



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EBU LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE
HELD AT IMPERIAL HOTEL, RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON
ON WEDNESDAY MAY 14TH 2014**

Present:	Tim Rees (TR)	Chairman and Elected Member
	Mike Amos (MA)	Elected Member
	Robin Barker (RB)	Elected Member
	David Burn (DB)	Elected Member
	Jeremy Dhondy (JD)	EBU Chairman
	Grattan Endicott (GE)	Vice-President
	Frances Hinden (FH)	Vice Chairman and Elected Member
	Neil Morley (NM)	Elected Member
	Martin Pool (MP)	Elected Member
	Gordon Rainsford (GR)	Chief Tournament Director
	John Pain (JP)	Secretary

1	<i>Apologies for Absence</i>	Barry Capal (BC)	EBU General Manager
		Gerard Faulkner (GF)	Vice-President
		Ian Payn (IP)	EBU Vice Chairman

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2.1/2 ***Minutes of the previous meeting***

The minutes of the meeting of January 29th 2014 were approved and signed.
There were no corrections.

2.3 ***Matters arising***

2.3.1 ***Defining and determining fielded misbids***

FH introduced a paper on fielded misbids (Appendix A). There was concern that the current procedure doesn't work very well and is of dubious bridge legality. The application also varied amongst senior TDs who sometimes did not agree. Players often forget what they are playing and are embarrassed to tell the TD that is the case, so quite often players make something up. It is not illegal to forget. It was felt that sometimes a misbid might be fielded because of UI (e.g. from the speed of the misbid), but this should be dealt with under the UI regulations, not the fielded misbid regulation. It was acknowledged that UI in these cases is often not easy to pin down.

The Committee was keen not to have a long and complicated outcome for this item and it was felt that the current rules for unauthorised information and misinformation were adequate to replace the current setup.

The feeling of the meeting was to do away with the current regulation and it was left to DB to come up with a new suggestion in time for the next meeting. It was emphasised that there was no desire to replace the current regulations regarding the treatments of fielded psyches.

Action: David Burn

2.3.2 *Gross and manifest scoring errors*

RB had produced a new draft regulation to go into the 2014 White Book and this was approved by the Committee.

Replace in WB2.5.1

Gross and manifest scoring errors: This is the period referred to in Law 79C2 within which a contestant can challenge a gross and manifest error in scoring made by an official. No request for a change in score will be entertained once this period has expired under any circumstances. This does not cover errors such as entering a wrong score, which should have been found by checking at the time.”

with

Later scoring errors: This is the period referred to in Law 79C2 within which **certain scoring errors can be corrected**. No request for a change in score will be entertained once this period has expired under any circumstances. **The only errors which will be corrected in this period are errors introduced by the officials, and errors which have an impact on multiple scores (such as players sitting in the wrong direction in a Swiss match)**. This does not cover errors such as entering a wrong score, which should have been found by checking at the time.”

And replace later occurrences of “Gross and manifest scoring errors” with “Later scoring errors”.

It was noted that the revised regulation would not have solved the problem at the 2013 Tollemache QR, when an error was found after all of the correction periods had expired.

2.3.3 *The International Laws of Contract Bridge 2014 (Rubber Bridge Laws)*

The Secretary reported that a sub-committee of GR, JD and himself has assisted Giles Hargreave (Portland Club secretary) to produce the new rubber bridge laws which took effect on April 1st 2014. A copy of the new laws was shown to the Committee.

3 Appeals to the National Authority

None this time.

4 Disciplinary Cases

4.1 Wroxall

The secretary reported that the matter was ongoing and that the Club had not completed its own procedures. Consequently the Laws and Ethics committee would take no action at this stage.

4.2 Proclaimers

The Committee confirmed the decision of the previous Chairman and Vice Chairman to refer the case of a walk-out from the Autumn Congress to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee found the case proved and the following will appear in the August 2014 edition of *English Bridge*.

Member censured and fined

A Disciplinary Committee of the English Bridge Union recently considered a charge brought under Rule 3.2(v) of the EBU Disciplinary Rules against Mr Richard Cross. Mr Cross had walked out of the EBU Autumn Congress in October without notice after receiving a Tournament Director’s ruling with

which he disagreed. This caused inconvenience to other congress participants. Mr Cross did not deny the charge. The Disciplinary Committee fined Mr Cross £50 and asked for a letter of censure to be issued.

