



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EBU LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE
HELD AT 40 BERNARD STREET, LONDON WC1
ON WEDNESDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2005**

Present:	Martin Pool	Chairman
	Richard Fleet	Vice-Chairman
	Steve Barnfield	
	Max Bavin	Chief Tournament Director
	David Burn	
	Jeremy Dhondy	
	David Martin	
	David Stevenson	
	Grattan Endicott	Vice-President
	Nick Doe	Secretary

1. **Apologies for Absence**
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Philip Mason | EBU Vice-Chairman |
| Denis Robson | EBU Chairman |
| Gerard Faulkner | Vice-President |

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting (26th July)**

2.1 **Accuracy**

Mr Bavin asked whether the L&E was happy that minute adequately reflected the fact that bids with no specified meaning (random bids) were conventional, and therefore subject to detailed regulation despite the abandonment of the blanket ban. The L&E considered that the Note at the end of the minute was sufficient to make this clear.

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by Mr Pool as Chairman.

2.2 **Matters arising**

2.2.1 *White Book – Index (item 2.2.1)*

Mr Doe reported that he had not received any comments, so would now proceed to finalise the index, which he hoped to complete by the end of October or shortly afterwards.

2.2.2 *Correspondence with players – 04.117 (item 3.1)*

The L&E noted further correspondence, but did not consider that it provided any grounds for reconsidering the decision.

Mr Martin highlighted the delay in considering the form concerned, which had been caused by the backlog of work, consideration of reports from tournament directors having been deferred at several recent meetings. He suggested a new procedure, whereby if any of the three reviewers considered that a psyche had been classified too leniently, Mr Doe as Secretary should

automatically write to the players to say that a re-classification was under consideration, and to invite comments. The L&E considered this an excellent idea and agreed to adopt it.

2.2.3 *Psyches and “forgets” (item 7.6)*

The L&E considered correspondence arising from the discussion at the last meeting. The correspondent considered that the L&E should have addressed the question of whether a player, having disclosed to the opponents that his partner had a tendency to forget a particular conventional bid, was free to act on the information, and choose his own call on the basis that partner had forgotten on this particular occasion.

The L&E noted Mr Bavin’s explanation of why it was not possible to rule that the player had fielded a misbid – namely that the basis of ruling against fielded misbids is inadequate system disclosure, which could not apply to a situation where the player had specifically drawn to the opponents’ attention his partner’s propensity to forget the method. The L&E concluded that it was desirable to introduce a regulation to deal with the matter.

The L&E decided that the regulation should be that if a player has knowledge that his partner tends to forget a particular agreement, that tendency must neither be disclosed nor acted upon.

3. *Implications of Appeal to the National Authority of 26.7.05*

The L&E endorsed the three points proposed by the members who had heard the appeal, namely:-

- that players entering events submit themselves to the published regulations, and should be expected to comply with them even though there may be doubt as to their legality;
- that players seeking to challenge regulations should do so by approaching the L&E via correspondence, rather than via the appeals process; and
- that the L&E should encourage such approaches in cases of difficulty.

The need for possible further discussion at a later date was noted.

4. *Disciplinary matters*

4.1 *Complaint from an EBU event (“Cheetah”)*

The L&E considered a complaint, together with comments from the member complained of and others. In the light of the fact that the member had apologised, no further action was considered appropriate.

The L&E noted that the tournament director on site had believed that he had dealt with the matter adequately at the time. Without expressing any view on that point, the L&E did consider that it was appropriate for tournament directors to draw all instances of alleged bad behaviour to the attention of the director in charge, even if they believed that they had dealt with the matter so that no further action was necessary.

5. *Orange Book changes*

5.1 *Stop procedure*

The L&E considered some suggestions by Mr Burn to bring the occasions when the Stop procedure applies more into line with the situations in which players can be particularly expected to need time to think. The view was expressed that, regardless of any theoretical merit, the proposals were too complex.

A proposal by Mr Stevenson, seconded by Mr Burn, that once a pair had made two consecutive passes in an auction, the Stop procedure should not apply to later bids in the auction by their opponents, was defeated by four votes to three.

The discussion concluded on the basis that no changes were currently proposed, although the matter would be revisited in the event of further proposals being formulated for discussion.

