

Chicago Pinball Mafia Rules

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2006 League Season
Document Revision 2.1

Background:

The Chicago Pinball Mafia is a “for fun” pinball league started by Rob Kokot and Mike Gaspar as a minor league for pinball enthusiasts. The goal is to give the group a chance to play, compete, build skills and facilitate social interactions on games of different eras not normally found on location.

When And Where We Meet:

League Season:

The league will meet during the months that correspond with the major pinball events across the country. The season will start in April and conclude in November. This provides eight months of competition with the first seven months used to determine a players ranking and the final month for the league tournament.

Unless stated otherwise, the league will meet on the third Saturday of the month. Each week, an hour of practice time will be held from 6:00 PM until 7:00 PM. At 7:00 PM any announcements or other league business will be addressed. Round 1 will begin following the announcements or at 7:15 PM, which ever is later.

Hosts:

Any league participant who has a collection of at least five working games can offer to host a night of competition. A host should be able to accommodate up to 24 people for approximately five hours.

Hosts should be ready for arrivals and practice starting at 6:00pm on the day of a meeting.

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Game Requirements:

Each host should provide a list of games that will meet the following list of league requirements:

1. All playfield switches must be fully operational.
 - a. Any game that supports a test report cannot display an entry for “test switch x” or similar diagnostic code.
 - b. A switch required for play cannot be in a “stuck closed” or “stuck open” state.
 - c. A switch should not be causing phantom switch closures that can unfairly award a player additional points or prevent a game’s features from operating properly.
2. All flippers must function in both the “flip” and “hold” states
3. All feature lamps must be working prior to the start of an event.
4. The game must properly display the score for four players.
5. Any game adjustments that alter the game play from the factory settings must be disclosed to all players prior to the start of an event.
6. All games must be properly leveled left to right.
7. All solid-state games must be set to 3-ball play prior to the start of an event. EM pinball machines that do not allow for easy selection of this feature may be left at 5-balls per game.
8. Any game that supports a buy-in feature should have that feature disabled for league.
9. Any WPC or WPC-95 game that supports the “Allow Ball Chase” feature must have this feature disabled for league.

The Host’s Machines:

If one or more games are not fully functional for the night of an event, the host may declare a game “offline” for the evening.

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Competition:

Determination of the competition games:

1. At the start of the evening the host will allow inspection of all games that the host feels qualify for the evening's event.
2. All qualified games' names will be put into a lottery where three to five games will be drawn at random. This 'minimum required' number of games depends on the number of players who will be attending. One game is required for every group of three to four players.
3. If a host has more than the minimum required number of eligible games, additional games will be drawn as back up games in the event of a problem that prohibits competition from continuing on a game.

Player Ranking:

Each player will have a league score. The league score is calculated as the sum of all their scores over the season minus their lowest score. To show an individual's improvement over the season a league score average will be kept.

Players will be ranked from highest to lowest, based on their league score or the corresponding league average. The players with the top 8 league scores will be ranked in the "A" division while the remaining players are ranked in the "B" division. At the end of the regular season the winner of the "A" division will be crowned division champion. In the event there is a tie for the first place position, the tie-breaking procedures will be used to determine which player has tie-breaking advantage.

Attendance:

Players participating in the league competition are required to show up to league nights. Currently, players may miss one meet without penalty to their league score. It is possible though that one missed meeting will cost a player in their tie-break advantage statistics. Players who miss three or more meetings may have their place given to a person on the wait list for next season.

Generating Player Competition:

The Chicago Pinball Mafia has started using a software application that makes sure each player plays at least one round on every game available and plays as many other members as possible.

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Regular Season Meeting Play:

For the first 7 meetings (April, May, June, July, August, September and October) the evening will be divided up into two competitions: The Meet followed by the End of Evening Tournament.

The Meet:

In the Meeting each player is required to play 6 rounds. The rounds are determined as stated in the Generating Player Competition section of this document. Round 4 is called the "Put Up or Shut Up" round. In this round the players closest in rank go head to head to determine the strongest player.

All rounds must be played in the order specified on the printed score sheets. Anyone who plays a round "out-of-turn" will have to stop and replay the round at the proper time.

The End of Evening Tournament:

At the conclusion of the meet, the players will be ranked on their performance for that evening. The eight highest ranked players for the night will go into a head to head Zen competition to determine an evening winner team. If there is a tie for the eighth place position the tie-breaking procedure will be used to determine who has tie-breaking advantage. The teams are determined by placing the first and eighth place players together, the second and seventh players together and so on.

