

TEAMPOKER[®]COM SEATING PROTOCOL

DEFINITION: The TEAM POKER[®] SEATING PROTOCOL (“No-Contact Rule”) requires that teammates shall not play together on the same table with opponents. Teammates may play heads-up or among themselves to support table consolidation. Randomness in seating assignments is constrained only by this rule.

The following **EIGHT STEPS** describe The TEAM POKER[®] SEATING PROTOCOL or, “No-Contact Seating Rule”. The Steps reference the accompanying Attached Figures that provide examples of the protocol. The protocol is organized and directed by Tournament Directors and their staff, but the responsibility also lies with the players to help enforce this protocol/ rule in live poker tournaments:

PROTOCOL STEP 1 – INITIAL SEATING & MINIMUM NUMBER OF TABLES

The initial random seating draw does not allow teammates to start play on the same table. The first step requires that there must be a minimum number of tables in a tournament that is equal to the highest number of players in any team. This initial seating requirement for a minimum number of tables remains true until further consolidation requires teammates to play heads-up or together, to maintain the number of players per table as equally as possible. The initial seating could be an automated computer system or, executed manually by a random drawing from a structured set of draw boxes.

Referring to Figures 1A, 2A, and 3A – These show initial seating examples of three different size tournaments. The initial seating protocol requires that there be at least as many tables as the number of players in the largest team. Therefore, there must always be, as depicted in Figures, enough tables and seats so that teammates can sit on separate tables; and/or, so teammates do not play on same tables with opponents.

Referring to the Figures: 1B, 1D, 2B, 2G, 3B, 3D, and 3E – These are examples of the method of maintaining a minimum number of tables so teammates do not play on the same table with opponents as table consolidation takes place.

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PROTOCOL STEP 2 – TABLES RUN SIMILAR TO “SIT AND GOES”(SNG)

Referring to Figures: 2E and 2F - These are examples of tables running similar to a single table tournament (STT) or SNG, until seating protocol permits further consolidation. The tables play like STT until further consolidation can take place. The exception to the “like STT”, is that there must be a redistribution of players among tables, by tournament administration direction, as needed to maintain a balance of players per table.

Referring to Figures: 2C and 2D - These examples show the method of not allowing tables to consolidate, as they would in a standard gaming tournament, so teammates are not playing on the same table with opponents. The tournament administration process redistributes players as required to maintain the No-Contact Rule.

PROTOCOL STEP 3 - SEATING METHOD REQUIRES MATES TO PLAY HEADS-UP

Referring to Figures: 2K, 3C, and 3F - These examples show the method of having teammates play heads-up, or among themselves, so no teammates play together on same table with opponents.

PROTOCOL STEP 4 - SEATING METHOD MAY REQUIRE TEAMMATES TO “WAIT”

Referring to Figures: 2I – This example shows the protocol of a teammate “waiting” for a winner to advance to final table, maintaining the protocol that teammates never play on the same table with opponents. Depending on the size of the tournament, this “wait” protocol may be a rare event, but presents a unique and interesting spectator situation for interviews and option for opponent to play both teammates.

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PROTOCOL STEP 5 - WHEN THERE ARE NO TEAMMATES LEFT

Referring to Figures: 1E, 2H, 2L, and 2M – Method shows examples of when no teammates remain, table(s) can consolidate in standard manner.

PROTOCOL STEP 6 - WHEN ONLY TEAMMATES ARE LEFT

Referring to Figures: 1C and 2J – shows examples of the method of allowing teammates to consolidate to one or more tables as necessary when their team is the only one left in tournament.

PROTOCOL STEP 7 – TEAMMATES AGAINST ONE OPPONENT

Referring to Figures 4A and 4B – This protocol shows how tables' numbers are maintained as closely equal as possible. The protocol maintains as equitably as possible the blind and ante structures. The table consolidation continues maintaining the balance of players per table and as many tables as required to do so.

