

BMS(BE)

= Backgammon Master Series (Belgium)

BMS(BE) is run by dedicated volunteers, whose object is integrity, exactitude, and promptness.

However, since collecting, reviewing, and processing XG-files is time-consuming and requires care, delays in the publicizing of results and data may occasionally occur.

Since these delays always find their origin in personal circumstances (illness, holiday, job demands, ...), BMS participants are kindly requested to show patience and understanding in such event.

Aim :

- 1) give BGFed.be members the chance to see their performances acknowledged and honoured by the backgammon community.
- 2) give BGFed.be members the chance to monitor their playing skills and achieve a Grading (= a computed estimate of playing strength).

Two initiatives are started : **BMSB** and **BPR**.

- 1) BMSB (= Backgammon Master Series Belgium).
- 2) BPR (= Belgium Performance Rating)

Both BMSB and BPR collect XG-files of pre-designated *series* (BMSB) or *clusters* (BPR) of matches, re-analyse the matches using the official BMAB settings, save the files in an online match archive and publish the obtained PRs in a **BMSB Grading Table (GT)** and a **BPR Ranking Table (RT)**.

Both GT and RT are based on the BMS(BE) Grading Structure :

| Mastership Title | Class | Key | PR Target | EP Target |
|-------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-----------|
| Super Grandmaster | 1 | S1 | < 2.00 | > 300 |
| Super Grandmaster | 2 | S2 | < 2.25 | > 300 |
| Super Grandmaster | 3 | S3 | < 2.50 | > 300 |
| Grandmaster | 1 | G1 | < 3.00 | > 200 |
| Grandmaster | 2 | G2 | < 3.50 | > 200 |
| Grandmaster | 3 | G3 | < 4.00 | > 200 |
| Master | 1 | M1 | < 4.75 | > 150 |
| Master | 2 | M2 | < 5.50 | > 150 |
| Master | 3 | M3 | < 6.50 | > 150 |
| Proficiency Level | | | | |
| Advanced | 1 Expert | A1E | < 7.50 | > 100 |
| Advanced | 2 | A2 | < 8.50 | > 100 |
| Advanced | 3 | A3 | < 10.00 | > 100 |
| Intermediate | 1 | I1 | < 12.00 | > 70 |
| Intermediate | 2 | I2 | < 14.00 | > 70 |
| Intermediate | 3 | I3 | < 16.00 | > 70 |

The BMSB GT will contain a survey of all Series played, incorporating results achieved in international BMAB events.

The first BMSB GT (published 15 November 2015) can be seen in Appendix A.

For both BMSB and BPR, the following **Conditions of Play** apply :

* only matches submitted conform the Conditions of Play can be validated.

* BMS(BE) can at any time modify the Conditions of Play.

* *participation* : BGFed.be membership is required.

* *pre-designated* : to have their Series or Cluster designated, players need to announce their Series or Cluster beforehand to the Committee by e-mail.

* *re-analyse* : the BMAB settings are : Standard World Class Analysis, with “Gigantic” search interval, 15 x 8 bearoff database, resignation errors counting (see Appendix B), outplays not counting.

* only matches played live, with clock, can be validated. The time allotted is 2 minutes/point and 12 seconds increment. Note : this also holds when the player competes in a tournament where clock use is not mandatory. To have a Series or Cluster validated, ALL matches need to be clocked.

* *recording* :

Ideally, players film their matches. Two advantages :

+ by uploading the videos on YouTube, they have the option of having their matches transcribed by a third party.

+ by uploading the videos on YouTube (or keeping the video available for a period of 1 month after submission of the XG-file), the obtained PRs are beyond scrutiny.

However, direct transcription on a laptop or tablet is also permitted. A disadvantage :

– since no video backup is available, PRs can only be validated after discretionary approval by the BMS(BE) Committee.

For BPR, also manually transcribed matches can be submitted.

Here too, of course, Prs can only be validated after discretionary approval by the BMS(BE) Committee.

BMSB

BMSB monitors Master Series and organises BMS tournaments.

BMSB may award Proficiency Level Certificates and Mastership Titles once Gradings reach a certain significance level.

1) Master Series Type 1 (MS1)

By playing a MS1, players gain access to the BMSB GT provided their PR is 16 or better.

What is a MS1?

A MS1 is a pre-designated number of recorded and transcribed backgammon matches, played between two BGFed.be members, preferably at regular intervals, and within a given time-frame.

Conditions of Play.

a) participation :

Both players need to be BGFed.be member.

b) pre-designation :

A MS1 can only be started once it is properly designated. Therefore, one of the two players needs to announce the MS1 by e-mail to BMSB at least 2 days before start of play.

E-mails need to be sent to : johan.huyck@wiskin.be.

