

The 2017 Laws Of Bridge

A Guide for Directors

When things go wrong - Lawbook Rulings

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Introduction/ Disclaimer

- ▶ This is a personal interpretation of the implementation of the new laws and no guarantee is provided that it is correct or reflects the intentions of the WBF L&E committee. Directors must pay attention to instructions/ guidance from the WBF/ RAs on implementation.
- ▶ The laws change roughly every ten years (the 2007 laws were delayed)
- ▶ Implementation is required by 30th September 2017
- ▶ There are major changes to rectifications after insufficient bids; calls out of turn; playing the wrong boards; adjustments at teams. Lead penalties have changed. The concept of a 'Comparable Call' has been introduced.
- ▶ Certain anomalies have been addressed.
- ▶ The old Law 23 has been moved to Law 72C
- ▶ Minor changes to wordings that don't affect rectifications etc. are omitted.

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- ▶ At long last the laws actually have a table of contents at the front. This will enable faster location of the appropriate law rather than having to use the index.
- ▶ The established usage of ‘may’, ‘may not’, ‘should’ etc has been retained

Definitions

- ▶ Artificial call: the possible meanings have been split and the first definition includes (“or in addition to” a willingness to play in the denomination named) - this extends the scope slightly.
- ▶ Dummy: the definition now includes the point at which dummy ceases to exist “when play ends”. This defines the scope of laws 42 and 43.
- ▶ Misinformation is now defined as: the failure of a side to accurately disclose partnership understanding as and when required by laws and regulations.
- ▶ Procedural penalties are now “assessed” rather than “awarded”
- ▶ Presumed declarer: the person who would in the absence of an irregularity would become declarer. - this is purely logic chopping and has no real effect - it basically applies during the clarification period.
- ▶ A ‘visible card’ is now defined as one that’s face “may be seen” by either an opponent or partner. The phrase is used only in law 58 - simultaneous leads or plays, but the word ‘visible’ is used in other circumstances.

Law 1: The pack

- ▶ If the RA requires the face of the cards to be symmetrical, ensure that they are - by a cursory glance, or make sure you have available enough sets of boards with symmetrical faces to take to the event.
- ▶ The image on the backs of the cards 'should possess a centre of symmetry' - this means that it should be impossible to tell the difference if the card is rotated 180 degrees. This is a 'should' condition so won't often be penalised (who and how?). Of course the vast majority of cards are symmetrical, including all 'duplimated' ones.

Law 6: the shuffle and deal

- ▶ B... No two adjacent cards from the deck shall be dealt in the same hand.

Comment

This means that someone dealing ‘A B C D E D C B’ can be permitted to continue - but if someone is spotted dealing ‘A B C D D C B A’ then the board must be redealt. The person should also incur a penalty more often than not (“shall”)

Note that the law about “an illegally dealt board is a fouled board” has been removed. If it comes to your attention that a board in play was dealt incorrectly then it remains in play.

Law 7: control of board and cards

- ▶ A board must be placed in the centre of the table **where it shall remain correctly orientated** until play is completed.

Comment

If you observe a player removing a board then it must be replaced in the correct orientation. Whilst this is a 'shall' condition, I think a Director should look at the table to see whether there is room for dummy etc. to be displayed before applying penalties.

- ▶ B3 ...No one shall touch any cards other than their own () during or after play except by permission of **an opponent** or director.

Comment

This at least eases the load of the Director, being a sop to expediency.

Law 9: Procedure after an Irregularity

- ▶ A3 Any player (including dummy) may attempt to prevent an irregularity (but for dummy subject to laws 42 and 42)
- ▶ A4 Dummy may not call attention to an irregularity until play of the hand is concluded.

Comment

A3 Dummy used to only be able to attempt an irregularity by declarer - that has now been extended.

A4 from the definitions dummy ceases to be dummy when the play is concluded anyway

Law 11: Forfeiture of the right to Rectification

- ▶ The example of a side not gaining due to the ignorance of the laws of the other side has now been made a specific part of the laws.

Law 12: Director's Discretionary Powers

Law 12C has been comprehensively re-written. In particular the old 12C1e (most probable result/ at all likely result) has been removed.

- ▶ 1B The director in awarding an assigned adjusted score should seek to recover as far as possible the probable outcomes of the hand had the infraction not occurred.
- ▶ 1C The assigned adjusted score may be weighted to reflect possible results but only outcomes that could have been achieved in a legal manner may be included.

