

# **General Conditions of Contest for the Scottish National League and SBU Trials**

## **Overview**

1. This General Conditions of Contest (GCoC) applies to the Scottish National League and SBU Trials for Open, Women, and Senior international events.
2. The Scottish National League or SBU Trial may have a Supplementary Conditions of Contest (SCoC) which governs aspects not covered by this GCoC and which can modify the regulations applicable to a specific event.
3. Where a SCoC for an event differs from this document, the SCoC takes precedence.

## **Authority**

4. This Conditions of Contest is established by the Selection Committee of the Scottish Bridge Union. References to 'the Committee' mean the Selection Committee of the SBU. The Committee acts on behalf of, and is responsible to, the Executive Committee of the SBU Council.
5. The decision of the Committee in relation to the interpretation of this Conditions of Contest will be final.
6. The Committee reserves the right to determine a course of action at its discretion in the event of any matter arising which is not covered by this Conditions of Contest, or in the event of unforeseen circumstances arising.
7. In the event that a decision under this Conditions of Contest is required during the event, a decision may be made on the Committee's behalf by the Director in Charge.
8. The events are played under the current version of the International Code of Laws of Duplicate Bridge, with such modifications as have been approved by the WBF Laws Commission as at the date of publication of these Regulations.
9. The SBU is the Regulating Authority under the 2007 Laws.

## **Eligibility**

10. All players must be members of the Scottish Bridge Union in good standing.
11. All players must be prospectively qualified to represent the SBU in the international event to which the Trials relate, under the relevant international regulations.
12. Entrants must provide such evidence as the Committee may require as to their eligibility.

## **Entry**

13. Entry fees for Scottish junior players will be reduced in accordance with SBU competition policy. Currently this is half-price for U25s.
14. It is a condition of entry that all players disclose to the Committee any limitation that would in any way restrict the freedom of the Committee to select a team to represent Scotland.
15. Participants should be available for selection for at least one of the events for which the NL is a qualifier.

16. Each player, by entering a selection event, agrees that in the event the player represents Scotland in any World Bridge Federation, European Bridge League, or Bridge Great Britain event, he or she will comply with the relevant requirements for that event.

For example; in WBF events these requirements may include, among other things:

- Drug Testing: each player must be willing to submit to drug testing mandated by WBF.
- Publicity: players may be videotaped at any time during the championship and agree to the use of video footage or other photographs to publicise the championships and for any other reasonable purpose of the organising body.

## **Systems and conventions**

17. Pairs will normally be allowed to play any system or convention that is permitted in an international event to which the Trials relate. However, in multi-stage trials there may be system restrictions in the earlier stages.
18. Where Brown Sticker conventions and HUM systems are permitted, it is subject to the provisions of [Appendix A](#) regarding system disclosure and seating rights. Opponents of such methods should note that written defences are permitted and may be referred to at the table (see [Appendix A](#) for full details).
19. Copies of all systems must be lodged with the Committee in advance. See [Appendix A](#) for full details.
20. Failure to lodge a system card by the deadline will result in a fine of 2VP, or equivalent. The Committee may waive or reduce this fine in the case of late substitutions.
21. Systems lodged in advance as above may only be changed with the prior approval of the Committee, which will normally be granted provided that the Committee is satisfied that neither the original submission nor the change is made to gain an unreasonable advantage, and that the change is made to a method in common use.

## **Alerting**

22. The SBU Alerting Policy will be used, except when screens are in use when the WBF Alerting Policy will be used.
23. Full disclosure is vital. However, players are expected to protect themselves to a large extent. They are also expected to observe the spirit of the Laws as well as the letter.

## **Scoring**

24. Where scoring is converted to Victory Points, the WBF 20-point continuous Victory Point scale will be used.
25. A bye should be scored as 12 VP.

## **Standard adjustments and penalties**

26. The 'standard adjustment' is the difference between average plus and average (or between average and average minus) for the purpose of Law 12C2. It is applied in the initial method of scoring.
27. The 'standard penalty' is the amount of a standard (procedural) penalty and is applied in the final method of scoring (eg Victory Points if there is a conversion to Victory Points). Penalties do not

affect the scores of other contestants except in a head-to-head contest, when they reduce the score of the offender, as expressed in the basic method of scoring.

