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Section I - Midwest Poker Series Policies

For purposes throughout this manual, Dealers are considered Midwest Poker Series (MPS) Management at their individual games. For large scale tournaments, Tournament Directors and Supervisors may supercede any decisions if deemed necessary.

The terms "betting," "wagering," or any variation within, refer to the placing of tournament chips with no cash value into the middle of the table. The term "pot" refers to the total number of tournament chips in the middle of the table a player can win when a hand is completed.

Decision Making

1. Decisions made by MPS Management are **final**.
2. MPS Management reserves the right to modify or discontinue any part of the Midwest Poker Series including but not limited to prizes, structure, rules, regulations, and policies. The MPS also reserves the right to deny entry to or remove any player for any reason including but not limited to, repeated breaking of the rules, belligerent behavior, and intoxication.
3. MPS Management reserves the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness. Even if a strict interpretation of the rules may indicate differently, the fairness of the game **must always be taken into consideration**.
4. Errors or irregularities must be called upon when they occur or are first noticed. Any delay may affect the ruling.
5. If an incorrect ruling or decision by an employee is made in good faith, MPS assumes no liability.
6. A ruling may be made regarding the status of a pot if it has been requested **before** the next deal starts; otherwise the deal/result must stand. The first riffle of the deck indicates the start of the next deal.
7. If a pot has been incorrectly awarded and mingled with chips that were not in the pot and the time limit for a ruling pursuant to Rule #6 has been observed, MPS management may determine how much was in the pot by reconstructing the betting. The amount determined would then be transferred to the winning player(s).
8. The same action **may have a different meaning**, depending on who does it, so the possible intent of an offender will be taken into consideration. Factors include a person's poker experience as well as past history with similar offences.

Procedures

1. Cash is **not permitted** on the table **at any time**.
2. Cash may only be exchanged between players and dealers for the purposes of tipping. Any cash received by a dealer from a player **must immediately be removed from the table**.

3. **Gambling of any kind** involving real money at the poker table(s) is strictly prohibited. **Zero tolerance.** If law enforcement were to witness any kind of gambling activity involving real money at an MPS, the Midwest Poker Series would be **shut down immediately.**
4. Players will be read the rules on gambling before each nightly tournament begins. Any player engaging in gambling or wagering of any kind involving real money while using MPS property or while at the tables will be ejected from the tournament and **banned immediately** from playing in future MPS events.
5. **Players must be legal US residents and 21 years of age or older to play in any MPS event.** At the discretion of our dealers, they may require a player to furnish photo identification containing a birth date. Any player refusing to show, or not possessing his/her identification who is believed to be under the age of 21 will not be allowed to enter any MPS event. This includes the Semi-Final and Championship.
6. All MPS tournaments will play 8, 9, or 10 handed depending on the number of registered players.
7. Occasionally, MPS tournament final tables will be filmed for television and internet broadcasting purposes. Photos will also be taken at random MPS tournaments for promotional use and posting on all online forums operated by the Midwest Poker Series. **Anytime a player registers for any MPS event, he/she authorizes the Midwest Poker Series to use his/her likeness or image for any broadcast, promotional, or advertisement purpose without compensation or consideration. This includes use by our sponsors.**
8. All sensitive company information (pricing of tables, salaries of dealers, etc.) will be kept confidential. Any player or dealer not in compliance with this rule will be immediately banned from future MPS events or terminated. Simply stated, keep any information you believe might be sensitive to yourself.
9. Each season of the Midwest Poker Series will be approximately (9) months in length. Official statistics will be kept for each MPS tournament played throughout the season. The official statistics will consist of each individual player's total number of tournament wins, total number of final tables made (a final table consists of the final ten [10] players remaining in any given tournament), Player of the Year points, and a Money List.
10. Players will begin all nightly MPS tournaments with \$12,000 in tournament chips. The breakdown of chips will be as follows:
 - a. \$25 – 8
 - b. \$100 – 8
 - c. \$500 – 4
 - d. \$1,000 – 4
 - e. \$5,000 – 1
11. Any player is entitled to a clear view of an opponent's chips. Higher denomination chips are required to be placed in plain sight at all times. All players at the table should have **at least a 180° view** of every other player's chip stack. Do not "hide" chips beside drink holders, under napkins, or by any other means. Players in violation of this rule will be warned only once before receiving penalties.

