



Issue 9 - BridgeHands Newsletter

The Street Smart Bridge Player – Part III

May 2007

Dear Bridge Friend,

Welcome back to part three of our series on the Street Smart Bridge Player. Summer is here and we hope to brighten up your day continuing our saga with the Street Smart Bridge Player. In this issue we will dig into Bridge Laws, a necessary prerequisite for fair play. On our next installment, we will conclude by looking into the dark side of the force.

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The Street Smart Bridge Player – Part III

Playing a winning game helps when you know the rules!

In our last issue we mentioned several Laws-related tips:

- Consider tempo, mannerisms and gestures of opponents. Recall Law [73.D.2](#) states: "A player may not attempt to mislead an opponent by means of remark or gesture, through the haste or hesitancy of a call or play (as in hesitating before playing a singleton), or by the manner in which the call or play is made."
- A player should always "chest one's cards," especially against *better* players. Avoid giving the shrewd opponent an opportunity to "enjoy the view."

- Regarding three-way Knockout team games, we cautioned against sharing scores from the first session with the new opponents – certainly the new competitors will use this information to either play cautiously or aggressively depending on their standing. Also recall in a regular team game after the first half, only the side that is behind in the match has the option of changing opponents (North-South, East-West).

- Be sure you are truly at the table at the beginning and end of a long match (the “first hand syndrome” and the “last hand syndrome”). Try to avoid early distractions and late session doldrums. Even worse, resist the temptation to be a hero on your own – this can erode partnership trust, confidence, and appear resigned that the partnership cannot compete using skill.

- Lastly, we discussed the importance of both maintaining and presenting a positive emotional and physical image. This helps avoid “tells” and helps keep the opponents on their best behavior while respecting your Bridge prowess. Okay, let’s move on to discuss the laws from the perspective of the Street Smart Bridge player.

To begin our discussion of Bridge Laws, it should go without saying that it helps if a player both has a fundamental understanding of the Laws or at least knows where to find the relevant information pertaining to a question about the Laws. In North America, the American Contract Bridge League is the jurisdictional authority responsible for establishing Bridge Laws – both for [duplicate](#) play, [contract rubber](#) Bridge, [four-deal](#) (Chicago) scoring and [alternative contract club](#) Laws. Fortunately for those to play around the globe, Bridge Laws are uniform around the world (e.g., the [World Bridge Federation duplicate Laws](#)).

In addition to the Laws, several supplemental documents provide enlightening information: Director’s [Duplicate Decisions](#), [ACBLSCORE Tech Files](#), [Alerting Procedures](#), and [NABC “Casebook” Appeals](#) documents. At ***BridgeHands***, you can review these documents online. Where practical, we also have linkages between the Laws. To help you find your way around the Laws, here’s the basic structure:

[PART I – DEFINITIONS](#)

[PART II – PRELIMINARIES](#) (Law 1-5): pack/deck, card rank, draw

[PART III – PREPARATION AND PROGRESS](#) (Law 6-8): shuffle, cut, changing pack, deal, dealer rotation, redeal, missing or surplus card

[PART IV – GENERAL LAWS GOVERNING IRREGULARITIES](#) (Law 9-16a): irregularities, assessing penalties and forfeiting rights, Directors powers, incorrect or missing cards, playing wrong board, unauthorized information

[PART V - THE AUCTION](#) (Law 17-40): duration, bids, doubles/redoubles, reviews and call explanations, misinformation, end of auction, exposed card/s, legal/illegal changes of call

[PART VI – THE PLAY](#) (Law 41-71): opening lead, dummy reveal, dummy rights/limitations, sequence of play, card played, incomplete/erroneous call to dummy, retraction of card played, penalty card/s play, lead out of turn, play after illegal play, revokes, arrangement/inspection of trick, claims and concessions

[PART VII – PROPRIETIES](#) (Law 72-76): general principles, communication, conduct and etiquette, partnership understandings, spectators/kibitzers

[PART VIII – SCORING](#) (Law 77-79): partscore, penalties, bonuses

Okay, let's jump into the specifics of Bridge Laws.

