

EBU KNOCKOUT COMPETITIONS



GENERAL REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Various regulations apply to all English Bridge Union competitions that involve matches played privately. These competitions comprise:

The knockout stages of the Crockfords Cup and the Crockfords Plate

The National Inter-Club Knockout and the NICKO Plate

The Hubert Phillips Bowl and the Hubert Phillips Plate

The Portland Bowl (Inter-University/College Knockout)

The Gerard Faulkner Salver (Seniors Knockout)

The Silver Plate

The Online Knockout and the Online Knockout Plate

Bridge Great Britain organises the Gold Cup and issues its own regulations for it. In no circumstances may a BGB regulation be applied to an EBU event, or the reverse.

These regulations describe arrangements leading up to a match, conditions of play during it, and rulings for such matches. There are also specific regulations that relate to each individual competition, and these are found in a separate document issued for each competition. In the event of a conflict between the regulations in this document and those in the specific regulations for a particular competition, those in the latter shall prevail.

For some competitions there is an option to play the match online. In such cases the [Online Match Regulations](#) also apply.

All these regulations and conditions are supplementary to the general EBU regulations contained in various EBU publications (e.g. '[Blue Book](#)', '[White Book](#)', Diary, [Website](#)), and in some cases replace them. All the general EBU regulations continue to apply unless over-ridden by more specific regulations, or stated otherwise.

EBU Knock-out competitions are managed by means of a system known as EBU Knockout which requires captains to log into the Members' Area of the EBU website (commonly known as "My EBU") to access details of draws and contact details for opponents, and to enter results.

Any enquiries regarding these competitions should be addressed to:

The Competitions Department
The English Bridge Union
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SECTION A – THE DRAW AND ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO A MATCH

- 1 Draws are made in accordance with the following paragraphs:
 - a For a round during the stage (if any) of the competition where the specific regulations for the competition require the draw to be regionalised, as early as practicable during the period beginning one week before and ending two days after the play-by date for the previous round. How early during this period it is practicable for the draw to be made will depend on how many matches from the previous round remain to be played and/or the geographical location of teams involved in such unplayed matches.
 - b For a round during the stage of the competition where the specific regulations for the competition do not require the draw to be regionalised, as soon as practicable after the draw for the previous round has been made.
 - c In exceptional circumstances, as soon as is practicable in the light of those circumstances (which may result in an earlier or later draw than would otherwise be expected).
- 2 The draw in the early rounds will be arranged so as to seek to avoid excessive journeys for the away team, and so encourage the fixing of mid-week dates. In order to facilitate this, it is essential that the EBU Competitions Department is aware of the team's playing venue. In the absence of this information the captain's home address will be assumed to be the playing venue. The home team's venue may not be changed after a draw has been made to a venue significantly less convenient to the away team without the agreement of the away team. All playing venues must be in England.
- 3 Once the draw has been made a notification is sent to the team captains on the same day by email. By entering a competition teams agree:
 - a to provide an email address for use by the EBU Competitions Department and their opponents for communications relating to the competition; and
 - b to authorize the EBU Competitions Department to disclose such email address to the captains of teams against which they are or may be drawn.
- 4 As soon as they are notified that the draw has taken place, the captains should log into My EBU to ascertain the identity of and contact details for their opponent. At this stage they should check that their own contact details are correctly shown on the EBU Knockout system and make any necessary

amendments. They should then get in touch with each other, preferably on the same day and by telephone or email. This should lead to a selection of suitable dates being identified, and one of them will eventually be agreed without the need for a formal offer of dates.