Method of scoring	Standard penalty / standard adjustment
Teams-of-four	3 IMP
Cross IMPs	2 IMP per comparison
Victory Points	½ VP in matches of 5 boards or more 1 VP in matches of 4 boards or fewer

For example, in a head-to-head teams match,

- AVE+/AVE- translates into a difference of 3 IMP in the result of a match.
- A ‘standard penalty’ makes a difference of 3 IMP in the result of a match.
- AVE+/AVE- with a further ‘standard penalty’ (eg the normal penalty for a red psyche) makes a difference of 6 IMP in the result of a match.
- AVE+/AVE or AVE/AVE- translate into a difference of 2 IMP in the result of a match (this is 1½ IMP rounded up).
- AVE+/AVE+ or AVE/AVE or AVE-/AVE- make no difference in the result of a match.

## Correction periods

28. There are four correction periods.

1. Rulings: This is the period referred to in Law 92B within which a contestant may ask for a ruling. No request for a ruling will be entertained once this period has expired.
2. Appeals: This is the period referred to in Law 92B within which a contestant who has received a ruling may appeal it. No request for an appeal will be entertained once this period has expired.
3. Score queries: This is the period referred to in Law 79C1 within which a contestant can challenge any aspect of scoring. No request for a change in score will be entertained once this period has expired except as in the next section.
4. Gross and manifest scoring errors: This is the period referred to in Law 79C2 within which a contestant can challenge a gross and manifest error in scoring made by an official. No request for a change in score will be entertained once this period has expired under any circumstances. This does not cover errors such as entering a wrong score, which should have been found by checking at the time.

29. For all events the end of a session is defined when there is a major movement of the sections or there is a major break and corresponding calculation of scores. The correction periods are:

Rulings	20 minutes of non-playing time after the end of the session
Appeals	20 minutes of non-playing time after the end of the session or after ruling is given (whichever is later)
Score queries	5pm on the second working day after the end of the event
Gross and manifest scoring errors	5pm on the second working day after the end of the event

30. In exceptional circumstances the Director is authorised to vary the Correction Periods in order to accommodate some unforeseen circumstance or to facilitate the smooth running of the event. For example, when there is the late posting of results.

### **Slow play**

31. The regulations covering slow play are provided in [Appendix C](#).

### **Late arrival or fouled match/stanza**

32. In team events warnings and penalties apply to the team as a whole rather than to any individual or to any partnership within a team.
33. A pair or team is late if one or more playing members is not seated and ready to play at the advertised starting time.
34. A pair or team will incur ½ VP penalty for lateness save that a warning will be issued in lieu of a penalty for the first offence of no more than 4 minutes of lateness. The Director may increase this penalty, to a maximum of 2 VP, for repeat offences.
35. When a contestant is deemed to be late the Director will remove an appropriate number of boards. One board is removed for each 7½ minutes or part thereof after the actual start time.
36. When the Director determines that one or more boards have to be removed, then:
- Provided at least half a match can be played, an artificial adjusted score (AVE+ for non-offender/AVE- for offender) will be awarded for each unplayed board.
  - If less than half a match can be played, then the match is declared void and is scored:
    - For a non-offending side:  
The greatest of 13 VP, their average VP match score, and the average score obtained by all the other opponents against the team at fault.
    - For an offending side:  
The least of the 7 VP, their average VP match score, and the complement of the average score obtained by all the other opponents against the team at fault.
37. The warnings and penalties may be expunged for cause either in part or in whole for late arrival for the start of a weekend. A team which feels that it can demonstrate good cause for late arrival for the start of a weekend may apply to the Committee for a waiver or relaxation of these penalties.
38. In a teams event, a stanza is fouled if teams sit in the same direction in both rooms and the error is not discovered until the end of the stanza (or near to the end of the stanza). Were this to arise, the stanza is abandoned and scored as 0 IMP to both teams. Additionally, both teams shall be penalised 1½ VP. Note: this is a relatively modest penalty, as it assumes a degree of responsibility on behalf of the organisation as well as on the players themselves. In aggravated circumstances this penalty may be increased at the sole discretion of the Committee.

### **Withdrawals (pairs trials)**

39. If a pair withdraws during a trial, then all the scores against that pair are cancelled other than those relating to a completed round-robin against all other pairs (note: depending on the movement and scoring rules, the result of the first weekend of a two weekend trial may consequently remain unchanged by a subsequent withdrawal).

