



2016 VEGAS MASTERS - Road to Nationals

The “Road to Nationals” is simple, qualify by playing league and register for Nationals!! This document provides a thorough explanation of the process, [team eligibility](#), [singles eligibility](#), [rules](#) and [format](#); and is subject to change for clarification purposes as determined by the league office.

The Vegas Masters (VM) Tournament Series includes team and singles tournaments for 8-ball and 9-ball. It is where the best of the best come together from all over the city to compete for a chance to advance to compete in the Nationals team tournament. Singles are given the opportunity to win a prize package and advance to compete in singles. Buy in events for Nationals include 8-ball and 9-ball singles and the 8-ball Dream Team tournament. The Vegas Masters series includes:

- State Championship & National Qualifier team tournaments for 8-ball and 9-ball held in the summer of each year. *On average*, 1 out of every 18 teams in 8-ball and 9-ball will qualify.
- MVP Singles State Championship tournaments include 8-Ball and 9-Ball brackets for all skill levels. Some brackets are combined based on actual participation.

Winning teams and players receive trophies, travel packages and paid entry fees to compete in the National event held in an exciting different city every year. Winning teams also receive an invitation to TAP’s exclusive National Welcome Party.

TAP Las Vegas generally provides airfare, shared accommodations (up to 3 hotel rooms per team) for 2 to 5 nights (depending on the scheduled dates along with the start and end times) and the entry fee into the applicable TAP League National tournament for eligible members of the winning team(s) or players. **All other costs are to be paid for by the team.** Partial packages and other awards may be given based on team counts, participation and the National budget.

It is the league’s goal to provide as many players as possible with the opportunity to advance and compete! The following guideline has been developed and is subject to revision. TAP Las Vegas League Office has the final say on all matters concerning the distribution of awards, with the best interest of the league and its players being served and in protection of the National fund.

Rooms: TAP destinations are awesome! TAP members stay in beautiful hotels in great vacation destinations. Players receive their room reservation by email from TAP in advance of the trip. Check in is simple. The room is paid for in advance. Upon check in, players provide their ID and a credit card for incidentals. Room reservations are subject to change based on actual participation. A block of discounted *private rooms* is reserved and available for purchase on a first come, first serve basis. TAP secures extremely discounted rates at luxurious hotels that make great vacation destinations. Think about it!!

Deposits: In advance of purchasing airfare, to best protect the National Fund and insure participation, ALL members participating in Nationals are required to pay a \$100 **refundable** good faith deposit each to TAP Las Vegas. Winning players who are required to purchase their airfare will pay a deposit of \$350 with a possible partial refund to be made at the time of purchase. Alternatively,

these players may provide their flight itinerary and a \$100 refundable deposit. Itineraries and/or deposits are due ***no later than August 31***. If not submitted by that time, TAP Las Vegas reserves the right to award the prize to the team or player that placed next in the tournament. Once the deposits have been made, airline tickets will be purchased by TAP Las Vegas (airline tickets *are non-refundable and non-transferrable*).

Airfare: Generally, winning players receive their flight itinerary by email sometime in September. Along with the deposit, players are required to provide a copy of the ID that will be used to board their flight. This is to insure the name on the flight itinerary is exactly as it appears on the ID. If this does not match, players will not be able to board their flight. It is the player's responsibility to immediately review their flight itinerary and submit changes to the airline within the time period allowed by the airlines for change (typically 24 hours). Should players not follow these steps and an error occurs, TAP Las Vegas will not pay for additional airline tickets.

Teams/players **cannot** purchase or arrange their own transportation unless they do so at their own expense or request to do so in writing and obtain written approval from the league office.

Good faith deposit refunds: The good faith deposits WILL BE refunded to each of the players when they ARRIVE at Nationals. If players do not attend, the deposit WILL NOT be refunded. Any deposits not refunded due to a lack of participation will be added to the National Travel Fund for future use and the player will owe TAP Las Vegas the balance of the airline ticket cost to be paid by the end of the current year. Players keep their airline ticket and can typically use it for future purchases, as outlined by each airline.