- 5 If the team's next opponents are not shown on My EBU, normally because the team is drawn against the winner of a match which has not yet been played, opponents' contact details will not be shown on the EBU Knockout system. Captains are welcome to contact the EBU Competitions Department at this stage for contact details for both potential opponents.
- 6 If a date cannot be agreed without a formal offer of dates, the privilege of offering dates generally rests with the away captain. However:
 - a If the away captain has been dilatory in offering dates, and has failed to offer four valid dates within seven days of notification that the draw has been made (e.g. if the draw is dated Thursday the 4th, offers should have been made by Thursday the 11th), then the home captain may give notice of his intention to take over this privilege. To do so, he must formally advise the away captain of his intention (usually by telephone). Such an intention may not subsequently be withdrawn. On receipt of such notification, the away captain then has 24 hours in which to provide four valid offers. Upon expiry of this time without such an offer having been made, the privilege of offering dates is transferred to the home captain.
 - b If the away captain exercises his right to an intermediate venue, under Regulation 12, then the home captain may take over the privilege of offering dates, but only if notice of this intention is given to the away captain within 48 hours of notification by the away captain that an intermediate venue is required.
- 7 In the unfortunate event that a difficulty arises in agreeing a date, then the following tests will be applied to determine whether or not a valid offer has been made by the away team (or, in the particular circumstances described in Regulation 6, by the home team). A valid offer consists of at least four dates that meet each of the following requirements:
 - a All dates must fall on or before the advertised play-by date.
 - b There must be at least four clear days between the day that the offer is made and the first of the dates offered (e.g. if the offer is made on a Monday, then Saturday is the earliest valid offer).
 - c No more than two of the dates fall into any one seven-day period.

- d At least one weekend date (Saturday or Sunday) is included in the offer (at least two weekend dates for matches of 48 boards or more), and at least one weekday date is also included in all cases.
 - e None of the dates is included in any list of “put aside dates” notified to the EBU Competitions Department (see Regulation 8)
 - f None of the dates is offered conditional on a starting time materially different from the default starting time mentioned in Regulation 9, unless that starting time is acceptable to the captain to whom the offer of dates is made.
- 8
- a Captains have the opportunity to put aside up to four dates on which their team is not available. Such dates must be notified to the EBU Competitions Department before the advertised play-by date for the previous round, and preferably as soon as the result of the previous round match is known. In the case of the first round of a competition the deadline for notification is the advertised closing date for entries to the competition.
 - b Such put aside dates will be notified to opposing captains immediately after the draw has been made and will not then constitute a valid offer by the away captain. Captains are advised to use this facility to put aside the dates of major EBU events if they will not be able to provide a team during those periods.
- 9
- a Captains are required to confirm a starting time when agreeing a date. In the absence of any mutually agreed alternative, this will be 2.00pm in the case of a Saturday or Sunday match (1.00pm in a match of 48 boards or more), and 7.30pm in the case of a weekday match, (6.00pm in a match of 48 boards or more).
 - b A starting time is materially different from the default or agreed starting time if it differs by more than an hour in either direction in the case of a weekend match or by more than 30 minutes in the case of a weekday match.
 - c If a team breaks an agreement as to starting time by indicating that they cannot start until a time up to 90 minutes later than the agreed starting time, the matter is treated as one of notified late arrival and dealt with under the provisions of Regulations 20-22, which apply on the basis of the actual arrival time of the team.
 - d If a team breaks an agreement as to starting time in any other material way, the matter is treated as if it had broken an agreement as to date.