Comment

1C specifically addresses so called 'Reveley Rulings' in the EBU. This will be most often seen in cases of UI where the option selected at the table is disallowed and thus results involving that call/ play at that point in the auction cannot be used. Note that if the final contract/ result could have been reached via a different (legal) route then it should be included. There is nothing to prevent better scores being included - but the AAS will only be applied if there is net damage. Most assigned adjusted scores will be weighted as there will often be doubt as to the final contract (and if doubled).

Law 12C: awarding an adjusted score (Ctd.)

- ▶ 1e If.. The non-offending side has contributed to its own damage by an **extremely serious error** (unrelated to the infraction) or by a **gambling action** which, if unsuccessful it might have hoped to recover through rectification then:
 - ▶ The offending side is awarded the score it would have been allotted as a consequence of its infraction
 - ▶ The non-offending side does not receive relief for such part of its damage as is self inflicted

Comment

This replaces the old SeWOG condition. **Extremely serious** is, I think much more than taking a wrong line of play or misdefending - it suggests revoking or something like that. Similarly the clarification of the form of 'gambling' not allowed is welcome.

Law 12: Awarding an Adjusted Score (Ctd.)

- ▶ 2b - Clarifies how IMPS are awarded in AV+- cases (+- 3imps but this can be amended by the Tournament organiser if the RA gives approval.
- ▶ 2d the RA may provide for circumstances where a contestant fails to obtain results on multiple boards during the same session. The scores assigned for each subsequent board may be varied from those prescribed in a) and b) above.

Comment

Efforts have been made to try and ensure a more equitable solution when multiple boards have been lost e.g. when a 'good result' has been obtained by the other pair in a teams contest. Does 'subsequent' mean that the first board has to be awarded as +- 3 IMPS? Or does 'subsequent' mean "after it is found out that a contestant has failed to obtain results on multiple boards"?

Law 13: Incorrect Number of Cards²

²(One or more hands has more than 13 cards - see 14 for a deficient number)

- ▶ A. No call made (Was D. in 2007 laws)
 - ▶ 2 (another player's card has been seen) the Director allows the board to be played and scored. If he then considers the extraneous information has affected the outcome of the board the Director shall adjust the score and may penalise an offender.

Comment

Previously this law waffled on about UI, now it considers 'extraneous information'. IMHO An 'offender' will include both the person who has 14 cards (he should have counted them first) as well as the person who put the wrong number of cards back in the previous rounds - and anyone who broke [Law 7C](#) at the previous table.

Law 13: Incorrect number of cards (Ctd)

- ▶ B Discovered during the Auction or Play (one player over 13, one player fewer)
 1. If the Director judges that the deal can be corrected and played then the deal may be so played without change of call. At the end of the day he may award an adjusted score
 2. Otherwise when a call has been made with an incorrect number of cards the Director shall award an adjusted score and may penalise an offender.
- ▶ C Surplus Card (was F in the 2007 laws)
 - ▶ The surplus card is removed if found. The auction and play continue without further rectification. No adjusted score may be awarded unless such a card is found to have been played to a quitted trick

Comment

The section about UI about the movement of a card (Section E) is deleted. I assume the quitted trick is not regarded as being defective as no ref to law 67

Law 15: Wrong Board or hand

- ▶ A) Cards from the wrong board (Used to be part of law 17. Much better here)
 - ▶ 1) The call and any subsequent calls are cancelled.
 - ▶ 2a) If the offender's partner has subsequently called the Director shall award an adjusted score
 - ▶ 2b) Otherwise, after looking at the correct hand the offender calls again and the auction proceeds normally after that point.
 - ▶ 2c) 16C applies to any call withdrawn or cancelled i.e. UI OS, AI for NOS
 - ▶ 3 If he repeats his call on the board from which he withdrew his cards the Director may allow that board to be played normally, but shall award an adjusted score when the offender's call differs from his original cancelled call.
 - ▶ 4 A procedural penalty may be assessed in addition.

Comment

Much simpler - a bit surprising that the word 'differs' and meaning is retained rather than 'Comparable Call' used - see Law 23.

2a) The adjusted score could be weighted OR an artificial score.

Law 15: Wrong Board or Hand (Ctd.)

- ▶ B. Wrong board Discovered during auction or Play period
 1. If one or more players at the table have previously played the board, with correct opponents or otherwise, the board is cancelled for both his side and his opponents.
 2. If none of the players have previously played the board the Director shall require the auction and play to be completed. He allows the score to stand and may require both pairs to play the correct board against each other later.
 3. The director shall award an artificial adjusted score to any contestant deprived of the opportunity to earn a valid score.

