

**NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT  
(NICKO)  
including the NICKO Plate**



**REGULATIONS**  
2011 / 2012

## INTRODUCTION

Various general regulations and conditions of play apply to all English Bridge Union competitions which involve matches played privately. Examples of such competitions include:

- The knock-out stage of the Crockfords Cup (including the 'Crockfords Plate')
- The National Inter-Club Knockout (including the 'NICKO Plate')
- The Hubert Phillips Bowl
- The Portland Bowl (Inter-University/College Knockout)
- The Seniors Knockout (for the Gerard Faulkner Salver).

Bridge Great Britain organises the Gold Cup and the Silver Plate and issues its own regulations for these events. In no circumstances may a BGB regulation be applied to an EBU event, or *vice versa*.

The general regulations and conditions of play are described herein in section 'A' (general conditions) and section 'B' (rulings in matches played privately). In addition, certain specific regulations relate to the individual competitions: details of these are contained in section 'C' (special conditions).

All these regulations and conditions are supplementary to, and in certain cases a replacement of, general EBU regulations as contained in various EBU publications (e.g. 'Orange Book', 'White Book', Diary, Website). All such general EBU regulations continue to apply unless specifically stated otherwise.

Any correspondence or enquiries regarding such competitions should initially be addressed to:

The Competitions Secretary  
The English Bridge Union  
Broadfields, Bicester Road  
Aylesbury, HP19 8AZ.

Tel: 01296 317203 or 317205  
Fax: 01296 317220

E-mail: [knockout@ebu.co.uk](mailto:knockout@ebu.co.uk)

## A: GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. A separate draw is made for each round approximately four days after the scheduled end date of the previous round (i.e. usually on a Thursday, the scheduled end date usually being a Sunday). The draw is despatched to the team captains on the same day by first class post.
2. On receipt of the draw, each captain should get in touch with his opponent, preferably on the same day and by telephone. Generally, from this conversation, a selection of suitable dates will be agreed, one of which will be confirmed in due course.
3. An unplayed match will be awarded against the team who broke an agreed date (but see also section 10). If no date is agreed, then the match is awarded to the away captain provided that he has offered at least four valid dates as described in section 5 below. Failing this, the match is awarded to the home team captain. If the privilege of offering dates rests with the home captain (see section 4 below), then the match would be awarded to him provided that he had been able to offer at least four valid dates.
4. 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 10 days of the draw being issued (e.g. if the draw is dated Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup>, then offers should have been made by Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup>), 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. However, on receipt of such notification, the away captain then has 24 hours in which to provide four valid offers. Upon expiry of this time, the privilege of offering dates is transferred to the home captain.
  - b) If the away captain exercises his right to a half-way venue, under regulation 6, then the home captain may take over the privilege of offering dates.
5. 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 above, 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, and 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).

- b) No more than two of the dates fall into any one seven-day period.
- c) At least one weekend date (Saturday or Sunday) is included in the offer, and at least one weekday date is also included.
- d) Prior to any date being offered, the home captain (i.e. the captain due to receive the offers) has the opportunity to put aside up to four dates on which his team is not available. Any such date does not then constitute a valid offer by the away captain.

To put aside such a date, the home captain must so specify to the Union prior to the draw being made (e.g. when submitting the result slip from the previous round). Once the draw for the next round has been made, then it is too late for the home captain to set aside any such dates. The away captain may also have put aside up to four dates prior to the draw being made, which would become relevant were the onus of offering dates to subsequently fall upon the home captain, as described above. Any such 'put asides' will be automatically notified to the opposing team captain when draw details are issued.

- e) Captains are required to confirm a starting time when agreeing a date. In the absence of any mutually agreed alternative, this will be 2.00 pm 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 mid-week match, (6.30pm in a match of 48 boards or more). The offer of a date with a starting time other than that prescribed above is, in effect, an invalid offer unless the proposed starting time is acceptable to the opposing captain. Thereafter, breaking an agreement as to starting time is equivalent to breaking an agreement as to date.

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).

- 6. 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. However, at any stage the away captain may demand an intermediate venue if the distance between his normal home venue and the team's proposed venue is more than 100 miles. The expenses for the intermediate venue, and for refreshments, shall be shared between the two captains. The responsibility for arranging the venue rests with the away captain, but the arrangements shall be subject to the home captain's approval. The home captain has the option to take over the privilege of offering dates as described in section 4.
- 7. 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.

A further extension of one week may exceptionally be granted if both captains submit their request to Aylesbury 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 Tournament Committee acting through the Chief Tournament Director.

