Rules and Regulations for the 2027 BGB Gold Cup & Silver Plate

November 2026

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1. AUTHORITY

1.1 *General*

These Rules and Regulations are established by the Bridge Great Britain (BGB) Core Committee. The BGB Core Committee may make day-to-day amendments under its own authority, whether by its Chairman or otherwise.

All issues and difficulties raised in advance of an event will be resolved initially by the BGB Core Committee, whose decision shall be final. From the semi-finals onwards, the Director in Charge will determine how any difficulties are to be resolved.

All events sponsored by BGB are played under the current version of the International Code of Laws of Duplicate Bridge, with such modifications as have been approved by the WBF Laws Commission as at the date of publication of these Regulations.

Bridge Great Britain is the Regulating Authority under the 2017 Laws.

1.2 *Disciplinary Powers*

The BGB Core Committee may at its discretion investigate any matter touching upon these Rules and Regulations. This shall be the case irrespective of the way in which such a matter has come to its attention.

The relevant National Authority, as hereinafter defined may, at its discretion, investigate any matter touching upon or arising out of the Laws or the Proprieties of the Game.

Consequent upon its findings following investigation in such manner as it shall think fit, it is empowered:

a) To impose such penalty as it shall decide on any party in respect of the score or the participation of any individual, a pair, or a team in that event.

b) To award thereupon an adjusted score on any board that is involved in the matter.

The powers shall extend to suspension or disqualification of any player or players, or disqualification of a team.

1.3 *Relevant National Authority*

This shall be:

a) The NBO of which all the parties or a majority of the parties concerned are members if that NBO is England, Scotland or Wales else b) will apply.

b) Otherwise, the NBO nominated by the BGB Core Committee.

1.4 *Definition of session and play period*

Throughout these Regulations a session is defined as an extended period of play during which a specified number of boards is scheduled to be played before comparison of scores, and after which the ranking of contestants may be established. A play period, unless otherwise announced by the Director, may comprise one or more sessions.

1.5 *Administration*

BGB may appoint an Administrator for the Gold Cup, referred to as the organiser in this document. Contact details are provided in section 9.

2. GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 *Eligibility to enter*

The competition is open to bona fide fully paid-up members of one of the EBU, SBU, WBU, NIBU or CBAI at the time of entry to the competition and remain so for the duration of their participation in the event.

2.2 ***Master point awards***

The Winners of	National Points
Round 1	2
Round 2	2
Round 3	3
Round 4	4
Quarter-final	6
Semi-final	10
Final	20

In order to qualify for master points a player must have played at least one third of the total number of boards played in the match except that, where a match in play is conceded before conclusion, players in the winning team will earn their full entitlement to any award if they have already played in the match and could have earned their entitlement by playing the remaining boards.

2.3 ***Team members***

Teams may consist of up to six players. A player may not **register** for more than one team. Teams having fewer than six members may add members who have not **registered** for another team up to the start of the match in the round of the last 16. Any players so added must have been notified to the organiser **before** they play.

2.4 ***Death or serious incapacity***

In circumstances where a team is not normally permitted under these Regulations to add a player and when the team is reduced by the death or serious incapacity of one of its members, the Chairman of the BGB Core Committee in consultation with his colleagues – if the majority is of the opinion that the team is substantially handicapped because of this – may authorise that a substitute player take the place of the player who is not available for the remainder of the competition. In exercising this power, the Committee may make conditions as to the player who may substitute.

2.5 ***Gold Cup Holder***

To be classified 'Gold Cup Holder' and qualify for an individual prize a player must participate in one third or more of the total number of boards played in the semi-final and final. Boards played to break a tie do not count as the total number of boards played by a team. However, they shall count as boards played by those who participate in them.

2.6 ***The Gold Cup Trophy***

BGB shall be responsible for maintaining, insuring and engraving the Trophy, which each year shall be returned to the custody of BGB Secretary following presentation to the winners.

3. GENERAL REGULATIONS

The following shall apply to all rounds of the Gold Cup as appropriate.

3.1 ***Commentary on the Laws***

In all respects not covered by these regulations, the current regulations of the Union from which the Home Team comes shall apply.

3.1.1 Law 8B – End of round

A 'round' in a match played privately comprises a number of boards played without an interval in which scores may be compared. A pair which meets its colleagues and may compare scores is deemed to have completed the round in which it has been engaged.

3.2 *Length of matches*

Matches in Rounds 1 and 2 shall consist of 32 boards. This may be increased to 40 or 48 boards if both Captains agree before the start of the match.

Matches in later rounds up to the round before the quarter-final shall consist of 48 boards. This may be reduced to a minimum of 32 boards if both Captains agree before the start of the match.

Matches in the quarter-final consist of 64 boards, but with the agreement of both Captains this number may be reduced to 48.

Matches in the semi-final and final consist of 64 boards.

Matches shall be played in sessions of 8 boards (unless both Captains agree to a higher number).

3.3 *Dates for completion of rounds*

Round 1:	Monday 25th January 2027
Round 2:	Monday 22nd March 2027
Round 3:	Monday 17th May 2027
Round 4:	Tuesday 21st September 2027
QF:	By Friday 10th December 2027
Semi-final & Final:	11th & 12th December 2027

Any disputes with regard to dates for arranging matches shall be resolved by the BGB Core Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.