The fine has been paid and the matter is regarded as closed.

4.3 Queen

The Committee noted that the case against a member for non-payment of EBU entry fees in April 2012 had been sent to the Money Claim Online court. The court had given judgement in the EBU's favour. However the outstanding amount had still not been paid. All membership facilities for the member had previously been withdrawn and that remains in place.

The Secretary was to take advice on the next stage regarding recovery of the outstanding dues and also whether an EBU Disciplinary procedure set in motion, but halted when the court case was introduced, should be resurrected. The Secretary was asked to consult the EBU Honorary Counsel.

(Secretary's note: EBU Honorary Counsel confirmed that he saw no problem in pursuing action to recover the money and also take disciplinary proceedings.)

5 Technical Matters

5.1 Arrangements for amending the White Book 2014.

RB took the Committee through the changes he felt necessary for the updating of the WB for August 2014.

1.9.4.1 In Simple System events, Suggest replacing:

"Unless the Tournament Organiser specifies otherwise, any agreement that is part of 'old-fashioned simple Acol' is allowed, even if not shown on the card or in the published list."

with:

"If the Tournament Organiser accepts that an agreement is part of 'old-fashioned simple Acol', it is allowed, even if not shown on the card or in the published list."

Agreed: Passing responsibility to the Tournament Organiser was clearly correct for Simple System events.

2.5.1 The correction period for rulings applies to Law 71 (Concession Withdrawn) despite the reference in that law to "the Correction Period established under Law 79C".

Also Law 69B, and 81C.

After

"Rulings: This is the period referred to in Law 92B within which a contestant may ask for a ruling. No request for a ruling will be entertained once this period has expired."

add:

"(This includes rulings given under Law 69 or Law 71.)"

Agreed

2.5.1 and 2.5.4 Gross and manifest scoring errors – see 2.3.2 of these minutes. **Agreed.**

3.3.6 A teams match lost one stanza of two due to incorrect seating. They were confused by "entire stanza" in 3.3.6. I think the replacement scores only apply if only the entire round/match (between two teams) is lost.

Replace

"Suppose the teams sit incorrectly, such that an entire stanza or match is made void."

with

"Suppose the teams sit incorrectly, such that an entire round or match between the two teams is made void."

Agreed.

4.1.1.1/8.80.6.1 There was discussion about the definition of a session (Laws 4 and 8) and how average +/- should be calculated in the various types of multi-session event run by the EBU. For example in the National

Pairs National Final the event was played over three periods of prolonged play. In the first and second play periods two rotations of the movement were played, in the third period three rotations were played. It was agreed that the 14-board rotations did not comprise a session. In period one and two a playing period comprised 28 boards and in period three it was 42 boards. Should average +/- be calculated on that basis or should the event as a whole be considered one 'session' for this purpose?

It was already understood that in a Swiss Event, a single match constituted a 'session' for this purpose. What about teams leagues with matches played on several different days, ladder events or prolonged events where, for example, 'best 5 results from 10' to count? In the Corwen a short period was played on Sunday morning – did that constitute a 'session' for this purpose?

So it was necessary to define what a 'whole stage of a competition' meant. It was suggested that two common examples should illustrate what was envisaged for the WB and, where necessary, event specific guidelines would be included in the printed programmes.

Whatever was finally decided, it was important that the scoring software calculated the scores as per the regulation.

8.21.3 WBF minute to be included

Law 21B2 – When a player elects not to change a call because of misinformation, Law 16D will still apply. The situation is analogous to the withdrawal of an original call followed by the subsequent replacement of the same call. Information arising from inferences that only become available because of the correction of misinformation is authorized to the non-offending side, but unauthorized to the offending side.

