

Slow Play

The Santa Barbara Bridge Club recently published (via e-mail) a very good article on slow play. It's well written and a cogent read. While I don't think slow play is a big problem at BA II, I find the article worthy of being the major portion of this month's column.



September 2017

Dear Bridge Players,

We want everyone to enjoy their bridge game but lately many have complained that slow players have made the game much less enjoyable.

Slow play is a violation of bridge law subject to penalty, and the penalties are well deserved when slow pairs disrupt the normal progression of the game.

For those who may not understand why slow play violates bridge law, it is because a sanctioned duplicate game is a timed event. If a pair takes more than the allotted time for a round, they are inconveniencing their fellow competitors as well as gaining an unfair advantage over them.

The clock is set by the Director before the game and players are expected to be aware of the time remaining in each round. When a pair falls behind they are placing competitors at a disadvantage. Ethical players will make every effort to start rounds on time and to catch up when they have fallen behind, regardless of the reason for their lateness.

Finishing a round within the allotted time is the responsibility of all players at the table and Game Directors have the authority to assess penalties or no-plays to pairs who fall behind.

Knowing that slow play affects many people in a game, we hope that everyone will strive to play each round within the allotted time.

Thank you for making the Santa Barbara Bridge Center a fun place to play bridge!

Board of Directors
Santa Barbara Bridge Center

Addendum by RmG:

Slow play at a single table initially slows both the E-W pair advancing from the lower numbered table and the N-S pair at the higher numbered table. Continued slow play can cause the slow down to ripple and before long you can have 2-4 tables consistently behind the rest of the field. To keep

the game moving at a steady pace, slow pairs have an obligation to catch up within 1 or 2 rounds. And then to stay caught up.

Falling behind by 4 or 5 minutes and then maintaining that amount of tardiness is also not acceptable. You will still be affecting tables in both directions. Your obligation is catch up with the rest of the tables in play and then play within the allotted time thereafter.