

# General Regulations – Rulings in Matches Played Privately

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## 1 Introduction

The greater part of the [General Regulations for EBU Knockout Events](#) were revised in 2020, but the section relating to Rulings and Appeals was not revised until August 2021, in the White Book. This document are regulations and procedures for Ruling and Appeals for matches played privately. The later sections of this document are taken from White Book, section 2.6: with corresponding numbering. Cross references are prefixed by §.

These regulations are aimed at knockout matches and league matches. League matches played privately does introduce some further issues – because the outcome of the match is a victory-point score not just win/loss.

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## 2 Regulations and directives

In a match played privately, in any respects not specifically covered by these regulations [this section], 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, Law 9B1 (a) and Law 92B, with respect to matches played privately.

### *2.1 ‘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 has completed the boards in a round and compared scores have completed the round for the purposes of this law.

### *2.2 ‘Calling the Director’ (Law 9B)*

The equivalent of summoning the director in accordance with Law 9B1 (a) 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.

### *2.3 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 immediately summoned. Reservation of Rights under Law 16B2 does not override this condition if the request for a ruling is not then made within the specified time limit.

## **3 Rulings of first instance**

### *3.1 Application of law*

Where a dispute requires a reading and application of the law, the players can request a ruling from a suitable arbiter (agreed by the captains) available at the venue. Otherwise, the players should agree on a ruling which allows play to continue. Reading and application of law may prove difficult when assessment of comparable calls is required, see White Book §8.23.1.

Any such ruling can be revised at the end of round when the facts can be determined.

### *3.2 Asking for a ruling*

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 the cards from the following board.
- (b) Confirm your wish to have a ruling before the end of that set of boards; if after scoring you withdraw your request that would be 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 twenty minutes of the end of the match. However, the longer the time lapse, the more difficult it is to establish the facts and Tournament Directors, just as in public competitions, may be less inclined to find damage which the player did not appear to be aware of at the time. However, a 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.

## 4 When a ruling of first instance is required

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

- (a) Captains agree upon an outcome.
- (b) Captains contact a mutually agreed member of the EBU panel of Tournament Directors (see §5) of Senior Congress rank or higher.
- (c) Captains contact a mutually agreed suitable arbiter including any other EBU Tournament Director, or a member of the panel of Referees (see §5), or a member of the Laws and Ethics Committee.
- (d) If contacting a Referee or for a member of the Laws and Ethics Committee, it must be made clear 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 Tournament Organiser, as in §6.

## 5 Contacts

The names and telephone numbers of the members of the EBU panel of TDs and members of the EBU panel of Referees are available on the [L&EC page on the EBU website](#) and in the EBU Members' Diary.

EBU Tournament Directors:

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/tournament-director-list>

EBU Appeals Referees: <https://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/appeals-referees-list>

## 6 Means of obtaining a ruling of the first instance

Captains may decide to forward details of the question for arbitration, when submitting the match result to the Tournament Organiser. If the match result has been submitted (through an online system), the Tournament Organiser should be informed immediately (by email) that the submitted result is subject to ruling. This is necessary to avoid the Tournament Organiser treating a submitted result as final.

Captains must ensure that full details are supplied (along with such statements as the players and captains wish to make) and both captains should confirm their agreement with the details forwarded.

For knockout matches, teams should be aware, if they chose to request a ruling (or subsequent appeal) in this way, that a decision based on Law 12C1 (c) could result in a tied match. They should either play additional boards at the time (as prescribed in the General Conditions for Knockout Matches) to cover this eventuality or must be prepared to arrange and play extra boards if necessary.

## 7 Effect of a ruling of first instance

Any decision obtained by the procedures above is a binding ruling to be acted upon (but see also §8 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 and that a substitute board played, if known by the captains prior to the start of the last set of boards, allows a replacement board (with identical dealer and vulnerability) to be added to the next set to be played. If a ruling to play a single substitute board becomes known later, no substitute board is to be played – Law 86A applies.

## 8 Appeals procedures

### 8.1 Lodging an appeal

A ruling made under the provisions of §6 (b), (c) or (d) above may be appealed by either captain. Appeals may be dealt with in one of two ways. Appeals should be dealt with in writing (see §8.3) unless the ruling of first instance is made before the end of the match and the two captains are agree upon a referee to be contacted from the match venue (see §8.3).

Notification of the intention to appeal a ruling must be made within 20 minutes of the end of the match if the ruling is made during the match and within 12 hours of receiving the ruling if received after the end of the match unless some other deadline for the appeal is given by the tournament director (or other arbiter) when giving the ruling of first instance.

An appeal requires a deposit of £30, the standard sum for an appeal in a teams game. If an appeal is deemed to lack merit, it may be subject to sanction: consisting of both forfeiting the deposit and a score adjustment of the standard penalty. In a league match, the score adjustment will be a penalty of 1VP.

### 8.2 By on-site telephone to a member of the EBU panel of Referees

To contact a member of the EBU panel of Referees, see §5.

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 made clear to the Referee that this is an appeal against a ruling already received. See §8.3 below for guidance regarding the sort of information which the Referee will require.

The Referee's decision may include the forfeiture of the deposit, in which case the deposit must be paid promptly after submitting the match result.

### 8.3 By written correspondence to the Tournament Organiser

In this case a deposit of the must be lodged before the appeal can be considered. To submit such an appeal, provide:

- (a) full details of the hand with bidding, and with play if relevant; show dealer and vulnerability;
- (b) 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;
- (c) details of the matter protested, with any statements of players involved;
- (d) the ruling of first instance, and who gave it;
- (e) a statement on behalf of each side, signed by its captain.

The report should accompany the match result when it is submitted. It is improper to change or add anything in a report which has been finally agreed. The Tournament Organiser is responsible for arrangements to determine the appeal, and for altering the match score, should this be required in the outcome.

Where possible, the TD who gave the original ruling (under §6 (b)) should be asked to complete (the first two pages of) an Appeals form detailing the original ruling, to be sent to the Tournament Organiser.

The Tournament Organiser will make arrangements to determine the appeal, and for altering the match score, if required.

## 9 Rulings resulting in non-balancing scores

### *9.1 Non-balancing scores and non-balancing match results*

It is possible for a TD ruling to result in non-balancing scores for the two sides:

- (a) If there is some outside agency which prevents a result from being obtained, both sides may be assigned a good score.
- (b) If both sides are offending, they may both be assigned a poor score.

In knockout matches any such non-balancing scores are made to balance (Law 12C4) so there is a clear match result. But in a league match, non-balancing scores will remain in the match result, and may lead to non-balancing victory point scores in the final league result.

### *9.2 Obtaining a ruling resulting in a non-balancing match result*

Non-balancing scores are possible in a league match played privately. However, captains may not agree such a ruling under §6 (a). In particular:

- (a) They may not agree a ruling that is beneficial to both sides.
- (b) They are not expected to agree a ruling which treats both sides as offending.

Instead if such a ruling may be required, the captains should follow one of the other procedures in §6.