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PROTOCOL STEP 8 – TEAMMATES’ STRATEGY WHEN PLAYING AGAINST EACH OTHER

Referring to Figures 2K, 3C, 3F, 4A, and 4B, the final step protocol: The point in a tournament when teammates are playing heads-up, or with a third teammate provides a unique situation where teammates may “slow play” or “chip dump”, as an ethical/fair gaming strategy. These actions are not considered “collusion”, as this is a known potential strategy opportunity, without opponents at the table, and it may or may not be a good strategy. This point in the tournament provides a “new gaming industry situation”, and “interest point”, where teammates may discuss and decide how to play for the top individual finish positions and individual first place. Since, tournament prize pools are typically heavily weighted/ structured with larger payouts at the top, it is doubtful the teammate’s strategy would be to “dump chips” and give up any prize pool position/ ‘finish place payout step’.


At this point in the tournament, the one opponent player has to play heads-up verses the subject teammates and win the same number of chips to finish first regardless of how many teammates they will be required to play heads-up against.

At this point ‘collusion’ is not a factor among teammates, and they (the subject teammates) can decide how to play each other. This results in a situation similar to the standard “deal making process” in poker tournaments as director’s permit, only without the opponent(s) involved. Therefore, when teammates are in this situation their play speaks for itself and their teams’ strategy.

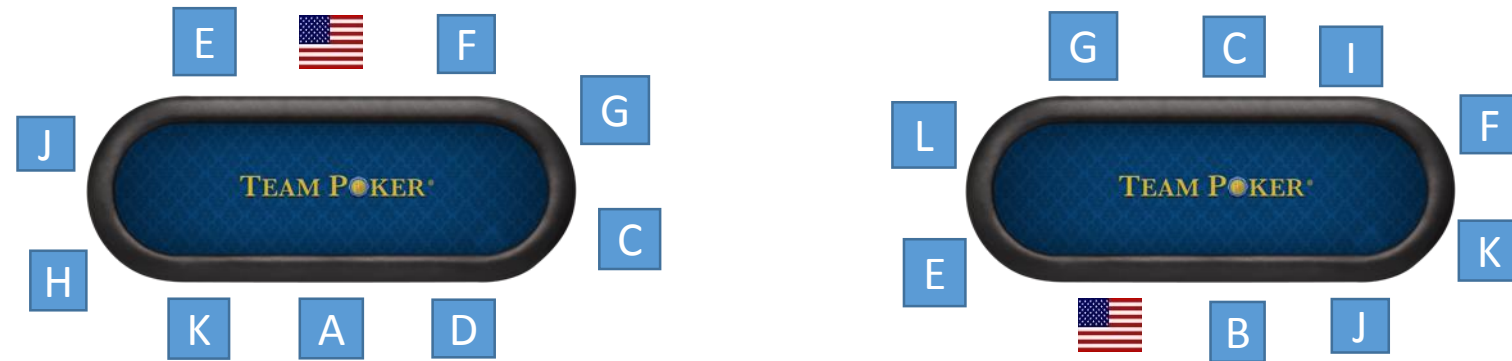
Thus, the Team Gaming “No-Contact” seating protocol, as presented in the steps above and Figures below provides a clear method for teams to play in single poker tournament(s) without the possibility of collusion.

TEAM POKER® SEATING PROTOCOL – Figures 1 - 5 Notes

USPTO - Patent: 7819735 & Patent Pending: 14708764


1. The examples herein represent the Team Poker® Seating Protocol (“No-Contact Rule”) requirement that does not allow teammates to play on the same table until they are heads-up, or playing among themselves in the event.
2. Figures: 1, 2, and 3 represents examples of three different size team structures that use the new poker team seating consolidation method. Any size team in any size tournament can use the seating protocol system to play collusion-free Team Poker®.
3. The Seating Protocols primary function is to assure there is no possibility of “slow play”, “chip dumping”, or “other forms of collusion” among teammates, when an opponent is at the table. There is no possibility of collusion among teammates using the, No-Contact Team Poker® Seating Protocol as identified in the Figures herein as teammates never play together on the same table with opponents.
4. Examples contain the following Team Sizes: Fig(s). 1A-G = 1 to 2 players per team (Team Poker® Handicap allows team size to vary in same event); Fig(s). 2A-M = Examples of 3 players per team; and, Fig(s). 3(A-F) = 5 players per team.
5. Figure 4 shows the protocol for a team who has all but one of the players left in the tournament. Teammates may decide to “chip-dump” or “slow-play” among themselves and implement their team strategy.
6. The Subject Example Poker Team =  or “Flag” Team. All other teams are indicated by a Alpha e.g.: A, B, etc. through the total number of teams in the example.
7. Each example table has 10 potential seats for active players. Each seat represents a unique player. Empty individual seats are sometime indicated with X, or they are just blank.
8. In accordance with typical tournament procedures, an equal number of players per table, or as nearly equal as possible, is maintained during table consolidation, and this requires a redistribution of players.

