



**EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE**  
**REGULATIONS for**  
**BIDDING BOXES, BRIDGEMATES AND SCREENS**  
Revised October 2019

**1. Bridgemates and other Recording Devices**

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

Whatever device is in use, players are required to enter all the scores in a timely, accurate manner. It is good practice to enter a result the moment the outcome of the board is agreed by both sides. In the case where a ruling is called for, unless unable to determine the outcome of a board, players are required to enter the table result awaiting the final ruling.

Bridgemates are currently the official score recording devices to be used at all championships. This recording is the responsibility of the team sitting North/South at each table. Failure to enter the score before leaving the playing room is subject to a standard penalty.

The official score will be that keyed in by North/South and agreed by East/West (or the captain, coach or another designated person). Players and captains are reminded that they are responsible for the accuracy of their own scores.

Recorders may assist with the data entry of scores to a device to record the bidding, play and scores. However, responsibility for the accuracy of the entered results remains with the players at the table.

Repeated violations of correct entering procedures are subject to penalty.

## **2. Bidding Box Regulations when screens not in use**

Starting with the dealer, calls must be removed from the bidding box and placed on the table directly in front of the player making the call. Players may either remove all previous, or just the chosen call, provided the manner remains consistent throughout the event. All calls must be visible and neatly overlap in a straight line from left to right, at an equal distance from each previous call. Violations of correct procedure are subject to penalty.

Players should refrain from touching any bidding cards until they have determined their call. A call is considered made when it is removed from the bidding box with apparent intent (subject to Law 25 any changes are assessed from the moment an error is recognised).

The Alert Card should be used by a player whose partner has made an alertable call as defined in the EBL Alert Procedures. It is the responsibility of the alerting player to ensure that the opponents have seen the alert. It is good practice for an opponent to acknowledge in some way.

Before making a skip bid a player should place the Stop Card on the table in left hand opponent's clear view, then make the call, and remove the Stop card in tempo as prescribed by regulation. LHO should not call until the Stop card has been removed. (If the Stop card has been removed hastily or has not been used, an opponent pauses as though the Stop card has been used correctly.)

Until they are removed from the table, a review of the auction is made by inspecting the bidding cards. When such inspection is not feasible a player may obtain a review of the auction at their turn to play to trick one. A player who removes one or more bidding cards in an apparent attempt to "Pass" is indeed deemed to have "Passed".

### **3. Regulations with Screens in use**

#### ***3.1 Description of the Operation and use of Bidding Boxes***

The North and East players sit on the same side of the screen. The sequence is this: North places the board on the bidding tray and the aperture is closed completely (thereafter it remains closed for the duration of the auction period). The players remove their cards from the board and the tray is passed under the closed aperture to the side of the screen with the Dealer.

Calls are made using the bidding box. Each player places a selected call on 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 the nearest segment of the bidding tray. All calls must be visible and neatly overlap in a straight line from left to right, at an equal distance from each previous call. Players should make every effort to perform these actions as quietly as possible. Violations of correct procedure are subject to penalty.

A call is considered 'made' when placed on the tray and released. A player who removes one or more calls made 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 entire bidding tray under the centre of the screen so that it is visible only to the players on the other side who 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.

Both sides are responsible to make sure that the whole auction is visible on each side of the screen.

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

At this point presumed Dummy or Declarer removes the tray from the table leaving the board in the centre of the table where it should remain throughout the play.

The opening lead must be made before the 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 put back on the table.

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

When leading or following suit, players must take care to always play cards in the same way, and quitted tricks must be placed vertically or horizontally in accordance with Law 65 to determine win/loss of that trick, and at an equal distance from the previous card. Violation of correct placing procedures is subject to penalty.

### ***3.2 Alerts and Explanations***

- a) A player who makes an alertable call as defined in the EBL Alert Procedures must alert the screen mate, and partner must alert on the other side of the screen when the bidding tray arrives. The alert must be made by placing the alert card in a position clearly visible to the screen mate. It is the responsibility of the player that alerts to make sure that the screenmate sees the alert. It is good practice for an opponent to acknowledge the alert in some way.
- b) At any time during the auction a player may write to the screenmate requesting a full explanation of an opponent's call. The screenmate will reply in writing.
- c) At all times, from the commencement of the auction to the completion of play, each player receives information only from the 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 given. 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 may apply), the irregularity is passed through the screen by the screenmate, the latter has accepted the action on behalf of that side in situations where the laws permit LHO to accept it.
- b) Before an irregularity is passed through the screen the offender or the 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 (see Laws 54B1, 54B2). Law 72C 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 a call, it is not an infraction if that player draws attention to the break in tempo. The screenmate, however, shall not do so.
- f) A player on the side of the screen receiving the tray who considers there has been a break in tempo and consequently there may be unauthorised information should, under Law 16B2, call the Director. This may be done 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, and 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.