Among the most relevant laws from the standpoint of the Street Smart Bridge player are:

[Law 16: Unauthorized Information](#) – this one regularly warrants Director calls for assistance and gets escalated to appeals committees all too often.

[Law 21: Calls based on Misinformation](#) – as soon as you realize you neglected to alert a conventional call by your partner, immediately call the Director.

[Law 25: Legal and Illegal Changes of Call](#) – as soon as you realize you made a mistaken call (provided partner has not already made a call), immediately call the Director.

[Law 27: Insufficient Bid](#) – be aware of the subtle yet critical differences between an insufficient natural bid and an insufficient conventional call. Also understand the loss of one's rights when an opponent accepts the call.

[Law 40: Partnership Agreements](#) – psyches are lawful within established guidelines (excepting excessive, frivolous, or unsportsmanlike psyches); concealed understandings are absolutely prohibited.

[Law 45: Card Played](#) – know the subtle differences between defenders played card and that of the declarer.

[Law 46: Incomplete or Erroneous Call of Cards from Dummy](#) – here's a tricky Law involving the differences between a slip of the tongue, a slip of the mind, and when declarer's true intention is incontrovertible (whew!)

[Law 48-51 Penalty Card Laws](#) – many players know enough about the basics of penalty cards to misapply these Laws (many variances depending on the circumstance). As always, be sure to have the Director assist players obtaining redress, particularly complex issues pertaining to penalty cards.

[Law 52-57: Lead Out Of Turn](#) – while the non-offending players cannot “huddle” when deciding whether or not to accept the LOOT, a “well educated” partnership will allow partner enough time to accept the lead before calling attention to the irregularity. Further, even when the declarer or dummy realizes the LOOT, either player may still accept the lead out of turn.

[Law 63–64: Establishment of a Revoke](#) – shrewd competitors allow opponents to revoke on a trick and play to a subsequent trick before “noticing” a revoke, thus invoking a progressive penalty.

[Law 68-71: Claims and Concessions](#) – always use caution and carefully explain a claim to the opponents, especially addressing trump play. Once a player faces one’s cards, a virtual claim has been made – listen carefully to the claim and call the Director to resolve any discrepancies or contested claims.

[Law 73: Communication](#) – it should come as no surprise that communication problems are the granddaddy of all Director calls and appeals in the big tournaments! Part C sounds easy enough but the devil is in the details:

C. When a player has available to him unauthorized information from his partner, as from a remark, question, explanation, gesture, mannerism, special emphasis, inflection, haste or hesitation, he must carefully avoid taking any advantage that might accrue to his side.

As if that wasn’t enough heavy material in one Law, Part D goes even further:

D. It is desirable, though not always required, for players to maintain steady tempo and unvarying manner. However, players should be particularly careful in positions in which variations may work to the benefit of their side. Otherwise, inadvertently to vary the tempo or manner in which a call or play is made does not in itself constitute a violation of propriety, but inferences from such variation may appropriately be drawn only by an opponent, and at his own risk.

So, perhaps there is truth to the saying, “He who hesitates is lost.” Even with this harmless saying, historians argue whether the origin proclaimed was “he” or “she” – go figure. Here’s some lighter witticisms:

- a. He who hesitates is worse than lost: he is miles away from the next cloverleaf on the freeway.
- b. He who hesitates is lost, but she who hesitates is won.
- c. He who hesitates is lost -- and so is his parking place.
- d. He who hesitates is interrupted.
- e. He who hesitates is the one who doesn't pick up the dinner check.

[Law 75 - Partnership Agreements](#) – here’s another commonly misunderstood Law that regularly draws Director calls. Part 1 permits a player to violate partnership agreements. But Part 2 provides redress to the non-offending side when opponents provide misinformation, including a mistaken explanation.

Okay, let’s move on with some practical tips on the Laws.

Practicing What You Preach

First and foremost, always call the Director for assistance. Otherwise, if someone makes a personal ruling at the table, the non-offending side may lose their rights.

Penalty cards – a [minor penalty card](#) is one whose face is a 9 spot or below; thus, a [major penalty card](#) is one whose face is an honor: A, K, Q, J, or 10. Of course, in addition to an inadvertently faced card, a lead out of turn or multiple faced cards (regardless of the rank) result in a major penalty card.