Comment

Much easier to implement than the previous rules. (I assume the cancellation of the board only applies to the second attempt of a pair to play it). The Director/ Tournament Organiser must have contingency plans ready for what to do to the pair that may be waiting at the table (and the pair waiting for the correct opponents if necessary). NB Note that they cannot play the board if B1 applies and a pair who have not played the board have taken their cards out of the board.

NB This law ONLY applies to pairs or individual events - see [law 86B](#) for teams

Law 16: Authorised and Unauthorised Information

- ▶ B Extraneous information from partner.
- ▶ 1a) A player may not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorised information if the other call or play is a logical alternative.
- ▶ 3 When a player haswho had a logical alternative has chosen an action suggested by such information.

Comment

The definition of extraneous information has been changed to make it more comprehensible - but I don't think there is any difference in meaning.

The call or play chosen need no longer be a 'logical alternative'.

The previous law had "an action that could have been suggested". This puts the onus more onto the player to work out that the action was suggested, rather than dumping it on the poor TD 😊

Law 16: Authorised and Unauthorised Information (Ctd.)

- ▶ C Information from Withdrawn Calls and Plays (was D in the 2007 rules)
 - ▶ 2. A player of the offending side may not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another.... If the other call or play is a logical alternative.
 - ▶ 3. the director shall assign an adjusted score ([12C1](#)) if he considers a violation of C2 has damaged the non-offending side.
- ▶ D Extraneous information from other sources
 - ▶ 2d) award an adjusted score (for team play see [Law 86b](#))

Comment

C2 has been amended to again take into account the ‘illogical alternative’ argument

C3 has been added presumably to remind directors that an adjusted score is only made if the NOS has been damaged.

D2d draws attention to the fact that the rules for team play adjustments have changed (and allows an adjusted score instead of an artificial adjusted score to be made before any call is made)

Law 17: The Auction Period

- ▶ D End of Auction Period.

Comment

Instead of saying that the end of the auction period is as law 22 provides, the appropriate part of law 22 has been moved here. Nothing has changed.

Very sensible

Law 18: Bids

▶ D Insufficient Bid

- ▶ A bid that fails to supersede the last preceding bid is an insufficient bid. It is an infraction to make an insufficient bid (see [Law 27](#) for rectification)

Comment

Previously the laws did not actually deem an insufficient bid to be an infraction.

Although this may look purely as a cosmetic change, there are laws that apply specifically to infractions e.g. they must not be made deliberately

Law 20: Review and explanation of calls.

- ▶ F1: A player who is compelled to pass cannot ask for a review or explanation
- ▶ F1: Players must now provide all inferences not just relevant ones.
- ▶ F4: If a player realises during the auction that his own explanation was incorrect, he must summon the director before the end of the Clarification Period (he can do so earlier)

Comment

F4 - This is obviously a major change (previously the player had to do it immediately). You can still apply law 21B or [40B3](#). Obviously it seems unfair that the OS can determine whether the NOS has the full information, however the NOS are not entitled to know that the OS is having a bidding misunderstanding.

Law 20: Review and Explanation of Calls (Ctd.)

- ▶ G1: A player may not ask a question if his sole purpose is to benefit partner.
- ▶ G2: A player may not ask a question if his sole purpose is to elicit an incorrect response from an opponent.

Comment

G1: Previously it was merely improper and not an infraction. Now at least you can penalise someone who does this.

G2: This is new. Many players (especially new ones) can get flustered if asked multiple questions and this can be exploited. Equally if a player thinks that a partnership is having a misunderstanding then they could have asked questions to get incorrect responses with the aim of using the laws on Unauthorised Information to their advantage, or letting their partner know vicariously.

And now to the basis of the most significant changes in rectification in the 2017 laws.

Law 23 - Comparable Call

(Don't worry - the old law 23 is still there as part of Law 72C)

- ▶ A call that replaces a withdrawn call is a comparable call if it: -
 1. Has the same or similar meaning as that attributable to the withdrawn call OR
 2. Defines a subset of the possible meanings attributable to the withdrawn call OR
 3. Has the same purpose (e.g. an asking bid or relay) as that attributable to the withdrawn call.

Comment

This is obviously a wider definition to the 'same meaning as, or more precise meaning as' in the old Law 27B1b and the fact that it is defined suggests (accurately) that it might appear several times in the new laws.

"The same or similar meaning" could be a DOPI pass when the withdrawn call showed one Ace.

"A subset of the possible meanings" could be a pass (0-4 points) instead of a 1 Diamond (0-7 points) negative response to a Precision Club

"The same purpose" could be a Blackwood 4NT instead of a Gerber 4Club call.

Law 23: Comparable Call (Ctd.)