3.4 *Extension of times for completion of rounds*

Late matches disrupt the competition. However, an extension of one week will be readily given provided that both Captains ask for it before the closing date, and that they show evidence of a real difficulty in fixing a date.

A further extension of one week may exceptionally be granted if both Captains submit their request to the organiser before the final date, and the request shows good reason for the delay.

If the match is not played by the agreed date, in the event of a dispute as to which team is responsible for the failure to play the match, such dispute will be resolved by the BGB Core Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.

3.5 *Starting times for matches played privately*

a) The recommended starting time for a 48-board match played on a Saturday, Sunday, or Bank Holiday is 1.00pm.

b) If the match is on a weekday the recommended starting time is 6.00pm (for 40 or 48 boards), and 7.00pm (for 32 boards).

A different starting time may be mutually agreed. In the event of a dispute the BGB Core Committee shall impose a starting time.

3.6 *Seeding*

A Seeding Committee, appointed by the BGB Core Committee, will select seeds as follows:

With an entry of fewer than 128 teams, eight teams will be seeded
With an entry of 128 or more teams, sixteen teams will be seeded

Any team beating a seed acquires that seed's position throughout. Only teams which enter by the closing date will be considered for seeding.

3.7 ***The draw***

A separate draw is made for each round prior to the round of 16. The draw for the round of 16 shall include the draw for all remaining rounds. Once the draw for the first round has been made a **registered** player may not change to another team. The draw for the final stages shall be as follows:

- No team seeded 1–8 can meet before the quarter-final,
- No team seeded 1–4 can meet before the semi-final
- No team seeded 1 or 2 can meet before the final.

Subject to the foregoing there shall be a random draw as to which numbered seed plays another numbered seed. This will take place at the draw for the round of 16.

Face-to-face matches are encouraged, but it is acknowledged that some teams will find that impossible or at least very difficult, and those needing to play the early rounds online have had the opportunity to so indicate. It is hoped that those who strongly prefer face-to-face will be tolerant of the needs of others, and vice versa.

A separate draw is made for each round prior to the round of 32, and so far as possible these will be regionalised. The default in the early rounds will be online, and for matches from the round of 16 onwards, the default will be face-to-face. In the case of online, BBO will be the default but RealBridge an alternative if both teams agree, and the Committee will be the final arbiter in case of a dispute. It is a requirement that the default setting is for no kibitzers during online matches.

3.8 ***Arranging matches***

In the event that a half way venue may be asked for (a distance of 100 miles or more between the registered home venue of the team via road and using Google maps), the team requesting may request an online match or a halfway venue. If the two teams disagree then an online match is the default. If the match is online then the default of the away team offering dates remains. If the match is played without a halfway venue being requested then the Away Team shall offer four dates to the Home Team. Online matches may be played on BBO or RealBridge. In the event of disagreement RealBridge is the default. Note the document on the BGB website giving detail of setting up a match on RealBridge.

If a halfway venue is the option chosen by the away team, then the Home Team shall offer four dates. Of these dates no more than two shall fall in any seven-day period (this also applies to an online match). From Round 2 onwards, that is when 48-board matches become the norm, weekend dates **must** be offered. In the event that the dates offered for a 48-board match do not include at least three weekend dates, the Home Team may require the Away Team to offer additional dates which shall make up a total of three weekend dates.

Once a draw has been received, captains must make contact immediately and offer, reject, or accept dates within seven days and note:

a) Captains are required to confirm a starting time when agreeing a date. Breaking an agreement as to starting time Is equivalent to breaking an agreement as to date.

The draw in the early rounds (and in particular for Rounds 1, 2 & 3) will normally be regionalised so as to seek to avoid excessive journeys for the Away Team, and to encourage the fixing of mid-week dates. The Away Captain may demand an intermediate venue if the distance between his normal home venue and the Home Team's proposed venue is more than 100 miles (as defined by Google Maps in the event of a dispute) and the match is being played face to face. The Away Captain may instead require an online match.

b) In the case of a face to face halfway venue, the responsibility for organising the halfway venue is that of the Away Captain, but expenses shall be shared.

c) If a team breaks an agreement as to starting time by indicating that they cannot start until a time up to 90 minutes later than the agreed starting time, the matter is treated as one of notified late arrival and dealt with under the provisions of Regulation 3.19, which applies on the basis of the actual arrival time of the team.

d) If a team breaks an agreement as to starting time in any other material way, the matter is treated as if it had broken an agreement as to date – see section 3.8(e)

e) If a date has been agreed and is subsequently broken, the match will be awarded against the team which broke the agreement as to date.

f) It is the responsibility of the Home Team to provide a suitable venue. In return for not having to travel, the Home Team is expected to provide refreshments for both teams. The scale on which this is provided should take into account the length of the match and the distance travelled by the Away Team.

g) Teams may consider splitting a 48 Board match into two halves of 24 boards to be completed on different days. This must be with agreement of both teams.

In the event that the Captains cannot reach agreement, a date will be set by the BGB Core Committee.

3.9 ***Exception dates***

If a team has members participating in any event listed below then this would not count as a valid offered date.