### **Playing requirements (team trials)**

40. To be a qualified pair for automatic selection purposes, the pair must play at least 50% of the boards (rounded down in the case of a fraction) in every stage of the event.
41. An individual player failing to fulfil the playing requirements does not disqualify his teammates.

### **Appeals procedure**

42. An appeals panel duly constituted will consider any appeals.
43. Any pair or team has the right to call for a review of any ruling made by the Director at their table, provided:
  - They have sought prior advice/guidance from an experienced non-involved counsellor. A list of names and telephone numbers will be available at the event.
  - They make a potentially non-refundable deposit at the time of lodging their appeal.
  - That both players if a pair, or the captain if a team, make the appeal.
44. A deposit of £30 will be required if an appeal is made; this may not be refunded if the appeal is deemed to be without foundation (frivolous).
45. It should be noted that Appeals Committee may not overrule the Director on a point of Law, on Regulations, or on the exercise of disciplinary powers.
46. The appeals procedure may be changed provided it is announced prior to play.

### **Interpretation of conditions**

47. Decision makers shall be guided by similar WBF, EBL, SBU, or EBU policies, procedures or regulations, as well as the Laws of Duplicate Bridge when ruling on matters or issues not expressly addressed in these conditions.

### **Miscellaneous**

48. Smoking and the consumption of alcoholic beverages of any nature in the playing area is prohibited. No player may leave the playing area during a match to smoke or consume alcohol. There is an automatic penalty of 1 VP for a breach of this regulation.
49. It is allowed to bring your mobile phones and electronic devices (including electronic cigarettes) to the playing table provided they are completely switched off at all times. When going to the rest rooms however, they must be left at the table. Any player bringing a mobile phone and/or electronic device that is not switched off into the playing area and toilets will be fined 1 VP.
50. Players are required to participate in any public presentation of matches arranged by the SBU, including video, Internet, TV, radio or any other media presentation.
51. Players may be photographed at any time during the trial and agree to the use of photographs or other electronic recordings to publicise the trial and for any other reasonable purpose of the SBU.
52. Screens should be used for all trials where practical, and irrespective of the CoC of the target event. The screen regulations are in [Appendix B](#).
53. Ties will be split where necessary in accordance with standard SBU procedures as described in the Competition Handbook. A tie which cannot be resolved by these means will be deemed to be an unforeseen circumstance (in which case the Committee will determine a course of action).

## **Communications**

54. Any notices to be given to, or communications for, the Committee should be emailed to the Secretary of the Committee.
55. Communication is prohibited between players and selectors that could be interpreted, in any way, as an attempt by players to influence selection decisions. Transgression of this rule will result in the immediate disqualification of the offending player(s) from potential selection.
56. The Committee can be contacted at [selection@sbu.org.uk](mailto:selection@sbu.org.uk).

## **Summary of major changes since 2014**

57. Scanned system cards, and cards generated by the WBF CCE using suit symbols, will not be acceptable ([Appendix A](#)).
58. Late arrival regulations aligned with the SBU General Conditions for Competitions.
59. Standard adjustments and penalties added for clarity.
60. Minor changes to the screen regulations, bringing them in line with the latest WBF regulations.

## **Acknowledgement**

61. Many of these regulations are used with kind permission of the English Bridge Union.

## Appendix A: System policy

1. All Green, Red, and Blue systems must be registered with the Committee seven days in advance of play.
2. Where Yellow (HUM) Systems and/or Brown Sticker Conventions (BSCs) and treatments are played, full details must be provided to the other pairs (through the Committee) a full 14 days in advance. Any pair failing to provide adequate notification shall not be permitted to play the method. Contact the Committee if you are in any doubt about a system or convention classification.
3. Systems lodged in advance may only be changed with the prior approval of the Committee, which will normally be granted provided that the Committee is satisfied that neither the original submission nor the change is made to gain an unreasonable advantage, and that the change is made to a method in common use.
4. Brown Sticker information and forms are available from <http://worldbridge.org/brown-sticker-forms.aspx>.
5. All pairs intending to play, or considering playing, a HUM or Brown Sticker Convention should contact the Committee to ensure that the appropriate notification (including a viable defence) is provided.
6. Opponents may bring written defences to the HUM system to the table as an aide mémoire. A pair may prepare written defences against the Brown Sticker elements of any system. Such defences shall be given to the opponents (two clearly legible copies) prior to the start of the match. Written defences against Brown Sticker conventions are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention card.
7. When a team that includes a pair using a HUM system (whether or not such pair will play) is opposing a team that has no such pair, the HUM system team will always line up first, that is the opponents of the HUM system have seating rights throughout the match. No special seating rights or line up restrictions shall apply when two teams containing pairs using HUM systems (regardless of line-up) oppose one another.
8. A fully completed WBF convention card must be used. Completion guides, editors and templates are available from <http://worldbridge.org/convention-cards.aspx>.  
  
