



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EBU LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE  
HELD AT YOUNG CHELSEA BRIDGE CLUB,  
54 GOLDHAWK ROAD, SHEPHERDS BUSH, LONDON W12 8HA  
ON WEDNESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016**

<b>Present:</b>	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
	Richard Fleet (RF)	Elected Member
	Frances Hinden (FH)	Vice Chairman and Elected Member
	Martin Pool (MP)	Elected Member
	Gordon Rainsford (GR)	Chief Tournament Director
	John Pain (JP)	Secretary

**1A** The Secretary opened the meeting and called for nominations for Chairman for 2015-2016. FH proposed Tim Rees as Chairman, seconded by RF. With no other nominations TR was declared elected and took the chair. RB proposed Frances Hinden as Vice Chairman, seconded by TR. With no other nominations FH was declared elected.

**1B** The Chairman welcomed Richard Fleet to his fourth term as a committee member and Mike Amos who was re-elected at the recent AGM. TR thanked Neil Morley for his years of service on the committee.

**1C** **Apologies for Absence**

Barry Capal (BC)	EBU General Manager
Ian Payn (IP)	EBU Vice Chairman

**1D** **Terms of Reference for the L&E Committee**

The terms were confirmed (unchanged) for the coming year. JD said that the Board would be discussing revised proposals for the Standing Committees at its meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>, with a view to putting recommendations to the Shareholders on May 12<sup>th</sup>. The proposals would be made available to all the Standing Committees so that they could comment on them before the meeting in May.

**2**

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

The minutes of the meeting of October 14<sup>th</sup> 2015 were approved and signed.

**2.3** **Matters arising**

2.3.1 League Regulations

FH produced the final version of the model regulations ; these are attached to these minutes. She said that although not exactly an L&E matter, the committee had produced the guidelines to assist any organisers of league tournaments where rules did not currently exist. There was no requirement for leagues to change their existing rules.

The secretary would approach Peter Stockdale about promulgation. The committee thanked FH for the work she had put into the regulations.

[Action: JP, Peter Stockdale]  
Appendix A

### **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 Merseyside Bridge League**

The L&E Committee had been asked to assist with a complaint from a member which he felt had not been dealt with by the league organisers. Following a number of email exchanges the matter had been resolved. The papers were put to file.

The case did raise an issue around the status of the league, which had been a 'District' league prior to the introduction of universal membership in 2010. As the league was not affiliated to Merseyside and Cheshire the default position is that the Regulating Authority for the League is the EBU itself.

#### **4.3 Ultravox**

The committee had launched an investigation , however there was no decision on whether to proceed to a charge.

#### **4.4 New case: Vangelis**

A hearing had been arranged for January 29<sup>th</sup>

#### **4.5 Dispute between a member and his club**

A member had been in dispute with his club and, after several months, had been sanctioned by the club. The member had asked the L&E committee to intervene. The member had been told on numerous occasions that the EBU would not become involved until the club's disciplinary procedures had been completed. However the member persisted and after exchange of many emails TR sent a final letter proposing a solution to the matter.

#### **4.6 Use of the NGS opt-out facility by club TDs and Hosts**

GR said that a letter had been sent to clubs reminding them that the facility within the NGS scheme for a TD or Host to opt out of the result of a session had to be used at the start of the session. It was not to be used to selectively opt-out of sessions where a poor score had been recorded.

*Extract from the Full NGS Guide:*

*Can a "host" player have an event excluded from the scheme?*

*A "host" player together with his/her partner may opt to be excluded from the grade calculations of any particular event. This is limited to one player or pair per event, is at the discretion of the event organiser, and the pair must express their intention to opt out before the start of the event.*

*Bear in mind that players new to the grading scheme are assumed to have a below average grade, and the grade calculation for this event for them and their partner will take account of this.*

MA said that clubs also needed to be aware of possible abuses with other technology such as the ability to alter scores on the BridgeMate even when locked by the TDs passcode. GR said it was not acceptable for players to make multiple attempts to guess the TDs passcode for the BridgeMate. Members are reminded that every action at the BridgeMate is recorded in the BM Log file so actions can be traced.

## 5 Technical Matters

### 5.1 System Cards

It was agreed that the time had come to remove references to the old EBU20A as an acceptable system card to use. The sentence referring to it would be deleted from the Blue Book in August.

[Action: FH]

It was also agreed to add a 'standard lead' from five small cards to the current 20B System Card. This will be shown on the on-line version of the card as x x x x x for both suit and NT contracts. However cards used at tournaments will not have this printed for some while as the EBU Shop still holds a large stock of the unamended cards.