8.12.3/8.90.3 8.90.3 (c) should be 6 IMPs. Agreed

Editorial changes

1.6.+	Add index entries for "matches played privately"
3 (intro)	The text before 3.1 applied when this part was "Regulations General/Normal". Whatever the text means, it does not apply now. Delete.
3.1.1/2	"calculator on the EBU website" (twice) should be a hyperlink to http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales
3.7.1	"20-50" should be "20-60"
3.3.10	This section is hard to find by searching or index: change "electronic scorer" to "BridgeMate" and index under "BridgeMate"
7.2.9.3	"rake" should be "rack".
8.12.2	The last sentence "See 8.69.2" only applies to the previous sentence: re-punctuate.
8.93.1	"they believes" should be "they believe"

Agreed

5.2 Arrangements for amending the Blue Book 2014.

FH had identified a small number of amendments which the Committee agreed:

4H2 (h) change 'might show up to 12 HCP' to 'might contain more than 10 HCP'.

7 A 3 change to "A one-level opening bid in a suit, whether forcing or not, must by agreement..." (current drafting implies that 1NT must also be Ro18)

7B3(i) add the word 'continuous' to read 'Natural non-forcing with a continuous defined range'.

7 C 1 (iv). Reword as follows:

1) At least five cards in a suit, specified or not, which may not be the suit opened, and/or

2) At least 5-4 in two suits, either or both of which may be specified or not, neither of which may be the suit opened.

Level 5 I think we agreed to move to be in line with WBF/EBL policy (although still allowing anything legit at level 4 including any defence to a short club) which means making the following changes/updates:

under definitions: Average Hand: a hand containing 10 high card points (Milton Work) with no distributional values

9 A 2 (e) becomes: An opening bid at the one level shows either length in one specified suit or length in another.

At the end of **9 A 3 (a)** remove the whole sentence with the reference to AKQxxx(x)

5.3 *WBF disciplinary case*

The Committee noted that a case reported in the national press involving two German players was now likely to be the subject of an appeal. So the reciprocity between the EBU and EBL would not yet be effective. The EBU has not yet been formally informed of the case or its outcome.

5.4 *On line discussion of hands subject to appeal*

An appeal had been lodged at the National Pairs final. It arose late in the day when a committee could not be found so was handled by a referee who took it away to decide. In the meantime there was discussion on on-line forums initiated by the appellant before the decision had been made. This was not thought to be appropriate and, in the same way that discussion of live appeals is restricted in face to face cases, discussion on line should not happen either. The policy needs to be clarified on this and FH would liaise with BBO and GR would bring it to TDs attention.

It was also noted that panel TDs were not permitted to comment about sub judice matters on on-line forums etc and that doing so was a breach of the TD code of conduct.

GR said that he contributed to forums in a personal capacity. He asked whether he should be disclosing that he is the Chief TD of the EBU and stating that he is not writing in an official capacity. The committee felt that this was not necessary.

5.5 *Blue Book anomalies*

GR asked the Committees opinion of whether the final call in these sequences was alertable or not:

a) 2♥ (P) 3♦ (non forcing)

The Committee said that the forcing and constructive meanings both show values, so aren't alertable. A weak 3♦ that could be done on nothing, and as such is unexpected and therefore alertable.

Ruling: Natural 3♦ non-forcing is not alertable.

b) 1NT (2♠) 3♦ (forcing)

Surprisingly, this is quoted in the Blue Book as alertable. It was agreed that this was played by significant numbers as forcing and non-forcing, so neither is unexpected and neither should be alertable. An alert here would indicate something unexpected, e.g. a transfer to hearts.

c) 1♠ dble 2♦ (non forcing)

Forcing is the expected meaning. Non-forcing is now unexpected and alertable. An alert could also indicate a transfer to hearts.

6. Applications for new permitted methods

The Committee considered the applications received by the closing date of February 28th to take effect on August 1st.

6.1 Light one level openers (Alex Mathers).

(a) Request to open one of a suit on Rule of 17 hands (subject to a minimum of 7 HCPs) – **Not approved.**

(b) Request to open 1NT non-vulnerable on hands with 7 to 11 HCPs – **Not approved.**

The committee had decided upon an absolute minimum for opening bids and were not inclined to change their view.

6.2 2-way 1NT openings (Ken Ferguson). This was an enquiry rather than a request. Could a 1NT opening be either 10-11 HCP or 15-17 HCPs. Under BB 7B3(i) this was not considered to be 'a defined range'. The Blue Book would be modified by insertion of the word 'contiguous' to avoid any possible further confusion.