Please note that system cards created using the WBF CCE editor are only acceptable as long as suit symbols are not used. Generally the use of this editor is strongly discouraged due to font issues.
9. Scanned images of system cards, even if provided in PDF format, will not be accepted.
10. Failure to provide two fully completed convention cards will result in the Director instructing the pair to play the basic SBU Simple System for the rest of the session.

## **Appendix B: Screen regulations**

### ***Description of the Operation***

The North and East players sit on the same side of the screen throughout. It is North's responsibility to place the board on, and to remove the board from, the bidding tray. It is West's responsibility to adjust the screen aperture. The sequence is this: North places the board on the bidding tray. 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.

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. If a defender exposes a card and, because of the screen, declarer does not see it, dummy may draw attention to the irregularity.

### ***Changes to bids made***

A call placed and released may be changed under the Director's supervision:

- a) If it is illegal or inadmissible (in which case the change is obligatory), if screens are in use, as soon as either screen mate is aware of this; or
- b) If it is determined by the Director to be a call inadvertently selected or
- c) Under the provisions of Law 25. Under the provisions of Law 25A it should be noted that if a player's attention is diverted as he makes an unintended call the 'pause for thought' should be assessed from the moment when he first recognizes his error.

### ***Alerts and explanations***

- a) A player who makes an alertable call 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 screen mate 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.

***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 23 may apply), the irregularity is passed through the screen by his screen mate 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 screen mate 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 screen mate 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 23 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 previous section.
- 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 screen mate, 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 normally regarded as significant. If the players have not been randomising the tempo of the auction as desired then a delay of less than 20 seconds may well be regarded as being significant.

## Appendix C: Slow play

1. The time allowed for each 16-board stanza is 2 hours. If screens are being used, then the time allowed for each 16-board stanza is 2 hours, 10 minutes.
2. In the event of stanzas of some other length being required, the time allowed will be announced prior to the commencement of play in the stage concerned.
3. Automatic penalties will apply to any table which runs over the allotted time. The penalty on the table involved will be 1 VP per five-minute delay or part thereof.
4. The Director will apportion the responsibility for the slow play between the two pairs involved and will assess penalties separately to the teams involved on this basis. All penalties will be expressed in terms of  $\frac{1}{2}$  VP or multiples thereof.

*Example: a table is eight minutes late (2 VP penalty). One pair is held to be approximately three-quarters responsible and the other approximately one-quarter responsible. The penalty is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  VP to the one team and  $\frac{1}{2}$  VP to the other.*

5. If a suitable person is available to act as a time monitor, the Director may appoint such person to monitor the speed of play at any table (either at the request of one of the players or on his own initiative). Otherwise the responsibility for monitoring the speed of play lies with the Director. The Director may take evidence from independent spectators or officials.
6. A team may be penalised at both tables in the same stanza.
7. In the event that a pair is penalised more than once during the course of a single weekend by reason of slow play, the penalty against that pair shall be twice that calculated in accordance with paragraph 4 for a second offence, and three times for a third offence. Each weekend is treated separately for the purposes of this Appendix.
8. Approximately halfway through each stanza and approximately ten minutes before the scheduled time for the completion of play, the Director shall notify each table of the time remaining. Although the Director will endeavour to warn a pair when they are in danger of a penalty being imposed, any failure to do so shall not preclude the imposition of a penalty.
9. If the time limit for a round is significantly exceeded and further delays will impact the smooth running of the trial, the Director may remove any unplayed boards (and may remove a partially played board) from the table awarding an artificial adjusted score (typically AVE+ for non-offender/AVE- for offender) for each such board.
10. The Director has been instructed to apply the penalty provisions of this Appendix strictly, though discretion shall be used where a table has been delayed through no fault of its own (for example, by Bridge Base Online coverage).