National Requirements: To be guaranteed a place in the National tournament and to receive the prize packages, all winning players must meet the National requirements **by August 31** unless an extension is requested in writing and approved by the league office by that time. However, if players do not meet this deadline (regardless of approval), they are no longer guaranteed their place in the tournament and/or paid airfare, as applicable. Waiting longer could result in higher airfares to be paid for by the player or no openings in the event. Players not registered for events become ineligible for their prize. The league office will not make any travel arrangements or pay entry fees for players who are not qualified.

NOTE: All monies in the player's National Fund account must be used for participation in TAP's National Tournament. No cash money will be redeemable for entry fees, hotel or airfare. If a player double qualifies, he/she will receive one flight. No more than one room, per two team players will be guaranteed. Any money not used will be re-allocated for other National expenses or rolled over to the National fund for the following year. The National Fund is for *TAP players only* and cannot be used for friends or family that players choose to take to this event.

Communication: Each winning player will be requested to provide an email address. The league office will use this address to communicate important information about your trip and deadlines. It is the player's responsibility to check their email frequently during this time period.

These processes are in place to insure TAP Las Vegas has full teams representing Las Vegas and to give as many players as possible the opportunity to attend and to preserve the National Fund for TAP Las Vegas league players.

TAP Las Vegas reserves the right to: 1) take away a team's National spot and prize package and give it to another team, if the team in question is unable to field a complete team for the National event; 2) Re-allocate funds within the National budget to best serve the interest of the league and its players.

Vegas Masters 8/9-Ball Team Eligibility:

1. To Qualify a team:
 - a. 8 & 9-Ball Divisions: 8 or less teams - 1st through 3rd wild card team; 10 teams – 1st through 4th & wild card team; 12 teams – 1st through 5th & wild card team
 - b. Bye slots in the “round robin” may be filled by otherwise qualified teams placing highest in their division, as determined by the league office.
 - c. All 9-ball teams that competed in the summer 2015 are grandfathered in and awarded a place. As we grow, we must change and award for excellence.
 - d. Teams/players must meet all other qualifications listed herein.
2. **Teams** must play a minimum of 2 of the 3 sessions prior to the VM: Summer, Fall, Spring. Exception: A new team that joins in the Spring Session can participate if they compete in the Summer Session and “**players**” meet the minimum match qualifications listed below.
3. **Players** must have (6) matches with the same team during a minimum of 2 of the 3 sessions prior to the Vegas Masters: Summer, Fall, Spring. Exceptions: members who join a team in the Spring must have a total of 6 matches in the Summer on the same team no later than July 22 for 8-ball or they will be removed from the Vegas Masters roster.
4. If a situation arises whereby a player(s) from your team is unable to play with the qualified team in a session, but are able to play with another TAP team during a session, they may be able to maintain their qualification with your team under specific circumstances. Special circumstances may be considered however, **league office approval is required** to ensure eligibility and will be decided on a case by case basis. *Requests must be submitted in writing by the team Captain for consideration.*
5. Qualifying teams must have a minimum of 3 original members (from the qualifying session) in order to maintain their qualification.
6. Should a qualified 8-ball team split to form 2 teams within the same division, both teams will be eligible to play in the VM with a minimum of 3 original members on each team **or** the original team can come together, so long as all players meet their match requirements outlined herein to compete at the VM.
7. All players must be *current and active (in the game they are competing)* members at the time of the VM and Nationals. Exception: Those active in 10-ball are considered active in 9-ball. Current members with 0 matches are considered **inactive**.
8. **Vegas Masters Rosters/Handicaps:**
 - a. Registration forms will be sent to the captains approximately 2 months prior to the event.
 - b. Upon registration, team captains will determine which roster they will be using in the competition. Teams can use any one of the 3 rosters from the qualifying sessions or the current roster, but cannot mix rosters.
 - c. NOTE: **ALL PLAYERS MUST HAVE 6 MATCHES PLAYED ON THE ROSTER SELECTED.** If the current roster is selected, players *must be able to play 6 matches/weeks* by the end of the session, as players with less than 6 matches will be ineligible to play at Nationals with the team.
 - d. Players cannot compete on two teams from the **same division**. If qualified for multiple teams in the same division, a player must choose one team to compete with.
 - e. Changes to rosters must be submitted in writing or via email to cindy@taplasvegas.com by the registration deadline.
 - f. Once all teams have registered, final on-line rosters will be generated and the contact person listed at the time of registration will be notified via email.
 - g. The final on-line tournament rosters will include all qualified players and list their “tournament handicaps.” These handicaps are based on players’ overall playing abilities and may be different from the handicap on league night.
9. **Registration:** *Registration fees are required in order to compete in this tournament series. These funds are added to the National Prize Fund and used for the tournament and National prize only.*

For clarification purposes, this document is subject to change at the discretion of the league office.