- 10 Captains are reminded that they should consider 'split' matches in rounds of 48 boards or more (e.g. 24 boards on each of two occasions).
- 11 A match that cannot be played will be awarded according to the following principles:
 - a If a date has been agreed, the match will be awarded against the team which broke the agreement as to date (but see also Regulation 43).
 - b If no date has been agreed, then (unless paragraph c applies) the match will be awarded to the away team provided that the away team captain has offered at least four valid dates as described in Regulation 7; failing that, the match will be awarded to the home team.
 - c If the privilege of offering dates rests with the home captain (see Regulation 6), the match will be awarded to the home team provided that the home team captain has offered at least four valid dates; and failing that, to the away team.
 - d The terms of this regulation will be applied strictly. It is therefore important for the team with the privilege of offering dates to ensure that they do in fact make a valid offer of sufficient dates, even if they do not expect their opponents to accept them, or else they risk the match being awarded against them.
- 12
 - a The away captain may require the match to be played at an intermediate venue if the distance between his normal home venue and the home team's proposed venue is more than 100 miles.
 - b For the purposes of this regulation the distance between two venues is taken to be the distance by road, using the route likely to result in the shortest travelling time.
 - c The expenses for the intermediate venue, and for refreshments, shall be shared between the two teams. The responsibility for arranging the venue rests with the away captain, but the arrangements shall be subject to the home captain's approval.
 - d The home captain has the option to take over the privilege of offering dates as described in Regulation 6.
- 13 Should the away team give sufficient notice that one or more of its members has special requirements in relation to access, playing conditions, toilet facilities or any other matter arising from any disability, including due to allergies, the home captain is required to provide a suitable venue to accommodate them. If he is unable to do so, then the away team may elect to play the match at a venue provided by and paid for by them (which specifically

includes the option to play the match at their own home venue). The away captain retains the right to offer dates as described in Regulation 6.

- 14 Late matches disrupt the competition. However, an extension of one week will be readily given provided that:
- a both captains ask for it before the final play-by date;
 - b they show evidence of real difficulty in fixing a date; and
 - c they have already agreed a date within the extension period.
- 15 A further extension of one week may exceptionally be granted if both captains submit their request to the EBU Competitions Department in writing before the final play-by date and the request shows good reason for the delay. Such extension is at the absolute discretion of the Chief Tournament Director or Deputy Chief Tournament Director or an officer of the Board acting on their behalf.
- 16 In the event of a match being played after the final play-by date under Regulation 14 or 15, the winning captain must contact the team's next round opponent within 24 hours of the match being played.

SECTION B – LATE ARRIVAL

- 17 For the purpose of these regulations:
- a A team has arrived at the match venue when at least four members of the team are present, all of whom are both willing and eligible to play.
 - b One member of a team being present within 45 minutes of the scheduled starting time is an indication of the intention of the team as a whole to arrive, and the team is therefore considered to have notified its late arrival.
 - c If both teams are late, the regulations apply from the time that the first team has arrived (so that, for example, if one team arrives 20 minutes after the scheduled starting time, and the other team one hour after the scheduled starting time, the second team is considered to be 40 minutes late and the first team is considered to be non-offending).
- 18 If a team arrives less than 30 minutes late, no sanction is prescribed by these regulations. If a team arrives at least 30 minutes late, its opponents have the rights set out in Regulations 19-22. Such rights may be enforced or waived entirely at the discretion of the captain of the non-offending team. If Regulations 20-22 (removal of boards) apply, they may be enforced in whole or in part. A decision to enforce or waive the rights must be made and

communicated to the captain of the offending team before play starts and cannot later be changed.

- 19 The match is awarded to the non-offending team if:
 - a The offending team has not notified its late arrival and is at least 45 minutes late; or
 - b The offending team has notified its late arrival and is at least one and a half hours late.
- 20 After 30 minutes of late arrival (whether notified or not), the match is shortened by removing two boards from the number scheduled to be played. For each further complete 15-minute period by which the offending team is late, two further boards are removed. The maximum number of boards which can be removed is eight (which occurs when a team has notified its late arrival and is between 75 and 90 minutes late).
- 21 For each board removed under the provisions of Regulation 20, the non-offending side scores 3 IMPs (100 aggregate points in the Hubert Phillips Bowl and the Hubert Phillips Plate).
- 22 The boards to be removed when Regulation 20 applies are those consecutively numbered from board 1. The stanzas to be played are as follows:
 - a Where the match does not involve a compulsory change of opponents (e.g. in the Crockfords Cup or the stages of the National Inter-Club Knockout where matches are of 32 boards or more), a short stanza is to be played first, in order that the remaining stanzas consist of the number of boards originally scheduled.
 - b Where the match does involve a compulsory change of opponents (e.g. in the Hubert Phillips Bowl or the stages of the National Inter-Club Knockout where matches are of 24 boards), as equal a number of boards as possible should be removed from all stanzas. If this results in one or more stanzas of unequal length, then the shorter stanza(s) is to be played first.