### 5.2 Alerting in a satisfactory way (with and without screens)

#### Events played with screens

FH introduced this topic. She said she wasn't sure whether any changes to screen regulations were the L&E or the Selection Committee's responsibility although the Selection Committee had agreed to use the WBF regulations. Screen regulations required players to place their alert card on their screen-mate's part of the bidding tray and wait for the opponent to give it back, however FH said that hardly anybody did this and a more casual approach was generally used. This did not normally cause a problem until the screen-mate was not looking.

DB said that during the recent Venice Cup in Chennai a member of the English Ladies team had been ruled against for not alerting in the correct way when a member of the USA team claimed not to have seen the alert.

MA said that he regularly reminded players at the start of events of the correct procedure. GR said that it would be written in to the Conditions of Contest for screen events, so that players would be deemed to know of the correct procedure.

MA highlighted other areas where screen protocols were frequently flouted: removing cards from the board before the flap was down and not using written questions and answers being the main areas. It is not normal to impose procedural penalties for failing to follow the regulations, but if a problem occurs, players failing to follow regulations will often lose the benefit of the doubt.

#### Events played without screens

Blue Book 4A8 / White Book 1.3.1 says it is the responsibility of the alerting player to ensure that **both** of his opponents are aware of the alert. GR said that some opponents were so engrossed in their own world that in spite of strenuous efforts by the alerting player, some alerts were still missed and then a claim was made that no alert had been made. It was agreed to amend the wording in BB4A8/WB1.3.1 to reflect the alerting player's effort.

Suggested new wording: The alerting player must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that BOTH opponents are aware of the alert.

### 5.3 2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge

GR said that during the production of 2017 laws it would be useful for the EBU to liaise with the Portland Club as to the size and format of the laws. The committee was happy for GR and JP to do this when the time came.

It was suggested that something of the robustness of the EBU diary combined with the size of the current ACBL version (17.5cm x 10.5cm) would be appropriate.

### 5.4 National and Senior TDs weekend

GR said that an extra training weekend for National and Senior TDs had taken place over the weekend of January 2/3. They had discussed several areas of interest. In addition to issues arising from the scoring of events the panel considered the application of Law 27 – insufficient bid, and the best approach to polling and consulting players before making a ruling. GR said that the WBF Laws Committee was discussing how best to proceed with Law 27 but appeared to be running into similar difficulties to those encountered during the preparation of the current 2007 laws.

FH said she was frequently polled by TDs and TDs tended to use people they knew. She said that those being polled did need to know the 'class of player' involved. TR said that, as an appeals chairman, it would be useful to know precisely what questions were asked by TDs of those being polled. It was agreed that, where possible, the poll question used should be written.

There are two papers Appendix B and C attached to these minutes, summarising the discussions at the TD weekend. **[Appendix B & C]**

### 5.5 2012 Appeals Booklet

The booklet for 2012 had been completed and was on the website. JP said that he was now working on the 2013 booklet and hoped to have responses back by the end of February with a view to having it completed by the end of March.

On the 2012 booklet, RF said that in a number of examples players were using complicated methods, making mistakes by not knowing those methods but still getting away with a ruling in their favour. He said that if players used complicated methods they should know them and be penalised when they get them wrong. GR said there was no legal basis in bridge law which said that players should be penalised for forgetfulness. However, in many of the cases, use of UI or MI will result in the score being changed.

### 5.6 Frivolous appeals

There was discussion on how to cut down frivolous appeals. There had been a number in the recently completed Premier League and Senior Trials where sponsored teams had appealed rulings, completely without merit. The loss of the deposit was irrelevant in a number of cases and it was felt that the prospect of a more tangible penalty might deter such appeals.

It was proposed by JD and seconded by RF that the committee should consider a system to withhold some number of scoring units in addition to or instead of retaining the deposit. Carried *nem con*.

TR would draft some regulations for consideration at the next meeting, with a view to implementing it for a season. **[Action: TR]**

### 5.7 MI from 'no agreement'

There was discussion on how to proceed when players said 'no agreement' in response to a question, but then attempted to clarify (usually in an attempt to be helpful) by using statements such as 'no agreement but I'm taking it as .....' or 'no agreement but he is likely to have ....'. While the first is definitely unacceptable, the second could be unhelpful and dangerous although knowledge from similar auctions in the past might be helpful. Players should give all relevant information from partnership experience and any general agreements but should not guess what a call might mean because of the possibility of misinformation.

**5.8 White Book issues**

RB highlighted a number of items that had come his way for inclusion in the 2016 White Book.

**6. Applications for new permitted methods**

Not covered this time.

**7. Reports from Tournament Directors**

**7.1 Psyche and appeal forms**

There were no comments on hand reports, other than those used to amplify points raised earlier in the meeting.

**7.2 Review of disciplinary penalties for 2015**

The committee considered the list for 2015, but no further action was required in any case.