- Home International Series weekends.
- Home International Series trials, including the English Premier League, Welsh Premier League and the Scottish National League.
- European and World Championships which are representative
- The EBU Spring Foursomes.
- The SBU Winter Foursomes.
- The Scottish Cup Finals
- Crockfords Cup Final Weekend

3.10 ***Dealing***

- Captains may agree to use pre-duplicated boards for any face to face match. On BBO & RealBridge random deals are required.
- Where boards are hand dealt a player of each side **must** be present during the shuffle and deal of each board.
- Any player in doubt at matches played privately may require a board to be re-dealt before it is first played.

3.11 ***Spectators***

- This section applies to Face to Face matches.
- In *online* matches before the semi-final no kibitzers are allowed. The match must be set up **not** to allow kibitzers.
- Spectators should be aware that during the round they must refrain from mannerisms or remarks and must not converse with a player (as by contact with him, etc) or displaying any reaction to bidding and play. Spectators are normally permitted to observe the cards of one player only and must not seek to look at the cards in two hands.

- Spectators are not allowed to draw attention to an irregularity or mistake, nor to speak on any question except by request of the Director. Non-playing members of a team are only permitted to watch their team-mates playing at the table in matches played privately with the permission of the other captain.
- Subject to any requirements of the BGB Core Committee, the Director is empowered to control the presence of spectators, individually, or collectively.
- A player is responsible for the actions of any spectator who is associated with him (as distinct from any spectator casually attracted to the table by his presence there).
- Either Captain may opt before the start of a match to have a Closed Room, which will be specified by the Captain who organised the venue. Spectators and team members may watch only in the Open Room.

3.12 ***Seating rights***

The two Captains will toss a coin (or for an online match choose another mutually agreeable method). The winner of the toss may elect to have seating rights (that is, the right to seat his players after the opponents have seated theirs) in either the odd numbered or even numbered sessions but see 3.16 in the event of a tie.

3.13 ***Both pairs of a team playing at the same polarity***

In the event that both pairs of a team play an 8-board stanza at the same polarity, a further eight boards with the same number, dealer, and vulnerability as the incorrectly played boards, will be played by the same four pairs.

3.14 ***Smoking***

There shall be no smoking in the playing areas in matches played privately or publicly (this includes every form of electronic cigarettes or vapes). However, in matches played privately, the standard arrangement may be varied by mutual consent.

3.15 ***Disabled access***

Should the away team give sufficient notice that one of its members has special requirements, the Home Captain is required to provide a venue to accommodate them. If he is unable to comply, then the away team may elect to play the match online.

3.16 ***Scoring***

Scoring is by IMPs. In the event of a tie, (whether or not the result is the subject of an appeal on any board or boards) a number of additional boards equal to one-eighth of the total number of boards must be played and, if necessary, this process should be repeated until the tie is broken. When playing extra boards, seating shall be decided by captains exchanging written nominations.

3.17 ***Results***

- Winning captains should communicate the result to the organiser promptly after the match.
- Results should be emailed. Please ensure that the names of all players, the number of boards played by each player and the margin of victory are given.
- Failure to fulfil these requirements may make it impossible to issue master points for the match in question.

3.18 ***Calling for a ruling***

Problems often arise in matches played privately when there is a dispute that involves more than just the reading and application of the law. If you think an irregularity has occurred which has damaged your side, you should proceed as follows:

a) Raise the matter (by, say, reserving your rights) at the time, when play ends.

b) Confirm your wish to have a ruling before your opponents have left the table to score up that set of boards; if after scoring you withdraw your request that is an end of the matter.

A failure to take these steps puts you in the same position as a player in a public competition who fails to call the Director at the appropriate time. You may still request a ruling as long as you do it within the protest period (up to 30 minutes after you have agreed the score with the opposing captain at the end of the match). However, the longer the time lapse, the more difficult it is to establish the facts and Directors, like Directors in public competitions, may be less inclined to find damage which the player did not appear to be aware of at the time. However, the player who could not have known an irregularity had occurred will be in a stronger position than one who could or should have noticed it but did not mention it at the time.

3.18.1 *Drawing attention to a possible irregularity*

a) Any comment at the table which points to the possibility of an irregularity draws attention to the irregularity within the meaning of Law 9B1(a). If no request for a ruling is then stated, the players are in the position generally of players when attention is drawn to an irregularity and the Director is not summoned forthwith.

b) Except for any appeal on the ruling to a Referee and thence, if desired, to the relevant National Authority (see section), any dispute should be referred to the BGB Core Committee whose ruling shall be final.

3.18.2 *Whom to call (ruling of the first Instance)*

When a ruling is required, the Captains should, first of all, attempt to agree upon an outcome themselves. If they cannot do this, they should then agree upon a suitable Director, failing which they should contact one of the persons listed in section 7.

3.18.3 *Appeals against a director's ruling*

Such rulings may be appealed. If an appeal is to be made, it should be made by telephone to one of the Referees named in section 7. If one of these persons has given the Ruling of the first Instance (see section), then a different Referee must be consulted. Such a ruling must be obtained within 30 minutes of the end of the match, subject to the provisions of section 3.18.4 below.

The Referees listed by BGB are hereby empowered to make a decision alone or to consult if this is considered necessary. A notional deposit of £30 shall be required. The Referee shall have the power to decide that this deposit may be retained, in which case payment of £30 must be sent immediately to the organiser.