1/22



Notes:

Fig. 1A represents INITIAL SEATING in a one (1), to two (2) players per team event.

There are six teams of one (1) player each (i.e. A, B, D, H, I, and L), and seven teams with two (2) players each (i.e. Subject  "Flag" Team and C, E, F, G, J, and K), for 2 full tables and 20 players.

The Initial Seating Protocol requires that the number of tables in any event must always be equal to or greater than the largest number of players from any one team. Teammates cannot play on the same table with opponents.

Fig. 1A

2/22

Notes:

Fig. 1B The number of players on tables is always maintained as closely as possible (industry standard).

Fig 1C Teammates play on the same table only when consolidation requires that they play heads up, or they are only players left in event.



Fig. 1B



Fig. 1C

3/22

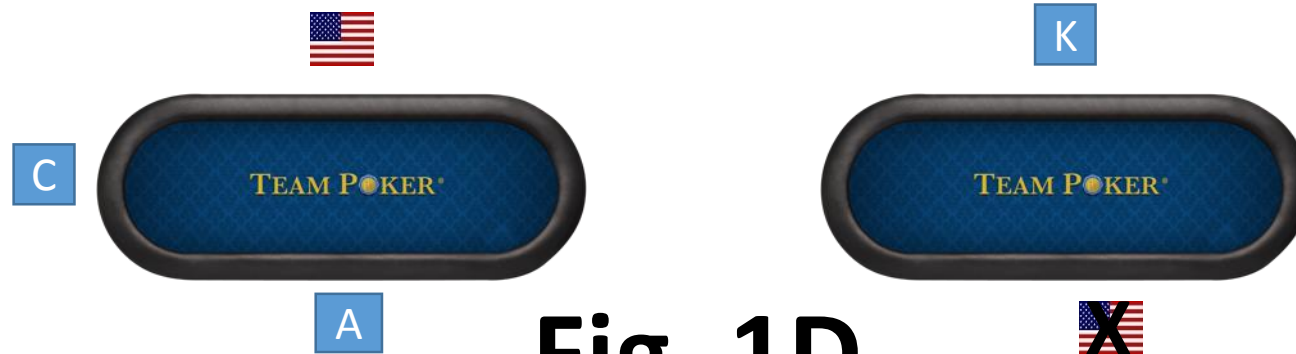


Fig. 1D

~~A~~
Exits Event/ Busts Out

Notes:

Fig. 1D: Tables play as single table events, until further consolidation can take place.

Fig. 1E: When there are no teammates left in an event the balance of players can consolidate to the Final Table(s).



Fig. 1E

4/22



Notes:

Fig. 2A shows Initial Seating, with 2 empty seats in a 3 Players/Team Event. 16 Teams total on 5 Tables.

Fig. 2A shows a Random seating assignment "draw" made within constraint of no teammates on same table.



Fig. 2A

5/22

Notes:

Fig. 2B Consolidate to FOUR TABLES, After One Table Lost to Consolidation of Players.

Fig. 2B: Seating Process maintained by not allowing teammates to play together with opponents.

