

Montana Tavern Times
How to Run Legal Sports Boards – August 1, 2014
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The Gambling Control Division's Investigation Bureau can get pretty busy this time of year helping licensed establishments with questions on how to run legal sports boards. NFL and NASCAR fans can be some of the best customers to draw in to your locations and sports boards are a fun way to enhance everyone's experience. Since these two sports generate the most sports boards around the state, I will focus on four types of boards we mainly see this time of year. Here are the top four approved sports pool boards (A.R.M. 23.16.1705) and how they must be run:

GENERAL RULES: for all boards:

- Chances cannot exceed \$25 per sports event and must be paid in full and in cash at the time the chance is selected.
- Total prizes cannot exceed \$2,500 per board or event.
- All money paid to participate in a sports pool must be maintained separately from all other monies.
- 100% of a sports board pool must be paid out in prizes. *(If the value of a merchandise prize is less than the amount of money paid by all participants for the chance to participate, the person conducting the sports pool shall award the balance to the winner in cash)*

SPORTS TAB GAMES:

- At least 90% of the proceeds of a sports tab game must be paid out in prizes.

BOARD RULES:

No matter which board you use, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING LISTED ON THE FRONT OF EACH BOARD.

A. Before you start selling spaces the board must have:

1. **NAME** of the sports event or series of events covered by the card (*NFL Football Game, Super Bowl etc.*)
2. **COMPETITORS NAMES** in the sports event or series of events. (*ie: Detroit vs. Minnesota*)
3. **DATE** of the sports event or dates of the series of events
4. **COST** per chance or space (*ie: \$.01-\$25*)
5. **TOTAL** number of chances available in the pool.
6. **PRIZE AMOUNTS** the winner(s) will receive at pre-determined intervals (*ie: 1st qtr., half-time, 3rd qtr., final score*)
7. **NAME OF SPONSOR** running the sports pool (*ie: Billy's Bar & Casino*)
8. **NAME OF THE COMPETITORS** and the date of a sports event that will be substituted for the original sports event if it is cancelled.

B. Once you start selling spaces:

9. **NAME or INITIALS** of participants who purchased chances on the card (Space must be paid for before names or initials are allowed on the board)
10. **ALL SPACES** must be sold to participants and any remaining spaces prior to start of the game (event) are purchased by the board sponsor. Those spaces must clearly show they were bought by the sponsor.

C. After all spaces are sold:

11. **NUMBERS (for football) OR NAMES (for Nascar)** can be randomly chosen and placed on the board before start of game or race.
12. **TEAMS** are assigned to vertical and horizontal axis before start of game.

D. After the Event:

13. **WINNERS** of each prize must be identified on each board
14. All sports pool cards must be kept for 90 days minimum after the event or last event in a series

****New**RECENTLY APPROVED**

Sports boards can now pay both ways, if you choose! If you are running a sports board and the winning numbers are 3 (vertical axis) and 7 (horizontal axis) on a traditional board, you can also choose to pay people with 7 (vertical axis) and 3 (horizontal axis) if you announce this pay style and amounts in your rules in advance. This new rule gives more people the opportunity to win with sports boards and sports tabs!

TRADITIONAL SPORTS POOL CARDS

1. 25, 50, or 100 space Master square sports boards are approved.
2. Winners are determined by the only or final digit in the teams' scores.
3. No limit on the number of boards you can have.
4. Prizes can be paid out on traditional sports boards:
 1. On final score only **OR**
 2. At intervals(qtrs.) **PLUS** final score

(NOTE: the amount paid on the final score must be equal to or greater than any other interval payouts)

SELECTED POINT SPORTS POOL CARDS

1. Sometimes referred to as a "28 Club" Sports Pools.
2. For football, pools are limited to 32 entries because there are only 32 NFL football teams. (in this case, the total prize limit can only reach \$800, even with a maximum \$25 entry fee. \$25 x 32 teams = \$800.)
3. There is no limit to the number of Selected Point sports pools that can be offered, however, each board must be independent of the other.
4. Once the prize is won by the participant having a team that scores "X number of points" (chosen by the sponsor ahead of time) then the pool is ended and a new one may begin.

5. Prizes in this pool can be carried over each week until it is won, but in no case may entry fees exceed a total of \$25 and prizes cannot exceed \$2,500.
6. If a participant drops out by not paying their fee week to week (if required), then they and their team are dropped from the overall pool.
7. No substituting new participants into the game once the first game has started.

MULTIPLE COMPETITOR SPORTS POOL

1. Accommodates events such as: Nascar racing, golf tournaments, horse racing events etc. where there are three or more competitors simultaneously competing in a sports event as individuals, not as a team. *(These events may not be offered on a Master square board)*
2. In Nascar, only 43 chances are sold (usually in a column on the left hand side of the sports pool card).
3. Once all 43 chances are sold, drivers are randomly assigned to the participants.
4. The winner is the participant whose driver finishes first. More than one prize may be offered (prize split, for example, on the top three finishers such as 50% for 1st place, 30% for 2nd place and 20% for 3rd place).
 - Prizes can be paid out on Multiple competitor boards (like Nascar)
 1. For placing 1st only **OR**
 2. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and other placings if participant knows in advance
 - (NOTE: the amount paid on the final or 1st place score must be equal to or greater than any other individual payout, same as all other sports boards).

LADDER SPORTS POOL

1. The card is divided into two columns, one for the participant to sign when purchasing a chance, and the other for a number, 0 – 9, to be randomly assigned after ten participants have paid and entry fee. The participants sign their names in one of the spaces in the first column and pay their entry fee, not to exceed \$25. When ten participants have paid the entry fee, numbers are randomly assigned next to their name. The winner is the participant whose randomly assigned number matches the sum of the only or final digit of the two teams final scores.
2. For example, if the final score were 28 – 21, the participant randomly assigned the number 9 would be the winner. If the final score were 7-3, the number 0 would be the winning number, and so on.
3. There would always be at least one winner in such a sports pool, and each participant would have an equal chance to win. The maximum prize could never exceed \$250 and all other rules pertaining to sports pools would apply.

Do not allow individuals or employees to solicit or sell chances for their private boards in your licensed establishment or you may be held responsible. Remember, operating legal sports pool boards is the responsibility of the licensee. Failure to do so can result in violations and fines.

Next month, I will highlight additional boards that are approved for use by the Gambling Control Division. For questions on approved pools, contact the Gambling Control Division at 406-444-1971 or one of our Regional offices. You may also visit our website at <https://dojmt.gov/gaming/>

Good luck and have fun!