



## **Policy Statement**

To foster polite etiquette and good conduct in all activities within the Bendigo Bridge Club (the club), this *Code of Good Conduct* policy document has been drawn up by the club's Management Committee (the committee). It is based upon similar documents issued by other bridge clubs. It is issued in accordance with the club's Constitution and supplements the club's Policies and Procedures Manual.

## **Code of Good Conduct**

1. The committee has adopted this *Code of Good Conduct* to provide guidelines to all members and visitors on the behaviours expected of them when participating in all activities related to the club. The club will publicise this Code widely and expects all members to be familiar with it.
2. **Breaches** of this *Code of Good Conduct* will be considered as:
  - a) **Minor** infractions, such as a lack of courteous attitude, causing annoyance, embarrassment, or interference of others' enjoyment of the game.
  - b) **Major** infractions, such as bullying, badgering or derogatory comments. Repeated Minor infractions will be treated as Major infractions.
  - c) **Serious** infractions, such as cheating, or physical or verbal threats, will never be tolerated and will always be regarded as serious matters.
3. Infractions against inexperienced<sup>1</sup> players

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<sup>1</sup> Inexperienced players are defined as players with 10 masterpoints or less who registered with the ABF less than 24 months prior to the infraction occurring.

New, inexperienced, players are the future of bridge in our community. The club will not tolerate behaviours that discourage them from continuing to play.

Infractions committed against inexperienced players will automatically be upgraded to the next or highest level.

4. Members and visitors may report to the Session Director any supposed infractions which cause them concern, at the time of occurrence.
5. The Session Director should aim to resolve complaints promptly, calmly and in an impartial manner. The complainant and the supposed offender should be heard and have the relevant bridge laws, regulations, and the expectations of the Club - possibly unknown to them at the time of the complaint - explained to them. The Session Director will apply the Laws of Bridge where appropriate, with the aim of restoring harmony in order that play may promptly resume for the enjoyment of all.
6. The Session Director will record a concise summary of the nature of each complaint in a secure register, available to our club Directors and the committee. This summary should include the Session Director's observations on whether the matter has been fully resolved.
7. Members and visitors may make a written submission to the President, the Secretary or the Club Director, if:
  - the matter involves a serious infraction;
  - making an immediate complaint to the Session Director was impractical or unsafe;
  - the complainant remains unsatisfied as to the outcome achieved by the Session Director;
  - the Session Director considers that the matter cannot effectively be dealt with at the table;
  - there is a pattern of repeated infractions of a similar nature by the alleged offender;

- the report concerns a Code of Good Conduct infraction by the Session Director.

Written submissions will be investigated by the Club Director and a concise summary of the nature of the complaint will be recorded, as in 6 above.

8. The committee will review the register and all active complaints and submissions at its scheduled general meetings (or, if necessary, at a special meeting) and, where appropriate, initiate disciplinary action

### **Formal Disciplinary Procedures**

#### **9. First complaint (Minor Infractions):**

If the committee considers the complaint to be valid, they will ask the Club Director to inform the offender and explain to them

- the relevant bridge laws and/or regulations
- the expectations of the Club, and
- caution them against repetition.

The Club Director will record his/her actions.

#### **10. Major Infractions or Subsequent complaints of the same player(s):**

The committee may issue an official warning to the offender(s) if deemed appropriate.

#### **11. Serious Infractions or further complaints of the same player(s):**

A Disciplinary Sub-Committee will be formed as per the Constitution.

This may result in:

- A formal reprimand.
- Suspension of the individual or the partnership for 2-4 weeks for first time offences or from 1 to 12 or more months for more serious infractions or repeat infractions.
- Expulsion, for extremely serious infractions or multiple repeat infractions.

## **12. Serial complainants:**

Persons making frequent formal complaints that, on review, are deemed to be without merit or vexatious, will be subject to formal disciplinary action.

## **13. Photography and Audio or AV Recording of Club Sessions**

Recording of club sessions is not permitted unless approved by the Committee and with the explicit consent of the subject(s). Unauthorised or non-consensual actions of this kind will be treated as serious infractions against this Code of Good Conduct.

## **14. Laws**

If the complaint is on a matter covered by Laws 74-91 (which outlines offences and Directors' powers), Directors may take immediate action such as awarding adjusted scores, giving a warning to the offender/s, or even suspending players in extreme situations. On normal playing days the Directors' decisions are final, subject to Appeals (Laws 92-93).