SECTION C – SEATING RIGHTS

- 23 Seating rights in head-on matches in all EBU Knockout competitions (except the Hubert Phillips and the stages of the National Inter-Club Knockout where matches are of 24 boards) operate as follows. The captains toss a coin and the captain who wins the toss may take the first choice or may pass that choice to his opponent. The choices are made in accordance with whichever of Regulations 24-26 applies, according to the number of stanzas to be played.

- 24 The choices in matches of four stanzas are as follows:
- a 1st choice: the captain selects one stanza in which he will have seating rights (i.e. the right to decide how to place his own pairs after opponents have nominated their line-up)
 - b 2nd choice: the other captain next selects two of the remaining three stanzas in which he will have seating rights
 - c The remaining stanza is then taken by the captain who had first choice.
- 25 The choices in matches of five stanzas are as follows:
- a 1st choice: the captain selects two stanzas, which may not be both stanzas 4 & 5 (but may be one or the other of these), in which he will have seating rights.
 - b The other captain then has seating rights in the three stanzas which remain.
- 26 The choices in matches of six stanzas are as follows:
- a 1st choice: the captain selects two stanzas, which may not be both stanzas 5 & 6 (but may be one or the other of these), in which he will have seating rights.
 - b 2nd choice: the other captain next selects three of the remaining four stanzas in which he will have seating rights.
 - c The remaining stanza is then taken by the captain who had first choice.

SECTION D – MISCELLANEOUS CONDITIONS

- 27 Teams may consist of four, five or six players of whom at least four must be nominated at the time that the original entry is made. No player may represent more than one team in the same competition in the same season. Where a team consists of fewer than six registered players, the rules (including time limits, where applicable) for registering further players are contained in the specific regulations for the competition concerned.
- 28 All players must be eligible to represent the team at the time of entry, and must continue to be eligible to represent it throughout the duration of the competition. In the event of the loss of a player due to death, serious incapacity or loss of eligibility, the team may apply for a permanent replacement of that player. This right extends even beyond the time at which additional players can normally be registered, and if the application is approved may result in the limit of six players per team being exceeded.
- 29 In the event that a player has been registered in a team but has not played a

match for the team in the competition:

- a The player may be de-registered from the team, in which event Regulation 27 applies as if the player had never been a registered member of the team.
 - b In the case of a Plate competition a player is taken not to have played a match only if the player has played a match in neither the Plate competition nor the parent competition.
- 30 A player who has been de-registered from a team may be registered for another team but only if:
- a The team for which the player is now to be registered has fewer than six registered players;
 - b The captains of both teams consent; and
 - c The Chief Tournament Director or Deputy Chief Tournament Director, or an officer of the Board acting on their behalf, is satisfied that the addition does not materially strengthen the team for which the player is now to be registered.
- 31 Scoring in all EBU Knockout competitions except the Hubert Phillips Bowl and the Hubert Phillips Plate is by IMPs. Scoring and split-tie arrangements for the Hubert Phillips Bowl and the Hubert Phillips Plate are contained in the specific regulations for those events.
- 32 In the event of a tie in any competition scored by IMPs, additional boards will be played equal to one-eighth of the original scheduled number of boards in the match (rounded up to the nearest whole number if necessary, e.g. four boards in a match of 25-32 boards). This process is to be repeated as often as may be necessary until the tie is broken.
- 33 There are no seating rights during a tie-break. If necessary, captains should exchange written declarations of the placing of their teams.
- 34 The home captain should ensure that the venue is available for sufficient time for the match to be completed, making adequate allowance for possible late arrival, scoring and refreshment breaks, and tie breaks as well as normal playing time.
- a It is recommended that the venue should be available, as a minimum, for one hour per 8-board stanza (or equivalent for stanzas of some other length), plus one additional hour.
 - b In the event that the venue is not available for long enough and the match cannot be completed, the captains must report the circumstances

within 24 hours to the EBU Competitions Department, who will arrange for a ruling to be issued under Regulation 42.