5.2 Convention card design

The L&E considered a draft of a revised version of the EBU20A card prepared by Mr Doe on the basis of suggestions from Mr Fleet. The L&E considered that there were a number of improvements in comparison with the existing card, and a number of further suggestions were made which Mr Doe was asked to incorporate.

The L&E also considered a draft of a possible replacement for the EBU 20 card prepared by Mr Stevenson, largely based on printed options with tick boxes. Doubts were expressed both as to the demand for such a card and as to the adequacy of disclosure effected by the use of such a design. It was suggested that it would be appropriate to discontinue the use of the EBU 20 card altogether, without introducing any replacement, but it was not considered appropriate to make such a decision without advance notice of the proposal, so the matter was deferred to the next meeting.

5.3 Announcements – regulations for hearing-impaired players

The L&E considered correspondence suggesting that such regulations were necessary. The L&E took the view that significant problems were not likely to occur, given the current proposals, because in virtually all cases where an announceable bid was made the opponents would be expecting either an announcement or an alert. Players who realised that an announcement had been made, but did not hear it, would be in no worse position than at present, when an alert was made but obtaining an explanation was made difficult by hearing problems. Players who did not know whether an announcement had been made would normally be in a position to seek clarification, either because they knew that an announcement was due, or because they knew that there had been no alert in a situation where a bid, if not alertable, would normally require an announcement.

The L&E acknowledged that more significant problems might be encountered were the scope of announcements to be extended in the future.

5.4 Alerting – takeout doubles

The L&E considered correspondence asking for guidance about alerting in the context of a style of takeout doubles played by a minority of players. The L&E did not think that any general guidance could be given, because the method in question was not sufficiently unexpected to justify an official interpretation that it was alertable. However, it was appropriate to draw the correspondent's attention to the fact that it was open to the sponsoring organisation concerned to introduce a regulation for its own events.

The L&E considered separate correspondence asking for clarification of the alerting status of certain specific agreements relating to takeout doubles, and concluded that none of the agreements would be alertable under the proposed new rules as they were all for takeout.

Mr Doe was asked to respond as necessary to both correspondents.

5.5 Permitted methods – minimum strength for artificial openings

The L&E considered correspondence critical of the decision to regulate strong 1♣ openings and the strong options of "either-or" 1♣ openings by reference to point count alone. The correspondents argued that to prevent players agreeing to upgrade hands with a lower point count but excellent playing strength was unwarranted. The L&E agreed that the present position was not sustainable, and decided that the minimum strength should be Rule of 25, or 16 HCP.

5.6 Permitted methods – application (M. Haag)

The L&E considered an application to permit at Level 4 a scheme whereby opening bids of 2NT and at the 3-level showed either a pre-empt in a specified suit, or a variety of strong two-suited hands. The L&E agreed to permit such bids provided that there was an anchor suit when the hand was weak, without restriction of the strong options except to a minimum of Rule of 25.

5.7 Timetable

The L&E discussed whether it should now depart from its previous decision (made in April 2004) not to publish the new *Orange Book* until the text of the new Laws was known, in the light of continued uncertainty as to the likely time frame for the introduction of the new Laws. Mr Endicott informed the L&E of the current situation, and gave his opinion that it was now unlikely that the new Laws would be ready for implementation before January 2007 at the earliest.

The L&E decided that it was appropriate to plan to publish the *Orange Book* in 2006 notwithstanding that the new Laws might not be ready. It proposed an implementation date of 1st August 2006, as it could see positive benefits from the Brighton Congress being the first major event played under the new regulations.

The L&E decided that if further applications were received they would be considered, but it did not envisage bringing any changes into force prior to the implementation of the new *Orange Book*. (i.e. the changes brought into force on 1st April 2005 would be the last changes to the 1998 *Orange Book*).

5.8 Other issues

The L&E noted another article written by Mr Stevenson for English Bridge, and any L&E members with comments were asked to notify Mr Stevenson without delay. The L&E understood that the Editorial Board had accepted the idea of a series of articles from the L&E. Mr Doe was asked to confirm that the Editor had received all the articles which had not yet been published.

Mr Pool raised a question about the provision in the present *Orange Book* that the Laws are not intended to provide scope for knowledgeable players to gain advantage at the expense of inexperienced players. A proposal from Mr Dhondy, seconded by Mr Martin, that this provision be deleted from the new *Orange Book*, was carried by four votes to one.