## **15. Role of the Session Director regarding disciplinary matters**

The Session Director is to:

- receive verbal complaints by players about the conduct and behaviour of other players,
- give due consideration to a call with the aim of resolving the matter to restore harmony and continuity of play,
- act as an educator, explaining the Laws of Duplicate Bridge in accordance with the Club's Constitution, Policies and Procedures Manual, and the *Code of Good Conduct*; and,
- keep secure records of all complaints,
- pass all recorded and written comments to the committee for monthly review; and
- treat all complaints with confidentiality, recognizing that the Session Director may need to speak with other parties including other Directors, in attempting to resolve the matter.

## **Alignment with the Purposes of the Bendigo Bridge Club**

To fulfill its purposes of fostering and facilitating the game of Bridge in the Greater Bendigo area, the Club aims to:

- provide a congenial, fair, competitive, and ethical environment conducive to participation in, achieving excellence at, and enjoyment of Bridge at all levels;
- ensure members and visitors are received with friendly hospitality by extending respectful, courteous behaviour to all.

The committee believes that serious competitive play can and should be conducted in a respectful, harmonious, and non-aggressive manner.

Therefore, the committee has adopted the following guidelines to the behaviour expected of all members and visitors.

### **Code of Good Conduct: Good Habit Guidelines**

- **Contribute** to setting up and dismantling play equipment, tidying the room and facilities as necessary.

- **Be prepared:**

Be ready for play at the allocated time.

Have a completed system card at the table. Understand your system card and be prepared, where required, to alert your partner's bids and explain their meaning.

- **Be polite and pleasant:**

Greet your opponents in a friendly manner promptly upon arrival at the table.

Be polite to all players, including your partner and the Session Director.

Especially welcome visitors and new players.

Encourage inexperienced and emerging<sup>2</sup> players by showing patience and understanding.

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<sup>2</sup> Players with fewer than 10 Masterpoints.

Acknowledge the good play of others.

Apologise readily for mistakes.

- **Comments and behaviour during play:**

Discussion about hands between boards should be avoided. Any discussion must be kept to a minimum as it can delay play and may annoy others at the table. Discussions must be conducted quietly to avoid unwittingly conveying information to players at other tables.

Don't criticise your partner during the session.

Avoid gratuitous advice to inexperienced players as it can be confusing, belittling, and unwelcome. First seek their consent.

Repeated unsolicited advice is badgering and must be avoided.

Do not gloat over your good play or excessively praise your partner's play. A simple "well played" is appropriate.

Avoid foul language and/or loud, aggressive, or accusatory tones.

- Avoid deliberate mannerisms that may unsettle opponents. (We acknowledge that some mannerisms cannot be controlled and should be treated with empathy and understanding, in a respectful manner).

- **Assist the flow of play:**

Alert opponents promptly to any alertable bids made by partner. Promptly state the value of 'announceable' bids (eg opening 1C or 1NT).

Filling in personal record sheets must not delay play. Bids, leads, scoring, checking scores and moving tables take priority.

Avoid unauthorised advantage by comments, expressions or gestures which may convey information to others.

Observe the clock and 4-minute warning bell.

Once cards have been returned to the board, unless the Director is present, they should remain there.

- **Respect for the Session Director:**

Call the Session Director promptly for any suspected infraction of the Laws or if a player fails to observe the principles outlined in this Code.

To call the Director, raise your hand and call “Director please!”

Bear in mind that our directors are usually playing and may not be able to respond immediately to your call. They will attend your table as soon as possible or, if another director is available, may delegate the response to your call.

Whilst waiting for a director to attend, players must remain seated and avoid making changes to the bidding sheet or touching any cards that have already been played.

Show respect for the authority of the Session Director. If you disagree with a ruling, take the matter up later away from the table and remember that you can formally appeal the Session Director’s ruling.

- **Report:**

Bullying and derogatory comments are never acceptable. If you witness or experience such, report the incident/s to the Session Director.

- **Enjoyment:**

Remember that Bridge is a game for all to enjoy. Sometimes this means holding back or not reacting to something out of line.

*Acknowledgement: In developing this document, BBC drew inspiration from the Club Rules of Geelong Bridge Club, with thanks.*

Bendigo Bridge Club, Inc.

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