Bidding – players are required to ensure they have 13 cards before looking at their faces ([L7.B.1](#)). After play, each player is required to ensure all cards have been returned to the board pocket. Fouling a board may result in a penalty ([L7.C](#)).

[Insufficient Bid](#) –

a. When on our side, our general approach is to promptly correct the bid at the higher level in the same denomination, assuming this was a mechanical error. This prevents LHO from accepting the bid. Naturally, when we have pulled the wrong denomination and notice the error before partner has made a call, we immediately call the Director who will allow us to restore the correct bid due to a mechanical error. Note: a player is not allowed to change one's bid due to a change of thought or mental error. This [issue](#) was addressed by the ACBL National Tourney Director Mike Flader in the May 2002 Bulletin (pg. 99) and Gary Zeiger, Director In Charge at the [Summer 2002 NABC \(case 46\)](#). In summary, they state: "(a) A slip of the mind is not inadvertent; (b) the burden of proof of inadvertency is on declarer." So its unlikely a Director will buy into the claim the "slip of the hand" story when the correction bid is not located near the bid actually made.

b. If by opponents, if it's useful you can quickly accept, even though the player made a mechanical error. The non-offending side's first option is to accept the insufficient bid.

c. If opponents make an insufficient conventional call, the offender's partner is barred from bidding in the auction. ([L27.B.2](#))

[Failure to Alert](#): The declarer's side must notify the defender's side of a failure to alert after completion of the auction, before the opening lead. However, the defender's side must wait until the completion of play before notification of the defender's failure to alert. ([L75.D.2](#))

If a player realizes they failed to alert a call, they should immediately make the alert, regardless of the rotational bidding. Again, call the Director for assistance.

Be careful asking about bids – don't needlessly do so unless you really have a need to know. And don't allow opponents to do so in order to needlessly draw attention to leads, sacrifices, doubles, etc. If an opponent does so and you believe your side may need redress, consider kindly calling the Director for assistance.

When asked by an opponent to explain partners bid, never make guesses or provide unwarranted inferences. Explain the convention as succinctly as possible. If you are uncertain of a bid, simply state "We do not have a partnership agreement on that call."

You can always look at the opponents' convention card. If one player's card is unclear or poorly marked, look at the other opponent's convention card (they must both agree with each other). Exception: the dummy is not permitted to look at an opponents' convention until after play is completed. Doing so during play might signal or influence the declarer about a line of play.

Conversely, do not allow opponents to look at their own convention card when bidding. If they seem to be peeking at their own card, immediately request their card as though you intend to look at the card yourself - it's there for your convenience, not theirs.

Proprieties

Beware of opponents subconscious gestures as, shrugging shoulders or hand faced skyward as "I don't know what to do!" Other antics include aggressive or angry bidding (upset about partner's call, etc). Some players pass Unauthorized Information unconsciously when using bidding boxes, as dropping down a thick stack of bidding card from several inches off the table to dramatize the magnitude of the bid. One way to defuse this situation and prevent its recurrence is to ask the offender's partner, "How many inches of drop constitute a signoff, invitational, or forcing bid?"

Beware of opponents' not-so subconscious eye-to-eye communication, such as when a bid was not alerted, etc.

When an opponent hesitates (more than a 15 seconds lapse) or makes a bid that is quite noticeably out of tempo, consider calling the Director to protect your rights. While it is commonplace for the Non-Offending Side (NOS) to obtain consensus among players of the hesitation, the ACBL Law states, "competitors will not be allowed to announce that they reserve the right to summon the Director later" ([L16.A.1](#)). At a minimum, if the hesitator becomes declarer and it's clear by viewing the dummy unauthorized information was transmitted, the NOS must immediately call Director. The NOS cannot wait to view post-play results to determine if they were injured, seeking two opportunities for the best result. If an opponent hesitates, you can make any inference you wish at your own risk. However, it is a violation of the Laws to hesitate with the intention of confusing an opponent ([L73.D.1](#))

Some players are of a mistaken belief that whenever your partner hesitates, you are automatically barred from the auction. This is not true, however if you plan to make another bid your bid must stand up on its own without benefit of partner's unintentional unauthorized information. Certainly you may not make any inferences from the pause, but you are allowed to make a call based on the "logical alternatives" of your hand and aggregate bidding. For your bid to stand up under scrutiny, the Director may conduct a sampling of your contemporaries to see if the clear majority autonomously selected your bid.

