



# WABC PLAYERS ETIQUETTE AND OBLIGATIONS

## **BEHAVIOUR OF PLAYERS**

WABC is keen to promote high standards of bridge etiquette at all times.

### **AT THE TABLE**

#### **Courtesy**

Always be courteous at the bridge table. This applies to how one relates to partner, the opponents, and the Director. Avoid any remark or action that might cause embarrassment to any other player – or which might interfere with their enjoyment of the game.

#### **Arriving at the Table**

At a new table greet your opponents. Introduce yourselves and briefly describe the system you are playing. At the end of a round thank your opponents before moving on to the next table.

#### **Conversation at the Table**

Before the first board begins it is certainly permissible to exchange pleasantries with partner and the opponents but once the bidding has commenced general conversation is not encouraged.

#### **Table Manners (Rules)**

- Cards should not be taken out of the board before all players are at the table.
- Before you look at your cards count your hand and ensure that you have exactly thirteen cards.
- The board should be left on the table during the bidding and play of the hand so everyone can see the vulnerability.
- At the end of a hand do not fold your cards until the result is agreed with the opponents.
- During play you are not allowed, without permission, to touch or handle your opponent's cards. If necessary ask your opponent to show you a particular card.
- Do not ask for information or ask to see the system card unless it is your turn to call or play.
- Dummy or either Defender may draw attention to a card pointed incorrectly, the right expires when a lead is made to the following trick.
- The North player is responsible for proper observance of all procedures and for maintaining proper conditions of play at the table. For examples, North is responsible for turning the boards and South, East, and West may not touch the boards without North's permission. North is responsible for ensuring the boards are not 'fouled' before they are sent to the next table.

#### **Systems cards and 'full disclosure'**

System Cards are mandatory for every player when playing in a tournament. This discloses your conventions and systemic agreements to your opponents, information to which they are entitled.

A player may not refer to his / her Systems Card during the auction or play. A player may request to see the oppositions system card when it is their turn to call or play.

### **Use of Score Cards and Bridgemate**

Score cards should not be written in or Bridgemates entered by the person leading before the lead is made. In the same way once the lead is made, Dummy should immediately put their cards down before using Bridgemate or their score cards

### **THE DIRECTOR**

Any player, except the Dummy, must call the Director when law infractions, hesitations, rude behaviour, or problems of any kind occur. Handling these is Director's responsibility.

The Director should always be called to the table in a courteous manner.

### **BIDDING**

#### **Bidding Boxes**

When using a Bidding Box, decide what your bid is going to be before reaching for or touching cards in the Bidding Box. Toying with different bidding cards may convey "unauthorised information" and restrict your partners bidding options. Once a bidding card has been taken out of the box it has been tabled. The bidding cards must be left on the table until the opening lead is made.

#### **Asking for explanations and not bidding**

Do not ask what a bid means unless you are intending to bid. Ask the partner of the person who bids what they understand by that bid only when it is your turn to bid. After three passes the player on-lead can ask the opponents to explain the bidding. The partner of the player on lead can ask for the bidding to be explained when the player on lead has placed their lead card on the table face down.

### **PLAY**

#### **The Opening Lead**

The opening lead should be made face down until it is accepted by partner. This prevents irregularities such as leading when it is not your turn. It also enables your partner to ask any questions about the auction before play.

#### **Play Generally**

- As Declarer do not call for a card in Dummy until LHO has played. Do not detach a card from your hand before it is your turn to play.
- Any player has the right to inspect all cards played to a trick (the Current trick) before the player has turned over their own card. Once they have turned over their own card it becomes a Quitted trick and they can no longer request to see the cards played to this trick. Get into the habit of not quitting a trick until you are ready to play to the next trick.
- Until a player's partner has led or played to the next trick a player may inspect but not expose their own last card played
- Players should not reposition their cards if a suit in their hand becomes void

#### **Tempo / Hesitations**

Play smoothly and in tempo. Avoid mannerisms, meaningful eye contact, sighs, grimaces and using words such as "I guess I need to pass." Avoid hesitations by being consistent and deliberate in your bidding. A hesitation followed by a pass places an extra burden on partner to justify continuing with the bidding as this may have communicated information to one's partner. If you have a difficult decision you have a right to think but partner cannot take advantage of the knowledge that you had a problem. So if your partner takes time to bid, or bids out of tempo and then passes, you should pass too unless that action would be totally illogical considering your hand. In play avoid snapping the card or playing with undue emphasis as it may reveal special interest to either partner or opponent.

### **DUMMY**

#### **On Dummy Play**

The following represents good practice when one is Dummy:

- Dummy should lay out the cards before writing down details or entering the contract in the Bridgemate to ensure the other players at the table are not kept waiting.

- Dummy may not ask for a review of the auction.
- The trump suit should be laid out on Dummy's right. Cards in each suit should be laid out in sequence from high to low.
- Dummy should not touch a card before receiving instructions from the Declarer. This includes playing a card even when it is a singleton.
- If a suit is called but not a rank, then the lowest card must be played by Dummy.
- Dummy is not entitled to call the Director when there has been an infraction of the law or other problem during play. Indeed Dummy may not draw Declarer's attention to anything except that he is about to lead from the wrong hand or ask if he is out of a suit played. Dummy may however call a Director after the hand has been played out.

## **CLAIM or CONCESSION OF TRICKS**

### **Claim**

Any statement by Declarer or a Defender to the effect that a side will win a specific number of tricks is a claim of those tricks.

### **Concession**

Any statement by Declarer or a Defender to the effect that a side will lose a specific number of tricks is a concession. A player concedes all the remaining tricks when he/she abandons the hand.

If a Defender attempts to concede one or more tricks and the Partner immediately objects, neither a concession nor a claim has occurred. The Director must be summoned immediately.

### **Clarification Required**

A claim should be accompanied at once by a clear statement of the line of play or defence through which the claimer proposes to win the tricks claimed, including the order in which the cards will be played. The player making the concession faces their hand.

### **Suspension of Play**

After any claim or concession, play is suspended

If the claim or concession is doubted by any player (including Dummy) then it is advisable to call the Director unless an agreement is quickly established

### **Outstanding Trump**

If an outstanding trump is not mentioned in the claim or concession, then the Director should be called to adjudicate as there are a number of possible outcomes

## **AFTER THE GAME**

### **Post-Mortems**

Wait until the game is over for post-mortems. Not only could a post-mortem undermine partnership confidence, but it may communicate information to players who have not played the hand at other tables.

Never try to teach or criticise a player at the table unless guidance is requested.

If you believe that a player has breached any of the rules above then you have a right to call the Director. If you believe that a player is repeatedly breaching the rules then it is appropriate to make a complaint in writing to the Recorder.

*Updated July 2022*