All Referees will be instructed to complete an Appeals Form for submission to the BGB Core Committee following any ruling and will provide information concerning the withholding of such a deposit at that time.

If the result of an appeal to a National Authority might give rise to a tie, the Referee may direct that the procedure in Section 03.16 be implemented.

3.18.4 *Written submission to a referee*

When it has proved impossible (to the satisfaction of the BGB Core Committee) to obtain a ruling from a Director, or for some other reason, the Captains may decide to let the matter be settled later by a Referee, in which case, the match result should be sent in, marked "Subject to ruling on board X", and accompanied by the full details. Payment of the fee of £30 should be made by bank transfer to Bridge Great Britain, sort code 20-85-73, account number 20529109. Such a ruling may be appealed to a National Authority.

3.18.5 *Appeal to a National Authority*

These are settled by the appropriate National Authority, and the appeal form (available on the Bridge Great Britain website www.bridgegreatbritain.org must be submitted online to the organiser, Sandra Claridge sclaridge31@gmail.com and a deposit, currently of £75, transferred to the account detailed in section 3.18.4. The organiser will then pass the appeal to the relevant National Authority. The Director who gave the ruling of first instance, and the Referee who dealt with the original appeal should be informed of your intention to appeal, since the Committee may want information from them. No appeal to the National Authority will be allowed if there was not a request for an appeal against the Director's ruling under Law 92A (Law 93C).

Appeals to the National Authority must be submitted promptly. There is no specific time limit of general application, although a deadline may be imposed in a particular case. If the National Authority decides that you have not submitted your appeal within a reasonable time, it will be dismissed. If you require details of the original appeal in order to decide whether to appeal to a National Authority, or in order to prepare your case, you must request them from the Referee who dealt with the original appeal.

An appeal to the National Authority is heard on its merits, and the deposit will be returned only if the appeal is considered to involve one or more of the following:

- A question of principle.
- An error of direction.
- An error in the application of Law or Regulation.
- A grossly inappropriate value judgement.

If none of these factors is present the appeal will be dismissed and the deposit forfeited. Note that a request to revise a value judgement which falls short of being grossly inappropriate is not a sound basis for an appeal to the National Authority. If one of the specified factors is found to be present, the appropriate National Authority will consider the matter afresh in the light of the submissions made, and it may revise a value judgement even if it does not consider it to have been grossly inappropriate. The deposit may still be forfeited if the National Authority considers the appeal to be without merit.

Appeals to the National Authority are almost invariably dealt with by correspondence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a National Authority allow a personal attendance by a party to the appeal. The outcome of an appeal to the National Authority will affect the result of a match in a knock-out competition only if the decision is made in time for the result to be included in the draw for the next round without undue disruption to the progress of the competition. Every effort will be made to hear appeals so that the team could play in the next round, but this is not guaranteed.

3.18.6 *Notice required for appeals to the National Authority (semi-finals and final)*

In the case of the Gold Cup semi-finals and final, the appeal must be submitted within one hour of any ruling being determined. Thereafter appropriate arrangements will be made to deal with the appeal.

3.19 ***Late arrival***

3.19.1 *Up to and including the quarter-final*

Should a team arrive more than 30 minutes late, its opponents have the following rights:

a) After 45 minutes of un-notified late arrival or one and a half hours of notified late arrival, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. One member of a team being present within 45 minutes of the scheduled start time constitutes "notification" within the meaning of this clause.

b) After 30 minutes of late arrival (notified or not) the match is shortened by two boards, awarding the non-offending side 3 imps per board removed. For each further completed 15 minutes delay within a scheduled play period, the match is to be reduced by two boards, awarding the non-offending side 3 IMP per board. A short play period is to be played, removing board one onwards, in order to produce sets of 8 boards thereafter.

c) If both teams are late the match shall be curtailed according to the time of the latest arrival and 3 IMP awarded for each 15 minutes difference in arrival time. If the time difference is greater than 45 minutes un-notified or one and a half hours notified, the match will be awarded in accordance with item (a) above.

3.19.2 *For the semi-final*

Should a team arrive more than 15 minutes late, its opponents have the following rights:

a) If late arrival has not been notified, then, after the time allotted for the first session, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. Where late arrival has been notified before the end of the first session then, after the commencement time of the third session has passed, the match is awarded to the non-offending side.

b) For each completed 15 minutes delay, the match is to be reduced by two boards, awarding the non-offending side 3 IMP per board. A short play period is to be played, removing board one onwards, in order to produce sets of 8 boards thereafter.

c) If the time difference is greater than that defined in sub-clause (a) hereof, the match will be awarded in accordance with that sub-clause.

d) The session time allowance, 70 minutes, for the offending team shall commence at the official starting time and for the non-offending side at 'start of play'. The regulations governing the rate of play shall then apply.

3.19.3 *For the final*

After commencement time of the second session has passed, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. In the event of lateness for the first stanza 3.19.2 will apply.

4. SYSTEMS AND AGREEMENTS

4.1 *General*

Any agreement conforming to Level 5, as defined by the English Bridge Union, or WBF Category 3, as defined by the Scottish Bridge Union, may be used for all rounds of the Gold Cup.