**8 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday May 25<sup>th</sup> at 1.15pm.

Venue is Young Chelsea Bridge Club, Goldhawk Rd, Shepherds Bush

The meeting closed at 5.05pm

DRAFT

## League Competitions: Template Regulations

## Appendix A

### Preface

Many Counties and other organisations run League events. The English Bridge Union (EBU) does not directly organise any similar competition. This template is offered as a starting point or reference for anyone organising a League. It attempts to cover all the areas which in our experience can cause a dispute if the rules are not laid out clearly. There are three ways you may wish to make use of this document:

1. Take these regulations as the basis and make any amendments or changes necessary for the specific circumstances of your event;
2. take note of all the topics covered and ensure your regulations also cover them;
3. add a clause to your regulations stating that for any circumstance not covered, these regulations will apply or refer to particular sections.

The EBU also provides a League Management System, available through the My EBU members' area. Existing results can be seen at <http://www.ebu.co.uk/leagues>

### Document Structure

Leagues are typically played either at a specified club or privately with the 'home' team having to provide a venue. Some events have a specified date (or range of dates) for each match; others simply provide the draw and leave teams to organise all their matches within a period of, say, six months.

To account for these variations, some sections in this document are enclosed in curly brackets { } and marked as alternatives: when adopting these regulations for your own use delete those sections that do not apply.

Square brackets are used to highlight content which the Organiser needs to supply.

Teams of eight have some special considerations. At the end of the document I have suggested alternative or additional wording for those sections affected.

The League organiser may wish to include some of the relevant sections from the White Book explicitly within these regulations, notably the VP Scale to be used, and (for teams of eight) the modified IMPs scale if required and the procedure for dealing with missing results and adjusted scores (parts of sections 3.7). These depend on the form of scoring.

Any enquiries regarding these regulations should be addressed to  
The Secretary, Laws & Ethics Committee  
EBU, Broadfields  
Bicester Road  
Aylesbury HP19 8AZ

☎: 01296 317228 or email [lecsec@ebu.co.uk](mailto:lecsec@ebu.co.uk)

Frances Hinden  
January 2016

## 1. Introduction

The League is run by [Utopia County Bridge Association]. Any enquiries should be sent to the Organiser at [1 Paradise Road, email Wotan@utopia.org]

## 2. General

These regulations describe arrangements for the League. They are supplementary to the general regulations contained in various EBU publications (such as the Blue Book), and in some cases replace them. All the general EBU regulations continue to apply unless over-ridden by more specific regulations, or stated otherwise.

The EBU White Book (<http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/white-book>) and the Regulations for Knock-Out Competitions (<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/competitions/regulations-and-conditions-of-contest/knockout-regs.pdf>) contain a number of regulations for EBU events which also apply to this league. These cover (among other matters) smoking, mobile phones, accommodating disabled players, spectators and split tie procedures. They also have more detail for complex areas such as the treatment of fouled boards and the procedure for rulings and appeals.

In the event of any circumstance arising not covered by these regulations nor by any EBU regulation the Organiser may add to or amend these regulations as required.

## 3. Entry

Entry is open to all members of [Utopia] in good standing. Teams may have up to [eight] registered players. Additional players up to the maximum may be added at any time by notifying the Organiser. No player may represent more than one team during the season.

The draw and schedule can be found at [[www.utopia.org/league](http://www.utopia.org/league)]. Entry costs [£10 per team] Entries should be sent to the Organiser by [30 September].

*{if there are multiple divisions:*

There are [two] divisions. The first division has [eight] teams. At the end of the season the winning team in division two will be promoted to division one, and the last team in division one will be relegated to division two.<sup>1</sup>

A new team will play in division two. In order to retain their place in division one in the following season, a team must either (i) retain at least three players who each played at least half of the matches, or (ii) retain at least four players.}

## 4. Scoring

Matches are [24 boards played in two sets of 12]. Scoring is IMPs converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale<sup>2</sup> which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales>.

[Blue Points] will be awarded. [The winning team in each division receives a prize of £50 and the winner of Division 1 will receive the trophy for one year.]

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<sup>1</sup> There are many possible ways of handling multiple divisions and promotion/relegation (such as play-offs); the default approach for new teams may depend on the total number of divisions, whether the number of teams in each division is fixed or whether other teams pull out.

<sup>2</sup> League organisers may specify the use the continuous scale found at the same location.

## 5. Permissible Systems

Partnership understandings permitted at 'Level 4' as set out in the current EBU Blue Book are permitted.

## 6. Arranging Matches

The first named team in the draw are the home team.

*{for a league played at a fixed venue(s) on fixed dates}:*

Matches must be played at [Utopia Bridge Club] on the dates shown in the schedule. Table money is £[4] per player.

