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REGULATIONS ON LAWS AND ETHICS

1. ALERTING (Revised August 2018)

At the start of every round each pair must inform their opponents of their basic system (e.g. forcing club, strength of no trump opening) and their carding methods and in particular any unusual openings for which opponents may need to prepare.

- (a) The purpose of alerting is to advise your opponents that your partner's call has a special meaning.
- (b) The alert is made by the partner of the person making the alertable call. It is the responsibility of the alerter to ensure the opponents are made aware that an alert has been made.
- (c) An alert is made by saying the word "Alert" clearly. If bidding boxes are in use an alert is made by placing the alert card on the table in front of the alerter.
- (d) Alert any call of your partner which you believe to be alertable even if you can't explain its meaning.
- (e) You should not alert any call above the level of 3NT that occurs on or after the opener's rebid. Instead the declaring side alerts such calls after the final pass but before the opening lead has been selected, while the defending side alerts such calls after the opening lead has been selected but before it has been faced.
- (f) The correct way to ask for information following an alert is to say "Please explain". You may only enquire when it is your turn to call.

2. ALERTABLE CALLS (Revised August 2018)

You should alert

- a) Any call that is a convention
- b) Any bid that is natural but unexpectedly weak
- c) A forcing raise of a natural opening one of a suit.

For clarification

- A forcing 1C opening bid needs to be alerted

No Alert or Announcement is required for

- a 5-card Major suit opening bid
- Stayman 2 club response to a 1NT opening bid
- Strong Acol 2 club opening bid.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Revised August 2018)

You should announce your partner's bid in the following three specific cases:

1. If partner opens 1NT, you state the range e.g. "12-14", "15-17" or whatever the range is.
2. If partner opens a non-forcing 1C or 1D that can be made with 0, 1, 2 or 3 cards in the suit, you say "could be 0, 1, 2 or 3 cards" as appropriate.
3. If you open 1NT and the next player passes and your partner makes a transfer response of 2D or 2H, you say "Transfer to Hearts" or "Transfer to Spades" as appropriate.

The 'announcement' is solely for the benefit of the opponents and partner is not permitted to use any unauthorised information gained from hearing the announcement.

4. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- (a) Hidden understandings are unfair and illegal.
- (b) The obligation is always on the user of a system or convention to show that he has made a sufficiently clear statement of his method. The benefit of any doubt is given against the player who bears the onus to disclose his methods.
- (c) Opponents are entitled to know of any conditions attaching to the meaning of a call. If possible holdings are excluded by the existence of an alternative call to cover them, then this must be disclosed.
- (d) A bid may be forcing by partnership agreement, but it is not improper for a player to break that agreement and pass in a forcing situation provided that there is no understanding in the partnership that it will happen. A partnership agreement is an arrangement between partners of which opponents are entitled to be informed, but it does not constitute an undertaking to opponents.

5. DOUBLES (Revised August 2018)

For the purposes of deciding whether a 'double' should be alerted or not, any double on the first or second round of bidding of a one or two level natural suit bid is deemed to be a TAKEOUT DOUBLE. All other doubles are deemed to be PENALTY DOUBLES. Any variations must be ALERTED.

6. PSYCHIC BIDDING

- (a) A psychic bid is a legitimate ploy, provided always that it contains the same element of surprise for partner as for opponents.
- (b) Any player at a table where a psyche has occurred may report the action to the Tournament Director before the end of the session in which the psyche occurred.
- (c) If there is any doubt about the responder's bid after a psyche, the director should take frequency of psyches by the player who psyches into account. Implied agreements can arise from frequent psyching.
- (d) It is forbidden to psych a conventional opening bid.

7. DEFINITION OF HIGHLY UNUSUAL METHODS

A Highly Unusual Method (HUM) means any System that exhibits one or more of the following features, as a matter of partnership agreement:

- (i) A Pass in the opening position promised the values generally accepted for an opening bid of one, and the player who passed will or may hold values a queen or more above average strength (i.e. an average hand contains 10 HCP);
- (ii) By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level may be weaker than pass;
- (iii) By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level may be made with values a king or more below average strength;
- (iv) By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level shows either length or shortage in a specified suit; or either length in a specified suit or length elsewhere.