12. **Dealers will arrive to all nightly MPS tournaments no later than 6:00PM.**
13. All nightly tournaments will begin at 7:00pm, unless otherwise listed or noted. Dealers will call players to their seats and rules will be read approximately five (5) minutes before play is scheduled to begin.
14. In the event of an alternate list, players entering any nightly tournament after Level 6 will receive \$1,000 extra in tournament chips for each level after Level 6.
 - a. Example 1: While playing at blind level 7, a player is eliminated. The next player on the alternate list is called and given the original \$12,000 in tournament chips, an additional \$1,000 in tournament chips due to play occurring at level 7.
 - b. Players entering any nightly tournament **before or during** Level 6 will receive only the original \$12,000 starting stack.
15. Players who enter the tournament from the alternate list will have the amount of chips they begin with announced to the table by the dealer. Knowing the amount of chips in play for each opponent is an important part of poker.
16. Tournament chips have no cash value and will **never** retain a cash value at any time.
17. Any player at the table may ask for a wash of the deck, provided the privilege is not abused.
18. Playing out of a rack in not allowed.
19. Only one person may play a hand.
20. No one is allowed to play another person's chips.
21. Receiving a registration card and signing into the game is required before taking a seat in the game. If a player is caught sitting without meeting these requirements, that player will be moved to the bottom of any alternate list that may be started. Multiple violations of this procedure may force the player to be banned from future MPS events.
22. Pushing an ante or posting for another person is not allowed unless requested by the dealer or that person is not at the table.
23. Splitting blinds will not be allowed. In the event the table folds around to the blinds, the hand must continue until a winner is determined.
24. Players must keep their cards in full view. This means above table level and not past the edge of the table. The cards should not be covered by the hands in a manner to deliberately conceal them.
25. Players may sit out for a period not to exceed 10 minutes or 15 hands, whichever comes first. A player's chips may be picked up and forfeited if their absence extends beyond this threshold. All decisions of MPS Management are final.
26. The MPS will use a two deck system, usually with one red and one black deck. At the start of every tournament, the dealers will select one color deck to begin with. The opposite color deck will then be put in play at the start of the next level. Decks will be alternated in this fashion throughout the duration of all MPS tournaments. Players are not

allowed to ask for a deck change at any other time unless they notice the deck is damaged.

27. Players will never be allowed to cut the deck. **Dealers will shuffle and cut the deck before each and every deal.**
28. Looking through the muck, burn cards, or deck stub is not allowed.
29. **Absolutely no rabbit hunting.**
30. Players are expected to pay attention to the game and not hold up play. Activity that interferes with this is discouraged and the player will be asked to cease the activity if a problem is caused.
31. Non-players may not sit at the table. They may sit or stand behind a player as long as no one at the table has an issue. If any player has an issue, the spectator will be asked to step away from the table.
32. Spectators/player guests may not look at any player's cards in the interest of keeping all information about the hand confidential to the player playing it. If spectators or guests continue to break this rule they will be asked to leave the playing area.
33. English is the only language allowed at any time during play.
34. The use of headphones is allowed, but all electronic devices should be placed on the rail or off the table completely.
35. Use of a cell phone at the table is not allowed. This includes texting. Players needing to use their cell phone will be required to step away from the table.
36. Smoking is not allowed at the table. Players who wish to smoke will be asked to do so away from the table, preferably in another area of the establishment or outside.

Seating

1. Seating will be determined by random assignment. When a player arrives they must request a registration card from a host establishment employee. Registration cards will be numbered and distributed sequentially. Players will then present their registration cards to the dealer and will draw a seating card from a container immediately upon registration. Dealers will then place the player's name on the playing list in accordance with their table position. Order of draw will be determined by registration card number.
2. In the interest of starting each tournament on time, players will be called for registration by the dealer in charge immediately after the dealer has set their table. All players with registration cards should draw for a seat at this time. Players who arrive after this process has been completed will simply draw for a seat in the order they are registered.
3. In the event a nightly tournament has already begun, players may still be seated or added to the alternate list anytime before the second level of play has ended.

4. In the event of an alternate list, it is the player's responsibility to be in the playing area and hear their name being called. A player who intends to leave the playing area is responsible for knowing their position on the list. Any player whose name is called and does not notify the dealer in charge of the list they are ready to play within three (3) minutes will be moved to the bottom of the list. Once the list has been exhausted the player will be announced one final time. If they are not immediately present, their name will be removed and the alternate list will be closed.
5. In the event of an alternate list, players will take the seat available upon having their name called. In the event two players are called simultaneously, the player whose name was called first will have seating preference.
6. Players may not hold seats for anyone for any reason. Players may draw for one and only one seating card. This is in fairness to those who arrive early.
7. Once a player enters a tournament location and receives a registration card, the player must remain at the tournament location until the tournament begins. Players, who arrive early to get a low numbered registration card, leave the location, and then return just before the tournament begins will not be allowed to register. **Multiple offenses will result in being banned from the MPS.** This rule is also extended to employees and staff of our host locations that get off work in the afternoon but intend to play in that night's tournament. If they choose to take a registration card upon getting off work, they must remain at the location until the tournament begins. If they choose to go home for any reason, they may not take or receive a registration card until they return. This rule will be strictly enforced in order to support the fairness of the game.
8. MPS Management reserves the right to require any two players sit at separate tables to begin the tournament (husbands and wives, relatives, business partners, etc.). This is designed to prevent collusion.
9. Before each tournament starts, one table will be selected and players will be dealt a card for the button position. The button will be awarded to the highest card by suit and will begin in the same position across all tables. **The ranking of suits is as follows: spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs, with clubs being the lowest.**
10. As tournaments progress, tables will be kept in balance to the best of the ability of MPS Management. The overage at one table should not exceed two players.
 - a. Example 1: A tournament has two tables with 14 players remaining. Table 1 has 8 players and Table 2 has 6 players. The player who is next in the big blind will be forced to move from Table 2 to Table 1 to balance out the tables at 7 players each.
 - b. Example 2: If Table 1 has 8 players and Table 2 has 5, at least one (1) player will be forced to move to Table 2. In the interest of keeping the game moving, MPS Management reserves the right to not break tables unless player overage exceeds two players.
11. When the final table is reached, **all players will re-draw for seats.** After seating has been determined, players will be dealt a card for button position. The button will be awarded to the highest card by suit.