▶ B. No rectification

- ▶ When a call is cancelled ([29B](#) after a call of turn) and the offender chooses at his proper turn to replace the irregularity with a comparable call, then both the auction and play continue without further rectification. Law 16C2 (Information from withdrawn calls) does not apply, but see C following.

▶ C Non-offenders damaged

- ▶ If following the substitution of a comparable call (See laws [27B1](#), [30B1](#), [31A2](#), [32A2](#) (all of which deal with insufficient bids)) the Director judges at the end of the play that without the assistance gained through the infraction the outcome of the board could well have been different and in consequence the non-offending side is damaged he shall award an adjusted score.

Comment

Because comparable calls are going to be used both for calls out of turn and insufficient bids, the wording for each section is going to be slightly different. Note that the 'Director judges' not the players - so you can't just say "call be back if you think you have been damaged."

Law 24: Card exposed or led during the Auction

- ▶ This has changed from 'Auction Period' - probably due to the fact that a card led after the Auction has finished starts the play period.
- ▶ It means that if a card is exposed before the auction starts then it is NOT automatically a penalty card if partner could have seen it. (Although UI, of course exists)
- ▶ A card accidentally exposed after the Auction becomes a penalty card as per Law 49

Law 25 - Legal and Illegal changes of Call

▶ A. Unintended call

1. 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 intended call. The second (intended) call stands and is subject to the appropriate law, but the lead restrictions in [Law 26](#) do not apply.
2. 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.
3. A player is allowed to replace an unintended call if the conditions described above are met no matter how he may have become aware of his error.

Comment

Note that the phrase 'without pause for thought' has vanished. This makes the Director's job slightly easier. IMHO this clarifies the intent of the previous Law 25.

Law 25: Legal and illegal changes of call

▶ B. Call intended

The only change here is that a clear reference is made to the fact that Law 26 (lead restrictions, coming up next) may apply to the withdrawn call (the first if LHO accepts the alternative, the second if LHO rejects the alternative.)

Note that LHO can accept a call made in error in the full knowledge that lead penalties may be applied if their side becomes declarer. As this depends on whether the original call was unintended or not, the Director will still have to rule.

Law 26: Call withdrawn, lead restrictions

- ▶ No Lead restrictions
 - ▶ A call that is withdrawn and replaced by a comparable call is not subject to lead restrictions for the side if they become defenders. Law 16C does not apply but [Law 23C](#) (adjustment if damaged) may apply.
- ▶ Lead restrictions - this has significantly changed.
 - ▶ When an offending player's call is withdrawn and NOT replaced by a comparable call then, if he becomes a defender, declarer at their partner's first turn to lead either:
 1. <<DELETED 20 June 2017>>
 2. Prohibit offender's partner from leading any (one) suit which has not been specified in the legal auction by the offender (to last while the lead is retained)

Comments - see over

Law 26: Call Withdrawn Lead restrictions (Ctd.)

Examples

Offender makes and withdraws a call. It now DOES NOT MATTER what this call promised. Suppose in the LEGAL Auction:

Offender passes or bids No trumps (naturally): Declarer can now forbid ANY (one) suit.

Offender shows Hearts: Declarer can now forbid any (one) suit but Hearts

Offender shows Clubs and Diamonds: Declarer can now forbid EITHER a Heart OR a Spade lead.

<<Law 26B1 gave the right to DEMAND the lead of any one suit not shown in the auction - this has been deleted.>>

Law 27 - Insufficient Bid

- ▶ If the insufficient bid is corrected by the lowest sufficient bid which specifies the same denominations as that specified by the withdrawn call the auction proceeds without further rectification ([Laws 26B](#) and [16C](#) do not apply)
- ▶ If the insufficient bid is corrected with a comparable call, the auction proceeds without further rectification (Law 16C does not apply)
- ▶ Otherwise partner must pass **WHENEVER** it is their turn to call, the lead penalties in [Law 26B](#) may apply and also [law 72C](#)

Comment

The NOS is still protected against damage caused by assistance of the IB

Note that the 'insufficient bid' and the 'lowest sufficient bid' does not have to be 'incontrovertibly not artificial'. Thus if a player has bid 1 Heart only to find their partner opened 1NT in front of them and they missed it, then they can call 2 Diamonds as a transfer.

Law 28 - Calls Considered to be in Rotation

- ▶ If a call is made by a player whose turn it was to call before rectification has been assessed then the auction proceeds as though the opponent had not called at that turn. Law 26 does not apply, but see [law 16C2](#).