8. CLASSIFICATION OF SYSTEMS

Systems material will be identified by one or more of the following:

- (i) A coloured sticker;
- (ii) The appropriate name colour;
- (iii) A check mark on a convention card next to the appropriate colour – in keeping with the following descriptions:

Green Natural

Blue Strong Club/Strong Diamond, where 1C or 1D is always strong

Red Artificial. This category includes all artificial systems that do not fall under the definition of Highly Unusual Methods (HUM) systems (see definition at Paragraph 7 above), other than Strong Club/Strong Diamond Systems (See "Blue"). Examples would be a system where one club shows one of three types - a natural club suit, a balanced hand of a specific range, or a Strong Club opener, or a system in which the basic methods (other than the no trump range) vary according to position, vulnerability and the like, or a system that uses conventional "weak" or "multi-meaning" bids (with or without some weak option) in potentially contestable auctions, other than those described in the main part of the WBF Convention Booklet (copies available separately)

Yellow Highly Unusual Methods (HUM) as defined in Paragraph 7 above.

9. BROWN STICKER CONVENTIONS & TREATMENTS

The following conventions or treatments are categorised as "Brown Sticker":

- (a) Any opening bid of 2C through to 3S that:
 - (i) could be weak (may by agreement be made with values below average strength); **AND**
 - (ii) does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.

EXCEPTION

The bid always shows at least four cards in a known suit if it is weak. If the bid does not show a known four card suit it must show a hand a king or more over average strength.

(Explanation: Where all the weak meanings show at least four cards in one known suit, and the strong meanings show a hand with a king or more above average strength, it is not a Brown Sticker Convention).

- (iii) An opening bid showing a weak two in either major, whether with or without the option of strong hand types
- (b) An overcall of a natural opening bid of one of a suit that does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.
EXCEPTION: A natural overcall in no trumps.
- (c) Any 'weak' two-suited bids at the two or three level that may by agreement be made with three cards or fewer in one of the suits.
- (d) Psychic bids protected by system or required by system.

None of the foregoing restrictions pertain to conventional defences against strong, artificial opening bids or defences against 'Brown Sticker' or HUM conventions.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR CBAI COMPETITIONS

10. PROCEDURES

In addition to those outlined elsewhere, the following rules apply to Competitors in all events held under the auspices of the CBAI

- Players should count their cards face down.
- Opening lead should always be made face down.
- Quitted tricks: No inspection of any card of a quitted trick is permitted except at the request of the TD.
- The TD should be called for any infringement.
- The use of mobile telephones during play is strictly prohibited.
- Brown Sticker Conventions may not be used in any match of less than 16 Boards.

11. PENALTIES

The TD shall impose a disciplinary penalty for any offence which interferes directly or indirectly with the rights of another player. These offences may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Unduly slow play.
2. Comparing scores with another contestant during a session.
3. Touching or handling cards belonging to another player.
4. Misboarding.
5. Replacing record slips in the board so that the writing is visible.
6. Any error in procedure that requires the award of an adjusted score to a contestant.
7. Failure to comply promptly with the Tournament regulations, or with any instruction of the TD.
8. Any improper or discourteous behaviour.
9. Late arrival at the commencement of a session or failure to take seats promptly at a subsequent round.
10. Discussion of the bidding, play or result of a board.

The minimum disciplinary penalty shall be 1.5% of the total match points available in the session.

12. FOR TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

- Tournament Directors will submit a report on all national and regional competitions and on the main events at congresses. The report will include details of psyching, latecomers, troublemakers etc.
- Where a score sheet has an error that cannot be checked, it should be accepted if possible in the contract shown and altered if not possible. For example, 2H+1 entered as 170 should be accepted as it is a possible score in a Heart contract; 2H+1 entered as 150 should be changed to 140 since a score of 150 is not possible in a Heart contract.

- Where the top score on a score sheet is different in different sessions of the same competition, all sessions should be factored to the same top score.