[Secretary's note – a copy of the updated cumulative record of Orange Book decisions is attached as Appendix A to these minutes].

6. Reports from Tournament Directors

6.1 05.17

The L&E considered a psyche report from an approved Green-pointed County Congress, and decided to write to inform the players that an undesirable pattern was becoming apparent.

The L&E was surprised to see more than one instance in the reports under consideration of the following combination of events:-

- a player had failed to support a suit bid by partner when it appeared entirely normal to support it;
- the partner had in fact psyched, and did not hold the suit concerned;
- the player who had failed to support had nonetheless failed to comment on the form to seek to justify the action taken.

It considered that it would be appropriate to consider changes to the psyche form to make it clear that players were expected to explain their actions in such circumstances.

6.2 05.18

Dealer S
E/W vul**North**

♠ K Q J 9 8 3
 ♥ 2
 ♦ J 5
 ♣ Q 8 7 6

West

♠ 10 5 4
 ♥ A K Q J 7 3
 ♦ 10 7
 ♣ 10 4

East

♠ A
 ♥ 10 9 8
 ♦ Q 8 6 4 3 2
 ♣ K J 3

South

♠ 7 6 2
 ♥ 6 5 4
 ♦ A K 9
 ♣ A 9 5 2

Bidding:	West	North	East	South
	Pass	2♦ ^{A1}	3♦ ²	Pass
	3♥	Pass ³	Pass	Pass ⁴

- 1 Multi
- 2 Not initially alerted. Only alerted by W when he bid 3♥. TD not called.
- 3 Questions by N as to the late alert of 3♦. Told by W that 3♦ shows ♠s & ♣s.
- 4 S given opportunity by TD to reopen auction – declined

Result: 3♥ +1 N/S –170

Tournament Director's statement of facts & ruling

I was called when N's opening lead was face down. E stated that the alert and subsequent explanation of his 3♦ was incorrect – it was natural. The convention card gives overcalls as "CRO", hence W's explanation. No stated defence to Multi 2♦. S declined to reopen auction and TD not called at time of late alert. "Rights reserved". N contends he would bid 3♠ over 3♥ had he known that 3♦ was natural. Had this driven E/W to 4♥, N/S would sacrifice in 4♠.

After due discussion, I felt that 3♠ was not an LA*, and thus the score stands. S could have called me at the time of the late alert but chose not to. S's points (in ♦s) could have been in E and S have a 0 count.

**[The TD seems to have meant that 3♠ was not a plausible action]*

Appeals Committee's decision

We felt that W had misled N/S by bidding 3♥ and then giving a late alert. Normally the bidding would have led to 4♥ by E/W and a 4♠ sacrifice by N/S, usually –1. Score adjusted to 4♠-1 by N, N/S –50.

L&E comment:

It is surprising that the Appeals Committee felt that N/S would play in ♠s, when S, who had the correct information, both over 3♦, and when given the opportunity to reopen the auction, declined to support his partner's effectively known suit. To give N/S 100% of the benefit of such an action seems to be a misjudgement – a weighted score would seem more appropriate if any adjustment is made, but even that seems doubtful.

6.3 05.22

The L&E considered a psyche report from the Easter Festival at London, which had been classified on site as Green, and decided to write to the players to invite comments with a view to reclassifying it as Red.

6.4 05.30

The L&E considered a psyche report from a One-day Joint Venture event, which had been classified on site as Amber, and decided to write to the players to invite comments with a view to reclassifying it as Red.

6.5 05.33

The L&E considered that it might be helpful to point out that in reviewing forms from tournament directors, it assumes that the tournament director will have highlighted any instance of an explanation given at the table not being substantiated by the convention card (either because the convention card is silent, or because it contains conflicting information). The absence of any mention of the convention card on the form does therefore afford a presumption that the director has checked the card and found the explanation substantiated. It is, however, helpful if information on the meaning of relevant calls is recorded in the "Relevant information from convention cards" section of the form.

6.6 05.45

The L&E discussed a hand on which a player had doubled a 2-level overcall, intending the double for penalties. His partner had duly taken the double for penalties (and therefore not alerted). However the convention card had indicated that doubles of simple overcalls were played for takeout (the pair asserted that doubles of 1-level overcalls were for takeout, and doubles of higher overcalls for penalties). Accordingly, the next player had been faced with conflicting information from the card and from the lack of an alert. The L&E concluded that it is not unreasonable for players of sufficient experience to protect themselves in such circumstances, rather than guessing which source of information to believe and seeking an adjustment if wrong. By far the best means of self-protection is an immediate call for the director.