6.3 K D Joshi system (Prakash Paranjape). In this method opening one-level bids show specific point ranges with no relation to the holding in the suit opened. It was noted that point count responses are already permitted, but not opening bids. The Committee had no desire to alter this. **Not approved.**

6.4 Resubmissions by Mike Wemble previously made in 2012 prior to the major rewriting of the Blue Book regarding multi-meaning jump overcalls with no anchor suit. **Not approved.**

6.5 Semi-strong Club (Roger Bryant). This was a request for a reduction in the ER25 regulation from 16 HCP to 15 HCP for those playing Strong Club systems to allow players to promote semi-balanced 15-point hands to a strong club. The Committee considered this very carefully and there were those who would like a reduction to ER24 (which would allow some 15 point hands in but not all) and the status quo. A vote was tied at 3-3 and the Chairman cast his vote to maintain the status quo. **Not approved.**

6.6 Stevenson 1♠ opening at Level 5 (David Stevenson) – The Committee noted that this had lapsed when the regulations had been amended last year. However it did not fall within either the WBF regulations or the EBU Level 4 regulations and the Committee had no desire to introduce 'one offs' into Level 5. **Not Approved.**

7. Reports from Tournament Directors

7.1 Psyche and appeal forms

13.083 London Year End Swiss Pairs

The Committee considered a hand where the Appeal Committee had reached a unanimous decision to uphold the TD's ruling with little or no discussion. They indicated that there were mitigating circumstances for returning the deposit, but couldn't identify any specific circumstances to justify returning the deposit.

TR said he would contact the Appeal Committee chairman to remind him of the need to retain deposits where the appeal had little or no merit.

Action: TR

14.007 Portland Pairs

The Committee considered a hand where the player (whose bid had been questioned) had made some inappropriate comments on the report of hand form. GR undertook to write to the player concerned.

Action: GR

8 *Date of next meeting*

Wednesday October 1st 2014 at 1pm.

Venue is Baker Tilly office, 2 Bloomsbury Street, London.

The meeting closed at 5pm

Appendix A

Fielded Misbids

The current White Book contains the following regulations relating to misbids in section 1.4 (relevant wording extracted here):

A misbid is an inadvertent mis-statement of honour strength and/or suit length.

Players are required to disclose their agreements, both explicit and implicit. If a player believes, from partnership experience, that partner may have deviated from the system this must be disclosed to the opponents. If a player properly discloses this possibility, the player will not be penalised for fielding it, although there may be a penalty for playing an illegal method.

A partnership's actions following a misbid may provide evidence of a CPU, but they are less likely to do so because of the lack of intent to mislead. As with psyches, misbids may be classified as red, amber or green.

Because of the difference between the player's understanding of their call and any alerts and answers to questions by their partner it is quite common for unauthorised information problems to be present.

After the board is completed the TD may judge a ... misbid is red. If their opponents have a 60% score or better, or have gained 3 IMPs or more, the result stands unchanged. Otherwise, the result is cancelled, and the board re-scored as average plus to the opponents, average minus to the pair. Normally this translates as 3 IMPs, or 60%/40%.

There are four problems with this regulation.

- (i) It has dubious legality. When you 'field' your partner's misbid, in some cases the only infraction may be MI which might well not have led to any damage. There is thus no reason at all under L12 to cancel the result.
- (ii) It is not applied consistently by TDs. Email discussions between Mike Amos, Gordon Rainsford and Robin Barker have covered hands where these senior directors do not agree on whether the regulation should be applied or not.
- (iii) If applied strictly as written, it could lead to some absurd consequences with boards being cancelled after no obvious infraction. For example, consider the auction 1♥ (1♠) P (2♠) P P dbl all pass. Opener says, on being asked "our system file says explicitly that all doubles below game on any auction are for take-out." Opener passes the double with a void spade. The opponents are not damaged in the play (the opening lead is the SQ on which opener discards). Opener has clearly 'fielded' his partner's double which was intended and interpreted as penalties. Perhaps responder also says, "I knew it was supposed to be take-out but thought you would work it out".
- (iv) It isn't necessary. The MI and UI laws seem to work perfectly well, together with the regulation on illegal conventions. For the "cheating Ghestem" auction, it's illegal to play (1S) 3C as either clubs or the red suits, so you can still cancel the board if required. Otherwise, adjust based on MI (or possibly UI) if there is damage, and not otherwise.