

Changes in the New Laws

Robin Barker – 22 May 2017 – revised

Some laws have not changed, while some have changed a lot. Not all the changes impact how a TD will rule at the table but, for other laws, TDs will find themselves saying different words when they read the from the law book – and should listen to what they are saying.

Law that are unchanged:

2, 3, 5, 8, 18, 19, 33, 39, 44, 48, 52, 59, 71, 74, 76, 77, 82, 83, 84, 85, 88, 89.

Laws with minor wording changes or changes to cross-references only:

4, 10, 14, 21, 28, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 46, 49, 54, 55, 58, 60, 65, 78, 80, 81, 90, 92.

Law 1

More detailed requirements for design of cards – not all changes are an issue for the TD at the table.

Law 6

B. ... No two adjacent cards from the deck shall be dealt into the same hand. ...

This should help with answering questions from players about whether back-and-forth dealing is OK. TDs should observe the correct procedure when dealing substitute boards, etc.

Law 7

A. When a board is to be played it is placed in the centre of the table where it shall remain, correctly oriented, until play is completed

Some illegal signalling was transmitted by positioning of the board.

B3. ... No player shall touch any cards other than his own (...) during or after play except by permission of an opponent or the Director.

As a player, you can permit an opponent to touch your cards. But Law 66D still says “After play ceases, ... no player should handle cards other than his own.”

Law 9

A3. Any player, including dummy, may attempt to prevent an irregularity (but for dummy subject to Laws 42 and 43).

A4. Dummy may not call attention to an irregularity until play of the hand is concluded (but see Law 20F5 for correction of declarer’s apparently mistaken explanation).

I think these are rewording/clarification to avoid conflicts with the other laws mentioned.

Law 11

- A. ... *If a side has gained through subsequent action taken by an opponent in ignorance of the relevant provisions of the law, the Director adjusts only that side's score by taking away any accrued advantage. The other side retains the score achieved at the table.*

One of a number of examples where the new laws award a split score.

Law 12

Numerous changes.

C1(b) The Director in awarding an assigned adjusted score should seek to recover as nearly as possible the probable outcome of the board had the infraction not occurred.

James asked whether current practice of giving the benefit of the doubt to NOS when assigning weightings is not permitted under this new law. Discuss

C1(c) An assigned adjusted score may be weighted to reflect the probabilities of a number of potential results, but only outcomes that could have been achieved in a legal manner may be included.

Explicitly prohibiting "Reveley" rulings.

What was Law 12C1(b) on "Serious Error ... wild or gambling" is now Law 12C1(e) "an extremely serious error (...) or by a gambling action". EBU guidance on what constitutes an [extremely] serious error will have to be revisited; although the EBU guidance (White Book 8.12.5.3) may already anticipate "extremely". Clearly to be considered an "extremely serious error" under the new laws, it must have been a "serious error" under the old EBU guidance.

Changes in Law 12C2 allow variations in artificial adjusted scores for multiple instances of "failure to obtain a result". This is already done in EBU White Book regulations. Also see new Law 86B2

Law 13

Restructured/reworded. Ambiguity of the case of a surplus card has been resolved – this was discussed at the Panel Weekend in December 2016.

Law 15

What was Law 17D moved here. "Play of the Wrong Board" simplified – there is no longer the possibility of seating the correct opponents and seeing if they repeat the same calls; instead the wrong opponents get to complete the board.

Law 16

Clarifications (and some repetition).

B1(a) A player may not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorized information if the other call or play is a logical alternative.

The previous law appeared to allow an illogical alternative even if it was suggested by the unauthorised information. The new law prohibits any call [or play] if the alternative call [or play] is logical.

Law 17

Clarifications. Now includes end of auction period. Cards from wrong board moved to Law 15.

Law 20

F4(a) If a player realizes during the auction that his own explanation was erroneous or incomplete, he must summon the Director before the end of the Clarification Period and correct the misexplanation. He may elect to call the Director sooner, but he is under no obligation to do so.

This limits the opportunity of the NOS being able to use the knowledge that the OS has had a misunderstanding. Subsequently the NOS may get an adjustment on the basis of getting the correct explanation but not that there has been a misunderstanding.

