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Tournament Regulations

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Part A: The NSWBA Tournament Regulations

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. These Regulations (the "Regulations") shall apply to all tournaments conducted by the New South Wales Bridge Association (NSWBA) either alone or in co-operation with affiliated clubs or other bodies.
- 1.2. NSWBA tournaments shall be played under The Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge (the "Code") as promulgated by the World Bridge Federation (WBF) and ratified by the Australian Bridge Federation Incorporated (ABF) as supplemented by these Regulations.
- 1.3. Where a NSWBA tournament has Supplementary Regulations they shall be deemed to be part of these Regulations. In the case of conflict the Supplementary Regulations shall prevail.
- 1.4. In any session at a club affiliated with the NSWBA or at any Congress conducted by such club under the auspices of the NSWBA, the Tournament Regulations of that club shall apply. Where no such Tournament Regulations exist, Sections 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of these Regulations shall apply.
- 1.5. No claim shall lie against the NSWBA by reason of the conduct of any tournament pursuant to the Regulations.
- 1.6. Competitive integrity requires that every competitor in a NSWBA tournament try to do as well as possible in each round, match or section of each competition and every competitor is hereby required to do so. This Regulation is directed to intention. A breach of this Regulation will result in disciplinary action by the NSWBA and the offence will be treated as a serious one. Intention will, for the purpose of assessing whether a breach has occurred, be inferred by the NSWBA from the result actually obtained having due regard to all factors reasonably explicatory of such results. The criterion used will be "balance of probabilities" and not "beyond reasonable doubt".

2. COMMITTEES

- 2.1. The Council of the NSWBA will annually appoint from the NSWBA Council a Chairman of the Appeals Committee, a Chairman of the Tournament Committee and a Chairman of the Rules and Ethics Committee.
- 2.2. The Appeals Committee
 - 2.2.1 The function of the Appeals Committee is to adjudicate all appeals from rulings of the Tournament Director(s) (the "Director") directing a NSWBA event.
 - 2.2.2 The Appeals Committee must follow the procedures set out in the NSWBA Appeals Rules. No person interested in an appeal or reference shall be a member of the Committee that adjudicates it and "interested" as used in this clause shall mean a person who in the opinion of the Chairman of the Committee should reasonably be thought to be likely to obtain some benefit from the adjudication. Should this clause disqualify the Chairman he shall appoint an Acting Chairman.
 - 2.2.3 All questions of law and/or of fact, involved in appeals from Directors' rulings or otherwise arising pursuant to these Regulations shall be appealable to the Committee. There shall be no appeal from any decision of the Appeals Committee where duly constituted in accordance with these Regulations except as provided under Law 93C of the Code. Any question raised in writing as to the due constitution of the Committee (no other form of question shall be permitted) shall be determined by the Council of the NSWBA whose decision shall be final. If a Committee is found not to have been duly constituted its determinations shall be null and void and the appeal or reference shall be heard by a duly constituted Appeals Committee.

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- 2.3. The Tournament Committee
- 2.3.1 The function of the Tournament Committee is (consistent with the Code and the Regulations) to oversee the efficient conduct of the NSWBA tournaments and it shall discharge in that regard such duties as are not by the Code or the Regulations expressly the responsibility of the Director or the Appeals Committee including in an emergency or unforeseen circumstances the duty to promulgate (after the fact if necessary) any further Regulation that may be required for the proper conduct of any tournament. Any question as to the jurisdiction of the Tournament Committee either generally or vis a vis the Appeals Committee shall be determined by the Council of the NSWBA whose decision shall be final. The Tournament Committee is not necessarily an appellate body and may take action of its own motion or initiative.
- 2.3.2 The provisions of clause 2.2.2 above and the NSWBA Appeals Rules in relation to procedures shall (*mutatis mutandis*) apply to the Tournament Committee.
- 2.4. The Rules and Ethics Committee
- 2.4.1 The Rules and Ethics Committee is entitled to exercise the disciplinary powers of the NSWBA except for those reserved to the Council of the NSWBA by its Articles of Association, but nothing herein shall negate the powers of the Director under Law 91 of the Code.
3. **DISCIPLINARY POWERS OF THE NSWBA**
- 3.1. Subject to the rights of its members under its Articles of Association:
- (a) The NSWBA reserves the right in its discretion to reject the entry of any player, pair or team to a NSWBA tournament or to any session or stage thereof.
- (b) As a consequence of incidents which may occur in a NSWBA tournament or in any international, interstate, interclub or other event at which the NSWBA is represented, the NSWBA reserves the right in its discretion to reject the entry of any player, pair or team for any future tournament conducted by the NSWBA or otherwise under its auspices whether for a limited or unlimited time and without assigning any reason for such rejection.
- 3.2. In addition to or substitution for firstly the exercise of any power under the Code as modified by the Regulations and secondly any other power referred to in this Regulation 3, the NSWBA reserves the right to request a Club affiliated with the NSWBA to take disciplinary action against any member of that club as a consequence of events which may occur in a NSWBA tournament or in any international, interstate, interclub or other event where official representatives of the NSWBA are playing.
- 3.3. Without thereby attempting to limit the matters which may give rise to the exercise of the disciplinary powers of the NSWBA, any one or more of the following matters shall constitute an offence by a player, pair or team under these Regulations in respect of which the NSWBA shall be entitled to exercise such disciplinary powers as it sees fit, namely:
- (a) any breach of the Laws of bridge as set out in the Code as supplemented by the Regulations;
- (b) any behaviour in the course of a tournament which the Director or the Tournament Committee shall rule offensive;
- (c) any unauthorised withdrawal from a tournament being a withdrawal for a period of any one deal or longer not approved in advance by the Director or the Tournament Committee or ratified thereafter by either of them in the case of accident or emergency. For all purposes under this paragraph (c) a pair may be deemed to have withdrawn from a tournament if both members of the partnership are not in attendance and ready to play every deal which they are scheduled to play at the time set down.