Due to lack of time consideration of the remaining reports was deferred.

7. *Date of next meeting*

Wednesday 30th November at 1.15 pm at 40 Bernard Street.

8. *Any other business*

8.1 *End of Committee year*

The L&E noted that there would be a contested election at the AGM, three nominations having been received for two available places. Mr Pool thanked L&E members for their hard work over the course of the past year.

[Secretary's note – L&E members were asked to retain the papers relating to outstanding Reports from Tournament Directors, which will not be re-circulated for the November meeting.]



RUNNING MASTER RECORD OF LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE DECISIONS CONCERNING ORANGE BOOK REVISIONS

The current Orange Book was published in 1988, although a number of amendments have been brought into force since then, details of which are contained in the current cumulative update booklet (yellow, dated January 2005, incorporating changes coming into force on 1st April 2005). The EBU Laws & Ethics Committee ("L&E") is currently undertaking a complete review of the *Orange Book* with a view to publication of a new edition which is likely to come into force some time in 2006. This paper sets out the current state of the proposals, and is updated on a meeting by meeting basis. It was originally based on the digest of *Orange Book* decisions prepared for Council following the L&E meetings in November and December 2004.

In two respects the wording in this paper does not necessarily represent the precise wording which will be included in the 2006 *Orange Book*:-

- to some extent the decisions of the L&E are paraphrased in this paper – the actual minutes should be referred to for detailed wording if necessary; and
- in a number of cases the wording of the minutes themselves will not necessarily be included verbatim in the new *Orange Book*, the precise wording of which will be a matter for the detailed drafting, some of which remains to be done.

Some sections of the original Council paper are not included in this paper, notably details of the changes coming into force on 1st April 2005, which can be found in the cumulative update booklet.

Revision 5 – September 2005. This reflects decisions made at the September 2005 L&E meeting, and changes since the previous version are underlined.

SECTION 1 – ALERTING (including ANNOUNCEMENTS)

1.1 Basic alerting rules

1.1.1 Passes and bids

You must alert a pass or bid if

- it is not natural; or
- it is natural but has a potentially unexpected meaning.

1.1.2 Doubles

- doubles of natural suit bids – not alertable if for takeout; alertable otherwise;
- doubles of no trump bids – not alertable if for penalties; alertable otherwise;
- doubles of artificial suit bids – not alertable if shows the suit doubled; alertable otherwise.

(Note – for the purposes of the first bullet a form of words is to be devised to include with natural suit bids opening bids of one of a minor suit which are in principle natural, but may be made on fewer than three cards in the suit (i.e. including “short” clubs and Precision diamonds, but not strong clubs or diamonds or “either-or” clubs, none of which are “in principle natural”))

1.1.3 **Redoubles**

- redoubles which are for business or show general strength, which partner is normally expected to pass if the next hand passes – not alertable;
- other redoubles (notably those partner is expected to take out) – alertable.

1.2 **Alerting rules – Exceptions**

1.2.1 **Announceable bids**

Bids should not be alerted if an announcement is required instead (see section 1.4)

1.2.2 **Calls above 3NT**

In principle no calls above 3NT to be alerted except for:-

- artificial opening bids;
- lead-directing passes; and
- lead-directing doubles and redoubles that ask for the lead of a suit other than the suit doubled.

(Note – doubles of a potential final contract which carry a lead-directing message, such as Lightner doubles, are within the final bullet).

1.2.3 **Exceptions**

The following will not require an alert:-

- a 2♦ response to an **announceable** 2♣ Stayman enquiry

1.3 **Alerting rules – Specific instances**

1.3.1 **Potentially short minor-suit openings**

Not alertable (because not unexpected) if in principle natural, but may be made on three cards in the suit, but not fewer.

Alertable (because potentially unexpected) if in principle natural, but may be made on fewer than three cards in the suit.

(Note – openings which are not in principle natural, such as strong clubs or diamonds or “either-or” clubs, will remain alertable).