The semi-final and final are deemed to be Category 1 events as defined by the WBF Systems Policy, a copy of which is available at https://www.worldbridge.org/?s=systems+policy

In the case of conflict between these Regulations and the WBF Systems Policy, these Regulations shall apply. Opponents should not be disadvantaged by lack of information about your system. Inaccurate, inadequate, late disclosure or use of methods, not permitted by regulation, can all give rise to a successful claim of damage on a deal.

If unusual methods are in use, where advance notice may be appropriate, it is the team captain's responsibility to provide opponents with full information – in particular, any weak or multi-way opening bid where the weak options do not guarantee a known suit.

4.1.1 *Restrictions in all rounds of the competition*

a) The two members of any partnership are restricted to a single system in any one match and both must play the same system and the same agreements in bidding and play.

b) A team of four players is restricted to a maximum of three systems, a team of five or six players to four systems.

c) Any system of leads, signals and discards may be used as long as the system card gives reasonable detail, except that some specific complex signals and encrypted carding methods are not permitted.

Encrypted carding:

No partnership understanding is permitted whereby the meaning of a lead, signal or discard is based on principle on information not available to declarer, so no form of 'encrypted' carding is permitted. An agreement may arise typically where dummy has a long suit missing the Ace, and no outside entry, and involves the defender with the Ace of the suit giving a signal along Smith Peter or suit-preference lines, i.e. a signal concerning another suit, while the defender without the Ace gives a count signal. As an exception to the ban on encrypted signals, a count signal is permitted in such situations subject to full disclosure.

Specific Cases:

The following signals (i.e. when following suit) are not permitted:

(a) Signals which make use both of the rank high/low or high/middle/low and the parity (even/odd) of the card played.

(b) Signals which assign a meaning to specific pips (e.g. 6 or 7 encouraging, other cards suit preference). Such meanings are permitted for discards.

4.2 ***Alerting procedures***

Where a match is played between two English teams, two Welsh teams, or one English and one Welsh team, EBU Alerting Regulations will apply. These can be found at https://www.ebu.co.uk. Where a match is played between two Scottish teams, SBU Alerting Regulations apply. These can be found at https://www.scottishbridge.org Where a match is played between a Scottish and an English or Welsh team, the captains may agree between them which regulations to follow, otherwise they will play under WBF Alerting Regulations, which can be found at https://www.scottishbridge.org.

The EBU method of announcements applies when EBU Alerting Regulations are being used.

Where a match is played online all bids which are alertable and would, in F2F bridge, be announceable, should be alerted by the player making the call before the call is made.

4.3 ***System cards***

4.3.1 For *rounds up to and including the quarter-finals*

Systems should be accurately and legibly presented on an EBU 20B or WBF System Card, or any reasonable computer equivalent.

On BBO or RealBridge cards may be posted using their system or links provided to an electronic card in WBF or the format of the country of the player.

4.3.2 *For the final stages*

a) WBF System Cards for all partnerships must be submitted electronically to the organiser, to arrive no later than one week before the final. Pairs who fail to submit cards will not be allowed to use methods other than those currently permitted at EBU Level 5 or WBF Category 3. From the semi-final onwards, rulings of the Director as to use of a system or convention may be appealed forthwith to the Chairman of Appeals acting alone in person or alternatively at the end of the session to the Appeals Committee. Teams who have not played their quarter-final match at that time must both submit their system cards and supplementary sheets

b) in accordance with this regulation. The organiser shall also supply one set of system cards and supplementary sheets to the Director in Charge and one to the Chairman of Appeals.

Where a conventional system (for example, a HUM system) cannot be described adequately in the space provided on the System Card, supplementary sheets must be provided with the card, crossed referenced as appropriate, containing the complete explanation.

c) For special regulations relating to Yellow (HUM) systems as permitted from the semi-final stages onwards, see section 5.4 below.

A change of basic system, or material changes to a system during a match, needs the approval of the Director in Charge (or the BGB Core Committee in matches played privately) before it can be used. Permission will usually be given provided that the relevant person is assured that neither the original submission nor the change is made to gain an unreasonable advantage of the opponents and provided that the change is to agreements permitted at WBF Category 3.

4.4 *Bidding boxes (for Face to Face matches)*

The use of bidding boxes is mandatory throughout.

Starting with the dealer, players place the bidding cards on the table in front of them, from the left, and neatly overlapping so that all calls are visible and faced towards partner; players should refrain from touching any bidding cards until they have determined their call. A call is considered to have been made when the bidding card(s) is removed from the bidding box with apparent intent (but Law 25 may apply).

Alerts should be made using the alert card. It is the responsibility of the alerting player to ensure that his opponents are aware of the Alert.

A player “announces” a skip bid by placing the Stop card in front of him, then placing his bid card as usual, and eventually removing the Stop card. His LHO should not call until the Stop card has been removed. (If the Stop card has been removed hastily or has not been used, an opponent should pause as though the Stop card has been used correctly.)

Until they are removed from the table, a player obtains a review of the auction by inspecting the bidding cards. When such inspection is not feasible a player may obtain a review of the auction at his first turn to play to trick one.

If a player whose pass will conclude the auction removes his bidding cards from the table he is deemed to have passed.