13. TIME ALLOWED PER ROUND

PAIRS EVENTS

The following times will be the maximum allowed for playing of boards and includes the time taken to move to the next round

Two Boards - 17 Minutes Three Boards - 23 Minutes

After one warning the offenders will be penalised.

TEAMS EVENTS

The schedule for team events depends on the number of boards per round and will be announced by the TD.

The following schedule is recommended and includes the time for scoring:

4 Board Rounds: 35 Minutes;

6 Board Rounds: 50 Minutes;

8 Board Rounds: 65 Minutes;

14. TIME LIMIT FOR LODGING APPEALS

An Appeal arising out of the first session can be lodged up to 30 minutes after the end of the second session; out of the second session, up to 30 minutes into the third session; and for the final session, up to 30 minutes after the results have been posted.

15. FACTORING OF SCORES

Factoring for sit-outs in multi-session pairs and teams competitions should be calculated on the overall final result i.e. not the session result. Factoring on the result of a single session will be used for session prizes only.

16. REFUSAL TO PLAY

Should a pair or team refuse to play against another pair or team when required to do so, that pair or team shall be awarded zero match points or victory points in respect of that match. The other pair or team if willing to play, shall be awarded 60% or such higher percentage as they may average for the event or the average of the scores against the offending pair/team whichever is higher. Should both pairs or teams refuse to play the match, both shall be awarded zero.

The incident must be reported to the CBAI Management Committee, which may take further disciplinary action.

17. WITHDRAWAL OF PAIR(S) AND TEAM(S)

If a pair or team has to withdraw from a competition after it has started and they have played less than 50% of the total boards to be played their scores are discarded and the competition is scored as if there was a sit out.

If they have played 50% or more of the boards to be played in the competition their scores stand and the pairs they are due to meet get an average + for those boards and the teams they are due to meet receive 18 VP for that match or their average for the competition whichever is greater.

18. SUBSTITUTES - In a pairs or individual event

If a player duly entered in any event is unable to play, that player or that player's partner may apply to the Chief Executive, CBAI (CE), or to the TD for permission to use a substitute.

The application may be approved if the reason for the substitution is deemed valid and the substitution is not substantially detrimental to the other contestants.

The CE or TD may permit substitutions where necessary to facilitate the smooth running of the event, subject to the substitution not being substantially detrimental to the other contestants.

To be eligible for an overall ranking, a pair must play at least 75% of the boards in the competition without a substitute.

To be eligible for a sessional ranking, a pair must play at least 75% of the boards in the session without a substitute.

In qualification events for National Finals, one substitute is permitted in a qualifying team (and should be of comparable standard to the player being replaced). No substitutes will be permitted in a qualifying pair.

19. BREAKING TIES

When it is determined that a tie is to be broken the following rules will apply

IN PAIRS AND INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Single Session Events:

1. By the result between the contestants when they played each other.
2. If the pairs did not meet, the winner is the pair with the most match points against the next highest ranking pair or pairs that all the tied pairs played against. Should a tie still exist, the foregoing procedure shall be used with the next highest ranking pair or pairs that all the tied pairs played against until the tie is broken.
3. If the tie is still unbroken then all boards which the contestants played are examined:
 - On the common boards played: 2 points are awarded to the pair with the best matchpoint score and 1 point is awarded to both pairs if the scores are tied.
 - On the remaining boards played: 2 points are awarded to a pair if they score above average (their opponents score zero), 1 point is awarded to the pair if they score average (their opponents also get 1 point) and 0 points are awarded to a pair if they score below average (their opponents are awarded 2 points).

Multi Session Events:

The winner is the pair with highest percentage score in its best session.

If there is still a tie the highest score in two sessions is the winner. Further ties are broken in similar fashion.

IN MULTIPLE AND SWISS TEAMS

If two teams are tied the result is determined by

- (1) The result of the direct match. If still tied by VPs then by the numbers of IMPs in the match. If the IMPs are the same then
- (2) The IMP quotient (total imps won divided by total imps lost) in all matches played by the tied teams. If a tie still remains
- (3) The higher margin of IMPs earned against the next highest ranking team that both have played and so on. Which failing, then
- (4) One board sudden death matches (one board at a time) until a winner emerges, with neither team to have seating rights against the other.