The following info is required : names of both players, number of matches, match length, time-frame, way of recording.

Players are bound to play out their MS1 within the given time-frame once it is officially designated.

Failure to do so results in forfeiture of the MS1 and the banning of both players from BMSB initiatives or events for a period of at least 3 months. In cases of force majeure (technical malfunction, illness, ...), leniency will be considered.

c) number and length of matches :

The minimum number of matches is 6. The number of matches should always be even.

The minimum match length is 9. The match length should always be uneven and not longer than 25.

The minimum total EP (EP = Experience Points or total number of match points) is 70.

Examples of valid formats : 8 x 9, 6 x 13, 8 x 11.

Examples of invalid formats : 9 x 11, 5 x 15, 20 x 7, 5 x 27.

A special case is the Maiden Series : two players who are not yet mentioned in the GT can gain

access to the table by playing ten 7-point matches (10 x 7). Once mentioned in the table, the above criteria need to be adhered to.

d) *time-frame* :

The time-frame cannot exceed 6 months.

Players should strive to complete at least 30 EP/month.

e) *submit the files* :

After each playing session, the XG-files need to be sent to BMSB no later than 8 days after the match has been played.

f) *publication* :

After completion of the MS1 the average PR of both players will be calculated. Hereby, the number of decisions is taken into account.

The published PR in the GT is always the aggregate PR of all MS played, regardless of the type of MS.

Example : Player A has played a Maiden Series and has a PR of 8,6 on the GT. The number of decisions is mentioned as 2000. Now he achieves another BMSB-approved result : a PR of 7,4 with 1580 decisions.

His aggregate PR then becomes : $(8,6 \times 2000) + (7,4 \times 1580) / (2000 + 1580) = 8,07$.

2) Master Series Type 2 (MS2)

By playing a MS2, a player gains access to the BMSB GT provided his PR is 16 or better.

What is a MS2?

A MS2 is a pre-designated number of recorded and transcribed backgammon matches, played in an official tournament setting, both in Belgium and abroad.

Conditions of Play.

a) *participation* :

The player needs to be BGFed.be member.

b) *pre-designation* :

A MS2 can only be valid if it is properly designated. Therefore, the player needs to announce his MS2 by e-mail to BMSB at least 2 days before start of play.

E-mails need to be sent to : johan.huyck@wiskin.be.

The following info is required : name of player, name of tournament, way of recording.

The player is bound to play out his MS2 once it is officially designated. Failure to do so results in forfeiture of the MS2 and the banning of the player from BMSB initiatives or events for a period of at least 3 months. In cases of force majeure, leniency will be considered.

c) *number and length of matches* :

To be considered valid, ALL matches need be submitted.

The tournament should be of the format where matches have a minimum length of 9 points in the Main. As matches become shorter in the Consolation (7) or the Last Chance (5), they nevertheless constitute an essential part of the MS2 and consequently should be included.

A MS2 could conceivably consist of only 2 matches and thus have an EP which is smaller than 70. In that case, the obtained PR is still mentioned in the GT, but will be marked as insignificant. This is done by putting the PR between (straight) brackets :

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| [] : | EP < 35 | (low significance) |
| () : | EP > 34 < 70 | (moderate significance) |
| x (prov.) : | EP > 69 < 150 | (provisionary) |
| x : | EP > 149 | |

A player who has entered the GT with an EP of less than 70 has 1 year to reach the 70 EP threshold. Failure to do so will result in deletion of the MS2 result.

In this case (a MS2 yielding insufficient EP) augmentation of EP can be achieved in 4 ways :

- 1) by playing another MS2
- 2) by playing a MS1
- 3) by participating in a BMS tournament
- 4) by playing a *complementary MS1*. This type of MS1 has a minimum match length of 9 and a minimum number of matches of 5. That way, the MS2 applicant can add a chunk of 45 EP or more to his Grading.

3) BMS tournament

All matches played in a BMS tournament will be validated as MS. It is the objective of BMSB to organise a BMS Tournament in Belgium every year. See the posted article (*Michel wins BMS Prague*) to learn more.

It is possible that BIC Division 1 will be validated as BMS tournament by BMAB. In that case, if ALL players comply with the Conditions of Play, each player would be playing a MS1 (14 x 13, EP 181) and gain a spot both on the BMSB GT and on the BMAB International Ranking List.

If not ALL matches can be submitted, the tournament would not be eligible for BMSB or BMAB validation. In that case, individual players could still have their BIC matches designated as MS2. That would require recording and transcribing ALL their BIC matches. PRs of opponents would then not be validated.

BPR

BPR is a low-threshold initiative for players who do not have the time to play a MS, but would still like their playing skills acknowledged and honoured.