8. Should a team arrive 30 minutes late or more, its opponents have the following rights (but see separate regulations for BGB competitions such as the Gold Cup).
- a) After 45 minutes of unnotified late arrival or one and a half hours of notified late arrival, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. Note that 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 thus constitutes 'notification' within the meaning of this clause.
  - b) After 30 minutes of late arrival (whether notified or not). The match is to be reduced by two boards, awarding the non-offending side 3 IMPs per board removed (100 aggregate points per board in the Hubert Phillips). For each further complete 15-minute period of notified late arrival, further sets of two boards are removed and the non-offending side continue to be awarded 3 IMPs (or 100 aggregate points) per such board. The maximum number of boards which can be removed is eight (which occurs for notified late arrival of at least 75 minutes, but less than 90 minutes).
  - c) Where boards are removed from a match which does not involve a compulsory change of opponents (e.g. Crockfords Cup, Portland Bowl or the 32 or more board stages of the Inter-Club Knockout), a short stanza is to be played first, removing board one onwards, in order to produce stanzas of the pre-scheduled number of boards thereafter. An exception to this arrangement arises in the case of matches which do involve a compulsory change of opponents, such as the Hubert Phillips Bowl or the 24-board stages of the Inter-Club Knockout. In these cases only, as equal a number of boards as possible should be removed from all stanzas; if one or more stanzas must be one board shorter than the others, then the 'short' stanza(s) shall be played first. The match shall begin with board number one, and shall finish with the highest numbered board now scheduled to be played.
  - d) If both teams are late, the above regulations apply from the time that the first complete team is present. Thus, for example, the other team has 45 minutes

(unnotified) or 90 minutes (notified) in which to arrive from that time. For the purpose of this regulation, complete shall mean that four members of the team are present, all of whom are both willing and eligible to play.

9. Scoring in all competitions bar the Hubert Phillips Bowl is by IMPs. In the event of a tie in any competition bar the Hubert Phillips, additional boards will be played equal to one-eighth of the original scheduled number of boards in the match (e.g. four boards in a match of 25-32 boards). This process is to be repeated until the tie is broken. There are no seating rights during a tie-break. If necessary, captains should exchange written declarations of the placing of their teams. See section 'C' (where relevant) for corresponding scoring and split-tie arrangements in the Hubert Phillips Bowl.
10. Except for any appeal on a ruling to the Laws and Ethics Committee, any dispute should be referred to the Chief Tournament Director, acting on behalf of the Tournament Committee, whose ruling (including the award of a match) shall be final. In exceptional circumstances ("force majeure"), the regulations relating to 'unplayed matches' 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.
11. 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 players may represent more than one team in the same competition and season. See section 'C' for the time limit for registering further players into the competition, and see also section 12 below.
12. All players must be eligible to represent the team at the time they first represent it, and must continue to be eligible to represent it throughout the duration of the event. 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.
13. Smoking: the standard arrangement in matches played privately is that all smoking is prohibited at the playing table throughout the match. However, the match host may provide an area away from the playing table in which cigarette smoking will be permitted during scoring breaks. Team captains should discuss smoking arrangements when arranging the match, and the standard arrangement may be varied by mutual consent.
14. Disabled access: should the away team give sufficient notice that one of its members has special requirements, the home captain is required to provide a venue to accommodate them. If he is unable to comply, then the away team may elect to play the match at a venue provided by, and paid for by, themselves (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 section 4.

15. 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.
16. 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.
17. Boards must be shuffled and dealt at the table at the commencement of each set. 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 an alternative means of board dealing (e.g. via a 'Duplimate' machine) subject to proper security arrangements being maintained at all times.
18. The winning captain must e-mail or post the signed result slip to the Competitions Department at Aylesbury within 24 hours. The sheet should list every member of the two teams, and show how many boards each member played. Either captain has the right to lodge an appeal against a ruling already received (see section 'B'). Subject to this, when both captains have signed the result slip, this result is final.

## **B RULINGS IN MATCHES PLAYED PRIVATELY**

19. In a match played privately, the regulations and directives of the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee shall apply as contained in the current 'Orange Book'. In any respects not especially covered by these regulations, the current regulations and directives of the EBU shall apply. The following clarification of the factors affecting the application of law and regulations is issued in the light of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, sections 9B1(a) and 92B, with respect to matches played privately.

### **(a) 'End of Round' (Law 8B)**

A 'round' in a match played privately comprises a number of boards played without an interval in which scores may be compared. A pair who meet their colleagues and compare scores have already completed the round in which they have been engaged.