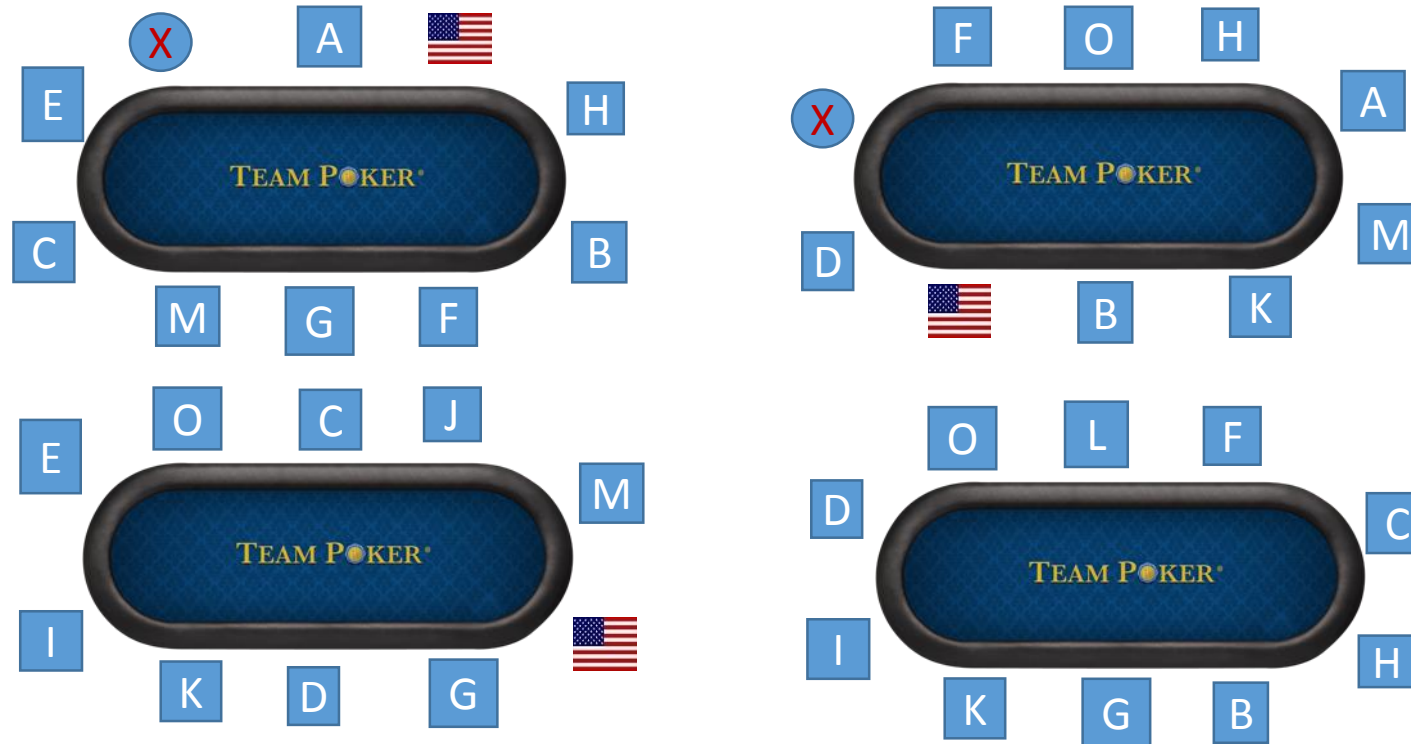


Fig. 2B

6/22

Notes:

Fig. 2C: FOUR TABLES - 24
Players. (Flag) team the
largest team remaining
with 4 Players.

Fig. 2C: The Event can
consolidate Tables after 1 more
bust/loss of Flag Team,
and Consolidate to 3 Tables of
7, 8, and 8 Players respectively.
The Seating Protocol requires a
redistribution of players.



Fig. 2C

7/22



Notes:

Fig. 2D: Three teams remain with three players each.

Tables must remain at three in the event; and,

maintain the said Seating Protocol of no teammates allowed on same table with opponents.


No further table reduction can take place until all three of these teams lose one player.

Fig. 2D

8/22



Notes:

Fig. 2E: Ready for Consolidation after one more player from Team , and team M busts out as these two teams both have three (3) players remaining.


Until both of these two teams lose a player the tables will move players among tables to maintain as equally, as possible, the number on players on the table.

Tables run as if they are single table events until further consolidation can take place.

Fig. 2E

9/22



Note: Fig. 2F: One  Player must bust, or both of the opponents must lose, before further table consolidation.

Tables run as if they are signal table events until The Team Gaming Protocol can take place.
If a Flag Player wins first, they must “wait” until the other table finishes heads-up, thus maintaining The Team Gaming Seating Protocol.

Fig. 2F

10/22



Notes:

Fig. 2G: the remaining teammates lose a player.

Tables, again, play as signal table events until further consolidation can take place.