If your opponent made a hesitation, you can make whatever inferences you wish at your own risk. However, if the opponent hesitated without cause, the hesitation was irregular and you should call the Director for redress ([L73D1](#)).

If LHO makes a non-conventional pass out of rotation, the first option is for the next player (following the offender) to accept the pass out of rotation and continue. If not accepted and the offender bid before the RHO's turn to call, the offender is required to pass once at their first turn to bid; the non-offending partner is not barred from bidding. However, if the RHO passes when it was either LHO or partner's turn to call, the offender is barred the remainder of the auction ([L29](#)).

If LHO makes a non-conventional bid out of rotation, the bid is cancelled unless accepted by the offender's LHO. If the offender subsequently bids a new denomination at the first turn to call, the offender's partner is barred for the remainder of the auction ([L31](#)). If partner makes a bid out of rotation and the bid is not accepted by the opponents, the offender's partner is barred from bidding the remainder of the auction. If RHO makes a non-conventional bid out of rotation, the offender's partner is barred for the remainder of the auction.

Bidding Odds and Ends

A [psyche](#) is defined as a call that deliberately and grossly mis-states high-card values or suit length. Psyche bids are often legal yet the limitations are misunderstood by players and not consistently applied by Directors. The Director may penalize excessive psyches (more than three by a partnership in a session), frivolous psyches, or unsportsmanlike use of psychic bidding. It is not lawful to have an agreed way to "catch" a psyche, or employ any controls to detect partner's psyche. Ask Director for help. The ACBL prohibits psyches of strong opening bids: 2 Clubs, 2 Notrump, and Precision 1 Club. 1 level opening bid psyches are also prohibited with less than 8 High Card Points. Psyching artificial forcing responses are further prohibited. ([L75B](#) and [Duplicate Decisions](#))

If a player deliberately or inadvertently passes out of turn, the call may be accepted by the player's LHO, however the Non-Offending Side may not huddle. If the call is not accepted, the offender's partner must pass one round at their first available bid ([L30](#)). However, if the player made a call out of turn (not LHO's turn to call), the offender's partner is barred from bidding the remainder of the auction.

After the auction when it is a player's turn to make their first play, the player

may ask for a review of the entire auction. However, the player is prohibited from asking about a subset of the auction. Doing so appears to show interest about a certain call which may provide unauthorized emphasis to specific weakness, leads, etc. by the defender. Instead, insist on a review of all bids. This reminds us of when the legendary Charles Goren once quipped, "Please give me a review of the auction, complete with all the hesitations!"

During a session of play, [a system may not be varied](#), except with the permission of the Tournament Director. Of course, a pair can alter their defenses against the opponents' conventional calls and preemptive bids.

Now let's explore the Laws during the play of the hand.

As declarer, we should neither allow nor answer questions asked by opponent seated in the third seat until leading opponent makes their face down opening lead. Prematurely answering questions may suggest a favorable lead, interest in a suit, or a line of play which leader is not entitled to have knowledge (unauthorized information).

We should always make our opening lead face down and ask if partner has any questions ([L41.A](#) and [L45.A](#)). This prevents a Lead Out Of Turn.

When an opponent makes a [Lead Out Of Turn](#), we may choose to accept it. Of course, we should call the Director who will instruct us on the various options.