### **(b) 'Calling the Director' (Law 9B)**

The equivalent of summoning the Director in accordance with Law 9B1 is to inform one's opponents at the table that one wishes to have a ruling. The request for a

ruling must be specific and must be made before the protesting side calls on the next board, or the end of the round, whichever is the sooner.

**(c) Drawing attention to a possible irregularity**

Any comment at the table which points to the possibility of an irregularity draws attention to the irregularity within the meaning of Law 9B1(a). If no request for a ruling is then stated the players are in the position generally of players when attention is drawn to an irregularity and the Director is not summoned forthwith. *(Reservation of Rights under Law 16A1 does not override this condition if the request for a ruling is not then made within the time limit specified above).*

**20. Calling for a Ruling**

Problems often arise in matches played privately when there is a dispute that involves more than just the reading and application of the law. If you think an irregularity has occurred which has damaged your side, you should proceed as follows:

- (a) Raise the matter (by, say, reserving your rights) at the time, preferably before the board has finished, but certainly before you remove your cards from the next board.
- (b) Confirm your wish to have a ruling before your opponents have left the table to score up that set of boards; if after scoring you withdraw your request, that is an end of the matter.

A failure to take these steps puts you in the same position as a player in a public competition who fails to call the Tournament Director at the appropriate time.

You may still request a ruling as long as you do it within the protest period (up to when you have signed the final result sheet or prior to commencing the next set of boards, whichever is earlier). However, the longer the time lapse, the more difficult it is to establish the facts and Directors, like Tournament Directors in public competitions, may be less inclined to find damage which the player did not appear to be aware of at the time. However, the player who could not have known an irregularity had occurred will be in a stronger position than one who could or should have noticed but did not mention it at the time.

**21. When a ruling of the first instance is required**

If a ruling of the first instance is required, the procedures outlined below should be followed:

- (a) Captains agree upon an outcome.
- (b) Captains contact a principal member of the EBU panel of Tournament Directors as listed in section 22.

- (c) Captains agree upon a suitable arbiter.
- (d) Captains contact any other EBU Tournament Director (as listed in the EBU diary), or a member of the panel of Referees (see 24 below), or a member of the Laws and Ethics Committee. If contacting a member of the panel of Referees for a ruling of first instance, it must be made clear to the Referee that this is a request for a ruling of the first instance rather than an appeal against such a ruling.
- (e) Captains submit the case in writing to the EBU as described below.

## 22. Means of obtaining a ruling of the first instance

Under the above, captains may decide to forward details of the question with the match result for arbitration. In this case, or when it proves impossible to obtain a ruling, ensure that full details are supplied (along with such statements as the players and captains wish to make).

The result slip should be endorsed ‘Subject to ruling on board...’ and both captains should sign the details forwarded.

Teams should be aware, if they chose to request a ruling in this manner, that a decision based on Law 12C1(c) could result in a tied match. They should play additional boards at the time (as prescribed in paragraph 9) to cover this eventuality.

Alternatively, the names and telephone numbers of the principal members of the EBU panel of Tournament Directors are as follows:

<b>Midlands</b>		<b>North</b>	
M Amos	01691 623 984	S Davies	01274 598 408
Mrs S Amos	01691 623 984	J Proctor	01723 364 788
A Crawford	01543 277 138	D Stevenson	0151 677 7412
D Evetts	07977 481 399		
D Jones	02476 463 111	<b>South East</b>	
J Pyner	02476 693 785	M Bavin	01296 485 503
		M Lee	07813 073 064
<b>South West</b>		N Morley	01252 333 885
R Barker	01392 259 081	J Pain	01296 334 584
S Brown	01865 881 185	J Probst	020 8141 4385
E Hill	01452 712 960	G Rainsford	07908 730 774
		E Williams	01424 430 596

*Note: You may contact any Tournament Director – it does not need to be one from your own region*

### **23. Effect of a ruling of the first instance**

Any decision obtained by the procedures above is a binding ruling to be acted upon (but see also the section below relating to appeals). If a score adjustment is awarded on the board no substitute board is played.

A ruling that a board shall be cancelled, if within the knowledge of the captains prior to the commencement of the last set of boards, allows a replacement to be added to the next set to be played (with identical dealer and vulnerability); such a decision becoming known later than this means that no replacement board is to be played.