If a captain is unable to raise a team for one match, he may ask the opposing captain for it be rearranged as long as he gives at least one week's notice. Re-arranged matches must be played at [Utopia Bridge Club] after the first date, and on or before the last date, of the season. Any team that rearranges more than one match during the season will be fined 4 VPs per match after the first. In the event of difficulty finding an alternative date the Organiser will adjudicate but the onus is on the offending side to be accommodating. If less than one week's notice is provided, the non-offending team is awarded the match (see section 11).

*{for a league played as home or away at venues provided by the players}*

Matches should be played from [October to April (June for Division 1)] The draw specifies the month(s) when it expected that each match should be played. The captains are expected to agree a suitable date and starting time. Any match that cannot be played during the specified period can be played at another date amenable to both teams as long as it is played by [30 June] and the Organiser is informed.

In the event of difficulty arranging a date the Organise will, if necessary, adjudicate based on the number of suitable dates each captain has offered and their timeliness in replying to messages. A 'suitable' date is a weekday evening during the specified period for playing the match given with at least 10 days' notice. (Note there is no requirement to play on a weekday evening if both captains agree otherwise.) The Organiser will typically deem one team to have defaulted and award a VP result as specified in section 11.

The venue must be [in Utopia (old boundaries)] unless both captains agree otherwise. If the match is played at a club, the home team will pay any table money due.

The home team is expected to provide refreshments for both teams and to provide playing conditions similar to or better than those found in a duplicate club (such as suitable lighting, boards, bidding boxes, paper and a copy of the IMP scale). Exceptions, such as not using bidding boxes, should be agreed by the captains beforehand.

### 6.1 Substitutions

A substitute is only allowed with the explicit agreement of the Organiser. No substitute that is a significantly better player than the team member they are substituting will be allowed. At the discretion of the Organiser a member of a team from the same or a lower division may be allowed as a substitute.

### 6.2 Exceptional Circumstances

The Organiser may allow other arrangements for matches or ask for a match to be rearranged in exceptional circumstances such as illness or extreme weather conditions but teams are encouraged to find substitute or additional players if at all possible.



## **7. Dealing**

Boards are dealt at the table in the presence of at least one player from each team. Pre-duplicated boards may be used instead as long as both captains are satisfied with the security arrangements.

## **8. Seating Rights**

The home team may choose which opponents it plays in the first half. When two teams of four play in fixed partnerships, there is a compulsory change of opponents at half time. If one or both teams have more than four players or wish to swap partnerships, the away team have seating rights for the second half. This is subject to the condition that the same four players must not play against each other for the entire match.

## **9. Reporting Results**

It is the responsibility of the winning captain, or the home captain in case of a draw, to enter the results via the [Utopia.org](http://Utopia.org) website or if unable to do so, to send the results to the Organiser within two days of the match being played. The names of all participating players must be included. No correction of scores is allowed after the captains have agreed the result.

## **10. Irregularities**

### **10.1 Late Arrival and Non-Arrival**

If a team is more than 30 minutes late without notification, or more than 90 minutes late having notified late arrival, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. If any member of a team is present within 30 minutes of the starting time that constitutes 'notification'.

After 30 minutes of delay, whether notified or not, the match is reduced by 2 boards and for each further complete 15 minute period the match is again reduced by 2 boards. The maximum number of boards that can be removed is eight (which occurs after 75 minutes of late arrival). If both teams are late, the 30 minutes starts from the time all the members of the first team are present.

It is preferable for an equal number of boards to be removed from each stanza of the match, but if one table can start play the non-offending side may choose to remove boards only from the first half. The non-offending side is awarded 3 IMPs per board removed but the match is still scored using the 24-board VP scale.

If a player has to leave early due to an emergency, the unplayed boards are treated in the same way as with late arrival. If there are more than eight boards still to play, section 11 below applies.

### **10.2 Fouled or Cancelled Boards**

In the event that both pairs in a team sit in the same polarity in one stanza, the score for that set will be zero. The stanza that has been completed will determine the score according to the [24]-board VP scale. Both pairs at the table are equally responsible for making sure that they sit in the correct positions.

If a board is fouled or cancelled for whatever reason in the first stanza of the match, a substitute board is added to the second half with the same dealer and vulnerability. If a board is fouled or cancelled in the second stanza of the match a substitute board may only be played if no player is aware of any of the results from the other table.

The captains should be aware that Law 86D may apply.

## **11. Unplayed or Incomplete Matches and Withdrawal**

If a match has to be abandoned due to unforeseen circumstances with neither team at fault, then:

- (i) if at least half of the boards have been played at both tables, the match is considered complete and the VP scale for the number of completed boards is used;
- (ii) if fewer than half of the boards have been completed, the captains should endeavour to replay the match completely. If this is not possible, the Organiser will adjudicate a result.

