

## FVBC Talk – Bridge Procedures, Rules & Etiquette

### 2. Enjoying the Game

Duplicate Bridge is both an enjoyable game and a competitive sport. ALL of us have a role to play in supporting both enjoyment and competition. This talk will address three things that you can do to make today's bridge more enjoyable for everyone:

*Be a good host or guest.*

*Keep pace.*

*Deal with rudeness.*

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#### Being a Good Host or Guest

Think of North/South as the hosts of their table, and East/West as invited guests. As East/West join the table North should warmly welcome them with "Welcome to table 4" or "Hi Cindy and Mark... how are you doing?". If North/South were discussing an earlier hand, they should stop to greet their guests. Such a greeting sets the tone for a pleasant round.

Be especially kind and patient with newer players. During play, don't offer advice to your opponents unless they ask. At the end of a hand, compliment opponents when they made a particularly good bid or play.

At the end of the round, wish your opponents good luck as they move on to their next table.

#### Keeping Pace

Duplicate bridge is a timed event. Everyone expects to play their 27 boards and be finished in a little over 3 hours. One slow pair affects all players. This requires that everyone be mindful of the clock. A few simple steps will help to keep pace:

1. Don't discuss each hand after it is played. A brief comment, such as "maybe we should have bid 3NT" or "let's talk about our leads later", should be sufficient to allow for later discussion.
2. Save socializing for *after* all boards have been played, if time permits. We also have hospitality breaks as time to socialize.
3. Do not start a new board with less than 3 minutes remaining in the round. Call the director, and ask to play the hand after the last round.
4. If possible, play through hospitality breaks to catch up.
5. If there is an infraction or problem, call the Director promptly to avoid delays.

## Dealing with Rudeness

We have all seen rude behavior at the bridge table. Experiencing rudeness is the main reason why players (especially new players) quit playing at bridge clubs. Players and Directors should have no tolerance for rude or disrespectful behavior.

If you experience rudeness, follow these two steps:

1. Politely and constructively, point out the behavior to the offender. In many cases, the offender will stop the offensive behavior and apologize. Bridge can be a competitive and frustrating game, and people can get emotional or overreact.
2. If the behavior continues, call the Director. Describe the offensive behavior, and state that it is “affecting your enjoyment of the game”. The Director will warn the offender, and monitor the offender for the remainder of the session. Further problems may result in procedural penalties. In extreme cases, an offender may be suspended for a period of time. Bridge Law 74 states “A player should carefully avoid any remark or extraneous action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player or might interfere with the enjoyment of the game”.

Everyone is responsible to identify and address rude or disrespectful behavior. I played in a tournament where a married couple was playing together. The husband was being verbally-abusive to his wife. The wife was clearly intimidated by her husband, and simply took the abuse. The opponents asked the man to stop the abuse, but he continued. The opponents called the Director, who warned the man. When it became clear that he would not control his behavior, the Director kicked him out of the tournament. I mention this example to point out that observing rude behavior, even when it is not directed at you, is cause to take action... and call the Director if necessary.

As you play today’s game, please keep these three tips in mind:

1. Be a good host or guest,
2. Keep pace, and
3. Deal with rude behavior, and call on the Director when needed.

Your actions will contribute to everyone’s enjoyment of today’s game!

Let’s play!