For the first round, the team containing the fourth place person shall go first, the third place person second, the second place person will go third and the evening's top scorer will go last. The team that earns the lowest score is eliminated, and the remaining teams advance. For the second round, the teams will be play in ascending score order from the first round. The team with the lowest score will again be eliminated. The two semi-finalist teams will then play in a head to head match, playing in ascending score order from round two. The winning team will be declared end of evening.

Round Disruption Procedure:

This procedure describes the steps taken in the event a round is disrupted for reasons other than mechanical failure.

If a player caused the disruption and received a foul as a result, the player score for the round will be considered final and this procedure is used for the remaining players.

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If any remaining player did not have a chance to play the same number of balls as another player they will play 'ball 1' of a new game so all remaining players have played the same number of balls. Once this has been done the remaining players will compete in a second, complete game.

The scores from the disrupted game, the additional 'ball 1', and the make up game will be added together to determine their final position for the round.

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Calculation of the league score:

A player's score at the conclusion of the round will be calculated as follows:

1. **Round Score:** At the conclusion of the round, the player with the highest score will be awarded 10 (ten) points. The player with the second highest score will be awarded 8 (eight) points. The player with the third highest score will be awarded 6 (six) points. The player with the lowest score is awarded 4 (four) points.
 - a. In the event that a round can only be played with three players, the second place winner will receive a compromise score of 7 (seven) points and the 6 and 8-point levels will be omitted.
 - b. In the event that a round can only be played with two players, the first place winner will receive 8 points and the second place winner will receive 4 points. The 10 and 6-point levels are omitted.
2. **Upset Bonus:** Starting on a player's third meeting, any "B" division player who defeats an "A" division player will be awarded 1 point for each "A" division player they beat, up to a maximum of 2 points in a round.
3. **Fouls:** If a player disrupts play for another player or causes physical harm to a machine the player will be awarded a foul. Soft fouls cause the player to receive a fourth place finish. Hard fouls cause the player to receive 0 (zero) points for the round.

At the conclusion of the End of Evening Tournament, the points earned by the players during the meet are added to the player's league score. Starting with the third meeting the league score is calculated by adding all the meet scores together and then subtracting out the lowest score.

Tie Breaking Procedure:

In the event of a tie for qualification, position or team elimination, the following criteria will be used to determine who has tie-breaking advantage:

1. The person who has the higher league score
2. The person in the "A" division takes advantage over the "B" division
3. The person who has attended more meetings
4. The person who has more first place finishes
5. The person who has more "Put Up or Shut Up" wins
6. The person who has less last place finishes
7. The person who has more EOET wins

The list is applied until there is a criteria that breaks the tie. This list is used to break ties that determine rank, tournament qualifications, and any other event that does not require player elimination.

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In the event of a tie for single player elimination, the tied players will play in a tiebreak game.

Score keeping:

It will be the responsibility of the player in the first player position to record the scores for the round on the printed score card. Score recording simply requires placing a 1 next to the player who finished first, 2 for the player who came in second, 3 for third place player and 4 for fourth player. If a player did not play in a round record a 'DNP' on the score card. If any other score notations need to be made it will be done by the judges.

Absentee Scoring:

Any member of the league who is unable to attend an event will not have their league score increased. Given the weighted scoring, any absentee player should expect to be lowered in rank as a result. Due to the game selection lottery, the nature of the competition, and the consideration of our host's schedule, pre-playing is not permitted. Once a round has been played and recorded the round is considered final. Making up an absence is also not permitted.

If players attend a meeting and must excuse themselves from the premises for any reason, they will receive a zero for any rounds they have missed.

If a player RSVPs that they will attend a meeting, and due to travel conditions arrive past the start time, they will receive the 4 (four) point grace period score for up to the rounds 1 and 2. A player must play round 3 in order to receive the grace period score. During rounds 1 and 2 the participating players will receive the points for the number of players on the printed score card. For all other rounds the participating players will receive the points for the number of players who played the game.

Judges:

There will be three people acting as judges for the evening to make sure all scores are being kept in a fair and concise manner. The host will automatically act as one judge; League founders Mike and Rob will act as the other two. If Mike or Rob are hosting than a member of the Steering Committee will take the third judges spot. In the event a decision needs to be made a minimum of two (2) judges have to agree on the decision.

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The League Championship Tournament:

The final meeting in November will be the league tournament.