Patronage

1. Player patronage of host establishments is **vital** to the survival and growth of the Midwest Poker Series. Player's support of host establishments **is the only thing** that allows the MPS to offer unparalleled prizes. Simply put, the Midwest Poker Series is committed to catering to its players unlike any other free poker series. If players do not patronize our hosts, the Midwest Poker Series will cease to exist.
2. Players will never be forced to patronize any host establishment and will never be required to spend any set dollar amount. However, players are assumed to understand that **host establishments have the right to remove their customers and refuse service to anyone for any reason**. Players are also assumed to understand that when they enter any host establishment and chose not to patronize the establishment, they may be considered to be loitering by the management of the establishment.

Section II - Proper Behavior

Code of Conduct

MPS Management will attempt to maintain a pleasant environment for all players, but it is not responsible for the conduct of any player. The Midwest Poker Series has established this Code of Conduct and may deny entry to, remove, or ban violators. The following are not permitted:

- Collusion with another player or any form of cheating
- Verbally or physically threatening any player, MPS employee, or host establishment patron or employee
- Using excessive profanity or obscene language
- Creating a disturbance by arguing, shouting, or making excessive noise
- Throwing, tearing, bending, or crumpling cards
- Destroying or defacing property
- Using an illegal substance
- Fighting

Poker Etiquette

The following actions are improper and are grounds for warning, suspension, or barring of the violator:

- Deliberately acting out of turn
- Deliberately splashing chips into the pot
- Agreeing to check a hand down when a third player is all-in
- Reading a hand for another player at the showdown before it has been placed face up on the table
- Telling anyone to turn a hand face up at the showdown
- Revealing the contents of a live hand in a multi-handed pot before the betting is complete. Revealing the contents of a folded hand before the betting is complete. Do not divulge the contents of a hand during a deal even to someone not in the pot so that you do not leave any possibility of the information being transmitted to an active player. **These actions may cause your hand to be declared dead.**
- Needlessly stalling the action of the game
- **Slow rolling – ZERO TOLERANCE - Players will be warned only once and will then be given THE MAXIMUM PENALTY**

- Deliberately discarding hands away from the muck. Cards should be released in a low line of flight and at a moderate rate of speed
- Stacking chips in a manner that interferes with dealing or viewing cards
- Making statements or taking action that could unfairly influence the course of play, whether or not the offender is involved in the pot

Section III – General Rules

Betting/Raising

1. **Any single forward motion and release of chips toward the pot is considered an indication of action.** A forward motion toward the pot is defined as a **clearly distinguished** motion toward the middle of the table.
2. **A verbal statement denotes action and may be binding. If, in turn, you verbally declare a fold, check, bet, call, or raise you are forced to take that action.**
3. All bets must be equal to the big blind or the bet facing the player, unless the player is going all-in.
4. All raises must be equal to or greater than the size of the previous bet or raise on that betting round, except for an all-in bet. A player who has already acted and is not facing a full size wager may not raise an all-in bet that is less than the minimum bet.
 - a. Example: Player A bets \$500 and Player B raises \$500 more, making the total bet \$1000. Player C goes all-in for less than \$1,500 (not a full \$500 raise), and Player A calls. Player B has no option to raise again, because he wasn't fully raised. (Player A could have re-raised Player B)
5. A bet is not binding until chips are physically released into the pot, unless a player has made a verbal statement of action.
6. A player who states a raise is allowed to either state the size of the raise or make one motion toward the pot.
7. If there is a question between a player's verbal statement and the amount put into the pot, the bet will be corrected to the verbal statement.
8. A player, who makes a forward motion toward the pot with chips in hand, fails to release the chips, pulls his/her hand back, and verbally declares a change of action ("pump faking") will be warned immediately. The action will stand and the hand will continue. The next time the same player commits this infraction, a penalty will be imposed. Repeated infractions will constitute removal from the tournament by MPS Management and possible banning from the Series. If the player merely did not understand the level of action required (was unaware the pot was raised, etc.) and committed the same infraction, no warning is to be issued.
9. If a call is short due to a counting error, the amount must be corrected, even if the bettor has shown a superior hand.
10. Check-raise is permitted.
11. Unlimited raises are allowed at any level in any situation.