Fig. 2H Final Table can consolidate/ merge into one final table when there are no teammates left in the event.



11/22



Note:

Fig. 2I: Teammate waits for winner of active heads-up table with opponent before they continue competing. Teammates will play heads-up on the final table, or against H for individual championship, and final score for the team event. Alternatively, the opponent H can be given an option to play against both teammates (Full-Contact).

Fig. 2I

12/22



Note:

Fig. 2J: Both teammates win their heads up table.

The waiting mate joins teammate on Final Table to determine Individual Winner.

Team finish score is complete at this time.

Teammates play for individual championship.

Fig. 2J

13/22

Notes:

Fig. 2K/ 2L: Alternative Finish with teammates playing against each other on one table while another plays against opponent from H team.

2L: The Protocol maintains the table size, and the no-contact Team Gaming Seating Protocol until teammates can play heads-up, or among themselves.



Fig. 2K



Fig. 2L

14/22



Notes:

Fig. 2M: Opponent teams beat subject teams, and compete on Final Table for championship.

Individual event title is decided by the opponents heads-up Final Table.

Also, team event titles may not fully be decided until opponents finishes.

Fig. 2M

15/22



Notes:

Fig. 3A: INITINIAL SEATING

Example of ten teams of 5 player each. Five full tables.

The Seating Protocol requires at least as many tables as the number of players in the largest team starting or remaining in event.



Fig. 3A

16/22




Notes:

Fig. 3B: Even though there is enough open seats to consolidate to two tables. The Seating Protocol maintains the minimum number of tables (5) so the “no-contact” protocol is maintained.

Fig. 3B

17/22

Notes:

Fig. 3C: Alternative:  Flag team continues to win and must play heads up for further consolidation.

The Seating Protocol maintains the minimum number of tables (4) so the “no-contact” protocol is maintained.

The Seating Protocol continues to maintain the players on each table as equally as possible.



Fig. 3C

18/22

Notes:

Fig. 3 D: Alternative:

The Seating Protocol maintains the minimum number of tables (3) so the “no-contact” protocol is maintained.