All 8 members of the "A" division will advance to the league tournament. The top 8 players in the "B" division will face off in a playoff round for the last four league tournament spots. No substitutions will be made for absent members. Those who do not qualify are welcome to socialize but will not be allowed to play tournament games.

The B Championship Series:

The 1, 4, 5, and 8 players will play a total of 2 games on 2 machines. The remaining players will play 2 games on 2 different machines. The league point scoring system will be used. For this round order will be determined by rank. The top two scores from each game will advance to a B Division Champion Series and the League Championship Tournament. These four remaining players will play in one "winner takes all" match to determine the B Division champion. The final four seeds in the League Championship will be awarded as follows: the fourth place person will be ranked 12th in the League Championship, the third place will be ranked 11th, the second will be 10th and the B Champion will be ranked 9th.

The League Championship Tournament:

The League Championship Tournament is divided into two parts. For the first part, only the regular league point scoring system for first through fourth place will be used. Bonus points will not be awarded in the tournament.

In the first round all 12 finalists will play, four per game on three machines. Each group will play a total of 2 games on 2 machines. At the end of the two games the lowest score earner in each group will be eliminated from play. For this round order will be determined by rank:

Group 1: 1, 6, 7 and 12

Group 2: 2, 5, 8 and 11

Group 3: 3, 4, 9 and 10

Players will play in descending rank order.

In the second round the 9 remaining finalist will play, three per game on three machines. Play order will be based on ascending score order from round 1. Each group will play a total of 2 games on 2 machines. At the end of the two games the lowest scorer in each group will be eliminated from play. For this round ranks will determine the groups:

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Group 1: The highest remaining rank faces the sixth and ninth highest remaining ranks.

Group 2: The second highest remaining rank faces the fifth and eighth highest remaining ranks.

Group 3: The third highest remaining rank faces the fourth and seventh lowest remaining ranks.

In the third round the 6 remaining finalist will play, three per game on two machines. Each group will play a total of 2 games on 2 machines. At the end of the two games the two lowest scorers will be eliminated from play. For this round the games and grouping will be determined randomly, with the players earning the highest scores playing last.

The final four players will go to the semi-final match. Both the semi-finals and the finals will be a best 2 out of 3 game format. The highest and lowest rank person will go head to head in one group with the remaining two players in the other group. Each team will play through the tournament games. The first person in each group to win 2 games will advance to the finals.

The final round will be a best 2 out of 3 games on one non-tournament machine to be determined either by the finalists, or in the event they can not agree a random lottery. The first person to win 2 games will be declared league season champion.

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Game Rules:

1. Extra ball awards can be set at the discretion of the host. At events with a near capacity attendance extra balls can make game times longer so a host is encouraged to limiting extra balls to one or zero.
2. Ball savers are permitted at the discretion of the host. It is recommended that the host disclose what the balls save times configuration.
3. In the case of a stuck ball:
 - a. If a ball becomes stuck on a game with a manual plunger, the ball will be placed in the shooter lane. The player may resume play any time after the lock down bar has been re-secured.
 - b. If a ball becomes stuck on a game with an automatic plunger and no interlock, the ball is to be placed on the lower right flipper held by the player whose turn it is. The player may then restart the game by flipping any time after the lock down bar has been re-secured.
 - c. If a ball becomes stuck on a game with an automatic plunger and an interlock, the ball is to return to the shooter lane. The player will then be permitted to close the coin door when they are ready for play to resume.
 - d. If a ball becomes stuck in a game when the lock will release all the held balls during the third ball search, the player is not permitted to use the released balls.
4. Games that support the ball chase feature adjustment must have this setting turned off. If a ball chase occurs the round must be replayed.
5. In the event of a mechanical problem that prohibits a game from functioning properly, the round is to suspend and be replayed when the problem has been fixed. The host can determine if a problem can be fixed. If the problem can not be fixed the following course of action will be taken:
 - a. If another working game is available it will be substituted in for the remainder of the competition. If multiple working games are available then the order of substitution will be drawn during the lottery at the start of the evening.
 - b. If another working game is not available the match will be replayed on one of the remaining machines.
6. It is not required to change feature lamps or flash lamps that burn out during competition.
7. In the event that a player tilts a ball that is not the player's own and the ball is above the flippers the player will receive a soft foul. If the ball was deemed unsaveable (below the flippers) the player will receive a hard foul. The round disruption procedure will be followed.

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8. In the event that a player causes a slam tilt which halts the round for all players the following, the player that caused the slam tilt will receive a hard foul. The round disruption procedure will be followed.
9. Bang backs are prohibited and will result in a hard foul.