If screens are in use the foregoing is modified. BGB Screen Regulations will be used and can be found in the current Home International Series regulations.

Where matches are played online players alert their own bids and should alert anything that is ordinarily alerted in F2F bridge.

5. SEMI-FINALS AND FINAL

5.1 *Venue for the finals*

The semi-finals and final will be played on 11th & 12th December 2027 at the Mind Sports Centre, London.

5.2 *Screens*

Screens will be used for the semi-finals and final.

5.3 *Pre-duplicated boards*

Pre-duplicated boards will be used for the semi-final and final.

5.4 ***Systems***

Subject to any provisions set out in section 4 the Gold Cup semi-final and final are considered to be a Category 1 event as detailed in the WBF Systems Policy. This shall apply save where the WBF Policy is inconsistent with any other regulations contained herein.

A definition of Highly Unusual Methods (HUMs) is contained in the WBF Systems Policy. Only one HUM is permitted per team and the System Card should clearly designate the pair(s) that will adopt it.

5.4.1 *Restrictions on the use of HUMs in the final stages*

HUMs will not be permitted in the quarter-finals. Any pair intending to play a HUM System in the semi-finals and final must submit a copy of the System Card and Supplementary Sheets to the organiser for publication on the BGB website by 30th November.

5.4.2 *Seating regulations when HUMs are in use*

a) A team having a HUM pair(s) when its opposing team does not must seat the HUM pair(s), when they are to be used, before the other side seats any pair. Opponents may then seat their pairs. No special seating rights or line-up restrictions shall apply when two teams containing HUM Systems Pairs oppose one another.

b) No changes in nominated line-up may be made unless authorised by the Director in Charge. Such permission shall only be given in the case of compelling circumstances.

5.5 ***Closed room***

5.5.1 *Authorised personnel*

The following are authorised to be present in the Closed Room:

a) Participants assigned to play in the Room.

b) Directors on duty.

c) Personnel needed to operate the Tournament.

d) Time monitors appointed by the Director in Charge.

e) Members of the Appeals Committee.

f) Venue staff for the provision of refreshments, etc.

g) Journalists who are expressly accredited by the Chairman of Appeals. If a journalist leaves the Closed Room during a Session he/she may not return.

5.5.2 *General*

No player may leave the Closed Room in the course of a session unless accompanied by a person designated by the Director, nor may he watch play at other tables. If any player leaves the Closed Room without the permission of the Director, their team will be fined 5 IMP. This penalty is automatic.

5.6 ***Timing procedure***

The recommended starting and finishing times for 64 board matches are: 10.00-11.10; 11.20-12.30; 12.40-13.50; 14.10-15.20; 15.30-16.40; 16.50-18.00; 18.10-19.20; 19.30-20.40. These times may be varied by the TD to facilitate the smooth running of the event. Any changes must be notified to the captain of each team.

5.7 ***Playing time***

The time schedule for the duration of a Session shall be 70 minutes per session of 8 boards.

At approximately half-time and approximately ten minutes before the end of play, the Director is required to notify each table of the time remaining. Failure of the Director to meet this requirement will not absolve players from penalty.

5.8 ***Slow play***

- BGB wishes to discourage slow play in all matches of the Gold Cup, and a rate of 8 boards per hour is considered reasonable when screens are not in use.
- For matches played in the semi-final and final where screens are in use, time clocks will be on display, and the Director is required to impose penalties for slow play.
- At the end of the allocated time for a stanza (it is the responsibility of Captains to make his/her team aware of the published time allocations) the Director must impose, at any table still in play, a fine of 6 IMPs for any delay up to 5 minutes, and an additional fine of 6 IMPs for each further delay of five minutes or part thereof.
- Where the Director deems one pair only to be guilty of slow play, their team shall suffer the whole of this fine. Where the Director deems both pairs at a table to be at fault, he shall divide the fine between the teams according to his assessment of the degree of fault.
- Where the same pair incurs further fines in the same match, each of the penalties shall automatically be increased by 50% and, on each occasion, the team will lose their seating rights for the next stanza in which it has seating rights.
- No penalties will be carried over to another match, but consistent infringements will be recorded by BGB, who reserves the right to take further action.

5.9 ***Smoking and alcohol***

Smoking (including the use of all types of electronic cigarettes and vapes) in the playing area is prohibited. No player may leave the playing area before completion of play in a session in order to smoke.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages of any nature in the playing area is prohibited. No player may leave the playing area before completion of play in a session to consume alcohol.

Any player, captain, or coach breaching this regulation will cause his team to be fined 6 IMP. A second or subsequent offence by the same player will carry a penalty of 12 IMP.

5.10 ***Mobile phones and electronic devices***

Mobile phones and electronic devices capable of communication must be switched off in the playing area and be visible at the table at all times. Any player leaving the playing table prior to completion of the session must leave his mobile phone and electronic devices at the table.

Any player, captain, or coach breaching this regulation will cause his team to be fined 6 IMP. A second or subsequent offence by the same player will carry a penalty of 12 IMP.

5.11 ***Appeals at the finals venue***

As provided by the Laws a player (or non-playing captain) may appeal against a Ruling given by the Director. To be heard the appeal must meet the conditions specified in Law 92.