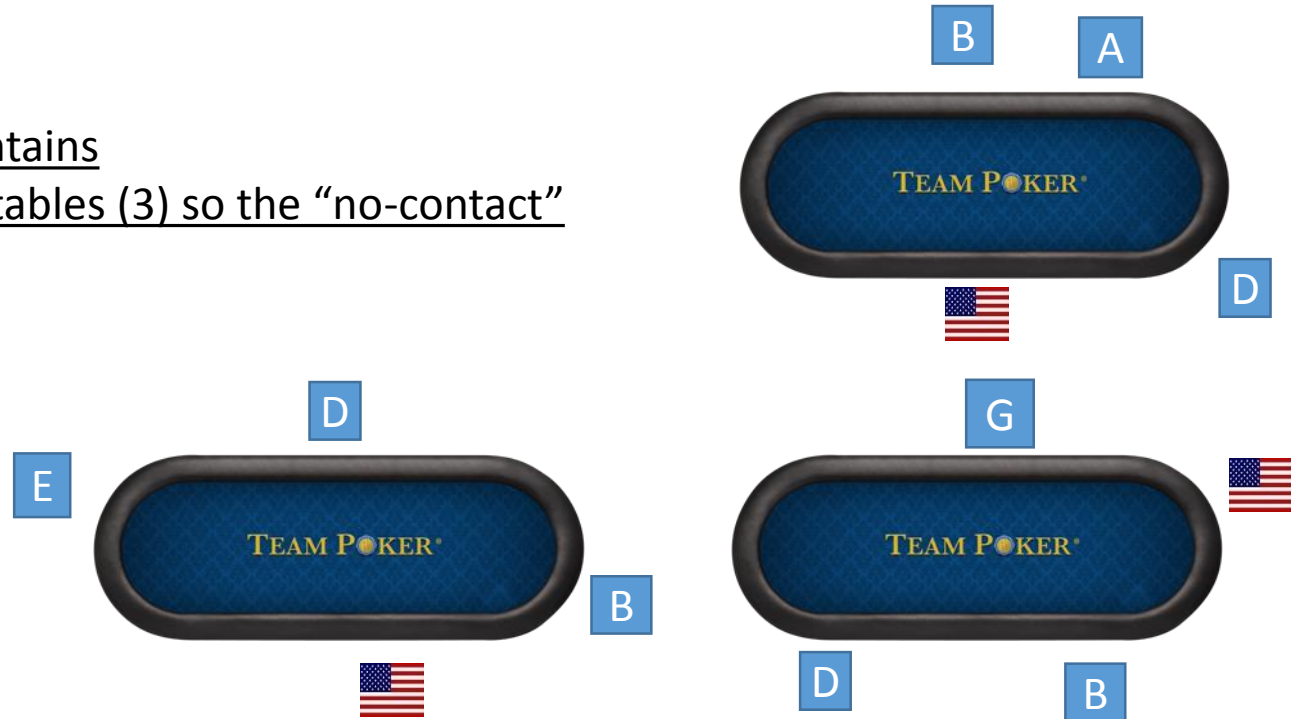




Fig. 3D

19/22

Notes:

Fig. 3E: Further consolidation, when  Flag Team Loses 1 player, and  Team loses 1 player. The Seating Protocol maintains the minimum number of tables (2) so the “no-contact” protocol is maintained.

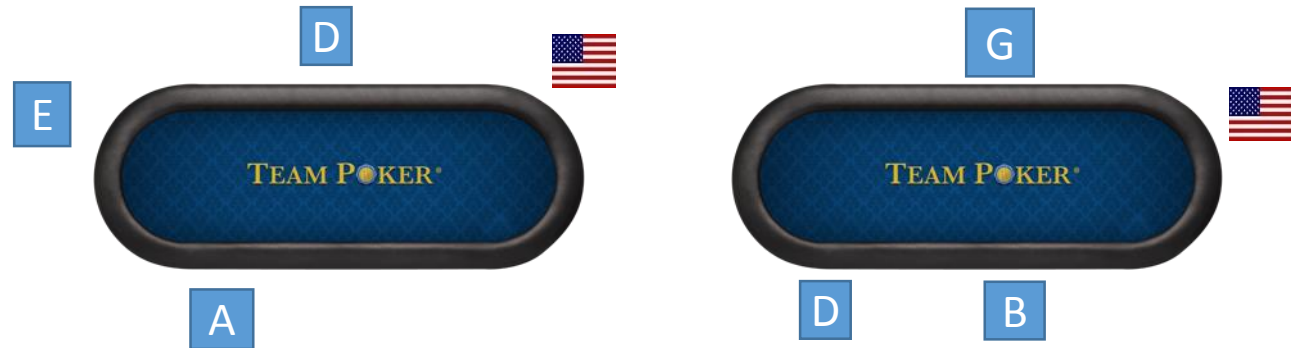


Fig. 3E

20/22

Notes:

Fig. 3F: Alternative - The Seating Protocol moves teammates to heads-up play to maintain the “no-contact” Rule.

There are (10) players left in the event to fill one table; However, four tables are required to maintain “no-contact”, and keep table occupancy as close as possible.



Fig. 3F

21/22



Fig. 4A

Notes:

Figs. 4A and 4B Shows the way
Tables numbers are maintain
as closely as possible with
teammates required to play
together.

Blind structures/antes, therefore,
also impact players as equally
as possible.





Fig. 4B

22/22



Notes:

Fig. 4C Shows a table consolidation with teammates playing among each other. No more than 2 or 3 maximum  team members only at a table when opponents are left in the tournament. At the point teammates are playing together on the same tables, teammates may strategize, and elect to: “dump-chips”, and/ or, “slow-play” among themselves. This is considered an “ethical strategy”, versus “collusion”, as it is a known option (i.e. nothing secret about it), an opponent is not at the same table being impacted directly by “teaming-up” in the same poker hands, and the opponent has to win the same amount of chips to win regardless what the  Team does.





If for example teammates were to “Dump” all of their chips to one person they would be losing out on the prize pool increment that would go with a higher position so the logical play is to have player  “run the gauntlet” and have to beat all remaining players. Therefore, it would make sense that  team playing among themselves might try to keep relatively even stacks of chips, and all survive to play  if required. Alternatively, the  players may want to just play it out for their individual percentage of the prize pool.

Fig. 4C