

Scoring Errors, Corrections and Correction Periods

Mistakes in scoring can and do happen whether scoring is done on paper travellers or through wireless scoring. Although wireless scoring eliminates some of the mistakes in calculating the total score on a board, the contract may still have been entered incorrectly, or as being played by the wrong person, or there might have been an error in the number of tricks registered. It is important to have an agreed procedure for when there are such mistakes whichever scoring method is used.

Corrections

The TD and/or Scorer must be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the score is wrong before it can be corrected. If it is a simple case of incorrect data entry by the Scorer transcribing from a traveller, there is no problem, as that can be checked against the traveller. (Travellers need to be kept until the end of the correction period – see below.) However, if one side claims that the score on the traveller is incorrect, it is necessary to get the correct score agreed by the other side.

This may entail going through the play with one or both pairs. In situations where people can't remember and/or can't agree, and there is no other way of ascertaining what the correct score should be, then the original score as entered should stand. In the latter case, if there is a discrepancy on the traveller between the numerical score and the number of tricks noted, it is customary for the numerical score to stand as long as that is not blatantly wrong, e.g. one off vulnerable cannot result in a score of -50 but must be corrected to -100.

Correction period

There needs to be a set period from the end of a club duplicate during which players can check the results, report any errors, and any necessary corrections can be made. Law 79C of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge allows the club, as Tournament Organiser, to set a specific correction period during which an error in scoring can be corrected. No request for a change in score can be entertained once this period has expired.

Nowadays most bridge clubs display their results on the Internet within a short time of the event finishing, and players can examine the results at leisure on a computer. Most players who are interested in checking their scores in this fashion will do so within two or three days. It is at this point that they may unearth a scoring error and fire off an email to the Club Scorer.

However, not all clubs have websites, and not all members have easy access to computers, so there should be some other way to provide an opportunity for members to check scores and have them corrected. Many players have a regular day of the week when they play at the club, even if the club has several weekly games. For those players who don't have access to scores on the Internet, their next weekly game will often be the first time they can check their scores.

So, the suggestion for clubs would be to allow scoring corrections until the end of the game on the following week. In this case it is a good idea to put the travellers in an envelope and pin it to the club notice board with the results. Players can then have the opportunity to come early to their next game and go through the results if they wish.

Whether or not your club decides to do that, the most important thing it needs is to have a set correction period and to let the players know what it is. (For special events, where the club needs to issue prizes or present cups at the end of the event, this regulation can always be varied by putting in a special condition of contest.)

The White Book

The EBU publishes the White Book, the EBU Tournament Directors' Guide, which supplies regulations for all sorts of situations that might arise. Sections 79 and 146 cover correction periods. The White Book applies to EBU events but can usefully be adopted by a club to cover any gaps in its own regulations, e.g. the club might have the regulation that the White Book will apply whenever the club doesn't have another regulation for a situation. However, correction periods are one instance when the club might well want to make its own regulation, rather than relying on the EBU defaults, which are designed to cover larger EBU events that need to be finalised promptly.

The White Book can be downloaded from

- <https://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/laws-ethics-publications>

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