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(d) any breach at any material subsequent time of the terms of any agreement or undertaking given by any player in a NSWBA selection tournament to the NSWBA as a condition of entry thereto (including without limiting the generality of the foregoing a declaration of availability pursuant to clause 3.4 hereof), that in the event of there being any dispute of fact as to whether there has been such a breach the opinion of the NSWBA Council shall prevail.

The Director and/or the Tournament Committee are delegated during the tournament to exercise the disciplinary powers of the NSWBA under this clause 3.3. except for paragraph (d) hereof.

3.4. It shall be a condition of entry to NSWBA selection events that:

(a) unless otherwise specified in the Supplementary Regulations of such event, continuation beyond the first qualifying stage constitutes a declaration of availability to represent the NSWBA in the target event;

(b) unless otherwise specified in the Supplementary Regulations of such event only members of the NSWBA and its affiliated clubs will be eligible to represent N.S.W.;

(c) selection as a N.S.W. representative depends upon subsequent ratification by the NSWBA Council notwithstanding the results of such a tournament and that such ratification may be refused by the NSWBA Council without any reason being assigned therefore provided always that at any meeting of the Council of the NSWBA where a motion to refuse ratification is put it shall not be dealt with by that meeting or by any subsequent meeting until the player or players the subject of any motion to have ratification refused is or are given an opportunity to be heard by the NSWBA Council either in person or by written statement.

4. SUBSTITUTION, AUGMENTATION, ELIGIBILITY & LATE ENTRIES

4.1. The number of substitutions allowed in any tournament shall be as provided in the Substitution Rules of the NSWBA as set out hereunder. Emergency substitutions not covered by the Regulations may be allowed for substantial cause by a special ruling of the Director subject in such cases to such terms as the Director may impose. In the last resort, the Director may take whatever action necessary to keep the tournament in motion. See also clause 12.4.

4.2. The Director shall report to the Tournament Committee any instance where he is of the opinion that the substitution was outside of the Regulations. The Tournament Committee may treat a substitution outside the Regulations without reasonable cause as an unauthorised withdrawal.

4.3. Where an event or sections of an event are restricted to a particular category (*e.g.* to Men's Pairs, Mixed Teams and so on) or where prizes are available to the best performances by players in a restricted category the pair or team in question must play throughout the event so that at all times the members of the pair or team (including substitutes) actually competing fall within the restricted category in question.

4.4. Substitution Rules - preliminary

4.4.1 Terminology

Unit means the original team, pair or individual, but includes augmented players (in the case of teams events), and players who become permanent (see clause 4.5.5). For a teams event, a unit shall consist of four, five or six members. For a pairs event, a unit shall consist of two members.

Substitute means a non-unit player who represents that unit for one session or a part thereof.

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Substitution means the replacement of a unit member by a substitute for one session or a part thereof.

Stage of event means those successive sessions where the size of the field which is eligible to win the competition is not reduced (excluding reduction due to disqualification or withdrawal). In partial knock-out events, all successive knock-out sessions shall constitute the one stage.

Equivalent standard means that degree of equivalence where the ability of the substituting pair is neither significantly higher nor significantly lower than that of the substituted pair. In determining the degree of equivalence, masterpoint rank need not be the determining factor and the relative experience of the partnerships and players should be taken into account.