12. Silent raises are permitted.
13. String raises are not allowed. To protect your right to raise you should either declare your intention verbally or place the proper amount of chips into the pot. Putting a full bet plus **more than half** a bet into the pot is equivalent to announcing a raise and **the raise must be completed**. This **does not** apply in the use of a single chip of greater value.
14. A bet of a single chip without comment before the action is considered to be the full amount of the chip, only if that player is the initial bettor in any round after the blind round. Any player throwing a single chip into the pot that is larger than the amount of the big blind during the blind round is subject to Rule #15.
15. When facing a bet or raise, if you throw a single chip into the pot that is larger than the original bet or raise but do not announce a raise or re-raise, you are assumed to have only intended to call.
 - a. Example: Player A calls the big blind for \$800 and Player B throws in a \$5,000 chip but says nothing before taking the action; Player B has only called the \$800.
 - b. Example: Player A bets \$2,000 and Player B raises to \$6,000. Player C throws a \$25,000 chip into the pot but says nothing before taking the action. Player C has only called the \$6,000.
16. If a player tries to bet or raise less than the legal minimum and has more chips, the wager must be increased to the proper size.
17. Tapping, rapping or slapping the table with your hand is a check.
18. **Deliberately acting out of turn will not be tolerated.** A player who checks out of turn may not bet or raise on his/her next turn to act. **They may only call or fold.** An action or verbal declaration out of turn may also be ruled binding if there is no bet, call, or raise by an intervening player acting after the infraction has been committed.
19. To retain the right to act, a player must stop the action by calling "time" or stating the equivalent. This rule only applies if the action is on you, you fail to act, and two or more players behind you continue the action. Failure to stop the action before two or more players have acted behind you will forfeit your right to act. However if the action is not on you and two or more players behind you continue to act, you will not lose your right to act.
20. A player who bets or calls by releasing his chips into the pot is bound by that action and must make the amount of the wager correct. This also applies before the showdown when putting chips into the pot causes the opponent to show the winning hand before the full amount needed to call has been put in the pot. However, if you are unaware that the pot has been raised, you may withdraw that money and reconsider your action provided no one else has acted after you.
21. A player who has taken action based on a gross misunderstanding of the amount wagered needs some protection. A bettor should not show down a hand until the amount put into the pot for a call seems reasonably correct, or it is obvious the caller understands the amount wagered. Situations falling under this rule will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Player character and skill level should without question be considered when ruling on these situations.

22. **Players must protect their hand at all times.** Players may protect their hand with a chip, marker, your hands, or any object placed on top of them. If a player does not protect their hand, they have no redress if their hand becomes fouled or is killed by the dealer.
23. **Players must show their cards when playing the board, otherwise they lose all claim to the pot to players who have showed their cards.**

Showdown

1. To win any part of the pot a player must show all of his cards face up. **No exceptions.**
2. Cards speak. The dealer assists in reading hands, but players are responsible for their cards until a winner is determined. Although verbal declarations of the contents of a hand are not binding, deliberately miscalling a hand with the intent of causing another player to discard a winning hand is unethical and **will** result in forfeiture of the pot.
3. Any player or member of MPS Management who sees an incorrect amount of chips put into a pot, or an error about to be made in awarding a pot has an ethical obligation to point out that error.
4. **Dealers should kill all losing hands before awarding the pot.**
5. Any player who has been dealt in may request to see any hand that has been called at showdown. If a player other than the pot winner asks to see a hand that has been folded, that hand is dead. If the winning player asks to see a losing player's hand, both hands are live and the best hand wins. However, if this privilege is abused it will be revoked for the remainder of a tournament.
6. **Show one, show all.** Players are entitled to receive equal access to information about the contents of another player's hand. After a deal, if a card or cards are shown to another player, every player at the table has a right to see that card or cards. During a deal, cards that were shown to an active player who might have further betting decision on that betting round must immediately be shown to all the other players. If the player who saw the cards is not involved in the deal or cannot use the information in wagering, the information should be withheld until the betting is over, so it does not affect the normal outcome of the deal.
7. If everyone checks (or is all-in) on the final betting round, the player who has acted first is the first to show the hand. If there is wagering on the final betting round, the last player to take aggressive action by a bet or a raise is the first to show the hand. In order to speed up the game, a player holding a probable winner is encouraged to show the hand without delay. **Slow rolling will not be tolerated.** If there is a side pot, players involved in the side pot should show their hands before anyone who is all-in for only the main pot.

Ties

1. When splitting a pot, an odd chip will be broken down to the smallest denomination remaining in play.
2. No player may receive more than one odd chip.

3. If two or more hands tie, an odd chip will be awarded to the first hand clockwise from the button.
4. All side pots and the main pot will be split as separate pots, not mixed together.
5. Suits never break a tie for winning a pot. Suits are used to break ties between cards of the same rank (for purposes in the MPS, suit ranks are only used to determine button position).
 - a. Example: When dealing for the button the two (2) seat receives the Ace of Clubs and the eight (8) seat receives the Ace of Spades. The Ace of the Spades wins the draw and the button will begin at the eight (8) seat.

Misdeals

1. The following situations cause a misdeal. Attention to the error must be called upon before two players have acted on their hands.
 - a. Two or more cards have been exposed by the dealer.
 - b. Two or more cards are found to be face up in the deck (boxed cards).
 - c. Two or more extra cards have been dealt to any player.
 - d. An incorrect number of cards have been dealt to any player, except the player on the button, because the top card would be the next card in the sequence.
 - e. Any card has been dealt out of sequence.
 - f. The button was out of position.
 - g. The first card was dealt to the wrong position.
 - h. Cards have been dealt to an empty seat or a player not entitled to a hand.
 - i. The small or big blind receives his/her **first** card face up.
2. Once substantial action occurs, a misdeal cannot be declared. The hand will be played out and no money will be returned to any player whose hand is invalid. Substantial action is defined as action (call, raise, or fold) by the first two players after the blinds.

Dead Hands

1. Your hand is dead if:
 - a. You fold or announce that you are folding when facing a bet or raise.
 - b. You throw your hand into the muck (even if not facing a bet)
 - c. The hand does not contain two cards.