1.3.2 **Walsh**

No change:-

- 1♦ response to 1♣ which denies a major unless strong (typically game-forcing) – not alertable;
- 1♥/1♠ response to 1♣ which may be a 4-card suit, concealing longer diamonds – alertable.

1.3.3 **Completion of transfers**

Not alertable unless it shows something specific, e.g. shows or specifically denies a particular length in responder’s suit.

1.3.4 Rescue sequences when 1NT is doubled

No change.

1.3.5 Natural openings at the two level

Not alertable because now announceable.

(Note – openings which show the suit bid, but promise another suit, are not natural (and will therefore remain alertable). Openings which show the suit bid and have distributional constraints relating to other suits, but only promise another suit in certain defined circumstances, are now considered natural for alerting/announcing purposes (and will therefore be announceable)).

1.3.6 Very common alerts

Proposals were made to eliminate alerts of artificial bids in certain very common situations, namely:-

- fourth suit forcing;
- a 2NT strong enquiry response to a natural weak two opening.
- bids of opponents suits

These new proposals have been rejected. There will be no change – the bids concerned will remain alertable (and a bid of an opponent's suit which is used in a natural sense will remain non-alertable).

1.4 Announcements

1.4.1 Basic purpose of announcements

- Instead of an alert in the traditional manner, the partner of the person who makes an announceable bid makes a short specified statement about the bidder's hand.
- In effect, announcements are a specialist form of alert.
- Questions can still be asked, as they can about alerted bids.
- Announcements are not intended to provide comprehensive explanations – matters of detail will still be disclosed by means of information on convention cards and the answers to questions.

1.4.2 Scope of announcements – 1NT openings and responses

- natural 1NT openings to be announced by stating the range;
- where a 1NT opening which is in principle natural may be made by agreement on some hands which contain a singleton, the statement “may contain a singleton” to be added to the range announcement;
- Stayman to be announced:-
 - in response to a natural 1NT opening;
 - where there has been no intervention; and
 - where it is used in the traditional manner to ask for a 4-card major; and
- red suit transfers (i.e. ♦s to ♥s and ♥s to ♠s) to be announced by naming the suit shown, i.e. “hearts” or “spades” (the wording is the recommended wording; variations (e.g. “transfer to hearts”) are not subject to penalty but players should be consistent):-
 - in response to a natural 1NT opening;
 - where there has been no intervention; and

- where the transfer guarantees at least 5 cards in the major suit concerned.

1.4.3 Scope of announcements – 2-level opening bids

- a natural opening bid of two of a suit should be announced by stating the range into which it falls, from the following categories (the wording is the recommended wording; variations are not subject to penalty but players should be consistent):-
 - strong forcing
 - strong not forcing
 - intermediate
 - weak

(Note – openings which show the suit bid and have distributional constraints relating to other suits, but only promise another suit in certain defined circumstances, are now considered natural. Openings which show the suit bid, but promise another suit, are not natural).

1.4.4 Regulations for hearing-impaired players

None considered necessary, although the possibility to be borne in mind if the scope of announcements is widened in future.

SECTION 2 – PERMITTED METHODS

2.1 General

2.1.1 Number of Levels

- No Levels 1 or 5;
- Levels 2 and 4 to be published in full in the *Orange Book*, and virtually all EBU events to be played at one of these Levels;
- Level 3 to be included in the *Orange Book*, at least at the drafting stage.
- Nomenclature remains to be addressed.

2.1.2 Valuation methods

A note to be introduced that whilst other methods of hand valuation are permitted, compliance with minimum strength requirements will be assessed by reference to HCP and/or Rule of X, as appropriate.

2.1.3 Treatments

The section to be simplified. The provisions restricting treatment of the Multi at Level 3 (which will be the only method in respect of which treatments are banned) to be moved to the section dealing with the Level 3 Multi.

2.1.4 Random calls

The prohibition on agreements to make random calls to be removed, subject to a new regulation on disclosure (see section 3.1.2)

Note – any such agreements will remain subject to the generality of the permitted methods regulations, so that, in effect, random calls will only be permitted in situations where any defence (continuation etc.) is allowed.

2.1.5 Two different systems at different conditions (i.e. position and/or vulnerability)

Two examples of things which are not considered within the prohibition:-

- playing 4-card major openings at some conditions and 5-card majors at others;
- varying the meanings of two-level openings according to position or vulnerability.