Ineligible substitutes include those that have entered in the same stage of the competition, those still competing in the competition and those who would not have been eligible to enter the competition.

Altered score is either the actual score obtained in a session, or the average of all the other scores which the unit obtained in that stage of the competition, or the complement of the opponent's score for that stage of the event, whichever is least.

- 4.4.2 It is a condition of entry to all NSWBA events that each entrant is obliged to play in all sessions, or arrange a substitute if unable to play. The Director should be notified of this substitution at least 24 hours before the relevant session. The entrant shall make every effort to find a substitute of equivalent standard, as defined in these Rules.
- 4.4.3 Each disqualified unit shall be obliged to play in the remaining sessions of that stage of the event, unless the Director, in conjunction with the Tournament Committee, expels the unit from the event.
- 4.4.4 The unit is responsible for the payment of all table money, notwithstanding the use of a substitute.
- 4.5. Substitution
- 4.5.1 Limits to the number of substitutions permitted in a stage of an event.

No. of sessions in stage (<i>n</i>)	Pairs events (includes Butler)	Teams events
1	No substitutions	No substitutions
2	One substitution	One substitution
3	Two substitutions	Two substitutions
4	Two substitutions	Two substitutions
5	Three substitutions; the unit must play as a pair in three sessions	Three substitutions
6	Four substitutions; the unit must play as a pair in four sessions	Four substitutions
7	Four substitutions; the unit must play as a pair in four sessions; each player must play at least five times	Five substitutions; four sessions must be substitute-free
8	Four substitutions; the unit must play as a pair in five sessions; each player must play at least six times	Six substitutions; five sessions must be substitute-free
9+	The unit must play as a pair in at least 60% of the sessions; each player must play in at least two thirds of the sessions	(<i>n</i> -2) substitutions; the unit must play as a team in at least 60% of the sessions

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- 4.5.2 Any unit which does not comply with clause 4.5.1 in respect of a competition will be disqualified except as provided under clause 4.6.4.
- 4.5.3 If a legal substitution takes the form of:
- (a) a substitute pair in a pairs session, or
 - (b) three or four substitutes in a teams session, or
 - (c) a substitute in an individual session,
- then the Director must consider awarding an altered score and record his decision in writing on the substitution form referred to in clause 4.6.2. In all other circumstances the unit shall receive the actual score for the session(s) in which the substitute(s) played.
- 4.5.4 If an ineligible substitution occurs, or one deemed by the Director not to be of equivalent standard, the Director may disqualify the unit and/or award an altered score.
- 4.5.5 Upon application by the unit to the Tournament Committee, a substitute may become a permanent member of a unit by replacing a player of equivalent standard. Such application must be made before the commencement of the next stage of the event. In such circumstances the replaced player will be deemed to have been a substitute. The reconstituted unit must comply with clause 4.5.1.
- 4.5.6 If a player substitutes for a small number of boards, the Director may rule that a substitution has not taken place.
- 4.5.7 A disqualified unit shall be obliged to play in the remaining sessions of that stage of the event, unless the Director, in conjunction with the Tournament Committee expels the unit from the event.
- 4.6. Procedures and Miscellaneous
- 4.6.1 Masterpoints. Substitutes earn sessional masterpoints which are calculated before any alteration to scores. Outright awards are shared between unit members after any alteration of scores, provided the unit has not been disqualified.
- 4.6.2 Substitution Forms. In addition to informing the Director, the unit shall arrange to fill out a Substitution Form at least 30 minutes before the session commences. The Director shall complete and sign the form. The Director shall record on the form if he has awarded an altered score and the reasons for his decision. The Director shall ensure that the form is retained for one month after the completion of the event and shall produce it to the Tournament Committee or Appeals Committee if required.
- 4.6.3 A unit may appeal to the NSWBA Tournament Committee against the Director's ruling under clause 4.5.3 or 4.5.4.
- 4.6.4 The Tournament Committee may approve additional substitutions under Section 4 in special circumstances. In particular, absence while representing Australia or NSW or participation in WBF or Zone 6 or Zone 7 Championships or finals of national events may be considered a special circumstance, provided approval is obtained in advance.
- 4.6.5 Where an illegal substitution occurs for one or more sessions of an event, the Director, in conjunction with the Tournament Committee, may at his discretion modify the scores of all the opponents of the unit containing the illegal substitution, where the Tournament Committee considers that the results of a session could have been materially affected by the illegal substitution. If the Director proceeds in this fashion, such modified scores will be equal to the average of the unit's average score for that stage of the event (excluding the matches involving the illegal substitution) and the complement of the altered score awarded as per clause 4.5.4.