Singles Eligibility:

1. Place in the top 10 of an MVP bracket during the previous year.
2. Qualify with a team for a minimum of 2 of the 3 sessions during the previous year. Exception: Players who start TAP in the Fall and qualify must compete in a minimum of 6 matches on one team during the spring at least 1 week prior to the tournament.
3. Must be current and active in the game being played at the time of registration, during the event and Nationals.
4. Must have 6 matches played in the 16 weeks prior to the registration deadline that will be 3 weeks prior to the event (see exceptions noted above in #2)
5. Winner of this event must meet the National requirements and pay a \$100 good faith deposit by August 31 or the prize will be handed down.

NOTE: All league fees must be current to register and participate in the Vegas Masters and/or National events.

TEAM EVENT FORMAT: Day 1 - Round Robin / Day 2 – Single Elimination

- Each team will be on a 4-team board. Teams will consist of a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place and wild card from different divisions whenever possible. Each team will play a round robin format with the other (3) teams on their board. A total of 5 individual matches will be played in each team match. The total possible points attainable per team are 15.
- The top 50% plus ties will advance to the **Championship Team Board**. The remaining teams will play in the **Best of the Rest Team Board**. These tournaments are single elimination, a race to 3 match wins. *In smaller tournaments, they will only be a Championship Team Board or may move to a standard double elimination format.*
- Teams will be seeded for placement on the tournament board with one exception outlined below. Ties within the chart will be determined by the percentage of wins achieved compared to the number of games required to win. Consequently, never give up, as every game may count in the end.
Exception: Because TAP allows common players to be on teams, every effort will be made to allow both teams the opportunity to place in the tournament. If common players exist on the two opposing teams when seeded, the second team will be moved to the next available position on the chart where they will not be competing with themselves *whenever possible*. There may be situations where this is not possible and common players may meet at some point to compete. It will be the captain's decision as to play the common players as outlined herein under "Putting Up Players."
- If a team refuses to play a team match in the Round Robin, the opposing team will get an average of what the team gave up in points with a .5 going to the next number. For instance:
1st team beats said team 5-0, 2nd team beats said team 4-1, team then doesn't show up to play final round, opposing team would get (5) + (4) Divided by 2 = 4.5 Total of 5 points to opposing team
- If a team drops in the round robin without completing their matches or it is determined by the referee or tournament director that they are losing on purpose, said team will not be allowed to move on to the next level, Best of the Rest or Championship Boards. If you suspect a team is cheating by throwing their match, notify the referee or tournament director during said match.

Note: During the Team Semi-Finals & Finals, Sudden Death **will not** decide a winner. If the 4th match has not started at the 3 hours and 30 minute mark, the subsequent matches must be played on two tables at the same time.

8-Ball and 9-Ball Singles: will be divided by skill brackets based on actual participation, generally 2/3, 4, 5, 6/7 and 2-4 and 5-7 for 9-ball. Tournaments will be standard double elimination or round robin format, as determined by the tournament director based on participation. Registration for this event is \$35.00. 1st Place in every division, in every MVP bracket receives a paid entry. This entry may be exchanged for a portion of a Dream Team entry or spending cash at the event. Should a player not attend Nationals, the player becomes ineligible for all awards. Whenever possible, these prize packages will be handed down to the next eligible winner in the bracket, as determined by the league office.

Rules

The Association for P.O.O.L.'s general rules for 8-Ball and 9-Ball shall govern the conduct of each match played in all tournament events. Due to time constraints, some rule modifications must be implemented. These **additional** rules are also in effect for the duration of the tournament. Some of the rules you find herein apply solely to the team events. If the item does not apply, please disregard.

