

## **Etiquette and Rules for Playing Bridge at the Kamloops Duplicate Bridge Club**

Some people play bridge strictly for fun, some strictly for the competitive aspect and the rest for various combinations of the two. Regardless of where you fit in this range, the Kamloops Duplicate Bridge Club would like you to enjoy playing at our Club. Our games are sanctioned by the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) and we must therefore abide by the rules established by the ACBL. In addition to the ACBL rules, there are good practices which we want everyone to follow so that we can all enjoy the game.

With this in mind, we would like all players to be mindful of the following rules and practices.

### **The Director**

The Director's responsibilities include handling all law and rule infractions as well as running a smooth and pleasant game. Players should never feel frightened or embarrassed to call for the Director nor should they attempt to make their own rulings. When there is an irregularity, e.g. bid out of turn, lead from the wrong hand, insufficient bid, etc., call the Director.

As a matter of courtesy, tell the other players at your table that you'd like to call the Director, then raise your hand and say the word "Director". Once the Director has been called, play must stop and the cards left as they are. Once the Director arrives at the table, the person who has called him/her should explain the issue. The Director will ensure that each player gets an opportunity to explain their side of the issue and they should be allowed to do so without interruption by the others.

Remember that the Director is your friend but that does not mean that he or she will always rule in your favour. If you don't like the ruling or think it is incorrect, tell the Director that you'd like to discuss it more after the game.

### **All participants**

The start of the game is a busy time for the Director as he/she tries to determine the number of tables there will be and the kind of movement to use. You can help be arriving at least 10 minutes prior to the official start time and by sitting down at your table.

Please wait for the Director to give the OK before starting the first hand as he/she may need to move players from one table to another. Also don't move from one table to the next until the Director calls the round. If you move beforehand, he/she may be under the mistaken impression that you are still playing hands in the previous round.

Be a good host or guest at the table and when the opponents arrive stop any conversation with your partner and greet them in a friendly manner.

People are people and there will be times when someone does misbehave at the Club. When this happens it is very important that the Director be advised, if not immediately, certainly at the end of the game. Our Club has adopted a Zero Tolerance policy which is attached. It's up to all of us to ensure that it is applied.

Our Club has also adopted a Fragrance Free Policy and in consideration of others who may have allergic reactions, we ask that you not use scented products such as perfumes, colognes, hairspray or aftershave when at the Club.

The North player is responsible for the proper observance of all procedures and for maintaining proper conditions of play at the table. For example, North is responsible for turning the boards and South, East, and West should not touch the boards without North's permission. Nobody should reach under the top board to get their hand from the next board.

Each partnership should have at least one completed convention card. If the partnership has two convention cards, they must be identical. The card(s) should be placed on the table top accessible to your opponent. As you may not refer to your own card during the bidding or of a hand, it should be facing away from you.

We appreciate everyone's help putting away tables, chairs, etc at the end of the evening but if there are still people playing, please do so quietly and please don't disturb them by removing bidding boxes, etc from their table. Also please keep conversations muted.

## **The Bidding**

The cards should not be taken out of a board until at least one of the opponents is at the table. When you have removed your cards from the board, count them before looking at them.

If you make a bid (ex. Open with 2 spades) the opponent whose turn it is next to bid, may ask your partner what your bid meant. Your partner must answer, you may not. If your partner doesn't know or isn't sure, he/she should not speculate as doing so will give you information about your partner's thinking. He/she should simply say that he/she doesn't know what it means.

Do not touch the bidding box until you've decided what bid to make. Moving your hand back and forth between possible bids gives your partner information to which he/she is not entitled. For example, after you have placed your hand on the cards including the pass card, you may not then make a bid in a suit or no trump, as this passes unauthorized information to your partner. Decide what bid you want to make, take it out of the bidding box, look at it to make sure you've pulled out the one you intended and then place it on table.

Never make remarks, gestures, or facial expressions during the bidding that show that you do not understand your partner's last bid, you don't like it or that your own bid is based on indecision. Your partner is not entitled to this information and it may mislead the opponents.