2.1.6 Strong openings

The minimum strength for an opening to be defined as strong to be Rule of 25, rather than Rule of 23.

The use of the expression “non-strong opening” to be discontinued.

Regulation of the minimum strength of strong artificial openings at the one level to be changed to a combination of HCP and “Rule of X”.

2.1.7 Nomenclature – Multi 2♦

References to a Multi 2♦, without qualification, mean a traditional Multi where:-

- there is ambiguity as to the major suit held if the hand is weak; and
- there is at least one strong option of reasonable frequency.

Although the word “Multi” may be used as part of the description of a “♥s only” or a “weak only” Multi, players must disclose the full range of options. If a short description is used, a suitable qualification must be included in the case of any non-standard Multi.

2.2 New Level 2 provisions

2.2.1 Natural or balanced openings of one of a minor

To clarify the current position, a 1♣ or 1♦ opening which can be played as natural or balanced may alternatively be played as canapé, provided that at least 4 cards are held in the suit.

2.2.2 Strong 1♣ openings

The minimum strength to be Rule of 25 or 16 HCP.

2.2.3 Opening bids at the two level

The following to be permitted:-

- any two-level opening bid which has only strong options;
- any opening bid of two of a suit which shows a three-suiter including the suit bid, even if it only guarantees 3+ cards in the suit bid.

2.2.4 2NT opening as minor two-suiter

No longer to be permitted at Level 2.

2.2.5 Strong two-suited 2NT overcall

2NT to be permitted to show a strong two-suiter with no anchor suit, in defence to one of a suit or 1NT. Minimum strength Rule of 26.

2.2.6 Defence by fourth hand

The provisions to be extended to permit any overcall to show a two-suiter including the bid suit.

2.2.7 Defence to 1NT

A double to be permitted to have any meaning which includes a specified suit of at least 3 cards in a three-suited hand, and 4 cards otherwise.

2.2.8 Cotterill semi-positive 1NT

No longer to be permitted at Level 2.

2.2.9 Encrypted signals

The ban on encrypted signals to remain, subject to one exception. Wording to be changed to make it clear that all encrypted carding methods are within the ban.

2.2.10 Dual meaning signals

The reference to suit preference to be removed.

2.3 New Level 3 provisions

2.3.1 Minimum strength for opening bids at the one level

A lower limit was proposed but not agreed. No change.

2.3.2 Minimum strength for opening bids at the one level in third and fourth positions

A lower limit than that applying in first and second positions was proposed but not agreed. No change.

2.3.3 “Either-or” 1♣ openings

A proposal to permit these at Level 3 was not agreed. No change.

2.3.4 Natural 1NT openings

- 6-3-3-1 distribution to be added to the distributions permitted to contain a singleton;
- The restriction relating to the rank of the singleton in a 5-4-3-1 hand to be removed;
- All remaining restrictions and general provisions to continue in force (except the alerting provision which is superseded by the new announcement provisions).

2.3.5 Strong artificial 1NT openings

The minimum strength to be brought in line with that for a strong artificial openings at the two level.

2.3.6 Opening bids at the two level

The following to be permitted:-

- a Multi 2♦ which has ♥s as its only non-strong option (a “♠s only” option was rejected);
- a 2♣ or 2♦ opening to show both majors with a minimum length of 4/4.

2.3.7 Treatment of Multi 2♦ at Level 3

The following is a treatment, currently not permitted, but in principle not objectionable, and to be allowed from OB 2006:-

- an agreement to open a Multi with a weak hand with a 5+ card major, but not on a balanced hand with only a 5-card suit, i.e. if the main suit is only of 5 cards, the hand will also contain a side suit of 4+ cards.

The following is not a treatment and is currently permitted:-

- an agreement to vary the strength and/or suit length for the weak two element of a Multi according to position and/or vulnerability.

2.3.8 2NT opening as minor two-suiter

The restriction to a 5-point range to be removed.

2.3.9 Responses to opening bids, overcalls and doubles

Any response to be permitted to any opening bid, overcall or double, subject to strengthening of the general prohibition on conventions designed to deceive opponents intentionally as to the length or strength of a suit and/or the strength of a hand.

2.3.10 Cotterill semi-positive 1NT

Constructive values to be required in place of a specified point count.

