

2007 Laws

Effective 1 June 2008

Basic Information for Players

Revoke laws – Law 61-64

These have been simplified. The part about winning a later trick in the revoke suit has been dropped. So now the only way 2 tricks can be awarded is if the offender wins the revoke trick by ruffing and their side wins a further trick. Otherwise, 1 trick awarded if offending side won subsequent trick/s. However, Law 64C requires that the director adjust the score if these trick adjustments above do not redress for damage.

Declarer's lead from the wrong hand - Law 55

There was some uncertainty under the old law as to what happened when defenders disagreed on whether to accept declarer's lead from the wrong hand. The new law (Law 55) clarifies this – the decision of the defender next in turn will prevail.

Shuffling cards after play – Law 7C

Law 7C states that players must shuffle their cards after play before returning them to the board – especially important when hand has been passed in.

Quitted trick – card pointing the wrong way – Law 65

There has been uncertainty regarding whether a player may indicate that another player has a card from a quitted trick pointing the wrong way. Now it is clear: Declarer may require such a card to be corrected at any time. A defender or dummy may do so but only until a card is led to the next trick.

Dummy's rights clarified / enhanced – Law 42/43/9

Dummy can try to prevent anyone including an opponent from committing an infraction, however once an infraction has occurred dummy cannot take any action. So, for example, dummy could

- Prevent declarer from leading from the wrong hand (this right he already has)
- Prevent the wrong defender from leading out of turn
- Prevent a defender who is on lead when his partner has a penalty card from leading before declarer has exercised his penalty card options.

Inadvertency - Law 25

As before, players can continue to claim a bid was inadvertent (now termed “unintended”) but the provision whereby they could make a “purposeful” change of call for a 40% maximum has been withdrawn.

Claims and concessions – Law 68-71

Even though play should stop when a claim or concession is made, the director is now required to take into account any subsequent play that has occurred. In short, it is never in a defender's interest to say “play on” - the director should be called immediately if the claim / concession is in dispute. When declarer leads from the wrong hand, either defender may accept the lead and it is now clear that when they make a different choice, it is the player next in turn (to the illegal lead) who prevails.

Insufficient bid – Law 27

An insufficient call, whether natural or otherwise can now be replaced by another call without penalty, always provided that the new call has the same, or a more precise, meaning.

This means that the amended call may be a jump bid or, in some circumstances, a double. Each may be acceptable, always provided that the original insufficient call didn't contain information not provided by the replacement. The left hand opponent still has the option of accepting the insufficient call.

Significant changes here. Previously, assuming LHO didn't accept the insufficient bid, if the insufficient bid or the replacement bid could have been conventional, partner was barred from further bidding. Now, there is another

option - to replace the insufficient bid with a call that has the same or a more precise meaning as the insufficient one.

So, if an insufficient bid isn't accepted by LHO, it can be replaced:

- . • without penalty by (a) the lowest sufficient bid in that suit as long as neither the insufficient bid or replacement bid are artificial (per the existing laws), or (b) any other call that has the same meaning as the insufficient bid;
- . • with any other call, but partner is barred for the rest of the auction

The bidder's intention is now important, and this may involve the director taking the player away from the table and quizzing them about the intended bid in order to allow a penalty-free correction.

There is a further change in the situation where there is a premature attempt to correct the insufficient bid - if LHO doesn't accept the insufficient bid, the attempted substitute bid stands, and the above rules are applied to see whether or not partner can bid again.

Once you've realised that you've made an insufficient bid, don't make comments like "I didn't see that bid", as they become unauthorised information to partner.

1NT – 2C

A change to the ABF Alerting Regulations means that from 1 June 2008, 2♣ following a 1NT opening bid (usually Stayman) is now a self-alerting call, which means it doesn't need to be alerted. This only applied in an uncontested auction i.e. where the other side hasn't made a bid. Of course, the responses to 2♣ are alertable as normal.

Acting after Partner's Hesitation

You can always take action after partner's hesitation, it's just that you lose your discretion. Previously actions that were considered to be influenced by partner's hesitation could, on appeal, be changed to the least advantageous possible alternative.

The practice is now that, if 75% of the players of that standard, playing that system, would take a particular action, then no other alternative need be considered.

Stop Bids

If you are about to make a jump call of any kind, you should first of all draw the attention of your left hand opponent to the Stop Card on your table. You then make your call, the next player hesitates for 10 seconds (allowing them some thinking time), and the auction then continues.

Stop Bids have been in use overseas for many years. They operate as follows:

- When a player is about to make a jump call, whether it is an opening (includes opening 2 bids, preemptive bids), response, or intervention, he must first alert his left hand opponent to this fact.
- The bid is then made, and the left hand opponent must then hesitate for 10 seconds before calling.