BPR monitors, supervises and processes pre-designated *clusters* of backgammon matches. These clusters need to be played in a BPR-recognised setting.

Results are published in the BPR RT.

Conditions of Play.

a) *participation* :

BGFed membership is required.

b) *pre-designated* :

A cluster should be announced by e-mail at least 24 hours before start of play.

E-mails need to be sent to : miefmove@mail.com.

c) *clusters of matches* :

There are 3 types : *mutual* clusters, *individual* clusters, and *broken* clusters.

1) mutual cluster :

* Two players agree on playing a set of matches in a single session. In this case, the combined EP of their cluster should be at least 18, the minimum number of matches is 2, and the minimum length of the matches should be 5.

Examples of valid formats : 4 x 5, 3 x 7, 2 x 9. Not valid : 1 x 21.

PRs of both players will be validated.

* A special type of mutual cluster is a Four Cubes cluster. If the two club captains agree beforehand on recording, transcribing and submitting ALL matches of the Four Cubes encounter, the cluster will be valid for all players concerned. ALL PRs will then be adopted in the BPR RT, also for players who played only 1 match (EP 7).

2) individual cluster :

* One player announces he will record, transcribe and submit ALL his matches played during a single club evening. In this case, match lengths may vary. However, the cluster needs to consist of at least 2 matches, and the total EP should be at least 18.

Only his PRs, and not those of his opponents, will stand for BPR.

* One player announces he will record, transcribe and submit ALL his matches played in an official

tournament where matches are 7 points or shorter. The cluster needs to consist of at least 3 matches, and the total EP should be at least 18.

* One player announces he will record, transcribe and submit ALL his matches played in a Four Cubes encounter. This cluster needs to contain ALL three matches.

Only the PR of the player who filed the application will stand for BPR.

3) broken cluster :

This is a mutual cluster where both players opt for matches of 13 points or more. They can spread this cluster over maximum 2 sessions. In each session at least one match should be completed. The broken cluster needs to be finished no later than 10 days after announcement.

d) *recording* :

Next to the modes of recording mentioned in the introduction, manual notation is permitted for BPR clusters.

It is, however, imperative that the transcriber notes down ALL moves correctly until the very end of the game. It may be tempting to enter random moves in a no-contact bear-in or fast bear-off, but tricky checker-plays can occur even in the last 2 or 3 rolls of a game.

For this reason, the player who manually recorded the match should have his notes signed by his opponent (if it is a BGFed member), by the TD, or by another witness. After transcribing the match in XG, he should also keep the notes available for scrutiny for at least 1 month.

e) *BPR-recognised setting* :

Clusters can only be validated if they are played during a club evening or in an official tournament setting (e.g. Brussels Friendly, Leuven's Fourth Friday, ...)

f) *BPR RT* :

Players who are mentioned on the BPR RT with a EP < 70 have 1 year to reach the 70 EP threshold. Failure to do so will result in deletion from the RT.

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Appendix A

BMSB Grading Table (15 November 2015)

| Name | PR BMAB | Decisions | Matches BMAB | EP BMAB | PR BMSB | Decisions | Matches BMSB | EP BMSB | Aggregate PR | Total EP | Grading BMSB |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|------------------|---------|---------|-----------|--------------|---------|--------------|----------|--------------|
| Michel Lamote | 4,96 | 2380 | 13 x 11 | 143 | 5,26 | 1583 | 10 x 11 | 110 | 5,08 | 253 | M2 |
| Geert Van der Stricht | | | | | 6,12 | 1524 | 10 x 11 | 110 | 6,12 | 110 | M3 (prov.) |
| Waller Meuwis | 6,21 | 2596 | 7 x 11 5 x 15 | 152 | | | | | 6,21 | 152 | M3 |

Appendix B

Resignation errors.

Losing a match on time (a *clock timeout failure*) can ruin a good PR. This depends on the stage of the match. E.g. : when a player who is leading 1-away 3-away Cr. loses on time when he has a 80% chance of winning the current game, he is flagged as having committed a resignation blunder and his PR can sky-rocket from 5,8 to 20 (!). This will of course be much less if the player loses on time in a dmp game where he only has 10% winning chances.

Players are therefore warned to guard against clock timeout failure. Until a proper adjustment process is developed, resulting PRs will stand.

Appendix C

Abbreviations :

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| BMS(BE) | : Backgammon Master Series (Belgium) |
| BMAB | : Backgammon Masters Awarding Body |
| BMSB | : Backgammon Master Series Belgium |
| RT | : Ranking Table |
| GT | : Grading Table |
| BPR | : Belgium PR |
| PR | : Performance Rating |
| MS1 | : Master Series 1 |
| MS2 | : Master Series 2 |
| EP | : Experience Points |
| XG | : eXtremeGammon |

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