

CourtShuffleboard.com

Accelerated Swiss

Game & Tournament Format

Source basis: Accelerated Swiss Tournament.docx

CourtShuffleboard.com presentation cover added. The complete owner-supplied source document follows without editorial rewriting.

ACCELERATED SWISS TOURNAMENT

Purpose: To practice end game strategy for the last thirty points of the standard 75-point tournament.

Game Format:

- Match is one game, 6/6 format.
- If tied, 2-disc lag for winner.

Tournament Format:

- Mingles Draw Doubles or Draw Singles.
- Players/teams assigned one tournament point for each win.
- Players/teams record game points and tournament points.
- Brackets based on number of tournament points.
- First round, draw from full field. Subsequent rounds, draw from opponents within each bracket.
- Winners - # of games won then points total.

<https://www.zephyrhillsshuffle.com/commentary-opinions>

This is a non-elimination tournament played over a predetermined number of rounds set in advance. Players get a random match in the first round. After this, all the winners from round 1 are paired up against each other and all the losers pair up too. This continues round after round. For example, In a 24 player tournament, there are 12 matches played simultaneously. After round 1 there are 12 players on '1' win and 12 players on '0' wins. The winners draw each other for round 2 as do the losers. At the end of round 2, there are 6 players on '2' wins, 12 players on '1' win, and 6 players on '0' wins. This continues round after round until the end of the tournament when the winner is declared. If there is an odd number of players then the extra person is issued a bye. No player receives more than 1x bye and players at the bottom of the tournament ladder take priority in receiving a bye after round 1. When pairing rounds, pairings start at the top. If there is an odd number of teams in that bracket then one random team from the next bracket down is moved up for that round only.

he details can be worked upon, but I'd imagine that a typical tournament would look something like this:

9am	Round 1
10am	Round 2
11am	Round 3
12pm	Lunch
12:30pm	Round 4
1:30pm	Round 5
2:30pm	Round 6
3:30pm	Round 7
4:30pm	Finish

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The key advantages are:

- Tournament is 7x (arbitrary number) 16 frame games with 2-speed shots and 4x practice shots each match. Players don't switch colors after 8 frames. Players should be prepared currently to play between 6 and 9 games in a day so this fits in comfortably to this. In addition, the mini-breaks in-between matches allow frailer players an opportunity to refresh.
- Tournament finished in 1x day
- With a consistent round schedule, new players know in advance what is expected of them. It is much easier for them to plan their time and to arrange lifts to and from the venue etc.
- No player is turned away.
- Max of 1x player would have a bye per round and they would be waiting no more than 1 hour.
- All matches finish around the same time so there is minimal downtime. I imagine most matches will take around 45 mins so at the end of each match there is a short break whilst the tournament makes the draw for the next round which factors in time for bathroom/smoke breaks etc.
- After round 1 the winners play stronger players and the losers play weaker players. As the tournament progresses this becomes more precise. This has multiple advantages. Firstly, new players get to draw different partners throughout the day and play against more players. This allows them to meet more people which I believe is a positive step along in retaining players. Weaker and stronger players will find themselves drawn against opponents nearer their play level and thus the matches will become more challenging and rewarding. There is less resentment towards newer players as different partners are drawn each round.
- Players play 7x matches each day instead of 2 or 3. I'm not one for handing out 'participation certificates', but this format creates 7x opportunities for players to win a match. As the day progresses the losers play each other so by default virtually everyone should win at least one match. Personally, I enjoy tournaments a lot more when I win matches, or at the very least when I feel like I've been competitive. This format pushes positivity as players aren't drawing 2x top amateurs and are then knocked out. There's a clear path of progression as players will start to win more matches each tournament as they improve.
- Points - currently our point structure is very rigid. We give out full points to tournaments of 32+ players and anything less gets a lesser amount regardless of how few players turn up. In our current setup,

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coming second in the Main in a 30 player tournament takes real effort, and the reward is the same as coming 2nd in the Main of an 8 player tournament which is significantly easier. Honestly, it isn't fair, but our current format makes any change to this impractical. The Swiss format opens up more possibilities. As players are ranked individually at the end of the tournament we can pre-agree a simplified matrix.