A prematurely exposed card/s by a defender becomes a penalty card/s (note – this is a different rule than a minor card dropped during bidding). If defender exposes a minor penalty card (2 through 9), the defender may not play any other card of the same suit below the rank of an honor until the defender has first played the penalty card; however, defender is entitled to instead play an honor card. Offender's partner is not subject to lead penalty, but information gained through seeing the penalty card is extraneous and unauthorized. When a defender has a major penalty card, both the offender and partner may be subject to restriction, when the offender is to play or the partner is to lead. If it is the offender's turn, a major penalty card must be played at the first legal opportunity, whether in leading, following suit, discarding or trumping. The requirement that offender must play the card is authorized information for partner. However, other information arising from facing of the penalty card is unauthorized for partner. If a defender has two or more penalty cards that can legally be played, declarer designates which is to be played. The obligation to follow suit, or to comply with a lead or play penalty, takes precedence over the obligation to play a major penalty card, but the penalty card must still be left face up on the table and played at the next legal opportunity. If the turn of the offender's partner and a penalty card is in effect, the player may not lead until declarer has stated which of the options below is selected (if the defender leads prematurely, the player is subject to penalty under [L49](#)). The Declarer may choose: (a) Require or Forbid Lead of Suit: to require the defender to lead the suit of the penalty card, or to prohibit defender from leading that suit for as long as the lead is retained; if declarer exercises this option, the card is no longer a penalty card, and is picked up. (b) No Lead Restriction: not to require or prohibit a lead, in which case the defender may lead any card; the penalty card

remains a penalty card. Whew, that's quite a bit to digest. Bottom line, ask your Director for help.

Be aware that if you are injured though an irregular action of opponent, you may call Director for an adjusted score (even if Director provided initial redress for the irregular action. For instance, revoking in a way to prevent declarer from setting up a long Dummy suit that would yield more tricks than the 1 or 2 trick revoke penalty. Misinformation during the bidding phase is also a prime candidate for the belated Director call when the Non-Offending Side is injured beyond the initial redress offered by the Director.

Next let's review the Laws for exposed cards during play:

- a. By declarer – A card is played if touching or nearly touching table, or was played in a manner indicated it was a played card (expressly facing toward opponents, or claiming). But there is no problem if Declarer drops card/s on the table; ditto if the declarer exposes a card but does not place card near table.
- b. By defender – A card is played if partner could have seen card, whether looking in that direction or not. ([L45.C.1](#))

What do you and your partner do when declarer [Leads Out Of Turn](#) (LOOT)? Consider developing a partnership understanding to wait 5-10 seconds before accepting or refusing the LOOT, thus allowing either partner to first accept/challenge the offending action. Even when the dummy points out LOOT, either defender may still accept LOOT. However the defenders cannot huddle over best action ([L55.A](#)) As we mentioned above, when the declarer makes a LOOT, exposes cards or the like, the defenders are not injured. Unless accepted, the declarer returns the card to hand and play continues. ([L55.B](#))

How about when declarer erroneously calls for a dummy card?

- a. Incontrovertible calls can be changed; this assumes the intended card based on prior play of the hand (as a proven finesse, etc.) predicated on the player's ability.
- b. No more changes originally approved by the [Vancouver Appeals committee](#), "[Oh Sh*t! I meant another card.](#)" (see pg 4 and the [actual casebook](#))
- c. Corrections are acceptable, the proverbial "Slip of the tongue," without pause for thought (as opposed to the thinking error described above).
- d. Ambiguous declarer card calls are problematic - was the call for an Ace or the Eight? Incidentally, hand gestures are acceptable but should be unambiguous to all players.

As was mentioned earlier, the Dummy cannot look at opponents' convention card during play, particularly if the action draws attention to declarer.

Once declarer has faced a card down (even a moment) on a quitted trick, they are not entitled to turn the card back up and see an opponent's face down card. However it is within everyone's rights to see their own quitted trick until their side has played to the following trick.

