us-affiliate-backgammon-clubs/>
- d. You may also want to check out [MeetUp.com](https://www.meetup.com) in your local area to find backgammon playing opportunities.

8. Learn from Experts Playing

- a. The USBGF supports streaming matches of top players at American Backgammon Tour tournaments. To receive notices when matches are being streamed, sign up on <https://www.youtube.com/user/USBGFbroadcast> and check [Facebook.com/USBGF](https://www.facebook.com/USBGF) for notices when tournaments are in progress.
- b. Another treasure trove is an archive of recorded matches from the USBGF Online Circuit. Go to Find Player in the Online Circuit <http://usbgf.org/trny/stats/?plyr=>, scroll down the list of players to find someone whose matches you want to review, and click on Match File. Or go to the complete list of match files at: <http://usbgf.org/events/match-files/> Copy the text file onto your Home screen and open in eXtreme Gammon to go through the XG analysis of the match.

9. Check out Your Ratings

- a. Want to know who the top players are? Want to know if your performance over the board is getting better? Want to know whom your chief nemesis is? Want to see the drawsheets from your last American Backgammon Tour tournament? All that information and lots more is on the website. For ABT ratings and statistics information go to: <http://usbgf.org/ratings/> and get ABT point leaders, USBGF National master point leaders, USBGF Elo ratings, win-loss record, and more. Under the Elo rating heading you'll find tournament drawsheets, your Nemesis report, and your playing history: <http://usbgf.org/ratings/elo/>

- b. If you play in the USBGF Online Circuit, you'll want to keep track of your progress by checking out the Leaderboard: <http://usbgf.org/trny/leaderboard/> You'll find your current USBGF online master points, Elo-rating, win-loss record, tournaments won. Strive for a personal goal.

10. General Information

- a. The usbgf.org website has lots of information – do explore and find the American Backgammon Hall of Fame <http://usbgf.org/awards/hof/>, backgammon books, equipment, and merchandise, subscriptions to print copies of *the PrimeTime Backgammon* magazine, and more for sale at <http://usbgf.org/shop/>, names and photos of winners of Online tournaments <http://usbgf.org/usbgf-tournament-of-stars/>, and managing your profile at <http://usbgf.org/membership/my-profile/>.
- b. USBGF policy statements including the recently promulgated Rules may be found at: <http://usbgf.org/category/policies/>
- c. Information about the USBGF including its Board, Committees, by-laws, volunteers, financial statements, sponsors, and more may be found at: <http://usbgf.org/about-us/>
- d. You'll also find links to other backgammon websites and resources in the right hand side of the Home Page.
- e. More and more is added each day so check out the website regularly, starting with What's New in the top center of the Home Page and the News section.

Premium and Founding Sponsors

- **PrimeTime Backgammon**
 - Electronic access to the highly acclaimed *PrimeTime Backgammon* quarterly magazine, including current and back issues to September-October 2010 are available to Premium and Founding Sponsor members. <http://usbgf.org/download-ptbg/> Issues are typically released at the beginning of each quarter. You will receive e-mail notices as well as posts on [Facebook.com/USBGF](https://www.facebook.com/USBGF) when a new issue is released. This 120+ page magazine is chock-full of interesting feature articles to help you improve your game, tournament news, player profiles, ratings leaders, upcoming tournaments, and much more. You may also sign up to receive print issues at \$18 a copy plus shipping using PayPal or a major credit card: <http://usbgf.org/shop/>
- **Discounts**
 - Membership conveys discounts at several prominent backgammon organizations including:
 - 20% discount on the eXtreme Gammon neural net software <http://www.extremegammon.com/registeronline.aspx?usbgf=1>
 - 30% discount on <http://gammonsites.com/> backgammon server

- 10% discount on selected items at GammonVillage:
<http://www.gammonvillage.com/>
 - Delta Airlines – all USBGF members are eligible for 2-20% discounts on flights to most ABT tournaments in 2017 <http://usbgf.org/delta-airlines-discount-for-tournament-travel/>
- **USBGF Sponsored Tournaments All**
 - The USBGF sponsors special tournaments for USBGF members including:
 - The USBGF National Championship held at the Cherry Blossom Backgammon Championship, free first entry for USBGF members.
<http://www.cherryblossombackgammon.com/>
 - The invitational USBGF Tournament of Stars held at the Cherry Blossom Backgammon Championship team event for Founding Sponsors and Giants.
<http://cherryblossombackgammon.com/> Founding Sponsors select partners from a list of participating Giants, grandmasters and stars in order of their level and date of sponsorship: <http://usbgf.org/about-us/sponsors-and-benefactors/founding-sponsors/>