

# **How may I help?**

**A prompt for Directing Essentials**

## FOREWORD

The Director's main aim is to ensure everyone has an enjoyable game of bridge.

Players may not always appreciate that the reason for some of the rulings is that they are designed as a convenient way of dealing with unauthorised information.

Do not assume that anyone understands lead restrictions when there is a major penalty card. Nor that they understand comparable bids. Be prepared to explain.

For clarity in this booklet, the term offender is used but do not use this at the table! Similarly, with LHO (left hand opponent) and RHO (right hand opponent). It is best to use the points of the compass, even (perhaps especially) when you know some of the players well.

Definitions:

Denomination: The four suits and no trumps.

Call: Pass, double, redouble or bid of a denomination.

When a book ruling is made, players have the right to ask the Director to read out the relevant section from the Laws. [White Book 7.1.3]

The Director's comfort:

Law 82C: If a ruling has been given that the Director subsequently determines to be incorrect, and if no rectification will allow the board to be scored normally, he shall award an adjusted score, treating both sides as non-offending for that purpose.

*Call me back at the end of the hand if you feel you have been disadvantaged*

Issue 1

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## INCORRECT NUMBER OF CARDS

If someone has, say, 14 cards and looked at them, thereby seeing someone else's card, put the cards right and allow the board to be played and scored.

BUT

If the knowledge of the card has affected the outcome, the Director adjusts the score.

*Call me back at the end of the hand if you feel you have been disadvantaged*

[Law 13A2]

## **WRONG BOARD OR WRONG ORIENTATION**

### **Wrong Orientation**

If a board is played in the wrong orientation. The result stands with the scoring program used to record the result with the actual orientation of the players.

[White Book 8.87.1 & 7.2.4.2]

### **Wrong Board**

If a table is playing a wrong board, but neither pair has played it before, they should complete the board and the score stands. If possible, they should play the correct board later.

[Law 15B2]

Pairs that are unable to play the board (because their scheduled opposition have already played it) are awarded Ave+.

This is done in the scoring program. The EBU suggest that, if two pairs are to be given AVE+, then they should be shown as playing each other and both be awarded Ave+. Otherwise, they are scored against their scheduled pair (who played the board previously) with Ave+/Ave-.

[Law 15B3]

## HESITATION

Often a player doesn't realise how long they have been thinking and would deny hesitating. Avoid using the word hesitation. It may help to ask them whether it was an easy call to make and then conclude that a difficult decision could result in a break in the temp of the bidding..

Explain that, although the hesitater is often not aware of time passing, it makes it difficult for their partner as they now know there was a choice of calls for their partner to make.

Rules of thumb:

- If a player hesitates and then passes, there is the implication that he would welcome a bid or double from his partner
- If a player hesitates and makes a minimum bid, then their hand normally has a little extra.
- If a player hesitates and then doubles, he usually would not be unhappy if his partner removed the double

A hesitation does NOT mean that their partner cannot bid. BUT if they have a choice of bids they may make, they should not choose one suggested by the hesitation.

Test:

- Would 80% of player's of the standard of the hesitater's partner, playing the same system, seriously consider bidding something else. And would a significant number choose to make that alternative bid.

If the opposition feel disadvantaged, note the bids, hands and result and refer to others for a Judgment Ruling.

[Law 16B]

## COMPARABLE CALL

Deciding on what is a comparable call has the reputation of being the most difficult decision that a Director has to make at a table. But that is just because some people play very complicated systems, with so many non-natural calls. If that is the case, the Director may need to take offender away from the table to decide what is a comparable call. Possible questions include:

- \* What did you think you were doing?
- \* Would that bid be natural?