Comment

Suppose North is dealer and East calls. If North calls before South exercises his rights under laws 29-31 then East's call is cancelled and if NS become declarer then West can lead what he likes at his first time to lead - subject to the fact that the call East made is unauthorised information to him (but authorised to NS)

(There is probably no change here - the Law says 'not called' rather than 'call is withdrawn'. If so it is clearer.)

Law 29: Procedure after a call out of rotation

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

Comment

Eagle-eyed directors will note that this has changed from “Offender may make any legal call in rotation”. The reason is one of the most major law revisions in the 2017 laws.

Law 30: Pass out of Rotation

- ▶ It does NOT matter now whether any person has bid.
- ▶ A RHO's Turn to call
 - ▶ The offender must pass when next it is his turn to call i.e. after RHO makes his call - and [Law 72C](#) (awareness of possible damage) may apply.
- ▶ B Partner's or LHO's Turn to call (offender not having previously called)
 - ▶ Offender's partner may make any legal call at his proper turn (but Law 16C2 applies)
 - ▶ Offender may make any legal call at his correct turn and:
 - ▶ When the call is a comparable call ([Law 23](#)) there is no further rectification. Law 26B does (lead restrictions) does not apply but see Law 23C (damage)
 - ▶ When the call is NOT a comparable call, offender's partner must pass when NEXT it is his turn to call: laws 16C, [26B](#) and [72C](#) may apply.
- ▶ **Comments - see over**

Law 30: Pass out of Rotation (also applies to 31 (Bid) and 32 (Double))

Comments

The results of the changed call when it was partner or LHO (offender not having previously called) are the same whether the original was a pass, double/ redouble or bid.

1. Partner will ALWAYS be able to make any legal call, subject to 16C2
2. Partner will NEVER be obliged to pass WHENEVER it is his turn to call - only when NEXT after the offender and then only if the offender fails to make a comparable call. (This is different when an insufficient bid is made - see [law 27](#))

When it is RHOs turn to call then if he passes the original call must (if admissible) be repeated. If RHO doesn't pass then the offender must pass if had passed before otherwise he can make any legal call, with the results depending on if the call is a comparable one.

Obviously this enables the Offending side to compete effectively in the auction resulting in more realistic results than having to guess the final contract when partner is known to have to pass.

The Director should explain the position and ask to be called back if there is doubt whether a comparable call is made or if the NOS have been damaged.

Law 30, 31 and 32 - some examples.

(assume the call out of rotation is not accepted)

- ▶ North Dealer: East Passes:
 - ▶ Whatever North calls, East must pass this time round
- ▶ North Dealer: South Passes
 - ▶ North can bid what he likes e.g. 1NT (subject to law 16C2). After East calls, South can make any legal call.
 - ▶ If the call is a comparable one e.g. South Passes there is no further rectification. North could bid again at his next turn e.g. run to 2 Clubs if the 1NT bid is doubled
 - ▶ If the call is not comparable e.g. South (knowing partner will have to pass next time) bids 2 Hearts as a weak take out (which could include hands that would open a weak 2 Hearts), then North will have to pass when the bidding comes round to him the first time.
 - ▶ If W become declarer then he can forbid North from leading a Club, Diamond or Spade, such prohibition remaining while North remains on lead - [Law 26](#)

Law 30, 31 and 32 - some examples.

(assume the call out of rotation is not accepted)

- ▶ North Dealer: West opens 1 Spade - playing 5-card majors
 - ▶ East may make any call over North's call (Subject to UI). Suppose he bids 1NT and South passes.
 - ▶ Is 3 Spades (showing a 5+ card suit and game forcing) a comparable call? Is it similar enough to 1 Spade (showing 5+ card suit and opening values) even though it could be a bit weaker. We have no guidance - if the WBF keep on with their 'liberal interpretation' then I think I would allow it.
 - ▶ North still has to take into account UI when he makes his decision what to do next: for example on a moderate hand, he probably should not cue bid since that course of action is a logical alternative that is demonstrably suggested by the knowledge that South has extra values. Nor, with a good fit, can he take a flyer in 6 Spades as an 'illogical alternative' since 4 Spades is almost certainly a logical alternative.

Law 36: Inadmissible Doubles and Redoubles

- ▶ 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.

Comment

Very sensible in most cases. Tortured logicians might try and work out bidding sequences where the inadmissible double/ redouble occurred earlier in the auction, rather than after the final bid, and work out what to do.

Law 40: Partnership Understandings

- ▶ 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)
- ▶ B2Aiv The regulating Authority may disallow prior agreement by a partnership to vary its understandings during the auction or play following an irregularity committed by the opponents

Comment

A4 This used to be at the discretion of the RA. Directors of events where there are many Client : Professional partnerships and this was allowed should make sure that the Professional is now aware of this restriction.

