

Butler Scoring

The following is gathered from various sources on the internet.

Geoffrey Butler helped to form the British Bridge League in 1938 and was its Chairman from 1954 to 1966. For 27 years he served on the Executive of the European Bridge League, and for 22 on the WBF, formed in 1958 after he had prepared the ground in collaboration with Charles Solomon.

For 30 years he was active in Laws revision. He was Chairman of the Commission that prepared the new Duplicate Laws adopted in 1975. Other achievements included 'Butler' scoring and his work on the British master-points scheme.

Originally, IMP pairs games were scored by the Butler method. This method establishes a 'datum' for each board, by averaging the scores achieved across the field (sometimes discarding the top and bottom one or two scores first). Then the players' scores are compared to the datum, and the difference converted to IMPs using the normal scale.

To help reduce the effect of the odd 'random' result on a board, the datum in ECL matches is calculated after eliminating the best and worst N/S scores. Since each board is played 12 times, that leaves the datum as the average of the remaining 10 results.

For ECL matches a pair's average Butler score over a season is a good pointer of how well they have played overall.