A Comparable Call is one that satisfies one or more of the following three conditions:

- \* Has the same or similar meaning to the withdrawn call.  
e.g. 1♣-1♠-1♥; often X can replace 1♥ as it shows 4 hearts  
e.g. withdrawing an opening bid may not have a comparable call if partner was dealer and opens, as you need less to respond than you do to open
- \* Defines a subset of the possible meanings of the withdrawn call i.e. is more specific.  
e.g. a multi 2♦ may indicate a weak six hearts or six spades so a weak jump overcall in hearts would be a comparable call  
e.g. a Benji 2♣ may show points or playing tricks; so a NT overcall showing points would be a comparable call
- \* Has the same purpose as the withdrawn call.  
e.g. insufficient Stayman bids; allow even if the replacement is a five card Stayman bid

[Law 23]

## UNINTENDED CALL

A player may change their call provided:

- \* They change to the call they intended to make. (It must not just be a change of mind. If a mechanical error, consider whether it would be feasible to be that fat-fingered.)

AND

- \* The offender's partner has not yet called.

It does not matter how the offender discovers they have pulled out the wrong call from the bidding box, nor that their LHO has called.

There are no lead restrictions if the call is changed.

If the offender's call is changed then, if their LHO had called, the LHO can also change their call. The RHO is allowed to make use of the knowledge of the LHO's original call in bidding and play, but the offender and their partner are not.

[Law 25]

## INSUFFICIENT BID

An insufficient bid is considered accepted if the LHO calls over it, even if unwittingly. Otherwise:

Discourage offender from saying what they thought they were doing as this may give their partner unauthorised information.

Tell LHO that they may accept or reject the insufficient bid. If they reject:

\* Offender may make lowest legal bid which specifies the same denomination. (Note: (1) Usually the same suit, but that may not be the case when transfers are used. (2) It does not need to be a Comparable Call.) Then carry on as normal.

\* Offender may make a Comparable Call – then carry on as normal. (Occasionally, you may need to take the offender away from the table to discover what they had intended so that you can advise whether the call is comparable, but do not suggest what would be considered comparable.)

\* Otherwise, offender may make any sufficient bid or pass – but not double or redouble – then carry on but offender's partner is silenced throughout the board. If the offender passes, and had not already bid the denomination withdrawn, lead restrictions apply.

*Call me back at the end of the hand if you feel you have been disadvantaged*

[Law 27]

## **CALL OUT OF ROTATION**

### **First of All**

If it was an opponent's turn to call, they can make their call and auction proceeds as though the COOR never happened. There are no lead restrictions, but offender's partner must be careful not to use information from the COOR. [Law 28B]

LHO can accept COOR (and, by calling they do so, except if it was their turn to call as above). No lead restrictions and no information issues. [Law 29A]

### **COOR Not Accepted**

Stand behind offender, to ensure you have LHO etc correct.

Check whose turn it was to call i.e. RHO, Partner, or LHO

Offender's partner cannot use information of the withdrawn call.

Substitution with a call that is not comparable can result in lead restrictions

**Pass Out of Rotation - RHO turn to call**

[Law 30A]

Offender passes at next turn to call

**Pass Out of Rotation - Partner or LHO turn to call**

[Law 30B]

Offender's partner can call (but beware UI from that pass)

Offender can make comparable call & no problem

OR another call but partner must pass for one turn

and lead restrictions may apply

**Other than a Pass - RHO turn to call**

If RHO passes, repeat call & no problem [Law 31/32A1]

Otherwise:

Offender can make comparable call & no problem

OR another call but partner must pass for one turn

[Law 31/32A2]

**Other than a Pass – Partner or LHO turn to call**

Offender's partner can call (but beware UI from COOR)

[Law 31/32B1]

Offender can make comparable call & no problem

OR another call but partner must pass for one turn

[Law 31/32B2 & 31A2]

**Final Remark**

*Call me back at the end of the hand if you feel you have been disadvantaged*

## ILLEGAL AGREEMENT

Players may deviate from their partnership agreement, so long as it is as much of a surprise to their partner as it is to the opposition. This includes deviations (e.g. being a point or two light for a bid) or psyches (defined as a deliberate and gross misstatement of honour strength and/or suit length). Even illegal bids (e.g. opening lighter in first or second than permitted at EBU Level 2 or 4) may be viewed as deviations.

However, repeated deviations may give evidence of an undisclosed partnership agreement and can be recorded in the Club's Psyche Book to provided evidence of such.