The Dummy has the right to inspect tricks won/lost by everyone. Just because

the declarer has a faced card down, the Dummy may keep a card faced on the current trick and is still permitted to require opponents to face their cards - perhaps opponents' cards were not visible to the Dummy. The Dummy is to ensure opponents did not revoke, but must not point out the irregularity until play is completed. Of course, an unscrupulous Dummy cannot use the tactic to draw attention to an opponent's play such as sluffing on a trick. Here's a rundown of Dummy Rights and Limitations:

1. Dummy is entitled to give information, in the Director's presence, as to fact or law.
2. Dummy may keep count of tricks won and lost.
3. Dummy plays the cards of the dummy as declarer's agent as directed (see Law [45F](#) if dummy suggests a play).
4. Dummy may ask declarer (but not a defender) when he has failed to follow suit to a trick whether he has a card of the suit led.
5. Dummy may try to prevent any irregularity by declarer.
6. Dummy may draw attention to any irregularity, but only after play of the hand is concluded. ([L43.A.1.a](#))
7. Unless attention has been drawn to an irregularity by another player, dummy should not initiate a call for the Director during play. However, once another player points out an irregularity, the Dummy may summon the Director.
8. Dummy must not participate in the play, nor may he communicate anything about the play to declarer.
9. Dummy may not exchange hands with declarer.
10. Dummy may not leave seat to watch declarer's play of the hand.
11. Dummy may not, on own initiative, look at the face of a card in either defender's hand.
12. Dummy may not look at opponent's convention card during play. ([L43.A.1.C](#))

Technically, defenders do not enjoy the same rights as the Dummy. For instance, defenders are not permitted to advise their partner of a mis-oriented quitted trick (although this infraction seldom comes into play). This right is reserved for the Dummy to prevent an irregularity. The Dummy must immediately notify declarer a quitted trick is facing the wrong direction, ostensibly to prevent a Lead Out Of Turn. However, the Dummy is not permitted to notify declarer later; doing so would provide the declarer Unauthorized Information ([L43.A.1.C](#))

Many players do not know the Dummy is not obligated to correct declarer's Lead Out Of Turn. If an opponent accepts a LOOT, the cards are in play. ([L42.B.2](#))

The correction of a revoke by declarer or defender seems to be a non-intuitive

law judged by many players. First, you are under no obligation to ask if an opponent revoked. Shrewd players consider playing a losing card to a trick revoked by an opponent! After all, there is no reason to play a winner when the Director will award the trick to you anyway! The cunning player is quick to play another card to establish the revoke and call the Director after play. Still, while such tactics may maximize one's score at the opponents' demise, it certainly doesn't promote fair play.

The declarer's RHO may ask for a bidding review before playing to the first trick. The declarer can also get a review before calling for the first card from dummy. ([L20.C.2](#)). Subsequently, a player may inquire about partnership agreements associated with a call and signals but cannot ask for a bidding review. ([L20.F.2](#))

After commencement of play, players may still ask the contract denomination, level and if doubled/redoubled. ([L41.C](#))

Until a player or their partner has played to a subsequent trick, they may inspect (but not expose) their last card. ([L66.B](#))

Claims can be a thorny subject. Ostensibly the claim is offered to save time, however when a claim is ambiguous or erroneous, the Director must be called to adjudicate the matter – certainly not a time-saver. A claim is defined as any statement to the effect that a contestant will win a specific number of tricks is a claim of those tricks. A contestant is deemed to have made a claim when the the player suggests that play be curtailed or faces one's cards. Any statement to the effect that a contestant will lose a specific number of tricks is a concession of those tricks; a claim of some number of tricks is a concession of the remainder, if any. A player concedes all the remaining tricks when the player abandons the hand. Regardless of the foregoing, if a defender attempts to concede one or more tricks and the partner immediately objects, no concession has occurred ([L16](#)). Unauthorized Information, may apply, so the Director should be summoned forthwith.

A claim should be accompanied at once by a statement of clarification as to the order in which cards will be played, the line of play or defense through which the claimer proposes to win the tricks claimed. The defenders should listen carefully to the declarer's line of play associated with the claim, particularly how outstanding trump will be played, transportation between hands, and applicable discards (but never ask). If the line of play is not acceptable to the defenders, the Director should be summoned. After any claim or concession, play ceases. All play subsequent to a claim or concession shall be voided by the Director. If the claim or concession is acquiesced in, [L69](#) applies; if disputed by any player (Dummy included), the Director must be summoned immediately to apply [L70](#) and [L71](#). No action may be taken pending the Director's arrival.