1. Team Rosters

- a. No roster verifications or changes will be made at the Vegas Masters. It is the player's responsibility to review the rosters on-line in advance of the tournament.
- b. Players may be on multiple rosters, qualified on different teams from separate divisions. However, should the teams with common players compete; it is at the team captain's discretion whether or not to play the common player. Should the team captain be the common player, it is recommended that he/she temporarily appoint another player on the team as captain to minimize any controversy. Upon completion, the original captain resumes his/her position.
- c. Players cannot play on 2 tables at the same time.
- d. The roster(s) for the T.A.P. Nationals will be the roster of the winning Vegas Masters team(s). Under extenuating circumstances and with special requirements being met, team players who are ineligible to play and win in the Vegas Masters may be eligible to participate in Nationals at their own expense. These requests must be in writing and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the league office and if approved, submitted to the corporate office for final approval.

2. Sportsmanship: This league is about Sportsmanship, Courtesy and Respect towards your fellow players and the rules. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Penalties can range from a warning, to ball in hand foul, to forfeiture of games, matches or disqualification. Everyone is expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Rulings made by referees will not be made on petty technicalities. All players should win or lose on the table based on his or her abilities.

3. Time Outs (for team events only): All players receive **one 1-minute time** out per game. If the coach exceeds the one minute time limit, the opposing Captain, after timing the coach, can challenge for excessive use of time. At this point, the coach has 10 seconds to complete their advice to the shooting player. If there is a controversy, a Referee must be called. Remember that real time and perceived time are two different things. Don't be offended if you get called for taking too much time on a time-out. The match belongs to the players on the table, not the coach.

5 Handicap 2 players still receive unlimited coaching within the 45-second shot clock however, the Coach CANNOT approach the table to give advice. All coaching during a non-time-out must occur away from the playing area.

4. Putting up Players (team events):

- a. Only the Captain or a specific member of the team appointed by the Captain can make player selections for each match. This is to avoid controversy.
- b. Team captains have 5 minutes to put up a player.
- c. Once a captain has selected their player for a match, they cannot change their selection once the opposing captain has made his/her selection. Once both captains have made their selection – neither captain can change.
- d. **NOTE: TEAM SURVIVAL CANNOT BE USED. THE “BURNOUT STRATEGY” OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL RULE BOOK CAN BE USED AT THIS TOURNAMENT AND AT NATIONALS. GET FAMILIAR WITH IT!**
- e. If two teams face one another and the teams have any common player(s), the player(s) are **eligible** to play for both teams without penalty as long as the player(s) meet the following two criteria:
 - i. The player(s) have met the proper requirements to be eligible to play in the tournament.
 - ii. If the Captain elects to put a player up for a match, the other Captain **cannot** match the player to play him/herself.
- f. It is suggested to avoid controversy over favoritism, that if the common player is the captain, that he/she appoint another player to be captain for that match.

5. Coaching (team events):

- a. Only the coach or the player can call a time out.
- b. Neither the coach nor player can refuse a time out. Once a time out has been called or suggested, it must be taken.
- c. If the coach or player calls a time out when they have already used their time out for that game, one warning will be given to the team. Any future violations throughout the entire teams matches will result in ball-in-hand foul to the opponent.
- d. A second player can consult with the coach, but the coach is the only player who can communicate directly to the player or approach the table. Only the (2) shooting players and their coaches are allowed in the playing area.
- e. Only the coach or the player can ask for a third party to watch a close hit or verify a frozen ball. If another team member asks, one warning will be given. On the second infraction, ball in hand foul.
- f. The only communication between the player and the coach is during a time out situation by either team or between GAMES.
- g. When coaching a handicap 2 level player, the coach must declare when they are taking their one official time out so the opposing player can consult with their coach. The opposing player **cannot** consult with their coach during sideline coaching within the 45 seconds shot clock.
- h. Should the coach see a foul and a time out remains for their player, they may call the foul. This basically burns the player's time out. Should there be controversy over whether or not the foul occurred and the player did not see the foul, shot goes to the shooter. In general, players need to pay attention to the game and call their own fouls.

6. Sideline Interference:

- a. Due to the limited space at and around the table, only the players, coaches and scorekeeper will be allowed in the immediate playing area. All others will be asked to leave the area and those players will be expected to limit their conversations, as this can be very disruptive to the shooting player.
- b. Conversations with players are limited to those between the coach and the player during either player's time out.