In all cases, the playing of a substitute board is not affected by a procedural penalty (normally 3 IMPs, or 100 aggregate points in the case of the Hubert Phillips) if the individual to whom reference is made deems this appropriate. A breach of Law 74 may lead to an increased penalty, the Committee having approved penalties of 5 IMPs (or the equivalent thereof) in two such cases.

### **24. Appeals Procedures**

A ruling made under the provisions of 21 (b), (c), (d) or (e) above may be appealed by either captain. Appeals may be dealt with in one of two ways. Appeals should be dealt with in writing (option (b) below) if either captain so wishes or if the two captains are unable to agree upon a suitable Referee. Notification of the intention to appeal a ruling already received must be made within 12 hours of receiving the ruling.

- (a) By on-site telephone to a member of the EBU panel of Referees, as listed below.  
(\*asterisk indicates that the person named is not normally available after 10.00pm)

J Allerton	020 8224 1124	S Barnfield*	01892 534 055
D Burn	020 8749 3716	Mrs H Dhondy	020 8203 2119
J Dhondy	020 8203 2119	C Dixon	01761 432 255
G Endicott	0151 724 1484	P Hackett	0161 446 1138
D Harris	01582 821 161	Miss F Hinden	020 8224 1124
G Kirby	01509 670 824	D Martin	020 8670 9122
G Osborne	01428 682778	C Owen	01325 464 279
M Pool	01444 892 414	D Price	01787 472159
M Pryor	01233 712 554	T Rees	01344 775 499
N Rosen	020 8445 6609	B Senior	0115 952 7112
J Smith	0161 702 3773	M Swanson	01928 790 080

Both team captains must be present at the time of the telephone call, and the Referee must not have been involved in the ruling of first instance. It must be clear to the Referee that this is an appeal against a ruling already received. See section (b) below for guidance regarding the sort of information which the Referee will require. The Referee's decision may include the forfeiture of the deposit (see below), in which case the deposit should accompany the match result slip when it is submitted.

(b) By written correspondence to the Union, in which case a deposit of £30 (i.e. the current standard sum for an appeal in a teams game) must be received before the appeal can be considered. To submit such an appeal, write down:

- Full details of the hand with bidding, and with play if relevant; show dealer, vulnerability
- The result on the board (in both rooms) and the amount of the swing on any substitute board, in the event one has been played
- Details of the matter protested, with any statements of players involved
- The ruling of the first instance, and who gave it
- A statement on behalf of each side, signed by its captain

The sponsoring body is responsible for arrangements to determine the appeal, and for altering the match score, should this be required in the outcome.

Teams should be aware, if they choose to appeal a ruling in this manner, that a decision based on Law 12C1(c) could result in a tied match. They should play additional boards at the time (as prescribed in paragraph 9) to cover this eventuality.

## **C SPECIAL NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT REGULATIONS (including the National Inter-Club Knockout Plate)**

25. Entry is limited to fully affiliated EBU bridge clubs. Entries should be submitted by the Club Secretary, who should be satisfied of the credentials of the players due to represent the club.
26. It is left to individual clubs themselves to decide whether their members meet the criteria outlined below and are thus eligible to represent them. Clubs are asked to ensure that their representatives match the ethos of the competition. Any complaints that a team does not meet these criteria will be referred to the club that entered them.
27. There is no limit to the number of teams which may be entered by any given club. Teams should be referred to as club teams 'A', 'B', 'C' and so on in no particular order of preference.
28. Each team may comprise four, five or six players. At least four of the players must be nominated at the time that the entry is submitted; extra players may be added at any time and should be duly nominated before participating.
29. All players must be members of the affiliated club and must have been so for at least three months immediately prior to the day on which they first represent the club. Moreover, nominated players must play regularly at the club or for the club or contribute regularly in some other way OR have met this criteria in previous years, yet be unable to currently do so through some personal circumstance (e.g. illness, work, childcare, etc.).
30. No players may represent more than one team participating in the competition during the year of the competition. However, the fact that a player may represent some other club in the Garden Cities Trophy or in any other club competition does not bar that player from representing a different club in this competition.
31. 'Strong teams' (i.e. those with 2 or more Grand Masters or above or ranked in the top 40 of the EBU Gold Point scheme at the end of August of the relevant year) will be exempted until round 2 or round 3. In principle it will be the latter, but a final decision will not be made until the full entry list has been examined. Strong teams will not be eligible for the NICKO Plate.
32. Matches will initially be of 24 boards, to be played in two stanzas of 12 boards with a compulsory change of opponents at half time. Team captains shall toss for choice of seating rights in the first stanza.

