

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 BMS Grading (= a computed estimate of playing strength).

To achieve that aim, BMS(BE) collects and processes XG-files of backgammon matches.

These matches are re-analysed using the official BMS(BE) settings and saved in a match archive.

The obtained PR's are published in BMS Grading Tables (= GT).

Conditions of Play (version 07-Nov-2017)

* 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-designation* : PR matches and Master Series (= MS) can only be validated if they are pre-designated. That means that players need to announce their PR match or MS beforehand to Johan Huyck by e-mail (johan.huyck@wiskin.be) or text message (0496/644872). Required info : names of players, number of matches, match length.

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

* only matches played live, with clock, can be validated. The time allotted is 2 minutes per point and 12 seconds increment. Note : this also holds when the player competes in a tournament where clock use is not mandatory.

* *recording* : BMS matches must be filmed (see : Appendix B)

BMS Initiatives

BMS(BE) takes care of the BMS Grading Table and the BMS Speed Table.

BMS(BE) also organises BMS tournaments.

1) BMS Grading Table

The BMS GT mentions the aggregate PR of players over their most recent 750 experience points (= EP). Players with less than 200 EP will be given a 'provisional grading'.

Any pre-designated number of recorded and transcribed **PR matches**, played between two BGFed.be members, can be validated. These PR matches need to have a minimum length of 9 points.

If, in a tournament, a non-listed player plays against a recording BMS-applicant, he can gain access to the BMS GT provided he says so explicitly before the start of a recorded PR match. He thereby accepts that the match is played under 'Mutual PR agreement'. From that moment on he is considered to be a listed player. Once a player is listed, his PR's achieved in further recorded matches will automatically be incorporated.

If, in a tournament, the allotted time is less than 2 minutes per point (e.g. only 8 minutes for a 5-point match, or 12 minutes for a 7-point match), it is the BMS-player's discretion to apply for validation or not. Opponents of BMS-applicants, even if already listed, have the chance to opt out of the 'Mutual PR Agreement' on the grounds of reduced time in the bank. Should they nevertheless wish to have their PR validated, a simple 'yes' or 'no' before start of the match will do. It is then the BMS-applicant's responsibility to pass this information on to the BMS Committee.

Master Series

A special format is the Master Series (= MS). In a MS, players agree to play, record and transcribe a certain number of PR matches within a given time-frame (not exceeding 6 months).

The minimum number of matches is 5. The maximum is 12.

The minimum match length is 9. The maximum is 29. The match length should always be uneven.

The minimum total EP is 70. The maximum total EP is 170.

Examples of valid formats : 8 x 9, 6 x 13, 8 x 11, 9 x 11, 5 x 15, 5 x 27.

Tournaments

Matches played in official tournaments can also be validated as Master Series, provided the minimum match length in round 1 is at least 5.

Players need to film and transcribe ALL matches of the tournament. Qualifiers or satellites cannot be validated.

Four Cubes

A Four Cubes encounter qualifies as a tournament. Players need to film and transcribe every match played in the encounter.

BIC

The yearly Belgian Individual Championship (= BIC) qualifies as official tournament in all divisions. Applicants need to pre-designate ALL matches.

Should BIC Division 1 be given BMS Tournament status in 2018, the same provisions would apply as mentioned under 3) BMS Tournaments (see below).

2) BMS Speed Table

The BMS Speed Table mentions the aggregate PR of players over their most recent 300 EP. Players with less than 100 EP will be given a 'provisional grading'.

The same procedure needs to be followed as for the BMS GT.

The minimum match length is 7. The maximum match length is 21.

The time allotted is 20" (= seconds) per point and 10" increment.

The BMS Speedgammon GT is activated on November 1, 2017.

3) BMS Tournaments

In a BMS tournament, ALL matches are recorded and transcribed. The PR's of ALL players are incorporated in the BMS GT.

BMS(BE) organises two tournaments a year : the BMS Summer Tournament (July) and the Xmas Trophy (December).

BMS(BE) advocates the awarding of BMS Tournament status to BIC Division 1.

Appendices.

Appendix A : **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 B : **Filming** and **transcribing** of PR matches.

BMS applicants need to send their match transcriptions to their opponent and to Johan Huyck as soon as possible (preferably no later than 10 days after the match was played). The non-transcriber should take the time to verify the correctness of the transcription.