A team is considered not to be at fault if its home venue becomes unavailable during the match (e.g. due to a power cut) unless a member of the team was the direct cause of the problem.

If a team is awarded a match, for example under rules 6 or 10, it will receive the highest of 12 VPs, its average across all the other matches it plays during the season, or the final average of all other teams in matches played against the defaulting team. Artificial VP scores from other defaulted matches are not included in this calculation.

If a team 'concedes' a match having played at least half the boards, the non-offending side get the higher of their score under the preceding paragraph or their VP score for the match assuming they score +3 IMPs on each of the unplayed boards.

The defaulting team always receives 0 VPs.

If a team withdraws from the league having played fewer than half its scheduled matches, all results against the team are removed. If the team has played at least half its scheduled matches, results in the remaining matches are calculated using the preceding rule for defaulted matches.

The organiser may impose the penalty of non-entry in the following season on some or all the members of a team that defaults on a match or withdraws during the season.

## **12. Rulings**

*{for matches played at a specified venue}*

A non-playing TD will usually be available at the venue. If no TD is available, a suitably qualified player present but not playing in the match will give a ruling of first instance.

*{for matches played privately}*

The section on 'Rulings In Matches Played Privately' in the EBU Regulations for Knock-Out Competitions applies and covers all circumstances not described here.

The equivalent of summoning the Director is to inform one's opponents at the table that one wishes to have a ruling. If a ruling is required, then in the first instance the Captains may agree on an outcome. If they cannot agree, they should contact [Utopia's Chief TD] or an EBU Tournament Director or EBU Referee (contact details are available on the EBU website).

If it is impossible to obtain a ruling at the time, the captains should submit details of the hand to the Organiser who will arrange a ruling in the days following the match.

### **13. Appeals**

A ruling may be appealed by either captain as long as this is within 12 hours of receiving the original ruling. [The Utopia Appeals process applies / Details of the hand, the original ruling, comments from both sides and contact details for the players should be sent in writing to the Organiser including a request for an appeal to be held. The Organiser will ask at least three players of good standing within the [County] to act as an appeals committee. There is [no deposit] required for an appeal. If it is not possible to form a disinterested committee of suitable standard, the Organiser may ask any member of the EBU panel of Referees, as listed on the EBU website, to hear the appeal.

Note that amendments to the regulations on venue may be required if two locations are used for each match.

{A for matches played as two separate teams of four}

#### 4. Scoring

Each team of four plays a separate match of [24 boards played in two sets of 12]. Scoring is by IMPs. The net IMP result from the two matches combined is converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale<sup>3</sup> for a match of [48] boards which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales>.

##### 10.1 Late Arrival or Non-Arrival *additional text*

Each team of four is considered to be playing an independent match. One of the two matches should start play as soon as one team from each side is present.

If one team of four is late, up to eight boards may be removed from their match and scored as defined below.

If one team of four does not arrive within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time the other match is played as usual, but the unplayed match is scored as + 24 IMPs to the non-offending team (and – 24 IMPs to the offending team).

{B for matches played as one team of eight}

#### 4. Movement and Scoring

The away team sits for the first set, with two pairs NS (at tables 1 and 3) and two pairs EW (at tables 2 and 4). The home team have seating rights for the first stanza. The away team remains stationary for the match while the home team moves. The match is played in four stanzas of [6] boards each, with scoring after [12] boards. The movement is as follows:

Stanza 1: Tables 1 and 2 play [1-6] (sharing boards); tables 3 and 4 play [7-12].

Stanza 2: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap places, as do the home team pairs at tables 3 and 4. The boards are also swapped, so that tables 1 and 2 play [7-12] and 3 and 4 play [1-6].

Stanza 3: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap with their counterparts who were at tables 3 and 4. Tables 1 and 2 play boards [13-18] and tables 3 and 4 play boards [19-24].

Stanza 4: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap places, as do the home team pairs at tables 3 and 4. Tables 1 and 2 play boards [19-24] while tables 3 and 4 play boards [13-18].

Note that there can be no discussion of the hands after the first or third stanza, only at the scoring break and at the end of play.

*{If more than one set of boards can be duplicated it is simpler to have all four tables playing the same boards for each stanza with the home team moving up one table at each break, however sharing six boards between four tables is unacceptably slow.}*

Scoring is by {cross-imps} / {adding up the four scores and using the modified IMPs scale in the White Book section 3.7.1} converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale<sup>3</sup> which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales>. {the White Book explains which VP scale to use depending on the form of scoring}

<sup>3</sup> League organisers may specify the use the continuous scale found at the same location.