- c. The **ONLY** thing **ANY** player on the team can say to the shooting player when it is their turn at the table regarding the match is “mark your pocket” when the shooter is on the 8 or 9 Ball. Comments such as nice shot, let’s go, etc. are allowed. Use common sense. Don’t clap or yell out YES!!!, when the other player misses. Be quiet and show respect to the shooting players.
- d. If any comments are made of any kind that could be considered coaching, by any player on the team, the player may be charged with a time out. The team will be given one warning. Any further comments will result in a ball-in-hand foul to the opposing player. This applies to the remainder of all matches between the two teams, not just the match where the warning was issued. The match belongs to the players. Let them win or lose on the table, based on their individual skills.
- e. Any player making comments from the sidelines that is not on either team playing a match will be given one warning to stop. If it occurs again they will be ejected from the tournament area and the event.

7. **Sudden Death (team events):** Sudden Death will be in effect for the Team event. Matches are set at 4-hour intervals. We need to adhere to this time frame as closely as possible to stay on schedule for the week. At 3 hours and 30 minutes, any match that is currently in progress (defined as the first rack in the match has been broken) will be allowed to its completion. Any additional matches to be played will be determined by one game between the two opponents. The tournament referee staff will monitor times; however it is every team’s responsibility to manage your time wisely. Don’t intentionally try to stall matches to insure sudden death. Play fair and let your players win or lose on the table. The Referees or Tournament Directors have the final say on calling Sudden Death.

Note: *Should teams fall behind and there are tables available, the tournament directors, at their discretion, may move teams to 2 tables in an effort to keep the tournament on schedule.*

Note: During the Team Semi-Finals & Finals, Sudden Death **will not** decide a winner. If the 4th match has not started at the 3 hours and 30 minute mark, the subsequent matches must be played on two tables at the same time.

8. **Listening Devices:** NO listening devices of any kind will be allowed.

9. **The 45 second shot clock/Slow Play:** If you have timed the opposing player and verified they are exceeding the 45-second shot clock consistently, you must first notify a Referee and report the violation. The Referee will notify the opposing Captain or Coach that their player is under watch. The Captain or Coach should then tell the player after they complete their turn at the table. This is not an official warning, only a notification. The Referee will time the player to determine if a violation has occurred. If so, the Referee will issue the warning to the Captain or Coach and let them tell the player that a warning has been given. The Referee will continue to time the player. The next violation will result in a ball-in-hand to the opposing player unless that shot is considered by the Referee to be of extreme difficulty or critical to the match. The Referee has the final say.

10. **Accidental movement of a ball clarification:**

- a. If the shooting player accidentally moves a ball **prior to their shot**, the opposing player has the option of leaving the ball where it was moved “or” returning it to its original position. If the shooting player grabs the moved ball to replace it, it is not a foul.
- b. If the shooting player accidentally moves a ball **during the execution of their shot, putting the cue ball in motion** and then touches the moved ball while other balls are in motion “or” another ball on the table strikes the ball that was moved or strikes the cue stick, it is a ball-in-hand foul.

11. Referees: Referees will be provided during the tournament. If the player or coach sees potential for controversy, please stop the match and request a referee. The referees' ruling is final. In a controversial situation the referee has the option of referring the matter to the Head Referee for further review. The Head Referee's decision on all rulings is final.

12. Handicaps: Once all teams/players have registered, final on-line rosters are generated and captains are notified. These rosters include all qualified players and list their "tournament handicaps." These h/c's are based on players' overall playing abilities and may be different from the handicap on league night. Captains' are given an opportunity to review the rosters and request changes/audits. The league director will make all final handicap assignments.

No changes of any kind made to the team rosters once the event begins unless a manual error by the league director has occurred. All players' membership status and handicaps are verified prior to the start of this event and are not subject to change during the event.