By example:

7 or less players - 1 point for 1st, 0.5 points 2nd
8 - 11 players - 1 point 1st & 2nd, 0.5 points 3rd
12 - 15 players - 1 point 1st & 2nd, 0.5 points 3rd & 4th
16 - 19 players - 1 point 1st & 2nd, 0.5 points 3rd, 4th & 5th
20 - 23 players - 1 point 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 0.5 points 4th, 5th & 6th
24 - 27 players - 1 point 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 0.5 points 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th
28 - 31 players - 1 point 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th, 0.5 points 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th
32 - 35 players - 1 point 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th, 0.5 points 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th & 9th
And so on.....

This potential matrix allows for a more balanced distribution of points to players based upon how many players turn up. Towards the end of the season before Covid we had amateur numbers of 64 at ZSC, 64 at Woodbrook, 48 at Lakeland, 30 at St Cloud & 42 at Winter Haven. Compare this to earlier in the season when it was 16 at Lakeland, 9 at St Cloud & 14 at Winter Haven. I know there's been previous discussions about reducing points at the start of the season and this format gives us an easy way to achieve this, whilst supporting clubs that pull in larger numbers by giving them more points.

• Continuing on regarding points, I think that this format will create a more accurate reflection and recognition to the players who deserve to move up to State Am and Pro. I'd argue that our current system gives too much reward to players who literally play every week. It's virtually impossible not to earn 1.5 - 2 points a season if you enter enough tournaments; especially if you play early in the season when there are fewer players. Therefore, after 3x years any player happy to travel can move up a bracket, regardless of actual ability. I'm going to speculate that with this format the stronger players will constantly rise to the topmost weeks and thus find it easier to get their 5 points and move up quicker. This is great because it rewards the stronger amateurs and potentially fills a gap created by the removal of the auto pro opportunity back in 2016/17. It's also going to force the weaker players to improve to pick up points. I think this will happen as players will consistently will be paired with players of a similar ability and so matches will give a larger opportunity for growth. If a strong amateur just clears and makes hammers to win a match, it is strategically sound. But for a new amateur, this is a negative and weak experience. I just think this format nurtures growth and development.

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- As weaker players will find points harder to come by, I think the point expiration system will need to be reviewed. If they've won a few had points here or there then as the points accumulate it encourages them to chase points and reach the next stage of their shuffleboard career.

- A key advantage to this system is that a player who loses their first match can still win. Arguably, in a smaller field of players, you could lose match 2 and possibly 3 and still win. Even if you can't win, many players will have an opportunity to get that final spot that gives move-up points until the last round or two. This keeps players positive as an early loss doesn't necessarily mean that their tournament is over. I think that this again is a strong positive that only strengthens the amateur player shuffleboard experience.

Negatives

Unfortunately, I don't think this system is without flaws. Change is always a tough sell. The great thing about amateurs is that most are new and so they aren't emotionally attached to the current format. I like playing best of 3 matches and the loss of this is something I've pondered long and hard over. I've played a lot of single mingle tournaments through the summer which has a near-identical structure (random pairings each round) and I've enjoyed all those tournaments so I don't think the single game is as big a factor as I think.

I've tried to sell the idea of stronger players consistently getting move-up points as a positive thing which I believe is correct. I am slightly concerned that weaker and newer players will literally never get any move-up points. This could be bad as the points help drive players to play each week. However, players play all the way through the summer schedule and there are no points for anyone. I'm also aware of clubs that just play single mingles and they attract players consistently. It is possible that the lack of points is a positive as players don't get caught up chasing points too early and play for just the love of the game. Surely this is the best experience for newer players?

There is also going to be a little more work for the tournament director. All the matches will conclude at a similar time so there will be a mini backlog as results are recorded. I imagine that once all the results are in that the director will randomize the draw for the next round and print off a list of the current standings along with a second sheet indicating which court players have to go to. These sheets will be pinned in locations where the current tournament charts are and players will be able to go here to find their next round opponents/partner instead of the entire playlist being announced over the microphone.

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