If more than two teams are tied and have all met in direct competition then they are ranked according to the number of VPs obtained against each other. If more than two are still remain tied then from (2) above will apply.

IN KNOCK-OUT TEAMS

When it is determined that a tie is to be broken, extra boards will be played, in stanza of four boards, unless stipulated otherwise in the competition rules or by the sponsoring organisation.

20. REGULATIONS FOR THE USE OF BIDDING BOXES

Players in turn place the selected calls in front of them - facing towards the centre of the table - in a row from left to right, with every call in the sequence visible.

WHEN IS A CALL DEEMED TO BE MADE?

A call is deemed to be made when the bidding card has been placed on the table. To hesitate between calls when touching the bidding cards could constitute a violation of Law 16 - **Unauthorised information**

CORRECTION OF A CALL

A call may be changed without penalty **ONLY** if all three of the following conditions are fulfilled:-

- (i) The player has positively taken out the wrong bidding card by mistake
- AND** (ii) The change or attempt to change is made instantly - that is, almost in the same movement of the hand
- AND** (iii) The change or attempt to change is made while the player **STILL HOLDS** the bidding card, although it may have been placed on the table.

The TD will normally allow a change of call that does not fulfil these conditions if the original call was inadvertent. However, this is unlikely to be the case if it was made from a different section of the bidding box. If the left hand opponent made a call before the change was allowed, he may withdraw that card and replace it with another without penalty.

INCORRECTLY EXPOSED BIDDING CARD

An incorrectly exposed call can be subject to penalty if the TD judges that an opponent has been misled.

USE OF "STOP" CARD

The STOP card should be placed on the table with any jump bid and should stay there for about ten seconds. The next player may not bid until it is removed.

USE OF "ALERT" CARD

Whenever an alert is required, the ALERT card should be taken from the box and shown to both opponents (making sure that it is seen by both) before being replaced in the box.

AT THE END OF THE AUCTION

The bidding cards should remain in place until the opening lead has been made face down and all explanations have been obtained, after which they should be returned to their boxes. The TD may order the final bid to remain on the table until play is over.

If there is a conflict between the Laws and the bidding box regulations, the Laws shall take precedence.

DOS & DON'TS TO HELP AVOID INCIDENTS WHICH MAY SPOIL A BRIDGE GAME

1. Look at your hand and sort it into suits. Don't shift it from one hand to the other or shift suits around after sorting. Keep it fanned and don't shut it up or put it down on the table.
2. Pause a moment before making any call (which includes a Pass). If the opponent on your right has opened with more than one of any denomination or has made a jump bid, do not make any bid until 10 seconds have elapsed.
3. Remember if you pause for an unduly long time in normal circumstances, you may silence your partner if you then pass.
4. Don't bid after partner has made a pause before passing which was of significant length, unless the bid you make is clearly permissible on your own hand without anything but the minimum your opponents' bidding would suggest may be in your partner's hand. The onus will be on you to show that partner's pause could not influence your bid.
5. Bid and play without emphasis. Don't vary the tone of your bidding – it should always be flat and unemphatic.
6. Don't make faces, or twist about, or sigh, or otherwise indicate difficulty or distress either because of partner's or opponents' bids or plays. Remain always impassive.
7. Don't look at your partner during bidding or play.
8. Remember to alert your opponents to any bid which is conventional below the level of 3NT.
9. (a) When Dummy, don't play any card, however obvious, until asked by partner.
(b) When Dummy, don't look at opponent's or partner's hands.
10. Don't take the cards from the board when they have been returned to it after play. Penalties will be incurred if cards are misboarded.
11. Be courteous to opponents and to your partner.

GENERAL

Failure to comply with the proprieties is evidence of having taken an unfair advantage. You are bound to show positively that no improper action of yours, however inadvertent, has operated to your opponents' disadvantage. The TD is entitled to inflict discretionary penalties whether by fines or otherwise where an unfair advantage has been obtained.