Law 22

Definition of the end of auction period moved to Law 17.

Law 23

Defines “comparable calls”. Old Law 23 moved to Law 72C.

Law 24

The scope of this law is now “the auction” not the “auction period”. Cards exposed before the auction begins are mentioned in Law 16D1. Cards exposed after the end of the auction may be covered by Law 49.

- D. If the offender becomes declarer or dummy the cards are picked up and returned to the hand.*
- E. If at the conclusion of the auction the offender is to become a defender, every such card becomes a penalty card (see Laws 50 and 51).*

Part D applies in the case of part C but part E applies to any of parts A, B or C.

Law 25

- A1. If a player discovers that he has not made the call he intended to make, he may, until his partner makes a call, substitute the call he intended for the unintended call. The second (intended) call stands and is subject to the appropriate Law, but the lead restrictions in Law 26 do not apply.*

In A1, there is no “without pause for thought”.

- A2. *If the player's original intent was to make the call selected or voiced, that call stands. A change of call may be allowed because of a mechanical error or a slip of the tongue, but not because of a loss of concentration regarding the intent of the action.*

Item A2 distinguishes mechanical error from actions resulting from a lapse of concentration.

- A3. *A player is allowed to replace an unintended call if the conditions described in A1 above are met, no matter how he may have become aware of his error.*

Item A3 was a footnote, added after 2008.

Laws 26, 27 and 30, 31, 32

Rewritten, using "comparable calls". See separate presentation/paper.

Law 29

- B. *Unless A applies, a call out of rotation is cancelled and the auction reverts to the player whose turn it was to call. The offending side is subject to the provisions of Law 30, 31 or 32.*

Law 36

- C. *When attention is drawn to an inadmissible double or redouble only after the opening lead has been faced, the final contract is scored as if the inadmissible call had not been made.*

This is good. Unfortunately, there is no corresponding statement in Laws 37 or Law 39.

Law 40

- A4. *The agreed meaning of a call or play shall not alter by reference to the member of the partnership by whom it is made (this requirement does not restrict style and judgement, only method).*

This was a regulation for many Regulating Authorities (for example, EBU Blue Book 5A2) and is now law.

Lots of changes in Law 40B as to what agreements and variation of agreement may be regulated: see the Blue Book and White Book in August 2017 for any changes to EBU regulations.

Law 42

- A3. *He plays the cards of the dummy as declarer's agent as directed and ensures that dummy follows suit (see Law 45F if dummy suggests a play).*
- B2. *He may try to prevent any irregularity.*

Law 43

- A3. *A defender may not show dummy his hand.*

B3. *If dummy after his violation of the limitations listed in A2 is the first to draw attention to a defender's irregularity, there is no immediate rectification. Play continues as though no irregularity had occurred. At the end of play if the defending side has gained through its irregularity the Director adjusts only its score, taking away that advantage. The declaring side retains the score achieved at the table.*

Law 45

C4(b) *Declarer may correct an unintended designation of a card from dummy until he next plays a card from either his own hand or from dummy. A change of designation may be allowed after a slip of the tongue, but not after a loss of concentration or a reconsideration of action.*

Similar to the change to Law 25A: again "without pause for thought" has gone.

D2. *When it is too late to change dummy's wrongly placed card (see above), the play continues normally without alteration of the cards played to this or any subsequent trick. If the wrongly placed card was the first card of the trick, then the failure to follow suit to that card may now constitute a revoke (see Laws 64A, 64B7 and 64C). If the wrongly placed card was contributed to a trick already in progress and dummy thereby has revoked, see Laws 64B3 and 64C.*

When dummy has put the wrong card in the played position but it is too late to change, the card "played" by dummy becomes the card played to the trick. If it is the first card played to the trick, that card determines the suit led for purpose of revokes (and ownership of the trick.)

Law 47

Heading of Law 47C is "To Change an Unintended Designation"

Law 50

Law 50E rewritten. See separate presentation/paper.