- d. You have the clock on you when facing a bet or raise and exceed the time limit.
2. Cards thrown into the muck will always be ruled dead.
3. Cards thrown into another player's hand are dead unless the cards are facing opposite directions.
 - a. Example: If Player A throws his cards face up into Player B's cards.
4. Your hand may be declared dead if you reveal the contents to another player that is involved in the hand in any way. Rulings will come on a case by case basis. **See Poker Etiquette.**

Irregularities

1. If the button was placed incorrectly on the previous hand, the button and the blinds will be corrected for the new hand in a manner that gives every player a chance for each position in the round. The rule applies only if substantial action has not occurred.
2. If a card with a different color back appears during a hand, all action is dead and all chips in the pot will be returned to the players who bet them.
3. If two cards of identical rank and suit are found, all action is dead and all chips in the pot will be returned to the players who bet them.
4. Any player who knows a deck is defective has an obligation to inform the table. Any player who possesses this information and tries to win the pot by taking aggressive action will lose the right to the pot. All chips in the pot will be required to stay in play for the next deal. The player committing the infraction will not be dealt a hand.
5. If there are extra chips in a pot on a deal as a result of Rule #4, or any similar reason, only a player dealt in on the previous deal is entitled to a hand.
6. One card face up (boxed card) in the deck will be a dead card. Two cards face up in the deck constitutes a misdeal.
7. One or more cards missing from the deck does not void the results of the hand.
8. Before the first round of betting, if a dealer deals one additional card, to **the button only**, it is returned to the deck and will become the burn card.
9. A card that is flashed by the dealer is treated as an exposed card. A card that is flashed by a player will play. The player should announce to the table that the card was flashed but is not required to announce the contents of the card. Any card dealt off the table is treated as an exposed card.
10. If a card is exposed because of dealer error, a player does not have the option to take or reject the card. The situation will be governed by the rules of misdeals.
11. If a player drops any cards on the floor they must play them.

12. If the dealer prematurely deals any cards before the betting is complete, those cards are dead.
13. If the flop contains too many cards and cannot be rectified, or is prematurely flopped before betting is complete the flop must be re-dealt. The burn card will remain on the table, and the rest of the cards will be returned to the deck stub. The dealer will reshuffle, re-cut the deck, and re-deal the flop. In the case of too many cards being flopped, if the dealer is able to determine the correct three cards that should be contained in the flop, the first extra card becomes the burn card for the turn.
14. If more than one card has been burned before the flop round of betting begins, and any cards have been turned face-up, the flop is void if the error is discovered before betting has started. The flop will be re-dealt as per Rule #13. If the error has been discovered before the cards are turned face-up, the proper flop will be used. If more than one card has been burned in subsequent rounds, the error should be rectified before betting starts. If the error is not discovered before betting starts, the card dealt face-up must be used.
15. If the dealer turns the fourth card before the second round (betting after the flop) of betting is complete, the card is taken out of play for that round, even if subsequent players elect to fold. The second round of betting is then completed. The dealer then burns and deals what would have been the fifth card in the fourth card's place. The third round of betting is completed. The dealer then reshuffles, including the card that was taken out of play. The dealer will re-cut the deck and deal the final card without burning a card.

Penalties

1. Hand penalties will be imposed at the discretion of MPS Management and will be the only form of penalty used at any time.
2. Any player committing an infraction that is eligible for a hand penalty must be warned once before a penalty is issued.
3. Exception to Rule #2 would be if a player repeatedly commits the same infraction from tournament to tournament.
 - a. Example: Player A is repeatedly acting out of turn. After being warned once the player continues to act out of turn. A hand penalty is issued. The player returns to play in the tournament the following day at a different location and immediately begins acting out of turn. A hand penalty in this case should be immediately issued. Continued breaking of rules or etiquette could result in removal from the tournament and/or banning from the Series.
4. Hand penalties will begin at 10 hands away from the table and shall never exceed 30 hands.
5. Repeated penalties could lead to removal from a tournament and possible banning from the Series.
6. Breaking of any general rules, repeated etiquette violations, or any other general misbehavior at the poker table will be eligible for a hand penalty, MPS Management should use their own discretion when enforcing this rule. Poker is an **adult** form of entertainment that is supposed to be fun. Having fun at the table is encouraged and the

MPS asks our players and dealers to exercise a certain level of self-control at the tables.
Simply put, have fun and act your age.

7. The following infractions will result in **immediate** removal from a tournament and could lead to possible banning from the Series. These infractions will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
 - a. Fighting – **Zero tolerance, you will be banned**
 - b. Cheating – **Zero tolerance, you will be banned**
 - c. Verbal abuse of a player with malicious intent
 - d. Slamming or flipping of a table due to loss of a hand
 - e. Throwing of chips, cards, or any MPS property in a malicious manner
 - f. Excessive intoxication
 - g. Repeated questioning of dealer or MPS Management authority. If this becomes an issue at any tournament, players are encouraged to call or notify MPS Management or Supervisors as soon as possible.
 - h. Continuous disrespect and/or needling of another player
8. Any player attempting to defraud, deface, or defame the Midwest Poker Series, its dealers, management, property, or host establishments **will be immediately banned from the Series**. Legal action, if applicable, will be pursued to the fullest extent of the law.
9. Any player who is removed from a tournament will have his/her chips confiscated by MPS Management and they will no longer be in play.
10. Any dealer or member of MPS Management who gives preferential or unfair treatment to any specific player will be disciplined up to and including termination. Players are asked to report such instances to offsite MPS Management immediately .
11. Any player banned from playing in the Midwest Poker Series for any reason may not play in any future MPS events, even if that player has qualified to do so. A player who is banned also forfeits any rights to any potential prizes he/she may have been eligible for before being banned. This includes prizes he/she may have already won, but has not received yet. Prizes already received (i.e. cash) are **not** subject to this rule.
 - a. Any Prize Package forfeited by way of Penalty Rule #11 will be awarded to the next place finisher in whichever event the prize was won.

