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## *Club Movements*

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### *The use of Round Robins in Teams*

Swiss Teams has become the standard team format used in most Australian congresses. The growing popularity of teams has also seen an increase in IMP scored events at the club level. Movements such as the New-England relay, the Stagger movement and the American Whist League movement, have traditionally been used for such one-session events. Today however, players tend to associate teams bridge with longer head-to-head encounters rather than the typically short (3-board) pairs type rounds.

Given a multi-session format and sufficient entries, Swiss Teams is undoubtedly the favoured option. However many small clubs do not attract enough tables (14+) to make a Swiss viable. This is where an all-play-all Round Robin teams event becomes appropriate. If possible one should always attempt to play at least 7-board encounters because the matches are then of sufficient duration so that masterpoints may be awarded to each team that wins (or draws) a match.

Some numbers of teams fit nicely into certain numbers of sessions. For example, a 10 team Round Robin requiring nine matches, might be played over three sessions, each comprising of three (9 or 10 board) matches per week for a Club Championship type event. One of the advantages of a Round Robin over a Swiss is that the draw is predetermined. This means that the next match can commence as soon as the previous one concludes, since the time required to receive all the results and then do a Swiss draw has been eliminated.

Often the number of matches required does not divide easily into the number of sessions allocated, and a half match becomes necessary. With six teams and two sessions, a possible format would be to play two 12 board matches and the first six boards of the third match in session one. The second session would then consist of the other 2 ½ matches.

The appropriate Round Robin playing schedule for any even number of teams can be easily extracted from a set of full (not ¾) Howell guide cards. As an example, here is a typical 3-table (6 pair) movement. The pair number combinations per round from the Howell movement cards may be used directly as the match ups for a six team event.

<b>Rd 1</b>	6v1	3v4	5v2
<b>Rd 2</b>	6v2	4v5	1v3
<b>Rd 3</b>	6v3	5v1	2v4
<b>Rd 4</b>	6v4	1v2	3v5
<b>Rd 5</b>	6v5	2v3	4v1

If the number order is also used to allocate seating rights then it is a good idea to alternate the pairing order of the highest numbered (stationary seat) team. This will ensure that team 6 gets a chance to be both the 'home' and 'away' team on successive rounds.

Round Robin schedules are also available for odd numbers of teams. Here is one for 7 teams:

<b>Rd 1</b>	1v2v3	7v4	6v5
<b>Rd 2</b>	1v2v3	4v6	5v7
<b>Rd 3</b>	1v4v5	2v6	3v7
<b>Rd 4</b>	1v4v5	7v2	6v3
<b>Rd 5</b>	1v6v7	2v4	3v5
<b>Rd 6</b>	1v6v7	5v2	4v3

Note however that an odd number of entries requires a triangular grouping of three teams, which usually play two half-matches per round (using an American Whist League type movement) while the other

teams play a single head-to-head encounter. Any such triangular grouping remains intact for two rounds. This allows them to complete the remaining two halves of each match they commenced in the previous round. The playing schedules for various odd numbers of teams all have one team remaining in the triangle for the duration of the event. Anyone who has played in a Swiss Teams event with an odd number of entrants may also have experienced a similar “triangle” or “tripod” arrangement.

As with any type of event, the players will prefer to play the same boards so they can compare their results after the match with the other contestants. The same boards also theoretically give all the participants the same opportunity for potential pickups and losses. When the boards are pre-dealt it is easy to have multiple sets available for each grouping of tables. With care, 14 (or even 12) boards can be circulated between six tables. Even if the players have to shuffle the boards themselves, this still means only dealing 2 or 3 boards per match, instead of the normal 6 or 7 required when not sharing with other matches. Encounters of 8-10 boards duration usually need a set of boards per four tables, conversely in a 20-board match a single set of boards might be circulated around a group of eight tables.

The presence of a triangle leads to an added complication with board sharing. The three tables in this arrangement are not playing the same boards at the same time hence at least one set of non-identical boards is required. This however can be turned to advantage as follows: in a nine-team event on any given round, six teams will be playing head-to-head matches and three will be in the triangle. If for the first match/stanza, the players in the 6-table grouping deal and play boards 1-14, then the players in the triangle could deal and play two of the three 7-board sets 15-21, 22-28 and 29-35. For the second round, boards 1-14 could then be used in the triangle, with boards 15-28 shared among the other six tables. Thus boards 29-35 would then be the only boards requiring a re-shuffle and the majority of the field would have played the same hands after two ‘whole’ matches had been completed.

If the director is brave enough, he can even get the players to shuffle, play and “twin” a board to generate the extra set required to enable the same boards to be circulated around all the tables in play. For small Round Robins the only real limitation is the extent of a director’s imagination!