### **10.1 Late Arrival or Non-Arrival *additional text***

If it is known that one or two pairs from a team of eight will not arrive within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time, the non-offending captain may choose either to claim a default (scored as in Section 11) or to play a teams-of-four match. The two captains may each choose which of their pairs play which stanzas and which (if any) players will leave without playing.

The match is scored using IMPs converted to VPs using the discrete [24] board VP scale. The non-offending side is awarded an additional +24 IMPs (and the offending side -24 IMPs).

One or two pairs from a team of eight may be more than thirty minutes late but still expected to arrive before the first stanza is completed or within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time. In that event the match should be started with those pairs present. The non-offending side's captain has seating rights for the first stanza (this over-rides the usual seating rights). If only two pairs are present, one should sit EW and the other NS.

*{when scored by Cross-Imps: The non-offending side scores +4 IMPs for each board with two missing comparisons (one missing pair) or +5 IMPs for each board with three missing comparisons (two missing pairs), up to a maximum of {the lesser of} eight boards or one complete stanza. An artificial score is calculated to be used in place of the missing comparisons using the formula in the White Book section 3.7.2.2.*

If the missing players have not arrived before the start of the second stanza, the match is continued as a team-of-four match for the remaining boards. The [24] board VP scale for teams of four is used, with the IMP result from the first stanza divided by eight before converting the final result to VPs.}

*{when scored as 'add then IMP': Boards with only two results are scored normally. If there are three results available on a board, an artificial score is calculated to be used in place of the missing comparison using the formula in the White Book section 3.7.2.3. In addition, the non-offending side receives +2 imps for each board where there is one missing score, and +3 imps for each board where there are two missing scores.*

If the missing pair have not arrived in time for the second stanza, the match is continued as a teams-of-four match, using the normal IMP scale and the [24] board VP scale.}

*{C for matches played as teams of eight using 'IMP then Add'}*

### **10.2 Fouled or Cancelled Boards *additional text***

If a board is fouled having already been played two or three times, a score is calculated for the board as in section 10.1 above for late arrival. An additional IMP adjustment may be given as in that section if only one team is deemed to be the offending side.

## Law 27 – recommended approach

## Appendix B

At the senior TDs' weekend at the start of this year we discussed the way we think this law should be handled in practice. It is widely regarded as a most unsatisfactory law but we are stuck with it for a couple more years or so, and we have no guarantee that it will be much improved even then. In the years since its introduction the initial recommendations we were given have been affected by other developments and we now have a situation where TDs are not consistent in their method of applying the law, which is not desirable.

At the weekend we divided into two groups – those who always start by taking the player away from the table and those who don't – and discussed among ourselves what we think are the advantages of our approach. We then came back together and had a further discussion collectively in which we tried to synthesise an approach that we were all happy enough to go along with (looking for something that everyone actually liked was thought to be an impossible dream!) We also agreed that we would discuss it further, including those who were unable to be at the weekend, before finalising it as our policy.

So as to avoid confusion, I'm not going to try to state all the approaches that were reported back or discussions we had, but simply to state what I think we agreed to be the method we would adopt. Please let me know if you think I have got any of this wrong or would like to propose improvements to it.

When called to the table we should not automatically take players away but we should always be ready to do so at the first sign that it might be necessary. Try to stop the offending player from saying anything – giving away less information sometimes increases the options open to them. Sometimes players will already have given so much UI that there is no point in trying to mitigate it; other times the situation will seem so clear that there is unlikely to be any need to find out any more before ruling.

What we should do is effectively to read (or better, paraphrase) the law as it is before allowing LHO to exercise his options. LHO does not have a right to know whether the offender had a non-barring replacement call available nor, if they do have one, is intending to use it. They may however ask questions about system and make their own decision based on that if they wish.

Something like:

*You have the right to accept the insufficient bid if you wish and if you do the auction will continue without any further adjustment. Otherwise there are three possibilities*

- 1. if the insufficient bid is corrected by the lowest sufficient bid in the same denomination and I'm satisfied that both bids are not artificial the auction will just carry on from there.*
- 2. otherwise, if the insufficient bid is corrected with a legal call (which in this case could be a double, redouble or pass) that has at least as precise meaning as the insufficient bid [it seems quite unlikely that such a call would be available in this case, but nevertheless the option is there if you think you can use it\*], the auction*

*will just carry on from there but if you think this option might apply we should probably go away from the table to discuss it further before you make your decision.  
\*insert this if appropriate*

- 3. Failing either of those two possibilities, the insufficient bid must be corrected by a sufficient bid or a pass (but not a double), the offender's partner would be barred from bidding for the rest of the hand and there could be lead penalties if the denomination of the insufficient bid is not repeated in the legal auction and the offending side ends up defending.*

*In any of these instances, if the offending side appears to have gained from the insufficient bid there is a possibility that the result could be adjusted afterwards.*

And now you say:

*So now the first decision is for LHO of offender: do you wish to accept the bid?*

If yes, obviously everything carries on from there. If no, ask offender if they need to go away to discuss things further or if they are happy to make their decision now. If a player does make a decision without having any discussion with you, you may need to check with them afterwards that you are satisfied that they were entitled to do what they did. Otherwise, Law 27D might apply.