B2Aiv - This used to extend to any irregularity. A partnership is now entitled to vary its understandings if it commits an irregularity e.g. agree that when partner is forced to pass next that all calls will be natural.

Law 41: Commencement of Play

- ▶ D dummy spreads his hand in front of him on the table, face up, sorted into suits, the cards in order of rank with lowest ranking cards towards declarer and is **separate** columns pointing lengthwise towards declarer....

Comment

The word 'separate' could mean either that each suit has to be in its own column (instead of combining e.g. spades and hearts) OR, more likely, that there has to be a visible gap between each column. At least if someone complains that dummy is being displayed untidily you can now point out correct procedure.

Law 42: Dummy's rights

- ▶ 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)
- ▶ B3: he may try and prevent any irregularity.

Comment

A3: If declarer does not follow suit in dummy then he has committed an irregularity and dummy thus may not draw attention to it (until this specific law was amended) (I would have thought law 44C would have been enough)

B3: This previously was any irregularity by Declarer. It is very unlikely that a defender would complain if Dummy did try and stop them committing any irregularity, but if one did, at least they now can't.

Law 43: Dummy's limitations

- ▶ A3 A defender may not show dummy his hand
- ▶ B3 There is no immediate rectification. At the end of play if the defending side has gained through its irregularity the Director adjusts its score, taking away that advantage. The declaring side achieves the score achieved at the table.

Comment

A3: This could be used to convey UI to defender's partner. As such it should be penalised. This law doesn't really fit in here - but where else should it go?

B3: IF dummy violates its limitations then there is NOW some rectification. E.g. if the defending side revoke then the Director will presumably restore Equity under 64C - but will only score the equitable result for the defence.

Law 45: Card Played

- ▶ Cards are now ‘deemed to have been played’ rather than ‘must play’ if the conditions are met (they are unchanged)
- ▶ C4b 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

Comment

The right of a defender to change an unintended designation has lapsed - If a defender says that he is playing a card from his hand then he must (if he has it) play that card. Note that if the declarer says “Ace of Spades” (meaning the “Ace of Clubs”) and that card is played from dummy (even if dummy does the actual play under the law of agency) then it is too late to change it.

Law 45: Card Played (Ctd.)

- ▶ D2 When it is too late to change dummy's wrongly placed card (after each side has played to the next trick), 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 re revoke). If the wrongly placed card contributed to a trick already in progress and dummy has thereby revoked then see laws on revoke.

Comment

Declarer calls for a club from dummy, but dummy picks up a spade. Defenders play spades but declarer follows with a club. Declarer now leads a heart and LHO follows - at which RHO says - "hold on I won that trick with the Ace of Spades and was considering my lead". Then it would appear that Declarer has revoked, but his lead to the next trick (and LHO's card) stands.

Law 46: Incomplete or Invalid Designation of a card called from dummy.

- ▶ The only change is that if 'high', 'low' or equivalent are said then this applies to 'the suit led'.

Comment

This corrects the anomaly in that if declarer says "High" and dummy hasn't a card in the suit led then previously this would have required dummy to play the highest card left in dummy.

Law 47: Retraction of card played

► E Change of play based on misinformation

1. Lead - Added: 'Law 63A1 does not apply' i.e. a revoke is NOT established
2. Played: May now retract if no subsequent card had been played. Previously this was "no subsequent card had been played to the trick"

Comment

- 1) Previously if someone was told in error that it was their lead then that lead (although it could be withdrawn) established any revoke. (Law 63A1 refers to 'legal or illegal' plays to the trick.
- 2) This clears up the problem of what happens if the card played was the last card of the trick. In such cases the right to change now lasts until a card is led to the next trick.

Law 50: Disposition of a penalty card.

Section E: “Information from a penalty card” has been changed substantially

1. Information derived from a penalty card and the requirements for playing it are authorised for ALL PLAYERS while the card is on the table.
2. Information derived from a penalty card that has been returned to hand is UNAUTHORISED for the partner - but authorised for declarer.
3. Once the penalty card has been played, information about the CIRCUMSTANCES under which it was created is unauthorised for the partner
4. If, following the application of E1 (above), the director judges that without the assistance gained through the exposed card, the outcome of the hand could well have been different.... He shall award an adjusted score... to recover as nearly as possible the probable outcome of the board without the effect of the penalty card.

Comment

E1 means that there are no ‘logical alternative’ difficulties for the partner of the player - however if they gain from what should have happened then this can be rolled back. The Lord giveth.....

