

2017 LAWS OF DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Sarah Amos - May 2017

LAWS 68 -71

CLAIMS AND CONCESSIONS

There has been some tidying up and clarification of Law 68 with the previous footnote 21 relating to the current trick now being included in the first paragraph of the law.

References to contestants in 2007 are now Declarer or Defender.

LAW 68 B 2 now refers to a concession or claim – not just a concession.

LAW 68 C - Clarification Required – includes new instruction *“The player making the claim or concession faces his hand”*. This is something a TD would instruct the players to do when called but was not a requirement at this stage in 2007.

The biggest change to this law is to **Law 68 D** which was headed **Play Ceases** but is now **Suspension of Play**

D Suspension of Play

After any claim or concession, play is suspended.

1. *If the claim or concession is agreed, Law 69 applies.*

This is straightforward, it is clause two that will need careful attention from the players and the TD.

2. *If it is doubted by any player (dummy included); either*
 - (a) *the Director may immediately be summoned and no action should be taken pending his arrival, Law 70 applies; or*

This is a substantial change from 2007 Law 68D which stated that if the claim or concession was not agreed the Director must be summoned immediately. The 2017 Laws go on to outline the circumstances under which play may continue.

- (b) *upon the request of the non-claiming or non-conceding side, play may continue subject to the following:*
 - (i) *all four players must concur; otherwise the Director is summoned, who then proceeds as in (a) above.*

The lawmakers seem to be going along with what happens at many clubs when the non-claimers say “play on” and the claim or concession is simply ignored. Players will need to be educated as to the implications of playing on as the new law states:

- (ii) *the prior claim or concession is void and not subject to adjudication. Laws 16 and 50 do not apply, and the score subsequently obtained shall stand.*

So if they agree to playing on there is no redress at the end of the hand and Law 16 does not apply so any information obtained by the Claimer is AI. Note that the law says "*upon the request of the non-claiming or non-conceding side*" which would seem to mean that if Declarers claim is doubted he should not initiate playing on although this is what often happens even now in clubs. We have all heard a conversation along the lines of;

"The rest are mine."

"I'm not sure about that."

"OK, let's play them out."

As TDs we should be protecting less experienced players from being pushed into agreeing to play on when it might not be in their interest.

Law 68 D 2 b (i) Another important point to note is that all four players at the table, including Dummy, must agree to continuing play.

TDs also need to be clear that a careful reading of the 2017 Laws indicates that playing on is not an option we can offer when we are called to sort things out. The Laws simply tell us what happens if the players decide this among themselves.

LAW 69 AGREED CLAIM OR CONCESSION

Is largely unchanged except for the wording of the headings

A. When Agreement is Established becomes *Establishment of Agreement* and

B. Director's Decision becomes *Withdrawal of Agreement*

The only other change is that **A.** previously referred to a contestant but now refers to a side.

LAW 70 CONTESTED CLAIM OR CONCESSION

This law is also largely unchanged in 2017 except that Law 70 E 1 no longer includes the final phrase; "*unless failure to adopt that line of play would be irrational.*"

I believe this is an improvement which will simplify matters for TDs.

LAW 71 CONCESSION CANCELLED

Unchanged except that clauses 1 & 2 are now A & B.