If you did go away from the table to find out whether or not a replacement bid was available, you should not say anything either way when you go back to the table. They may be able to work it out when the player makes the replacement call, but they weren't entitled to know that before deciding whether or not to accept.

A couple of other points: in the original guidance we were given for this Law, Max said we should ask ourselves **"Would all hands which might make the new call (the replacement bid) have also made the old call (the insufficient bid)?"**

I think this is a valid approach, but unfortunately in practice TDs often get confused by this and get it the wrong way around. Another way of looking at it would be to ask ourselves **"Would offender's partner know more about his hand if the insufficient bid were replaced with this call than if this call had been made originally rather than the insufficient bid?"** Now that we have guidance from the WBF recommending a "liberal" approach in interpreting this law, that might be a useful guide to what we should allow.

Looking back at the original guidance document, it seems the general approach outlined above is quite close to it. Note that the original document said **"The LHO is not entitled to know what the offender was trying to do when he made the IB (though he is entitled to guess!). However, he is entitled to know full details of his opponents system (e.g. he can ask supplementary questions) and he is entitled to know the Law (e.g. he can seek clarification of the Law from the Tournament Director [TD])."**

Gordon Rainsford January 2016

## Notes on polling and consulting

## Appendix C

Often, but not always, when we need to poll it is to determine the logical alternatives to an action that was taken.

Law 16B1(b) defines an LA as follows:

*A logical alternative action is one that, among the class of players in question and using the methods of the partnership, would be given serious consideration by a significant proportion of such players, of whom it is judged some might select it.*

The White Book expands on this further:

### **8.16.6.1 Is an action a logical alternative?**

*When deciding whether an action constitutes a logical alternative under the 2007 Laws, the TD should decide two things.*

1. The TD must decide whether a significant proportion of the player's peers, playing the same methods as the player, would seriously consider the action.

*What is a 'significant proportion'? The laws do not specify a figure, but the TD should assume that it means at least one player in five.*

*If fewer than about one player in five of a player's peers would consider the action then it is not a logical alternative.*

2. If a significant proportion would consider the action, then the TD must next decide whether some would actually choose it.

*Again the laws do not specify a figure for 'some', and the TD should assume that it means more than just an isolated exception.*

*If no one or almost no one would choose the action having considered it, the action is not a logical alternative.*

*Serious consideration is more than a passing thought.*

We need to be polling players of similar "class" to the player in question and we need to be providing those we poll with details of the methods used by the partnership. Note that "class" in this context does not just mean standard of player but also includes things such as how aggressive a bidder the player is, and even any misapprehension they may have been labouring under at the time.

So, if a player makes a 3♣ overcall believing it to be a natural WJO, that is what we tell any players we poll, even if their agreement is really that it is Ghestem. Similarly, do not tell players of the unauthorised information they have received (and tell them to discount it if they start to guess). What we are trying to establish is what the logical alternatives would have been *without* the unauthorised information.

Ideally we would like to have a large number of players to poll, who belong to the right "class" and have not previously seen the hand. In practice this can be hard and we have to make do with what we can. For most of our events we don't have lots of sitting out players or non-playing



captains, so even if we get to ask a player who has finished a round early, they are likely to know the hand already.

Some players are good at putting out of mind what they already know about a hand, particularly if presented with a different scenario, but others find this harder. Occasionally you will be lucky enough to find a player who was presented at the table with precisely the situation you put to them; then you can simply ask what they did and whether they considered anything else.

It is a good idea to lead the players through the entire auction and ask them what they would do on previous rounds of the case in question. If they choose the same earlier call/s that were chosen at the table, this supports the case for the pollee being a peer of the player. If they would have chosen a different earlier call, ask if they could accept making the call that was made at the table. The answer to this might lead you to discount the person in question as not being a peer of the player.

In some cases it can be hard to find anyone who agrees with earlier actions and then you are left with your own analysis, assisted by TDs and players with whom you consult, rather than having an objective poll result to quote.

Some TDs build up a list of appropriate players to ask by text message. This is a good idea as long as you remember to exclude anyone who is playing in the event in question and might not yet have played the hand!

One possibility for finding players to poll is to poll TDs: the advantage is that they are available, not playing and usually haven't already seen the hand in question. However there are a few potential pitfalls with this.