Section IV – Button and Blind Use

Rules and Use

1. In all Midwest Poker Series tournaments, dealers will be provided.
2. A dealer button will be used in every tournament to determine which player has the dealer position. The player with the button is the last to receive cards and has the right of last action after the first betting round.
3. The button moves clockwise after each deal ends to rotate the advantage of position.
4. Small and big blind bets are used to force action and initiate play. Blinds must be posted before a new deal begins. The small blind is posted by the player immediately clockwise from the button, and the big blind is posted by the player two positions clockwise from the button.

5. Blind bets will increase as a tournament progresses and must follow the Official Midwest Poker Series Blind Structure sheet. Nightly tournaments, Invitational(s), Semi-Finals, and the Championship will all contain a separate and specific Blind Structure sheet.
6. Action begins on the first round of betting by the player immediately to the left of the blinds. Action begins with the first active player to the left of the button during every other betting round.
7. Each round every player must play on the button and meet the total number of blind obligations. In order to do this, the following situations will occur:
 - a. Moving button: The button always moves clockwise to the next player and the blinds adjust accordingly.
 - b. Dead button: The big blind is posted by the player due for it. The small blind and button are positioned accordingly even if it means the small blind or button falls on an empty seat, giving the same player the privilege of last action on consecutive hands.
8. A player who posts a blind has the option of raising the pot at the first turn to act.
9. In heads-up play, the small blind is on the button.
10. When a player posts the big blind it serves as the player's opening bet. When it is the big blind's turn to act, the player will have the option to check, raise, or fold.

Antes

1. The Midwest Poker Series will use antes in all of its tournaments. Antes will be required when the Blind Structure of a specific tournament calls for them.
2. An ante is a forced action from **each player including the blinds** designed to help build pot size and keep action moving. **Once the tournament structure calls for antes, they are due from every player at the table before each deal can begin.**
3. Antes are **not part of any players' bet** and will not be computed as such. Once a player posts his/her ante, it simply becomes part of the overall pot and is separate from any betting rounds that ensue.
 - a. Example: Player A is in the small blind and Player B is in the big blind. The blinds are \$400/\$800 with a \$100 ante. Player A owes \$100 for his/her ante, which will be immediately placed in the pot, and will then post \$400 for his/her big blind. As in normal blind play, Player A will require \$400 more in chips to call the big blind. Player B owes \$100 for his/her ante, which will be immediately placed in the pot, and will then post \$800 for the big blind. As in normal blind play, Player B will have the option to check, raise, fold (or call if a raise was made) when action comes around to him/her.
4. If a player has less or only enough chips in front of him/her to cover the amount of the ante, that player will be immediately all-in, and antes from all players will be placed in a side pot. That player will only be eligible to win the ante side pot.

Section V – No Limit Texas Hold'em

Rules

1. All MPS tournaments will be played in No Limit Texas Hold'em format.
2. In No Limit Texas Hold'em, players receive two down cards as their personal cards (hole cards), after which there is a round of betting. A card is discarded ("burned"), after which three board cards are turned simultaneously and another round of betting occurs. The next two board cards are turned one at a time, with a card being burned before each card is turned, and a round of betting occurs after each card. The board cards are community cards, and a player may use any five-card combination from among the board cards and personal cards. A player may even use all of the board cards and no personal cards to form their hand (playing the board). A dealer button is used. The structure is two blinds, but it is possible to play the game with one blind, multiple blinds, an ante, or a combination of blinds and antes.
3. Any player is allowed to bet any amount of his/her chips at any time. If a player does not have enough chips to cover the big blind, ante, or a bet larger than their remaining chips, that player would be all-in and would be eligible to win only the portion of the pot they were able to cover (the main pot). Side pots would be built for all betting that follows.
 - a. Example 1: Player A has \$400 chips remaining. Blinds are \$1,500/\$3,000 with a \$400 ante. Player A posts his ante. Player A is all-in. The main pot totaling \$4,000 (the \$400 ante from 10 players) is all Player A is eligible to win. The hand continues.
 - b. Example 2: Player A has \$900 chips remaining and is on the button. Blinds are \$400/\$800 with a \$100 ante. Player A posts his ante. The hand begins with Player B and C posting their blinds. The action comes around to Player A, who calls the big blind. Player A is all-in. The main pot of \$2,200 (a \$100 ante from 10 players plus the \$400 and \$800 small and big blind) is all Player A is eligible to win. The hand continues.
 - c. Player C, Player D and Player F are still involved in a pot after the turn. The pot contains \$18,000 in chips. Player D bets \$14,000. Player F calls Player D's bet of \$14,000. Player C only has \$8,500 in front of him/her and decides to call. Player C is eligible to win a main pot of \$35,000 (the original \$18,000 in the pot, plus \$8,500 from Player D and Player F). A side pot of \$11,000 is immediately created for Player D and Player F (the remaining \$5,500 from each that Player C could not cover). The hand continues with Player D and Player F playing until the end. Player D and Player F are eligible to win the side pot and the main pot.
4. MPS Management has the right to place a maximum time limit for taking action on a hand. The clock may be imposed by any player; however it must be requested and granted by the dealer. Dealers may never impose a clock on a player. If the clock is put on a player when facing a bet, the player will have one additional minute to act on their hand. The player will receive a ten-second warning, after which the player's hand is dead if they have not acted.

