



# EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE REGULATIONS for BIDDING BOXES, BRIDGEMATES AND SCREENS 2017

## 1. Bidding Boxes

The use of bidding boxes is mandatory throughout.

Starting with the dealer, players place the bidding cards on the table in front of them, from the left and neatly overlapping so that all calls are visible and faced towards partner; players should refrain from touching any bidding cards until they have determined their call. A call is considered to have been made when the bidding card(s) is removed from the bidding box with apparent intent (but Law 25 may apply and if a player's mind was elsewhere as he makes an unintended call the 'pause for thought' should be assessed from the moment when he first recognizes his error).

Alerts should be made by the use of the alert card; it is the responsibility of the alerting player to ensure that his opponent/s are aware of the Alert.

Until they are removed from the table, a player obtains a review of the auction by inspecting the bidding cards. When such inspection is not feasible a player may obtain a review of the auction at his first turn to play to trick one. If a player whose pass will conclude the auction removes his bidding cards from the table he is deemed to have passed.

## 2. Bridgemates and other Recording Devices

Electronic devices or other electronic and/or mechanical devices may be used in the European Bridge Championships to record bidding and play, enter results, control the time of the play, to send the collected data to any control centre, etc.

Bridgemates are currently used for the official recording of the scores throughout the Championships and Recorders may be required for the KO stages to record the bidding, play and scores. This recording is the responsibility of the team sitting North/South at each table.

The official score will be that keyed in by N/S and agreed by E/W. (or their Captain, Coach or other designated person)

Players and Captains are reminded that they are responsible for the accuracy of their own scores.

Repeated violation of correct entering procedures may be subject to penalties.

### 3. Screens

Screens will be used whenever possible in a European Bridge Championship.

#### 3.1 Description of the Operation

The North and East players sit on the same side of the screen throughout. The sequence is this: North places the board on the bidding tray after which the aperture is closed (and remains so during the whole of the auction period) so that the bidding tray can just pass under it. The players remove the cards from the board.

Calls are made with the cards from the bidding box. The player places the selected call in the bidding tray, which will be visible only on the player's side of the screen. A player's first call should touch the extreme left of his own segment of the bidding tray, with subsequent calls overlapping neatly and evenly to the right. Players should make every effort to perform these actions as quietly as possible. With screens in use a call is considered 'made' when placed on the tray and released. A player who removes one or more of his bidding cards from the tray in an apparent attempt to "pass" is indeed deemed to have "passed".

After two players on the same side of the screen have made their calls, North or South (as the case may be) slides the bidding tray under the centre of the screen so as to be visible only to the players on the other side. They then make their calls in like manner and the bidding tray is slid back again. This procedure is continued until the auction is completed. It is considered desirable that players should vary the tempo randomly when returning the tray under the screen.

After all four players have had the opportunity to review the auction (equivalent to the right of having the auction restated) the players replace their bidding cards in their respective bidding boxes.

At this point Dummy or Declarer removes the tray from the table and puts the board back in the centre of the table.

When the tray is removed from the table this must be done by either Dummy or Declarer and only Dummy or Declarer may put the board back in the centre of the table.

The opening lead must be made before the Screen aperture is opened and only Declarer or Dummy may open the aperture or call for it to be opened.

At the end of play the tray is replaced on the table.

After a legal opening lead is faced, the screen aperture is opened the minimum necessary to permit all players to see the dummy cards and the cards played to each trick. However, if a defender exposes a card and, because of the screen, declarer does not see it, dummy may draw attention to the irregularity.

Cards must always be placed on the table in the same way, vertically or horizontally and at an equal distance from the previous card. Violation of correct placing procedures is subject to penalties.

### **3.2 Alerts and Explanations**

- a) A player who makes an alertable call as defined in the EBL Alert Procedures must alert his screen-mate, and partner must alert on the other side of the screen when the bidding tray arrives there. The alert must be made by placing the Alert Card over the last call of the screen-mate, in his segment of the bidding tray; the alerted player must acknowledge by returning the Alert Card to his opponent. A player may, by written question, ask for an explanation of an opponent's call; the screen-mate then provides a written answer.
- b) At any time during the Auction a player may request of his screen mate, in writing, a full explanation of an opponent's call. The reply is also in writing.
- c) At all times from the commencement of the Auction to the completion of play each player receives information only from his screenmate about the meanings of calls and explanations given. Questions during the play period should be in writing with the aperture closed. The screen is raised after the response has been made. Therefore the tournament director cannot make enquiries on a player's behalf on the other side of the screen during the auction or play.

### **3.3 Modification of Rectifications when screens are in use.**

- a) An irregularity passed through the screen is subject to the normal laws, with the following provisions:
  - i) an inadmissible call - see Law 35 - must be corrected
  - ii) if a player infringes the law and, inadvertently (otherwise Law 72c (2017) may apply), the irregularity is passed through the screen by his screenmate the latter has accepted the action on behalf of his side in situations where the laws permit LHO to accept it.
- b) Before an irregularity is passed through the screen the offender or his screenmate shall draw the Director's attention to it. Infringing calls shall not be accepted and shall be put right without other rectification (but see (a)(ii) above); any other irregularity shall be rectified and the Director ensures that only the legal auction is passed through the screen. No player on the other side of the screen shall be informed of the occurrence unless the application of a law requires it.
- c) The screenmate should attempt to prevent an opening lead out of turn. Any opening lead out of turn shall be withdrawn without other rectification if the screen has not been opened. Otherwise:
  - i) when the screen has been opened through no fault of the declaring side (and the other defender has not led face up) Law 54 applies.
  - ii) when the declaring side has opened the screen the lead is accepted. The presumed declarer becomes the actual declarer. Law 72c (2017) may apply.
  - iii) when two opening leads are faced by the defending side the incorrect lead is a major penalty card.
  - iv) for a card faced by the declaring side see Law 48.
- d) When an alertable call is made see 3.2 above.

- e) When a player takes more than a normal time to make his call, it is not an infraction if he draws attention to the break in tempo. His screenmate, however, shall not do so.
- f) If a player on the side of the screen receiving the tray considers there has been a break in tempo and consequently there may be unauthorised information he should, under Law 16B2, call the Director. He may do so at any time before the opening lead is made and the screen opened.
- g) Failure to do as (f) provides may persuade the Director it was the partner who drew attention to the break in tempo. If so he may well rule there was no perceived delay and thus no unauthorised information. A delay in passing the tray of up to 20 seconds is not regarded as significant.
- h) However, if the players have not been randomising the tempo of the auction as desired by section 3.1 paragraph 3, then a delay of less than 20 seconds may well be regarded as being significant.