

USBGF Policy – September 2018

USBGF Streaming Initiative

Goal

The U.S. Backgammon Federation (USBGF) provides \$100 a day not to exceed \$400 per tournament toward support of streaming staff at ABT tournaments to further its mission of advancing the awareness, participation, education, and enjoyment of the skill-based game of backgammon. Specifically, its streaming goals are to:

- Increase interest in playing competitive tournament backgammon
- Improve the skill level of the backgammon community
- Bring recognition to skilled backgammon players
- Increase attendance at ABT tournaments
- Increase membership in the USBGF
- Attract corporate sponsors and philanthropic donations to the U.S. Backgammon Foundation

Issue

ABT tournament directors have responded positively to USBGF streaming support. In 2018 it is expected that 15-17 out of 20 ABT tournaments will offer streamed matches with the USBGF contributing an estimated \$6000 toward streaming staff support. The USBGF also provides streaming support funding for the Backgammon World Championships (BWC) in Monte Carlo. In addition, the USBGF is providing a super computer at approximately 10 ABT tournaments and the BWC and offers technical assistance to streaming staff.

To assist with the attainment of the USBGF Streaming Initiative goals, tournaments receiving USBGF Streaming Support should aim to attract a significant audience, feature top-level players, provide a quality streaming and commentating experience, and ensure timely accessible videos for recording and archiving. The following guidelines are suggested.

Attracting an Audience

- Timely notices of streamed matches should be posted on the USBGF ABT Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanBackgammonTour/> This should include information on opponents, which event/round is being played, and time streaming will take place. Contact April Kennedy, the USBGF Social Media Director, spyglassweb@gmail.com, if Editor access to the site is needed.
- In addition, post a notice that streaming will take place, the location for accessing it and dates/time range on www.bgonline.com/forums/
- If tournaments have websites/Facebook pages/brochures, note where streaming may be accessed
- Matches should be streamed on twitch.tv/usbgfstream.

Featuring Top Level Matches

- In early rounds, give preference to streaming undefeated top level players – e.g. Giants www.flintbg.com/giants.html/; BMAB grandmasters bgmastersab.com, ABT champions www.chicagopoint.com , American Backgammon Hall of Fame honorees usbgf.org/awards/hof
- In later rounds focus on players advancing toward final of Championship division, Masters Jackpot, Advanced division, Limited Jackpot
- Be sure the final matches of the Championship and Masters Jackpot are streamed, preferably with advance notice when they will be played

Quality Streaming Experience

- If feasible, post photos of two players along with notice of who is being streamed, what match it is (e.g. Round 3 of Championship)
- Important that stream captures beginning of match and goes through end.
- Labels should indicate names of players so people watching know who players are
- Stream 4-6 matches per day
- Check technical quality of stream (ensure visibility of board, dice, clock, and scoreboard – black dice suggested). Be alert to viewer audio/visual complaints.
- USBGF sponsorship should be noted – e.g. signs on board between matches or during breaks
- Streamers should be able to play back their recordings while broadcasting to assist players or directors who request to review footage while a match is in progress. Also streamers should be proficient with setting clocks.
- Tournament directors may ask streaming staff to update online brackets when those are used.

Quality Commentating Experience

- If commentating as well as streaming is provided, commentators should provide insight into decisions faced by players which will help viewers improve their own game; commentary should generally be pitched to intermediate players rather than experts
- Guest commentators who are knowledgeable experts such as Giants/grandmasters/ABT champions/Hall of Famers are particularly desirable
- The viewing experience should be enjoyable, commentary should both enlighten and entertain. Humor can help make the viewing experience fun.
- Criticism of players and harsh commentary when blunders are made should be avoided.
- Commentators should avoid speaking over each other. Do your best to not interrupt your fellow commentator(s) and wait for him/her to stop talking before you start talking.
- Commentators should be aware that eating and chewing food during commentary can be distracting to viewers.
- Viewers include players from around the world, of different ages and cultures. Care should be exercised to avoid comments that might be perceived as being racist, sexist, profane, or in any other way offensive to some people.
- Sponsors should be acknowledged. Link to U.S. Backgammon Foundation PayPal donations and reminders to join the USBGF or renew their membership are appreciated

Archiving Videos and Recorded Matches

- A large part of the value of streaming is the generation of a historical archive that can be viewed after the match is played. Videos should be promptly labeled and uploaded to YouTube and link submitted to Terje Pedersen terjepe@gmail.com for archiving on Backgammonstudio.com including XG match files for matches transcribed into eXtreme Gammon. Match videos should be organized into playlists.