- 35 The home captain should ensure that:
- a The duplicate boards used for the match are correctly marked (i.e. as to dealer and vulnerability).
 - b The cards used are in good condition and comply with Law 1C (which provides for symmetrical backs)
 - c Bidding boxes and suitable scoring stationery are available.
- 36 Boards should be shuffled and dealt at the table at the start of each set, although the boards for the whole match may be dealt at the outset if both captains agree. A player of each side must be present at the dealing of every board. Any player in doubt may require a board to be re-dealt before it is first played. Alternatively, team captains may agree to another means of board dealing (e.g. via a 'Duplimate' machine) subject to satisfactory security arrangements being in place.
- 37 Captains may agree to permit spectators and/or team members not playing in a particular stanza to watch. Either captain may opt before the start of a match to have a 'closed' room, which will be specified by the captain who organised the venue. Spectators and team members may only watch in the open room, which should be large enough to accommodate a reasonable number. If no closed room has been specified, no spectator or watching team member may move between rooms once a stanza has started.
- 38 The nominated team captain may nominate some other member of his team to be captain for a particular match, whether or not he is present at and/or playing in the match. If a team captain is not present at a match but has not nominated a substitute captain, the team members present may nominate one of their number to act as captain for the match. If a team captain is late, the other members of the team may nominate one of their number to act as captain pending his arrival. In either event any decisions made by such nominee shall be binding on the team as if he had been the captain.
- 39 In return for not having to travel, the home team is expected to provide refreshments to both teams. The scale on which this is provided should take into account the length of the match and the distance travelled by the away team.
- 40 Mobile phones & other electronic communication equipment should wherever possible be switched off in the playing room. Players should not telephone, email, or text from the playing room, and should not leave the room during a

stanza to do so. An exception arises where important communications relating to the match are required (such as communicating with a player who has not yet arrived, or with a tournament director in relation to a ruling). In this event a member of the opposing team should be present when the telephone call or other communication is made.

- 41 The regulations concerning smoking are as follows:
 - a Smoking within the venue may be restricted by law.
 - b All players shall respect any restrictions on smoking stipulated by the captain who organized the venue.
 - c Unless otherwise agreed between the captains, all smoking is prohibited at the playing table throughout the match. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes.
- 42 Except for any appeal against a ruling (as to which see Section E), any dispute should be referred to the EBU Competitions Department, who will arrange for the matter to be considered by the Chief Tournament Director or Deputy Chief Tournament Director, or an officer of the Board acting on their behalf, whose ruling (including the award of a match) shall be final. The EBU Competitions Department may arrange for such a ruling to be given on its own initiative in respect of any relevant matter coming to its attention in any manner.
- 43 In exceptional circumstances (“force majeure”), any of these regulations may be suspended either in whole or in part, and other arrangements put in their place in order to attempt to accommodate the particular circumstances.
- 44 Either captain has the right to lodge an appeal against a ruling already received (see section E). Subject to this, when both captains have agreed the result it is final.
- 45 The winning captain must log on to My EBU within 24 hours and enter the result into the EBU Knockout system. If, exceptionally, this is not possible he must email the relevant information to the EBU Competitions Department at Aylesbury within that time. The information to be provided in either case is the date of the match, the score and the number of boards played by each player who played in the match.

SECTION E – RULINGS AND APPEALS

This section of the Regulations is currently being updated. Pending the issue of a revised version, the equivalent section of the September 2016 issue of the Regulations (Regulations 22-27 in that version, headed “Rulings in Matches Played Privately”) continues to apply.