Law 51: Two or more penalty cards

- ▶ 2C... declarer may elect not to require or prohibit a lead, in which case partner may lead any card and the penalty cards remain on the table as penalty cards....

Comment

This extends the options for two or more penalty cards to be basically the same as for one penalty card - which makes life a bit easier. Previously this option was not available and declarer had to demand or prohibit a lead.

Law 53:Lead out of turn accepted

- ▶ A - the lead out of turn at trick 13 must be retracted.
- ▶ C - If declarer leads out of turn from either his own hand or dummy and the defender to the right of the irregular lead plays a card (but see B), the lead stands and Law 57 Applies

Comment

A - this is new.

C - (was 'B') Previously this only applied if Declarer led from hand. Note that if an opponent has made a proper lead then this stands and all cards are withdrawn - with the usual law 16C applying for withdrawn cards.

Law 56: Defender's lead out of turn

- ▶ This previously just referred to law 54D (Declarer refuses opening lead)
 - ▶ Declarer can accept the irregular lead as in law 53 (i.e. unless it was the 13th trick)
OR
 - ▶ Declarer can require the faced lead out of turn retracted. The withdrawn card becomes a major penalty card and law 50d (disposition) applies. (And presumably 50E (information), but this is not explicitly stated)

Comment

I think this is just a 'tidying up' exercise. Everyone other than a few Secretary Birds knew the intent.

Law 57: premature lead or play

- ▶ A3 - require offender's partner to play a card of another suit specified by declarer. (Option A3 in the 2007 laws has become option A4)
- ▶ C2 - A defender is not subject to rectification for playing before his partner if dummy of his own volition prematurely selected a card before his RHO or has illegally suggested that one be played.
- ▶ D When a defender attempts to play (not lead) a trick at his RHO's turn law 16 may apply. If the card can be legally played at this trick it must be played at his proper turn otherwise it becomes a major penalty card.

Comment

A3 completes all options. C2 makes the law clearer. An example of UI would be the knowledge that the defender can't beat any card in the suit that RHO may select.

Law 61: failure to follow suit - inquiries concerning a revoke.

- ▶ C A claim of a revoke does not automatically warrant inspection of quitted tricks (see law 66C i.e. the Director alone can do this).

Comment

This has been moved from Law 62C3

Law 62 : Correction of a revoke

- ▶ 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 16C2). Every card withdrawn by the defending side becomes a penalty card.
- ▶ D If a defender revokes on trick 12 before his partner's turn to play to the trick, law 16C applies

Comment

A - previously this was 'if he becomes aware of' - so players can now hide revokes (at their own risk) if they think the effect of having a major penalty card will be more damaging than a 1 (or 2) trick penalty. (which might be 0 in some cases).

C3 This covers a case where a defender revoked by ruffing and declarer revoked by over-ruffing and then led to the next trick. We then had the situation that the revoke by declarer was established, but the revoke by defender wasn't - and hence could be corrected, but the revoke by declarer couldn't be.

D This revoke would tell partner what his remaining card would be

Law 63: Establishment of a Revoke

- ▶ 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.

Comment

This seems straight forward - note that previously this was just “agrees to a claim” - the new wording takes into account that a side can withdraw agreement.

Law 64: Procedure after establishment of a revoke

- ▶ B7 Both sides have revoked on the same board and both revokes have been established
- ▶ C - Redress of Damage
 2. A. After repeated revokes by the same player in the same suit, the Director adjusts the score if the non-offending side would **likely** have made more tricks had one or more of the revokes not occurred.
 3. 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 an adjusted score based on the likely result had NO revokes occurred

Comment

There was no automatic trick adjustment if both sides revoke - but Law 64C still applied. This makes it clearer how to apply rectification.

Law 65: Arrangement of Tricks

- ▶ B3 A player may draw attention to a card pointed incorrectly, but this right expires when his side leads or plays to the following trick. If done later law 16B may apply.

Comment

This has removed the right the Dealer has to require a card pointed incorrectly at any time. However the right for other players now extends until the side has played to the next trick, rather than when any card is led to the next trick.

Law 66: Inspection of Tricks

- ▶ B Until his side has led or played to the next trick, declarer or defender may inspect but not expose, his own last card played
- ▶ 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.

Comment

B) This has extended the right to inspect the card until the side has played - before it was until the next trick was led.

D) This clears up the problem if both sides had mixed their cards. Previously the Director would have had to make a ruling in favour of both sides.

67: Defective Trick

▶ 3

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.