Within the terms of Law 79C the time limit within which an appeal may be lodged may be specified by the BGB Core Committee or by the Director in Charge, and failing specification, the 30-minute provision of Law 79C shall apply. When it appears an irregularity may have occurred the Director should be called in accordance with Law 9B1(a). Players who are conscious of circumstances which may be questioned should recognise that, apart from the possibility that the Director may later be unable to satisfy himself as to a question of fact, they may also place in jeopardy the extent to which rectification or adjustment is available to them if they fail to summon the Director at the time.

Under Law 92B a request for a ruling (as for an appeal) may be entertained up to the time limit specified above. After he has communicated a ruling, the Director must ensure that, as required by Law 92A, opportunity exists for it to be appealed. No matter may be the subject of an appeal if the ruling of the Director has not been duly obtained in the first place.

Notification of intention to appeal must be given to the Director and in the first instance such notification does not need to be in writing, but it should be committed to the official Appeals Form as soon as is practicable. The Director will hand the Form to the Referee once it has been signed by himself and both Captains, together with a deposit of £30. The deposit may be retained or returned at the absolute discretion of the Referee or Appeals Committee.

The Referee is empowered to review any decisions made on matters arising under these Regulations to ensure that a non-offending side is equitably treated; to remedy inequity as it thinks fit, and to report thereon to the BGB Core Committee.

The Statement of Procedure for Appeals Committees will be followed as closely as possible (See 3.18.4).

5.12 ***Public presentation***

A form of public presentation is encouraged by BGB in which all teams must participate when and as often as required.

The rules for time procedure and penalties for slow play will apply to the players in both rooms. However, the Director may add such further time as is in his opinion clearly attributable to delay in delivery of hands or to the operation of the presentation.

No player may leave the Open Room until play there is completed, unless accompanied by a person designated by the Director. If a spectator leaves the Open Room while play is in progress, he may not return thereto until play has been completed. No spectator may enter the Open Room after play has commenced.

If possible, both semi-finals and the final will be presented on RealBridge

6. LIST OF DIRECTORS

Name	Phone
Sarah Amos	07930 503746
Robin Barker	07971 623529
Jonathan Lillycrop	07838 381933
Gordon Rainsford	07908 730774
David Stevenson	0151 677 7412

7. LIST OF REFEREES

Name	Phone
David Burn	07767 642094
Heather Dhondy	07879 636493
Jeremy Dhondy	07967 475925
Glyn Liggins	020 8451 5804
Liz McGowan	0131 667 2432
Patrick Shields	01242 570710
Tim Rees	01344 775499

8. 2027 SILVER PLATE & MARION HILL TROPHY

The draw for the first round will be published in July 2027. Matches can be played by agreement either face-to-face or online, with online the default. The draws for rounds 1 & 2 will be regionalised.

Master Point awards: Round 1 1 Round 2 1.5 Round 3 2 QF 3 SF 4 Final 6

SILVER PLATE REGULATIONS

- Entry is open to teams from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland eliminated from the first, second or third round of the BGB Gold Cup.
- Scotland has its own competition for teams based in Scotland eliminated from the Gold Cup. The winners of that event shall automatically qualify for one quarter-final place in the Silver Plate. The format of the early rounds of the competition, therefore, is to produce seven teams based in England or Wales in the quarter-finals.
- Teams may consist of four, five or six players. Teams of fewer than six players may add additional players prior to playing their quarter-final match. No player may represent two different teams in one season. For the purposes of this regulation a team is considered to be a single team throughout its participation in the Gold Cup, the Scottish Plate (if applicable) and the Silver Plate.
- Matches prior to the quarter-finals will be played over 32 boards. Matches in the quarter-finals and semi-finals will also be played over 32 boards, but the captains may agree in advance to play a 40 board match. The final will be played over 48 boards. All matches will be played in eight-board stanzas.
- There will be no seeding in the competition. Teams will not normally be drawn again prior to Round 3 against a team which they played in the Gold Cup. Such rematches are possible from the quarter-finals onwards.
- The draw for the quarter-finals and semi-finals will be random.
- Level 4 agreements are permitted throughout the competition.
- Because the alerting procedures in force in Scotland differ from those in force in England and Wales (as set out in the Blue Book), in any match in the quarter-finals onwards which involves one Scottish team and one English or Welsh team, the alerting procedures to be followed are to be agreed in advance by the two captains, in default of which standard WBF Alerting Regulations will apply (full details of which are contained in the WBF Systems Policy).
- Final ‘play by’ dates for rounds will be found on the BGB website. The date and venue of the final should be decided by the team captains by mutual agreement. No play-by date is published for the final, however, captains are expected to use their best endeavours to find a mutually acceptable date within a reasonable time of the identity of the finalists becoming known, and if the final is unduly delayed a ruling may be given to award the match.
- Prizes: The winning team will receive £120 and the runners up £60
- Where they are not contradicted by what is above Gold Cup regulations apply
- Play by dates: Round 1: 30th August, Round 2: 11th October, Round 3 29th November, QF: 28thth January 2028 SF: 8th March 2028.