Etiquette is an important part of duplicate Bridge and should not be overlooked

just because a player is focused on winning. Here are some useful guides to improve everyone's enjoyment of our wonderful game:

1. Complete your Convention Card before the game, ensuring both you and partner are playing identical cards.
2. Arrive at the game early, locate your partner and check in with the Director and offer to help with pre-game logistics.
3. Make your opening lead before writing down the auction. Everyone is waiting for you.
4. As Dummy, do not linger before facing your cards after the opening lead. Everyone at the table is waiting for you. You can write down the auction after facing your cards on the table.
5. North should score the board immediately after play. After posting the results, North should place the traveler on the table where everyone can see and validate North's entries. Post-mortems are best saved until after the round if time allows.
6. When the Director has called a round change, leave the table if the pair behind you is waiting.
7. Refrain from opening up the traveling score-slip and loudly reading out the results achieved during previous rounds or discuss your result where players at other tables can hear you. Now is not the time to broadcast your result, maximum attainable result, opening lead, defense, misplays, etc.
8. If you are late finishing a board, pass the prior boards played to the next table. If you were not considerate enough to at least pass one board while the next table is waiting and are not sure who should get the boards, it's easy to determine – that's probably the person glaring at you from the adjacent table.
9. If you are late either arriving at the table or leaving the table, quickly sit at the next table, pull your cards and begin bidding. Now is not the time to take a break, engage in idle conversation, discuss prior boards with partner, etc.
10. Maintain a courteous attitude to everyone (partner, opponents, director, kibitzers and teammates).
11. Ensure any conventional bids used by you and your partner are alerted. Make sure your convention card is legible with correct entries in the appropriate location on the card.
12. Do not attempt to see the place from another player's hand from which the player pulled a card in playing. For instance, should an opponent or partner sort their cards by suit in descending order from left to right, we should not note positional relationship of adjacent cards played in order to deduce a player's holding.
13. Make your bids and plays in tempo. Using special emphasis, inflection, gestures, facial expressions, and the like may provide your partner unauthorized information about your hand. Do not draw inferences if your partner has done any of the above. Never hesitate to mislead your opponents.
14. Consistently announce skip bids or use the stop card before making a jump bid. This allows your Left Hand Opponent additional time to prepare for their bid, ensuring your Right Hand Opponent will not receive unauthorized information associated with a possible hesitation. The Left Hand Opponent typically waits about 10 seconds before making a call, using the interval to contemplate a well considered bid and shows the appropriate demeanor.
15. Make clear claims when it is your turn to play, facing your cards and providing the exact line of play, especially the treatment of outstanding trumps.
16. Do not detach a card before it is your turn to play; doing so provides

unauthorized information to your partner. Do not play to a trick before it is your turn to play.

17. Remember that the Director is available to help everyone. Call the Director at the first sign of an irregularity, doing so with a friendly "Director, please." Voice. Never make your own rulings.

18. It is not your duty to call attention to your own breach of law, such as a revoke, lead out of turn, or hesitation, made by you or your partner.

Congratulations, you've made it to the end of our session on the Bridge Laws. All rise in the courtroom – here comes the judge! (yes, that you)

BridgeHands Archive

While Bridge Laws aren't exciting until they jump up and bite a player, we hope you are enlightened and have a better appreciation of how the Laws provide equitable Bridge play. At a minimum, you are better equipped with another tool to make you the Street Smart Bridge Player! We will conclude our Street-Smart series by shining the light on the dark side of the game – looking at Bridge shenanigans and skullduggery!

If you missed a back issue of a ***BridgeHands*** Intermediate-Advanced eMag newsletter, here are the links:

[Issue 0 - Finesses](#)

[Issue 1 - Forcing Pass](#)

[Issue 2 - Leads on Notrump Doubled contracts](#)

[Issue 3 - Opener Reverses](#)

[Issue 4 - Reverses, Part II - Responder Rebids](#)

[Issue 5 – Psyches, Part I](#)

[Issue 6 – Psyches, Part II](#)

[Issue 7 – Street Smart Bridge Player, Part I](#)

[Issue 8 – Street Smart Bridge Player, Part II](#)

We hope you are enjoying the BridgeHands website and eMag Newsletters. We always look forward hearing from you regarding your comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,

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