Comment

This caters for a possibility not discussed in the old laws

And now on to claims - where a major change in procedure is taking place

Law 68: Claim or concession of tricks

- ▶ A ‘contestant’ has been changed to a ‘side’ - for obvious reasons.
- ▶ B2 If defender’s partner objects, neither a claim nor concession has occurred.
- ▶ C ... of the line or play of defence though which the claimer proposes to win the tricks claimed, including the order in which the cards will be played. The player making the claim or concession faces his hand.

Comment

B2 - previously this only dealt with ‘concession’ in the wording, which in theory caused problems since ‘a claim of a certain number of tricks is a concession of the remainder’

C This explains correct procedure - the first part is a ‘should’ so you may penalise someone for an incorrect claim. The last bit is a ‘does’ so doesn’t suggest a breach should be penalised.

And now to Law 68D -which changes procedure, but not, really, the role of the Director.

Law 68D: Suspension of play

- ▶ After any claim or concession play is suspended.
- ▶ 2. If it is doubted by any player (dummy included)
 - ▶ The director may immediately be summoned... law 70 applies OR
 - ▶ <If all 4 players agree the prior concession or claim is void and not subject to adjudication. Laws 16 and 50 do not apply and the score subsequently obtained shall stand>

Comment

Because play is suspended, not ceased, dummy is still dummy and limited to rights.

A director might be asked to explain the new law, not to rule on the disputed claim. Better find out why.

The laws do not say what happens if, subsequent to a director explaining the new law, a player withdraws consent. Is the claim now void and play continues anyway (with possible UI)? Or is it still in force.

Law 72: General Principles

- ▶ C - Awareness of Potential damage
 - ▶ If the Director determines that an offender could have been aware at the time

Comment

This is slightly different from law 23 in the old laws.

Whenever, in the opinion of the Director, an offender could.....

Law 73: Communication, Tempo and Deception

- ▶ A1 - communication by partners is allowed by any means specifically authorised by these laws
- ▶ B1 The restriction on questions, alerts or explanations is now not limited to only those give to opponents.
- ▶ C2 A penalty may be assessed against a player who violates C1 (not carefully avoiding taking advantage of the unauthorised information), but if the opponents have been damaged see law [16B3](#)
- ▶ E .. So long as the deception is not emphasized by unwonted haste or hesitancy, nor....

Comment

C2 now specifically lets directors know that **ANY** abuse of UI can be penalised.

E This prevents players trying to persuade the other side to stay by doubling slowly, for instance....

Law 74: Conduct and Etiquette

- ▶ A player should avoid any remark or **extraneous** action that might cause annoyance...

Comment

Dotting is and crossing ts - all this does is stop someone complaining that an opponent's superior card-reading skills got them a top!

Law 75: Mistaken Explanation or Mistaken Call

- ▶ This has been seriously re-written to avoid the examples given in the 2007 laws.
- ▶ The major change is clarification how directors should handle the situation.
- ▶ Basically, if the Director finds sufficient evidence that there is partnership agreement he rules on the assumption that opponents knew the agreement in a timely manner. If the call has no agreed meaning then he rules on the assumption that the opponents had been so informed.
- ▶ Note that when the partnership agreement is different from the explanation given, the explanation is an infraction of law.
- ▶ In other words - if you have no agreement then you had better say so!

Law 79: Tricks won

- ▶ B3: If the director is not called before the round ends the score may be changed for both side 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.
- ▶ E3: Subject to approval by the Tournament organiser, a scoring error may be corrected after the expiry of the correction period if the director is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the record is wrong.

Comment

B3 - previously a Director COULD increase a score - now he can't.

E3 - this solves the problem where a late notification affects the result but the condition of contest by the TO prevented any changes. Now this possibility is enshrined in the Laws.

Law 86: Team Play

- ▶ This is a major re-write - get your calculators ready 😊
- ▶ If one result is obtained and the result is clearly favourable to one side, then the Director awards an assigned adjusted score. However if more than one result is obtained.
 - ▶ If no one was at fault the boards are cancelled and award one or more artificial adjusted scores, or if time permits play substitute boards (subject to the restriction that this cannot be done for 1 board if it is possible the result without it is known)
 - ▶ If one contestant was at fault, the director will award either an artificial score of average plus or an assigned adjusted score, whichever is more favourable. The offending side receives the complement.
 - ▶ If both were at fault then the boards are cancelled and the director awards one or more artificial adjusted scores (presumably -3,-3 Imps)
 - ▶ The RA can vary this but unless they do - this is how you proceed.
- ▶ And that's it! Amendments to laws 87 - 93 are cosmetic