Law 51

B2(c) *When a defender has penalty cards in more than one suit and his partner is to lead, declarer may elect not to require or prohibit a lead, in which case the defender's partner may lead any card and the penalty cards remain on the table as penalty cards¹⁶. If this option is selected Laws 50 and 51 continue to apply for as long as the penalty cards remain.*

¹⁶ *If the partner of the defender with the penalty cards retains the lead, then all the requirements and options of Law 51B2 apply again at the following trick.*

This item and footnote fill in gaps that may have been inferred from Law 50.

Law 53

¹⁷ *A lead out of turn at trick 13 must be retracted*

... and other minor changes.

Law 56

Now says something – not just “See Law 54D”.

Law 57

Extended: A4 and part D added; C1 expanded.

Law 61

- C. *A claim of a revoke does not automatically warrant inspection of quitted tricks (see Law 66C).*

Law 62

- A. *A player must correct his revoke if attention is drawn to the irregularity before it becomes established.*
- C3. *If both sides revoke on the same trick and only one side has played to the subsequent trick, then both revokes must be corrected (see Law 16C2). Every card withdrawn by the defending side becomes a penalty card.*
- D2. *If a defender revokes on the twelfth trick before his partner’s turn to play to the trick, Law 16C applies.*

These all address issues that have certainly occurred in training simulations if not in real life.

Law 63

- A4. *when agreement is established (as per Law 69A) to an opponent’s claim or concession; the offending side having raised no objection to it before the end of the round, or before making a call on a subsequent board.*

Law 64

Law 64C – added item 2, re two revokes:

- (a) *After repeated revokes by the same player in the same suit (see B2 above), the Director adjusts the score if the non-offending side would likely have made more tricks had one or more of the subsequent revokes not occurred.*
- (b) *When both sides have revoked on the same board (see B7 above) and the Director deems that a contestant has been damaged, he shall award an adjusted score based on the likely result had no revokes occurred.*

Law 66

- D. *... If the Director can no longer ascertain the facts after such a claim has been made, and only one side has mixed its cards, the Director shall rule in favour of the other side.*

Law 67

- B3. *When the Director determines that the offender did play a card to the trick, but that card was not placed among the quitted tricks, the Director finds the card and places it correctly among the offender's played cards. The Director shall award an adjusted score if the same card was played to a subsequent trick and it is too late to correct the illegal play.*

Law 68, 69, 70

Important changes. See separate presentation/paper.

Law 72

Law 23 moved to Law 72C.

Law 73

- C2. *A penalty may be assessed against a player who violates C1, but if the opponents have been damaged, see also Law 16B3.*

Explicit possibility for a penalty for violation of Law 73C1.

Law 75

Example removed.

Added part D, re misexplanation when there is no understanding:

- 1. Players are expected to disclose their partnership agreements accurately (see Law 20F1); failure to do so constitutes Misinformation.*
- 2. It is a condition of any partnership agreement that both players possess the same mutual understanding, and it is an infraction to describe an agreement where the same mutual understanding does not exist. If the Director determines that the misleading explanation was not based upon a partnership agreement, he applies Law 21B.*
- 3. When there is an infraction (as per B1 or D2) and sufficient evidence exists as to the agreed meaning of the call, the Director awards an adjusted score based upon the likely outcome had the opponents received the correct explanation in a timely manner. If the Director determines that the call has no agreed meaning, he awards an adjusted score based upon the likely outcome had the opponents been so informed.*

Law 79

- B3. If the Director is not called before the round ends, the score may be changed for both sides only when he is clearly convinced as to the result obtained at the table. Otherwise he should either allow the recorded score to stand, or decrease the score for one side without increasing it for the other.*

Law 86

Changes to what was Law 86D. See separate presentation/paper.

Law 87

Fouled boards at teams scoring moved to Law 86. Specifically, fouled boards at teams are covered by Law 86B2 – which is not the law item that was used in discussions at Prague!

Law 91

- B. The Director is empowered to disqualify a player or contestant for cause, subject to approval by the Tournament Organizer.*

Law 93

... committee (or authorized alternative) ...

Acknowledgement of new review procedures.