Section VI – Tournaments

TDA Rules

In addition to all other rules and procedures in this manual, the following **Tournament Directors Association (TDA) Rules** will govern all tournaments in the Midwest Poker Series:

1. The best interest and fairness of the game is a top priority in the decision-making process. Unusual circumstances can, on occasion, dictate that the technical interpretation of the rules be ignored in the interest of fairness. MPS Management decisions are final.
2. When it is time to color-up chips, they will be raced off with a maximum of one (1) chip going to a player. The chip race will always start in the one (1) seat. A player cannot be raced out of any tournament. In the event that a player only has one chip left, the regular race procedure will take place. If that player loses the race, he/she will be given one chip of the smallest denomination still in play. This is known as the **chip race rule**, and is design to keep a tournament moving by not adding extra chips to the table.
3. In split pots, odd chips will always be awarded to the left of the button.
4. Each side pot will be split as a separate pot. They will not be mixed together before they are split.
5. Once a reasonable amount of time has passed and a clock has been called for, a player will be given one minute to make a decision. If action has not been taken by the time one minute is over, there will be a 10-second countdown. If a player has not acted on his hand by the time the countdown is over, the hand is dead.
6. All tournaments will use a dead button.
7. A penalty **may** be invoked if a player exposes any card with action pending, if a card(s) goes off the table, if soft-play occurs, or similar incidents take place. Penalties **will** be invoked in cases of abuse, disruptive behavior, or similar incidents.
8. A player must be at the table by the time all players have complete hands in order for his hand to be considered live. **This includes both blinds.** Players must be at the table to call time.
9. All cards will be turned face-up once a player is all-in and all action is complete.
10. If a player puts in a raise of 50% or more of the previous bet, he will be required to make a full raise. The raise will be exactly the minimum raise allowed.
11. An oversized chip put in play before the flop, with no verbal declaration of a raise is a call. After the flop an oversized chip put in the pot by the initial bettor will constitute the size of the bet. If a player states a raise and throws an oversized chip, the raise will be the maximum amount allowable up to the size of that chip.
12. The one-player-to-a-hand rule will be enforced.
13. Tournament seats will be randomly assigned.
14. The English-only rule will be enforced during play of all hands.
15. A player who wants to use a cell phone must step away from the table.

16. There will be no foreign chips on the table except for a maximum of a one card cap (protector).
17. Deck changes will be on limit changes or as prescribed by the Midwest Poker Series. Players will not ask for deck changes.
18. When time has elapsed in a round and a new round is announced, the new limits apply to the next hand. A hand begins with the first riffle of the deck by the dealer.
19. Players who sit out within the allowable time frame will have all antes raked and blinds posted in their absence.
20. Players must keep their highest denomination chips visible at all times.
21. Verbal declarations as to the contents of a player's hand are not binding. However, at MPS Management's discretion, and player deliberately miscalling his hand may be penalized.
22. No rabbit hunting is allowed.
23. All chips must be visibly displayed at all times. Players may not have tournament chips in their pockets at any time. A player who has chips in his/her pocket will forfeit the chips. The forfeited chips will taken out of play.
24. When breaking down tables, players will moved from the big blind to the worst position.
25. If a dealer kills an unprotected hand, the player will have no redress and will not be entitled to his money back. An exception would be if a player raised and raise had not been called yet, he would be entitled to receive his money back.
26. Dealers cannot kill a winning hand that was turned and was obviously the winning hand.
27. Verbal declarations in turn are binding. Action out of turn **may** be binding.
28. MPS Management reserves the right to cancel or alter any event at its sole discretion in the best interest of its players or host establishments (hours of operation, etc.)
29. Players going from a broken table to fill in seats assume the rights and responsibilities of the position in which they are placed. They can get the small blind, big blind, and the button. A player moved to balance tables will take the worst position. A dead button situation may occur.
30. Penalties available for use by the tournament director are verbal warnings, 10, 20, and 30 **hands** away from the table and may be used with discretion. These may be utilized up to and including disqualification. A player who is disqualified will have his/her chips removed from play.
31. A player who exposes his cards during play may incur a penalty but will not have his hand killed.
32. Players are obligated to protect the other players in the tournament at all times. Discussing discarded cards or hand possibilities is not allowed.

33. When raising, a player must either put the amount of the raise out in one motion toward the pot or state the amount of the raise. By stating the word raise, a player protects his/her right to raise, but the raise must be made in one additional motion unless he/she states the amount.
34. Verbally disclosing the contents of your hand or advising a player how to play a hand may result in a penalty.
35. Less than a full raise does not re-open the betting to a player who has already acted.