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- 4.7. Augmentation
- 4.7.1 *Augmentation* is the addition of one or two players to a team. The resultant team may have up to six players. The augmented players become permanent members of the team.
- 4.7.2 Permission to augment must be obtained from the Director and the Tournament Committee.
- 4.7.3 No augmentation will be permitted after the start of play of the penultimate round of stage 1 of any event.
- 4.7.4 Augmented players must
- (a) be of equivalent standard (see clause 4.4.1) to the other members of the team. If the Director, in conjunction with the Tournament Committee, is of the opinion that the augmented players have an ability significantly higher (or significantly lower) than the other players in the team, the augmentation will not be allowed.
 - (b) not have entered the event.
 - (c) be eligible to enter the event.
- 4.8. Ineligible units
- 4.8.1 If permitted by the Supplementary Regulations, a non-eligible unit may enter an event which has restricted entry provided it pays all the entry fees and table monies as though it were eligible.
- 4.8.2 Ineligible units which enter an event under the provisions of clause 4.8.1:
- (a) are not entitled to any prizes or titles associated with the event,
 - (b) may not qualify to any subsequent stage of the event,
 - (c) are not entitled to any outright masterpoints, but are entitled to sessional masterpoints.
- 4.9. Late entry
- 4.9.1 Units may be accepted into a field, after the completion of the first session, provided they obtain the Director's permission.
- 4.9.2 Units which enter an event under the provisions of clause 4.9.1 will be awarded a score of 40% (or the 40th percentile score) for any session they have missed. In a knock-out event with repechage section, such units will be accepted into the repechage section only.
- 4.9.3 If a pair, or the majority of players in a team, are representing Australia or NSW, the pair/team may be excused from attendance at conflicting sessions and will be awarded a score of 55% in a matchpoint event or 18/25 VPs (or equivalent in an IMP-scored event), provided:
- (a) approval from the Tournament Committee is obtained in advance;
 - (b) no more than 40% of the sessions are missed;
 - (c) neither of the last two sessions of the event is involved.
- 4.9.4 Entry fees for units which enter an event under the provisions of clause 4.9.1 or 4.9.3 will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

5. SYSTEMS

5.1. System Cards

- 5.1.1 Except for events where the Director determines that a system card is not required, each pair shall have on the table during the periods of play a legible system card properly identified with their names. The system card shall be one approved by the NSWBA; that is, one supplied by the NSWBA or the A.B.F. The onus is on the pair to prepare an accurate and reasonably comprehensive system card. System cards should remain on the table during play.

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- 5.2. System Classification. For the purposes of Regulation, the current classification of systems as adopted by the A.B.F. (introduced October 1, 2004) and as amended by the A.B.F. from time to time, namely into Green, Blue, Red and Yellow Systems and Brown Sticker Conventions, shall be adopted also by the NSWBA.
- (a) Yellow (Highly Unusual Methods)
 - (b) Red (Artificial Openings)
 - (c) Blue (Including strong 1♣/♦ openings)
 - (d) Green (Natural Openings)
 - (e) Brown Sticker Conventions (Calls that place demands on the opponents' defensive preparations)
- 5.3. A pair playing a Green system (without any Brown Sticker conventions) throughout an event, which has both of its players below National Master or one player below Local Master, may designate itself as a "protected pair". (A "protected pair" will be identified by means of an orange sticker attached to the front of its system card.) In events where the Regulations allow pairs to claim "protected pair" status, pairs playing Yellow systems conventions are required to ascertain before the start of each round whether their opponents are a "protected pair". If so, the pair playing the Yellow system must play a non-Yellow system for that round. In such cases the pair must provide a second system card detailing its non-Yellow system. Similarly, pairs using Brown Sticker conventions may not use them against a protected pair.
- 5.4. System Restrictions
- 5.4.1 Unless otherwise stipulated in the Supplementary Regulations of the event, all IMP scored events which have the status of State Championships shall not be restricted to any of the classifications described in 5.2.
 - 5.4.2 Yellow systems will not be allowed in any matchpoint pairs event.
 - 5.4.3 At other sessions receiving Red Masterpoints and at Congress events, all systems will be permitted, but pairs satisfying the conditions outlined in clause 5.3 may designate themselves as "protected pairs".
 - 5.4.4 At all other sessions, Yellow systems will not be permitted.
 - 5.4.5 The Tournament Committee may further regulate the use of systems at any session as it deems appropriate.
- 5.5. Yellow systems
- 5.5.1 Any pair wishing to play a Yellow system must submit an appropriate system summary in electronic format to the Tournament Committee at least seven days before the session in which it wishes to play the system. On submission, the system summary will be dated and posted on the N.S.W.B.A website and a copy entered in the Systems File kept for the purpose of advising potential opponents of Yellow systems. The pair must ensure that a copy of the system summary is in the Systems File immediately prior to the start of any event in which the system will be played.
 - 5.5.2 Pairs playing a Yellow system must supply their opponents with two copies of a written defence. Such defence must include actions and subsequent continuations over any and all opening calls that make the system Yellow. It must be concise and legible (so that the opponents can use it with no prior discussion), and detailed enough to be an effective defence. The written defence must be approved by the Chairman of the Tournament Committee before approval to play the Yellow system will be granted. Upon approval of the written defence, two copies of it will be placed in the Systems File and a copy posted on the NSWBA website.