[Law 40C1]

Where it is clear that an illegal agreement exists (e.g. a banned bid is alerted and explained by their partner) then the board is completed. If their opponents have a 60% score or better, the result stands unchanged. Otherwise, the result is cancelled, and the board re-scored as average plus to the opponents, average minus to the pair. (Normally this is 60%/40%.)

[White Book 1.9.7]

## PENALTY CARDS

Declarer and dummy NEVER have penalty cards.

### **Major Penalty Card**

*The offending card stays face-up on the table as a major penalty card to be played at the first legal opportunity, with the possibility of lead restrictions, as below.*

*If, at any time the major penalty card is on the table, the offender's partner is on lead, the declarer can choose*

*Either to demand the lead of the same suit as the penalty card*

*Or to forbid that opponent from leading a card of the same suit as the penalty card for as long as that opponent retains the lead, i.e. they must lose the lead and then regain it before they can lead that suit.*

*Also, if declarer chooses to demand or forbid a lead as above then, when the offender's partner regains the lead, they must have sound bridge reason if you then switch to that suit, i.e. other than knowing your partner wanted to lead one.*

*but the offender replaces the major penalty card in their hand and can play any legal card.*

### **Minor Penalty Card**

If a single card is accidentally dropped, and is below a 10, it is a minor penalty card. It remains face-up on the table and must be played at the first legal opportunity. But lead restrictions do not apply.

[Law 50]

## LEAD OUT OF TURN

### Opening Lead Out Of Turn

The EBU recommended wording is below, where for SUII you state the suit of the card led:

*You, as declarer, have five choices and you must make your choice without consulting your partner.*

*The first two involve accepting the lead and they are:*

- 1. Dummy goes down NOW, you play from your own hand, and the lead comes round to dummy.*
- 2. You can become dummy, putting down your hand, and your partner becomes declarer, playing the cards.*

*If you do not accept the opening lead out of turn, the lead reverts back to your left-hand opponent and then there are three more choices*

- 3. You may let him play what he wishes, the offending card staying on the table as a major penalty card to be played at the first legal opportunity, with the possibility of lead restrictions, like the final two choices*
- 4. You may demand that your left-hand opponent lead a SUII*
- 5. You may forbid a SUII lead from left-hand opponent for as long as he retains the lead, in other words he must lose the lead and then regain it before he may lead SUII.*

*Also, if declarer chooses to demand or forbid a SUII lead then when the offender's partner regains the lead, you must have sound bridge reason if you then switch to a SUII, i.e. other than knowing your partner wanted to lead one.*

[Laws 54, 56, 50D & 16D2]

### Declarer's Lead Out of Turn (from dummy or hand)

Either of the defenders can accept the lead. If they disagree, then the defender next to play after the irregular lead has the choice. (Declarer and dummy never have penalty cards.)

[Law 55]

Note: Dummy must play cards as directed by declarer, even if the lead should be from declarer's hand. [Law 43A1(b)]

### Other Leads Out Of Turn

LHO can choose to accept the lead

Otherwise, lead is made by the correct player.

If the offender was a defender, the card becomes a Major Penalty card (see separate page.)

## REVOKE

Provided there is agreement that a revoke has taken place, you do not need to see the face of any card. [Law 61C & 66C]

So long as neither the offender nor their partner has played to the next trick, the revoke can be corrected. The revoke card becomes a major penalty card for a defender (but not declarer or dummy). Non-offenders' cards after the revoke card are returned to their hands; but a card from the offender's partner becomes a major penalty card.

In addition, a revoke on the 12<sup>th</sup> trick must be corrected.  
[Law 62]

If the revoke cannot be corrected, there may be penalties:

\* 1 trick if the revoke card won the trick (i.e. by ruffing)

plus

\* 1 trick if offenders take any subsequent trick  
or offender's partner won the revoke trick

So there may be two, one, or even zero penalty tricks.

[Law 64A]

BUT "dummy can't revoke". However, if it does the Director assigns a score.

AND it is sometimes necessary to adjust the score if a two trick penalty is not enough to redress damage e.g. if it has denied declarer access to a long suit in dummy.

[Law 64]