Nightly Tournaments

1. All Midwest Poker Series nightly tournaments will begin at 7:00PM, unless otherwise noted or listed on the official Midwest Poker Series Schedule.
2. Players will begin all nightly MPS tournaments with \$12,000 in tournament chips. Exceptions in starting stacks only occur for late-arriving players. **See Procedures.**
3. Dealers will call players to their seats approximately five (5) minutes before play is scheduled to begin. A short reading of rules will occur, followed by dealers distributing to the players their tournament chips.
4. **Entry to Midwest Poker Series nightly tournaments is free. There will never be a buy-in of any kind required to participate in any Midwest Poker Series tournament. However, patronage of all host establishments is highly encouraged.**
5. Any questions or issues by players or dealers regarding rules interpretations, issues with player behavior, or any other problems that cannot be resolved by on-site MPS Management should be forwarded to MPS Owners and Supervisors. Players may contact MPS Supervisors and Ownership at any time regarding any issue and are asked to do so as soon as possible. The MPS encourages communication between Management and its players at all times, including comments and suggestions for making our Series better and more enjoyable. This is an "open door" policy.
6. Players who play in nightly tournaments will be eligible for prizes at each tournament. Because of the nature of the Midwest Poker Series, we operate under "sweepstakes" rules. Nightly prizes may include and are not limited to, Midwest Poker Series points, cash, and prizes.
7. The Midwest Poker Series is designed to recognize our most consistent players. Success of the world's greatest poker players is not measured by their number of wins; it is measured by their consistency. That consistency will be measured using a points system.
8. Players who make a Final Table will have that added to their total of final tables made, and will also receive Player of the Year Points based on their finishing order. The amount of Player of the Year points are as follows:
 - a. 1st Place – 200
 - b. 2nd Place – 160
 - c. 3rd Place – 120
 - d. 4th Place – 90
 - e. 5th Place – 70

- f. 6th Place – 50
 - g. 7th Place – 40
 - h. 8th Place – 20
 - i. 9th Place – 5
 - j. 10th Place – 5
9. The MPS will award, at minimum, a \$25 cash prize to the winner of each and every nightly tournament. The amount of the cash prize may fluctuate from location to location, but will **never** be less than \$25. This cash prize is guaranteed and is the only prize **NOT** subject to change. **The MPS has the right to modify the prize amount for any individual tournament, at any time.**
10. Blind levels will last 15 minutes, however the time limit may be adjusted at the discretion of MPS Management. Blind levels will never last less than 10 minutes. **The official Midwest Poker Series Nightly Tournament Blind Structure sheet is to be strictly followed for nightly tournaments. No exceptions.**
11. At the end of each season, the winner of each individual statistical category (wins, final tables, Money List) will receive a cash prize. The Player of the Year will be determined by the player with the most Player of the Year points at the end of each season. The Player of the Year will receive a cash prize, as well as a trophy.
12. Any ties for Player of the Year or any statistical category will be broken by the highest finish by the players involved in the tie in the final tournament of the regular season.
- a. Example: Players A,B,C,D, and E all have six wins. Those five players are currently tied in the Wins category. On the day of the final tournament of regular season, Player A finishes that tournament in 13th place, Player B finishes in 10th place, Player C finishes in 7th place, Player D finishes in 4th place, and Player E finishes in 3rd place. Player E will be considered the winner of the Wins category.

Invitational

1. At the end of each Season of the Midwest Poker Series, an Invitational will be held to determine the Champion of that Season. Winners of each statistical category and ties (wins, final tables, Money List) will receive an automatic invitation.
2. Players in the Top 15 of each statistical category, including Player of the Year, will receive an invitation.
3. Players will begin the Invitational with \$20,000 in tournament chips. For every two (2) wins a player accumulates throughout the Season, they will receive an additional \$4,000 chips. The Player of the Year, and winners of each statistical category (wins, final tables, Money List) will receive an additional \$5,000 chips. Any player who wins multiple categories will receive \$5,000 chips for each category won.
 - a. Example: Player A accumulates six (6) wins throughout the season. He/she would begin the Invitational with \$32,000 in tournament chips.
 - b. Example: Player B accumulates three (3) wins throughout the season He/she would begin the Invitational with \$24,000 chips.
 - c. Example: Player C accumulates one (1) win throughout the season. He/She would begin the Invitational with \$20,000 chips.
 - d. Example: Player D accumulates seven (7) wins throughout the season, the most wins of anyone in the Series. He/She would receive \$37,000 chips

(\$12,000 for the six wins, and an additional \$5,000 for winning the Wins category).

4. Chip breakdown of the initial \$20,000 received for the Invitational is as follows:
 - a. \$25 chips – 16
 - b. \$100 chips – 16
 - c. \$500 chips – 8
 - d. \$1000 chips – 4
 - e. \$5000 chips – 2

5. Blind levels will be 20 minutes and will be governed by the official Midwest Poker Series Invitational Blind Structure sheet.

*Prizes are non-transferable. Winners will be responsible for all taxes (income, state, and federal) connected with or as a result of any and all prizes. Any consequences associated with misrepresentation of these taxes are the sole responsibility of the winner. The Midwest Poker Series assumes none of these liabilities. **Prizes are subject to change**, however, **the Midwest Poker Series is committed to doing everything possible to ensure these prizes only get bigger and better.** The MPS is 100% about the players. The MPS strives to be the best free poker series not only in the region, but all of America. The only way to ensure our prizes get bigger and better is to patronize our host establishments. It will guarantee the growth of the MPS, and growth equals bigger and better prizes for our players!