When you make an insufficient bid, it is not your right to simply make it sufficient, the Director must be called as there are situations in which a call cannot simply be made sufficient. The left-hand opponent has options which will be explained by the Director.

Never pick up your bid cards before the auction has ended. If you pick up your bid cards before your partner's last bid, it appears that you are telling your partner to pass.

All psyche bids must be reported to the Director at the completion of the hand. A psyche is defined as a bid that grossly misrepresents the strength or distribution of one's own hand. Even a mistake can be a psyche, if it grossly misrepresents the strength or distribution of the hand.

Alert all bids that require an alert. When an explanation is asked for, do not simply respond with the name of the convention but rather explain what the bid shows (or asks). Not everyone knows all your conventions nor does everyone play them the same way

You may only ask for an explanation of a bid when it is your turn to bid or just prior to your play to the opening trick. To ask for an explanation for the purpose of making sure your partner understands is unethical.

As Declarer or Dummy, if your partner has failed to alert an alertable bid, it is your obligation to inform the opponents after the auction ends and before the opening lead is made. As Declarer or Dummy, if your partner alerts a bid that was not alertable or provides an explanation of a bid which is not as per your convention card, it is your obligation to inform the opponents after the auction ends and before the opening lead is made. As a defender, if you make either of these mistakes, it is your obligation to inform the opponents after the play of the hand is completed. When any of these situations occur, if your opponents are not advanced players, you should add to your explanation "If you feel you were damaged, you should call the Director."

## **Play of the hand**

When you are on opening lead, detach a card from your hand and lay it face down on the table. This prevents irregularities such as leading out of turn and allows your partner to ask question about the auction and alerts without influencing your lead.

A review of the bidding may be requested by each player at his\her turn to play to the first trick. After the first trick, a player, at his\her turn to play, may only ask what the contract is and whether or not it was doubled.

To save time, make your opening lead before writing down the contract.

If declarer plays a card from the incorrect hand, either defender or the Dummy may point this out.

A lead from the wrong hand can be accepted by either defender.

Only play your card when it is your turn not before. Do not detach a card from your hand until it is your turn to play. Do not touch a card until you have decided which one you want to play. Do not touch one card then move your hand to another. Do not pull up one card, push it back and then pull up another card. All of these manoeuvres provide unauthorized information to your partner. It shows that you are uncertain as to which card to play and, if you've followed suit, shows that you have more than one card in that suit.

To prevent a possible revoke, when a defender fails to follow suit, defender's partner may immediately inquire, "No spades?" for example. Similarly, attempting to avoid an irregularity, Dummy may inquire when declarer fails to follow suit.

Once all the cards played to any trick have been turned face down on the table, you cannot ask to see what cards were played to that trick. You may however ask for confirmation as to which hand won the trick to ensure a lead is made from the correct hand.

When a player places a card the wrong way down on a completed trick (vertical vs. horizontal showing a trick as won or lost), their partner may advise them of the mistake provided they do so immediately.

Dummy may only remove and play a card when directed to do so by Declarer. Dummy must not reach towards a card in anticipation of which card will be called for by Declarer. Likewise, when Declarer calls for a card, Dummy must never make a remark, gesture, facial expression or hesitation questioning that call.

Once a claim has been made, play of the hand may not continue. If the claim is invalid or uncertain, call the Director. If there is trump outstanding and declarer makes no mention of pulling trump, call the Director.

When the final card has being played and scoring is taking place do not fold up your cards until all players have agreed on total tricks taken.

North is responsible for entering the score on the traveller but must have it checked by opponent before continuing on to next board.

Discussion of hands can often be overhead by players at other tables and is a major contributor to slow play. When North shows you the traveller, it's for you to check the score, not an invitation to discuss the results. Wait until the game is over for post-mortems.

Bridge is a timed event. The ACBL has suggested that boards be bid and played in an average of 7 minutes. While our Club tries to be flexible to accommodate new players, slow play is a major concern. Please endeavour to not to keep the other tables waiting to change rounds.

And last, and certainly not least, enjoy the game, after all **it is only a game.**