9. CONTACT DETAILS AND RESOURCES

9.1 *Bridge Great Britain*

Secretary: Mrs Sandra Claridge
Tel: 01844 208629
Email: **sclaridge31@gmail.com**

Webmaster: Jeremy Dhondy
Email: **bgbwebmaster@gmail.com**

9.2 *Gold Cup & Silver Plate organiser*

Organiser: Mrs Sandra Claridge
Address; 31 Elm Trees Long Crendon, Aylesbury, HP18 9DG
Tel: 01844 208629
Email: **sclaridge31@gmail.com**

9.3 *National Authorities*

EBU: Heather Bakhshi
Tel: 01296 317219
Email: **heather@ebu.co.uk**

SBU: Juliet Vivers - Secretary
Email: **juliet.vivers@hotmail.com**

WBU: Ceri Pierce
Tel: 07837 563283
Email: **ceri@wbu.org.uk**

CBAI: Dermot O'Brien
Tel: 00 353 1 4929666
Email: **dermot@cbai.ie**

NIBU: Brian Mullen
Tel: 028 93361496
Email: **cnoc17ard@gmail.com**

9.4 *Websites*

Bridge Great Britain: **https://www.bridgegreatbritain.org**
English Bridge Union: **https://www.ebu.co.uk**
Scottish Bridge Union: **https://www.scottishbridge.org**
Welsh Bridge Union: **https://www.welshbridgeunion.org**
N Ireland Bridge Union: **https://www.nibu1.co.uk**
Ireland Bridge Union: **https://www.cbai.ie**

9.5 *Resources*

EBU White Book:
https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/laws-and-ethics/white-book/white-book.pdf.
WBF Systems Policy, Alerting Policy and **Brown Sticker** forms
http://www.worldbridge.org/rules-regulations/competitions/systems/
Sky Blue Book (Online bridge) **has been absorbed into the Blue & White Books**
BGB Screen Regulations can be found in the current Home International Series regulations.

APPENDIX A - PROCEDURES IN APPEALS COMMITTEES

A1 *Statement of procedure in Appeals Committees held on site*

A copy of this procedure should be handed to the Appellant Pair, Responding Pair, respective Captains, and Referee or members of the Appeals Committee.

The procedures of the Referee or Appeals Committee are not intended to be over-formalised. The objective is to ensure that the parties to the appeal receive a fair hearing. Appellants and Responders should be received in a friendly and courteous manner and put at ease. No Referee or member of an Appeals Committee should at any time act discourteously, with aggression or hostility towards a player or official appearing at its proceedings. The Referee or members of the Appeals Committee should be introduced to the players before the appeal is heard. The procedure should be briefly explained if necessary.

The Director should then be asked to state the facts insofar as he ascertained them, the agreement of the players being obtained by the Referee or Chairman to the facts as stated, or where there is disagreement, the nature of it clarified. The Director shall be asked to state what his ruling was, and the basis of it.

If there is any particular matter of Law of which the Committee should be aware, the Director (or the Director in Charge, if in attendance) should be asked to enunciate such matters of Law or Regulation as are relevant.

The Director shall not be permitted to state his arguments of a judgemental nature, nor to comment on the grounds of appeal, except where the Referee or Committee puts a direct question at a later stage.

The Chairman shall direct the Referee or Committee that it is bound by the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge and by these Regulations (which includes its interpretation of the Laws). Where Regulations are not specified, those of the Home Union in which the event is held shall be deemed to apply.

The Appellants are then invited to express the nature of their appeal. The Referee or Committee may ask questions after the completion of the representation of the appeal.

The Responders shall be invited to express their opinions and to comment on the matters raised. Again, the Referee or Committee will follow with such questions as it may have.

Under the control of the Chairman, any further questions, answers, or comments which could help the Referee or Committee may be heard. There should be orderly discussions with each speaker listened to in turn. The Referee or Chairman shall not allow any offensive terms to be used. Any question, by whomsoever it is put should seek to be neutral in manner and objective in expression.

After ensuring that no player has any final point to make, and that there is no further matter in which the Referee or Committee should be assisted further by the Director, the players and the Director should be invited to withdraw. Usually the players will be invited to remain close by or not as they wish, but the Director should hold himself available.

The decisions of the Referee or Committee are reached and recorded, along with other details on the Appeal Form, including whether the deposit is to be returned or forfeit. This information is conveyed to the players by the Director.

No player, Captain, or Official should be permitted to harangue or argue with any member of the Referee or Appeals Committee or the Director upon any matter related to the appeal or the Committee’s decision. It must be understood that to do so is discourtesy amounting to a breach of the Proprieties.

A2 *Persons entitled to appear before the Referee or Committee*

The persons entitled as of right to appear before the Committee are:

a) The Appellant Pair.

b) The Responding Pair, that is, the opponents at the table of the Appellant Pair.

c) The Captain of a team for which either pair was competing.

d) The Director who gave the ruling.

e) The Director in Charge.

No other person should normally attend, although exceptionally the Referee or Chairman of Appeals may authorise an observer to be present for such part of the proceedings as he may designate (or throughout). The proceedings are private.

A3 ***Following the appeal***

The completed Appeals Form is lodged with the Referee or Chairman of Appeals, who will forward it along with his additional comments to the organiser for the consideration of BGB Core Committee. All such Appeals Forms and any reports appertaining thereto should be typed or legibly printed in black ink to facilitate photocopying.