13. Miscellaneous rules:

- a. Avoid controversy and/or show good sportsmanship when shooting by:
 - i. **Clearly identify the ball & pocket you are attempting to shoot at.**
 - ii. **Clearly announce your fouls and defensive shots.**Players who are verbally warned more than once by a referee will be subject to Sportsmanship Violations, which can result in a ball in hand foul, to forfeiture of games, matches or disqualification.
- b. You must "**MARK THE POCKET**" ON ALL 8 or 9 ball shots. Not marking the pocket on a completed 8-Ball shot is loss of game. If there is any controversy and the pocket has not been marked, that player will lose regardless of any verbal agreements that have been made. In 9-ball, the 9-ball is spotted if the pocket is not marked. Any marker is acceptable **except a standard piece of chalk**. Be sure to clearly identify which pocket you are marking.
- c. **Double hit/push shots:** Double hitting the cue ball or pushing the cue ball is a foul. When the cue ball and object ball are less than a chalk distance or less apart, it is recommended that players elevate their cues or shoot at an angle to avoid double hitting for pushing. It is further recommended that a referee be called to watch the shots. If a referee deems the shot to be a foul, the call is final. See section 11 above.
- d. The house cue ball will be used unless agreed upon by BOTH players. Any game started with a different cue ball without this mutual agreement will be allowed to its completion and all subsequent games will be played with the house ball.
- e. All matches are considered final when both score sheets have been turned into the tournament desk. No protest or challenge will be considered after this occurs.
- f. Unscrewing a jointed cue **into two pieces** is a concession of your match, *unless you notify your opponent that you are changing shafts*.
- g. Two-piece Jump cues are allowed. Use of a shaft only is **NOT** allowed.
- h. If you shoot the wrong category of balls and your opponent does not call a ball-in-hand foul after the first ball is pocketed, the shooting player is now that category of balls for the remainder of that game, unless they admit a ball-in-hand foul.
- i. Once a match has ended, each team has 5 minutes maximum to field a player.
- j. Every player has the right to ask for their opponents Photo ID for identification. Any player attempting to misrepresent their own identity or the identity of another player will be immediately disqualified from competition and banned from the Association for P.O.O.L. Inc. for a minimum of (1) year. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- k. **Smoking:** For those who smoke, please be courteous to those around you and respectful of the equipment. Burning cigarettes **are not allowed at the shooting table**

while it is your turn to shoot. They need to be set in an ashtray and fully extinguished when you are done.

- l. **Outside Food/Beverages**: Outside beverages are NOT allowed inside Mickey's. *Players are encouraged to bring in food for the day, however, please clean up your area* when you are done. Healthy snacks are a good idea.
 - m. **Clean up** – When you are done with your match, please clean up the area. Throw your trash in the receptacles located throughout the room. This will be appreciated by all.
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Disqualification Process

Note: TAP Does Not Raise Handicaps During the Event

1. Reminder: Everyone here is planning to bring their "A" game so don't be surprised to see some players shooting 1 to 1½ levels higher than their rating simply due to the intensity of this tournament, excessive play for three days straight and personal focus.
2. All scores will be entered into PoolNet.
3. During and at the conclusion of the Round Robin tournament, all scores will be entered. If a player shoots statistically 2 levels above their current rating for 2 matches, they will be disqualified from the event. The team captains will be notified if their player(s) are disqualified.
4. During the Single tournaments, teams are instructed to flag any player who is shooting 2 levels above their current rating. The Captain is to bring the score sheet to the tournament director at the conclusion of the individual match. Do not wait until the entire team match is over. If this happens in the middle of the team match, the tournament director will give you another score sheet to continue scoring the remainder of the matches.
5. Teams will not move forward in the single elimination tournaments until instructed to do so by the tournament director. Should any matches be in question, additional time may be required for data entry to verify the team's and/or player's eligibility to do so.
6. Disqualified players cannot play in any other events.
7. If one player is disqualified, the team remains in the tournament. If a second player on that team is disqualified, the entire team will be disqualified.
8. If a team is disqualified, the players not disqualified on the team can still participate in other events.
9. If a team is disqualified during the round robin event, the teams they played will receive a 3-2 win unless their actual points were more than 3. If the team is disqualified before finishing the Round Robin event, all matches will be recorded as a 3-2 win for teams that would have played the disqualified team.
10. Any points won by a disqualified player during the Round Robin event will be reversed for all teams in that bracket prior to the seeding of the single elimination boards. The same point reversal will occur during single elimination prior to advancing a team to the next round.
11. Any disqualified players will forfeit any and all monies won.
12. For a team that lost to a team that was disqualified during the single elimination Championship and/or Second Chance rounds, they will move the next round provided the next match has not completed. If the next match has completed, the team will place in the next highest round and receive a payback if applicable.