Transcribers need to spell the name of the player as follows : First name Last name (e.g. : Johan Huyck) and take the time to provide correct match information such as : Event, Round, Date. The Date should be the playing date (not the transcription date).

Re-analysis and data processing will be done as soon as possible.

The video of the match needs to be saved for the duration of 1 month. BMS(BE) can request access to the video to check correctness. Failure to deliver the video can result in forfeiture of the PR match.

What to do in case of a **'technical failure'**?

A. Validation.

a) Mutual PR agreement :

In case of technical failure in a PR match where both players are BMS applicants, the match needs to be replayed for PR starting from the last roll filmed. The achieved score, however, always stands.

Examples :

i) player A is leading 8-5 against player B in a 13-point match. Then it is noticed that the recording stopped somewhere in the middle of game 3, when the score was 0-3. What to do?

Solution : if something other than PR is at stake, the match is played to a finish from the 8-5 score (= the position reached) to obtain a result. Then the PR match is resumed from the last recorded roll in game 3 and played to a finish in order to have a valid PR match.

ii) player A has just won a 13-point match against player B. Then it is noticed that the recording stopped after 8 moves in game 1. What to do?

Solution : the result of the match stands, but the match has to be replayed for PR starting with move 9 in game 1.

iii) players notice that they forgot to start recording somewhere in the middle of game 3 in a 13-point match with the score at 5-0. What to do?

Solution : if something other than PR is at stake, the match is finished from the last roll played to obtain a result. Then the match is replayed for PR from a 0-0 score.

iv) during a break at a 10-8 score in a 13-point match, players notice that nothing was recorded so far. What to do?

Solution : if something other than PR is at stake, the match is played to a finish from the 10-8 score to obtain a result. Then the match is replayed for PR from a 0-0 score.

b) No mutual PR agreement :

In case of technical failure in a PR match where only one player is BMS applicant (e.g. in a tournament abroad), the 70% rule applies. Since the opponent cannot be requested to re-play for PR, only the available recorded decisions can be validated. This available material needs to represent 70% of the 'total expected number of decisions'.

What is the 70% rule?

We start from the assumption that in a backgammon match, the two players together make about 30 decisions per EP (= Experience Point). Since 70% of 30 is 21, the recorded material will have to represent [21*match length] decisions to be validated.

Examples :

i) in a tournament abroad, a BMS applicant is playing against a foreign player. At a 3-1 score in a 13-point match he notices that the camera is not running.

Solution : start recording from the position reached. The recorded material will need to represent 273 decisions (= 21* match length) to be validated.

ii) in a tournament abroad, a BMS applicant has just lost a 9-point match to a foreign player. He then notices that the match was only recorded till somewhere in the middle of game 6.

Solution : transcribe the match till the position reached. The recorded material needs to represent 189 decisions (= 21*match length) to be validated.

Conclusion :

The 70% rule is used in those cases where there is no time/opportunity to replay the match for PR. We can summarize as follows :

1) a Master Series match : match always has to be replayed. 70% rule never applies.

2) a 'single' PR match : match always has to be replayed. If no time to replay, the match is annulled. 70% rule never applies.

3) a BMS tournament : match has to be replayed if time is available (e.g. when failure is noticed early in the match). If not, the 70% rule applies.

4) Four Cubes and non-BMS tournaments : 70% rule always applies.

5) BIC : validation procedure will depend on the 2018 BIC format.

B. Procedure.

In case a technical failure occurs in a PR match, the applicant needs to inform Johan Huyck by e-mail of what happened. This enables BMS(BE) to keep a record of a player's 'recording mishaps'. In case of repetitive failures, sanctions may be considered.

C. Sanctions.

If technical failures keep occurring with the same player, a 'warning' may be given.

Multiple warnings may result in temporary banning from BMS participation.

D. Tips for efficient filming.

A reliable recording kit can be obtained for less than 100€. A webcam (65€), an external battery (15€) and some structure to attach it to (15€) are all that's required.

- * make sure the scoreboard is visible when filming
- * use black and white precision dice, which do not reflect light, for clear image
- * always check whether there is enough space on the SD-card
- * always check whether the powerbank is sufficiently charged
- * make it a habit to check whether the camera is functioning properly:
 - at the start of the match
 - before resuming after a break
 - at the end of the match
- * it is recommended not to stop the recording during a break. If you do, make sure you do not forget to restart the recording
- * if two recording kits are available, double recording is advised.

31 October 2017

BMS(BE)