

To Call or Not to Call --- The Director

Bridge is a game with lots of ego, prestige, and sometimes money, involved. In one form or another it has been around for 170 years and has lots of rules. Rules are made to ensure that a game is played fairly for all the players. The players are not expected to know all the rules, but the director is and he/she is there to present the rulings with "Grace".

The words punishment and penalty have disappeared from the Rules of Bridge. It is now called rectification and it is the directors job; to put things right. The Rules of Bridge have been formulated to take away all advantages gained by the inadvertent 'oops'.

The director should be called at the first notice of a possible infraction. Many of the options for the director and the non-offending side go away if there is any action by either side after the infraction. Surprisingly enough, this includes discussion among the players. Explaining why you did something can limit the ways the problem will be corrected or can add more restrictions. Waiting often negates the possibility of a fair solution. If you wait, or self rule, you may forfeit the rectification. Knowing the rules is the directors job. Many rules has little quirks and caveats, which the director knows. Let them earn their pay.

When called, the director will listen to the problem as stated by the one who called. The director will listen to the other players ONE AT A TIME. And then may ask questions of other players to better understand the situation. The director will then give a ruling. If there are player options involved and decisions to be made, the director must then list all the options and explain any of them that might be confusing.

Directors are thoughtful (mostly) and easy to deal with (usually). They will explain the rules to you as much as time and their other duties allow. Because the more you know about bridge is to everybody's benefit. Remember, the director's job is also made easier if they are called to help sooner rather than later. ACBL rules require the director to rectify most infractions regardless of how and when the director became aware of that infraction, but sometimes it's just too late to ensure fairness.

So let's reiterate: **CALLING THE DIRECTOR IS NOT PUNISHMENT!!!** It is to make certain; 1: That no unfair advantage is obtained by inadvertent violations of procedure. And 2: that all infractions are handled in a fair, equitable and consistent manner.