- You need to ensure that the TD is of the right class of player; in many cases this will not be hard since we have a range of abilities on the TD panel, but at very strong events (eg Premier League) the TDs are unlikely to be considered by the players to be of the appropriate standard.
- You should poll a TD exactly as you would anyone else: ask one TD at a time, showing them only one hand and not telling them what was the UI. Do not show a hand to a group of TDs (or any other group of players) when you are polling as this will influence their responses and reduce their usefulness. Once you have their poll answers you can show them the whole hand and widen the consultation.
- If a player gives you an immediate answer as to what they would do, ask them if they considered anything else.
- If they don't give you an immediate answer, ask what calls they are considering and then give them time to decide which one they would select.
- Alternatively (and closer to the wording of the law) start by asking them which calls they consider and then ask which they would/might select.

- One of the problems with polling is that players may give a different answer to the one they might find at the table because they answer too quickly; conversely they might think about it rather more deeply because it has been presented as a problem.



We might also need to determine what is “demonstrably suggested” by the unauthorised information in a given situation. For that we do need to tell the players with whom we are consulting what the nature of the UI is, and ask them what they think it suggests. Do still show them just the one hand as sometimes we may think that what is suggested by UI does not match the hand of the player who provided it.

If you need to find out what the LAs are as well as what is suggested by the UI, you should poll first for their choice of call and then you can ask the same player afterwards what they think is suggested by the UI. Remember, the phrase is “demonstrably suggested”, which is quite a high standard. If they think it could be either one of two quite different things that are suggested, then neither is “demonstrably suggested”.

The White Book also has some advice on this question of what is suggested:

#### **8.16.2 What does a hesitation mean?**

The L&EC considers that:

- (a) A hesitation followed by a pass would normally be willing to hear partner bid on
- (b) A hesitation followed by a minimum bid after RHO’s pass would normally have something in hand
- (c) A hesitation followed by a penalty double is normally willing to see it removed

However, in cases such as

<b>Example</b>	W	N	E	
	1♠	Pass	3♠	(slow)

East might be considering a number of actions, i.e. the pause could have suggested either a 2½♠ or a 3½♠ bid.

To the above list one might also add:

- (d) A hesitation followed by a takeout double suggests imperfect shape for the action and therefore may well be more willing for it to be left in.



One other situation when you might need to poll is in the case of misinformation. You should ask the players what they would do with the information that was given at the table, then ask them what they would do with the correct information. If they give the same answer to both questions, ask them whether they would be more inclined to do something else with one explanation than with the other. Having received this answer, you might also tell them the argument put forward by the player in question and ask whether they think this argument is logical or persuasive.

Note that the correct information to which they are entitled may not be that which the player intended when making the call, but may often be something much more vague like “we haven’t discussed this exact situation but in an uncontested auction this would be a transfer bid”.



Finally, you might poll players to find out whether an action seems to be a “serious error” (note that this would need to be unrelated to the infraction), or “wild or gambling”. You would probably ask your pollees about this after you have already asked them what they would call/play. Robin Barker & I have what we call the “shudder test”: we have noticed that sometimes when you tell a pollee what the player at the table did, they physically recoil or ask you to confirm what you have just said! That’s quite a good indication that the action could be considered SEWoG!



When polling, do start by thinking it out for yourself before asking any players so that you will be able to question them further or challenge them if you think they have missed something or they give a surprising answer. Of course you are not trying to persuade them to your point of view, just checking that they have thought it through sufficiently.

### **How many should we poll?**

There’s no hard and fast rule about this, but in most cases the more the better unless it seems very clear-cut. When a case does seem clear-cut and your first two or three polling results confirm your initial opinion, it may well not be necessary to continue polling further.

In WBF and EBL events where they no longer have appeals committees and therefore rely to a greater extent on the TD’s ability to poll usefully, a minimum figure of five pollees has sometimes been given, but even then I have been told by one of the main EBL reviewers that this is not as important as ensuring that the correct questions are asked.

There are no plans for us in the EBU to go down a similar route and do away with appeals committees, but we can certainly learn correct procedure from those who have, to ensure our rulings are robust and stand up to scrutiny by appeals committees.

- Take note of who you asked and what questions you asked
- Do write down the answers
- Do come prepared with as much information about the players’ methods as possible, as well as any other relevant information about the case, so that you can answer any questions you might be asked by those you are polling
- Do ask follow-up questions if they are suggested by the initial answers; this can avoid you having to go back to the same person again later
- Do not be intimidated by stronger players – if they give you a surprising answer, question them further and go on to ask others what they think
- Do not allow this to become a search for as many as possible to agree with you! Be prepared to change your mind.