



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

Minutes of the meeting of the WBF Laws Committee held in
Philadelphia PA, 8th October 2010

Present:

Ton Kooijman - in the chair
Chip Martel - Vice Chairman
Grattan Endicott - Secretary
Max Bavin
Maurizio Di Sacco
Joan Gerard
Al Levy
Jeanne van den Meiracker
Jeffrey Polisner
William J. Schoder
John Wignall

Apologies The President Emeritus
Bertrand Gignoux
David Harris
Dan Morse

Guests: Herman De Wael, Rena Hetzer, Adam Wildavsky.

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1. The Chairman welcomed members of the committee and guests. He observed that not only are guests welcome but if they feel they have a useful contribution to make to the discussion they should feel free to speak. He added that he planned there would be two meetings of the committee in the course of the tournament.
2. A further document concerning treatment of insufficient bids was put for discussion at the second meeting.
3. There was a discussion of the definition of a 'logical alternative'. It was agreed that the call actually chosen by a player is normally considered to be among the logical alternatives with respect to the application of Law 16B1. An exception may arise in the case of a call that it would be impossible to contemplate in the particular circumstances.
4. Concerning 'play period' the committee confirmed its minute 8 of 8th September 2009.

5. Asked to determine who should respond to the question “Is it my opening lead?” (see Law 20C1), the committee observed that all players at the table are responsible for ensuring that a correct reply is given. The Director may deem silence when a reply is made to constitute assent.
Regulations may provide for situations when playing with screens.
6. The committee discussed a situation in which a defender seized the first trick and switched rapidly to a singleton in another suit, partner returning the lead for a ruff. An appeal committee had considered “inappropriate” the speed with which the lead was made. Concurring with that view the committee remarked that it is never necessary to make a play quickly. A player may not be mindful of the potential for unauthorized information but if on a rare occasion the creation of unauthorized information is deemed intentional an infraction has occurred.
7. The committee read a comment by a player that something he termed the ‘Kaplan doctrine’ had been overturned by the minute regarding Law 20F1 recorded on 10th October 2008 and reaffirmed in item 13 of the minutes of 8th September 2009. Remarking that the limits of enquiry are defined in Law 20F1 the committee drew attention to the fact that they do not extend to exploration of hypothetical situations not related to the partnership understandings applicable in the current auction.
8. The committee agreed that if a player infers from information given that opponents have had a misunderstanding he is entitled to use that inference at his own risk. Opponents are entitled only to correct explanations of opponents’ partnership agreements.
A player who hears partner give an explanation that does not conform with the partnership understanding is required to offer the correct explanation at the due time stated in Law 20F5(b). However if he is uncertain as to what is the correct partnership understanding he is under no obligation to speak immediately, the matter then being one to refer for resolution to the Director at the end of the play under Law 20F6.
9. The committee considered the situation of a claim by declarer whereupon it is noticed that dummy at an earlier stage has failed to contribute a card to a trick and consequently has a card too many. It was agreed that no penalty is applied (Law 64B3). The Director determines which card to remove from dummy and then resolves the claim deciding any doubtful point against the claimer. If the claim statement has been rendered invalid the Director should determine what would have happened if the board had been played out.

10. Having in mind a case of a disputed Declarer's claim and an admission by an opponent that he had revoked on the last trick played, the revoke not being established, the Chief Tournament Director suggested it had been an oversight not to include the WBF minute of 12th January 2000 in the 2007 laws. With a slight amendment the committee confirmed that the minute is still valid. It now reads:
"If a defender revokes and Declarer then claims, whereupon a defender disputes the claim so that there is no acquiescence, the revoke has not been established. The Director must allow correction of the revoke and then determine the claim as equitably as possible, adjudicating any doubtful point against the revoker."
11. The committee put back for further consideration at its next meeting the question of application of Law 50E in situations when the other defender is not on lead (i.e. in selecting discards or the card with which to follow suit).
12. The committee took note of a discussion on BLML concerning cards exposed when a spectator "pushing past" a table stumbles into a player. Observation was made that in such a circumstance the Director is empowered by Law 50 to designate that the exposed cards are not penalty cards.
13. A question concerning a fouled board in a knockout match was put back to the next meeting as also a matter on which the ACBL had invited an opinion from the committee.
14. With reference to Law 72A the subject of so-termed 'dumping' was discussed. It was agreed this is a matter belonging to regulations. It was noted that there exist widely diverging opinions on the subject; the WBF asserts that players must play to win "at all times and in all circumstances", reports suggest that the ACBL calls upon players to play to win every board, the English Bridge Union finds no objection to players who try to lose a match with the object of having the best chance of winning the event, and others have advocated that the object should always be to win a session or a match (which it is believed is the substance of the WBF stance.) It was observed that a side that believes it has the upper hand in a match must surely be within its rights if its aim is to avoid swings.
15. The committee referred to minute 2 of 12th January 2000 concerning the two trick penalty in Law 64. The minute states that the legal substitute card determines ownership of the trick and that Law 64 is then applied and may result in a two trick penalty but not necessarily so. The minute was upheld.
16. The words "next in turn" in Law 55A were considered. The chairman had informed an enquirer that the 'next in turn' refers to the LHO of the offending hand and this had been disputed. The committee confirmed that the LHO of the offending hand is meant.

Observation was made that Law 53A has the effect of moving the turn to the left of the lead out of turn and it remains there unless and until that lead is rejected.

The committee had addressed a nineteen page agenda; three items had been put back to the following meeting while another three remained yet to be reached.

Mr Martel left the meeting after item 10 and Mr. Wildavsky after item 12.

The next meeting was fixed for 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 12th October 2010.

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Note: the foregoing minutes are as agreed in the committee's meeting on 12th October 2010.