Where a team has more than four players who intend to play in the match one pair may be replaced by the sitting out pair after six boards of a 12-board stanza provided that advance notice is given of this intention to the opponents. Note, however, that the teams can only compare scores after 12 boards have been played.

Matches in the quarter-finals and semi-finals will be of 32 boards, to be played in four stanzas of eight. Seating rights operate as follows:

- (a) The captain who wins the toss may take the first choice or may pass that choice to his opponent.

Choices are then made as follows in the quarter-final or semi-final.

- (b) 1<sup>st</sup> choice: the one captain selects one stanza in which he will have seating rights (ie how to place his own pairs after opponents have nominated their line-up); 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: the other captain next selects two of the remaining three stanzas in which he will have seating rights, and the remaining stanza is then taken by the captain who had first choice.

33. The final will be a 48-board match, to be played in six stanzas of eight. Seating rights operate as follows.

- (a) The captain who wins the toss may take the first choice or may pass that choice to his opponent.

Choices are then made as follows:

- (b) 1<sup>st</sup> choice: the one captain selects any two stanzas in which he will have seating rights (ie how to place his own pairs after opponents have nominated their line-up), save that he may not select both stanzas 5 & 6; 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: the other captain next selects three of the remaining four stanzas (which may include both stanzas 5 & 6 if these have not already been taken) in which he will have seating rights. The remaining stanza is then taken by the captain who had first choice.

34. The draw prior to the quarter-finals will be arranged so as to avoid excessive journeys for the away team, and so as to avoid teams from the same club being drawn against each other wherever possible (though teams from the same county could well be drawn against each other). However, teams from the same club may be drawn against each other prior to the quarter-final stage if the only alternative would cause excessive travelling for one or more teams.

The draw for the quarter-finals onwards will be absolutely random, so teams from the same club may be drawn against each other at this stage, and long journeys could be involved.

35. Master points will be awarded in the form of Green Points for each round won as follows:

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9
Round of 257 Or more	round of 256	round of 128	round of 64	round of 32	round of 16	quarter- final	semi- final	Final
1	1	2	2	3	3	4	6	8

Master Points cards will not be issued. Instead, all Master Points will be direct-credited using the details supplied by team captains on the official match result slip. All Master Points will be direct-credited shortly after the final has been played.

36. Prizes will be awarded to the top eight teams. All prizes are quoted on a 'per team' basis, and will be automatically credited directly to the team captain's EBU account.

Winners	£600
Runners-up	£400
Losing semi-finalists	£240
Losing quarter-finalists	£120

### 37. Permissible systems

This is a 'Level 4' competition.

### 38. Final 'play by' dates for rounds.

Round 1	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2011
Round 2	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2012
Round 3	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2012
Round 4	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2012
Round 5	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Round 6	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
Quarter-final	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
Semi-final	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2012

The date and venue of the final should be decided by the team captains by mutual agreement.

39. The Plate competition will be open to all teams who are defeated in their first match of the main event, whether in Round 1 or, following a Round 1 bye, in Round 2.

There is no additional fee for the Plate, and it will be assumed that all eligible teams will wish to enter the Plate unless you advise us to the contrary. 'Strong teams' (see section 31) are not eligible for the Plate.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NATIONAL INTER-CLUB KNOCKOUT PLATE REGULATIONS

All conditions (numbers 1-39) contained in the main document relating to the National Inter-Club Knockout apply, save as amended herein.

32. Matches will be of 24 boards up to and including the quarter-finals. Matches will be of 32 boards in the semi-final and final only. Seating rights are as contained in the main document for two-stanza matches (24-board matches) and four-stanza matches (32-board matches), as appropriate.
34. Matches up to and including the quarter-final will be arranged wherever possible so as to avoid excessive travelling and so as to avoid teams from the same club meeting each other. The draw for the semi-final will be entirely random.
35. Green Points will be awarded as follows:

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
round of 129 or more	round of 128	round of 64	round of 32	round of 16	quarter- final	semi- final	Final
½	1	1	1½	1½	2	3	4

- 36 Prizes will be awarded to the top two teams. All prizes are quoted on a 'per team' basis and will be automatically credited to the team captain's EBU account.

Winners	£240
Runners-up	£120

### 38 Final 'play by' dates for rounds.

Round 1	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
Round 2	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2012
Round 3	8 <sup>th</sup> April 2012
Round 4	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Round 5	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
Semi-final	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2012

The date and venue of the final should be decided by the team captains by mutual agreement.