

Scoring a board that cannot be played because of slow play

Sometimes players play the first 2 boards of a round so slowly that they do not have enough time to play the final board. Clubs will have various ways of warning pairs that time is getting tight. This could be through nothing more sophisticated than a good old-fashioned egg timer, a bell which the TD rings or a proper displayed time clock.

The club may have a rule that no more boards are to be started once the bell rings or the clock goes below, for example, 3 minutes.

So how do you score a board when it happens that they cannot play it?

With the much wider use of table top scorers (BridgeMates, Bridge pads or Bridge Scorer) some organisers think, mistakenly, that they can use the 'No Play' option.

This is completely wrong and against the laws of bridge.

Law 12C2(a) starts off by saying 'When owing to an irregularity no result can be obtained, the TD awards an artificial adjusted score according to the responsibility for the irregularity: average minus (40%), average (50%) or average plus (60%)'

The irregularity is that time has run out and the board cannot be played. So the TD MUST give either 50%/50% if he thinks both pairs are equally at fault or 60%/40% if he thinks one side is clearly not to blame but the other side is.

The option to use 'No Play' should only ever be used when a board is not scheduled to be played. Perhaps the TD sets up the movement for 9 rounds but the session runs slower than it should – so he decides to scrub the final round completely. Now the final round is

no longer scheduled to be played so the TD should enter 'No Play' for all the scores on that final round.