2.3.11 Canapé overcalls

Canapé overcalls to be permitted, provided that the suit bid is of 4+ cards.

2.3.12 Transfer overcalls

Any overcall to be permitted that shows at least 4 cards in a specified suit, subject to the existing strength requirements.

2.3.13 Defence to 1NT

Any defence to be permitted.

2.4 New Level 4 provisions

2.4.1 Minimum strength for one-level openings

The overriding ban on openings at the one level by agreement on 7 HCP or less to be abandoned.

Note – no change is proposed to the other provisions relating to minimum strength, i.e.:-

- it is not permitted to open a conventional one of a suit by agreement on less than Rule of 18;
- opening a natural one of a suit by agreement on less than Rule of 18 is subject to the no conventions rule; and
- opening a natural 1NT by agreement on less than 9 HCP is subject to the no conventions rule.

2.4.2 “Either-or” 1♣ openings

The minimum strength for the strong option to be brought in line with that for a strong 1♣ opening, namely Rule of 25 or 16 HCP.

2.4.3 Opening bids of one of a suit

Any opening to be permitted that shows at least 4 cards in a specified suit, subject to the normal minimum strength requirements.

2.4.4 1♠ opening

To be permitted to show an unbalanced hand with either minor.

2.4.5 Artificial (but not strong) 1NT openings

Any 1NT opening to be permitted which shows at least 4 cards in a specified suit, minimum strength of Rule of 18.

(Note – this introduces a blanket permission in place of the small number of openings of this type currently specifically permitted).

2.4.6 Opening bids at the two level

The rules to be simplified to permit any opening bid which satisfies one of the following conditions:-

- all the non-strong options include the same specified suit of at least 4 cards; or
- all the non-strong options have a specification which does not include holding 4+ cards in the suit bid.

2.4.7 Opening bids at the three Level

Multi-way openings to be permitted to show either a weak hand with a specified suit or any number of strong hands (minimum Rule of 25).

2.4.8 Removal of restrictions on the strength of various conventions

- Stoker 1NT opening – Minimum strength Rule of 18. No maximum.
- Clarke 3♣ opening; Dhondy 3♣ opening – No stipulated range.
- Bliss cue bid – No stipulated range.
- Mollo 1NT overcall – No maximum strength.
- Reese 2♣ protection – No minimum strength.

2.4.9 Transfer overcalls

Any overcall to be permitted that shows at least 4 cards in a specified suit, subject to the strength requirements previously only applicable at Level 3.

2.4.10 Mollo and Gardener 1NT overcalls

The requirement of at least a 6-card suit for the Mollo overcall, and the weak option of the Gardener overcall, and the restriction on treatments of the Gardener overcall, to be removed.

SECTION 3 – OTHER REGULATIONS

3.1 Disclosure of system

3.1.1 Questions during the auction

No change to the present advice to defer questions if the action at that turn does not depend on the answer.

3.1.2 Random calls

A new regulation to be introduced concerning disclosure of agreements to make random calls, including:-

- that players adopting an agreement to make calls which had no specified meaning would be under an obligation to take great care over disclosure, particularly of negative inferences; and
- that such players would be ruled against unless a TD was completely satisfied that they had given full disclosure.

3.1.3 Experienced and inexperienced players

The provision that the Laws are not intended to provide scope for knowledgeable players to gain advantage at the expense of inexperienced players to be deleted.

3.2 Convention card design

3.2.1 EBU 20

Consideration to be given to the abandonment of the use of this card, without any replacement.

3.2.2 EBU 20A

A number of amendments considered and approved. Further suggestions to be incorporated before final approval.

3.3 Psyches

3.3.1 Classification

Minor amendments to the regulations to improve clarity.

3.3.2 ***Illegal psyches***

The ban on psyching game-forcing or nearly game-forcing artificial openings to be removed

The ban on psyching a Multi in a Level 3 event to remain.

3.3.3 ***WBF convention cards***

The prohibition on references to psychic habits on such convention cards to be removed.

3.4 ***Procedures***

3.4.1 ***Stop procedure***

No specific changes proposed but further discussion to take place if specific proposals formulated, in particular as to whether:-

- to apply the procedure to tempo-sensitive situations where it does not currently apply because there has been no jump bid;
- to change the obligations of the opponents when the procedure is not correctly followed by the side which makes the jump bid.