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- 5.5.3 Written defences to Yellow systems will be allowed on the table. Written defences to Red, Blue or Green systems shall not be allowed on the table.
- 5.6. Both members of a partnership must use the same bidding system and play conventions.
- 5.7. No more than two discrete systems may be played by a pair in a session. For the purposes of this regulation, a simple change in the high card points required for a specific opening depending on vulnerability or position will not constitute a change in system. Pairs playing two systems, one or both of which are Yellow, who are required to revert to a non-Yellow system by a “protected pair”, will be deemed to be playing a separate session against the “protected pair”.
- 5.8. It is implicit that a partnership should know its own system. The Director may require a pair to cease playing a particular system and revert to a more natural system if, in the Director's opinion, the bidding and/or explanations of the partnership demonstrate that it does not have an adequate knowledge of its system. The Director shall report such a ruling to the Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee may prohibit the pair from playing such system until it is able to demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of the system.

6. BIDDING AND PLAY PROCEDURES

6.1. Bidding boxes

6.1.1 Bidding boxes must be used:

- (a) for all State Championship events, or
- (b) when specified by the Supplementary Regulations of the tournament, or
- (c) when specified by the Director of the session.

6.1.2 When the use of bidding boxes is not obligatory, they may be used when agreed to by all four players at the table.

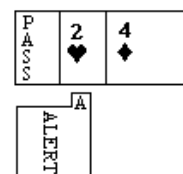
6.1.3 When used, bidding boxes must be used by all four players at the table.

6.1.4 All players make their first call by placing the appropriate bidding card on the table immediately in front of them, slightly to their left. Each player's bidding cards should be orientated so that the large print is upside-down from that player's perspective.

6.1.5 Each player's subsequent calls should be placed on top of the previous ones so that the bidding cards partly overlap and every call in the sequence is visible.

6.1.6 Players should refrain from touching any bidding cards until they have determined their call. A call is considered to have been made when the bidding card is removed from the bidding box with apparent intent (but Law 25 may apply).

6.1.7 To alert, a player should say “alert” and place one of the “ALERT” cards next to partner's alertable call, with the “A” tab directly below the alerted call. See the diagram where partner's 2H bid has been alerted.



6.1.8 At the end of the auction, the opening leader places his lead face down on the table. At this point, with the auction still on the table, the leader's partner and Declarer may request an explanation of the opponents' auction.

6.1.9 After all explanations have been completed, the opening lead is faced and all players return their bidding cards to their respective bidding boxes.

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6.2. Written bidding

- 6.2.1 In the absence of bidding boxes, written bidding will be used. If the Director believes that the circumstances require it, he may institute alternative bidding procedures without any further authorisation, whether for one or more tables only or for all competitors.
- 6.2.2 The bidding slip should not be marked to designate the dealer and/or vulnerability.
- 6.2.3 If a player opens out of turn as a result of the opposing side incorrectly marking the bidding pad, the director shall advise the side which marked the bidding pad incorrectly of their right to accept the irregularity under Law 29A. If they decline to do so, the director will award an artificial adjusted score of average minus to the side which marked the pad incorrectly, and average plus to the other side (Law 12C2).
- 6.2.4 The only legal notations are:
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, C, D, H, S, NT,
X (double), XX (redouble), / or \ (pass), // or \\ (final pass).
Full stops after bids are not allowed. "N" for "no trumps" is not allowed. Players should use the appropriate square on the bidding slip, and write their bids in a consistent manner.
- 6.2.5 The bidding slip shall remain in view until the third player has played to the first trick, whereupon dummy should remove the bidding slip from view.
- 6.3. In framing questions about the auction, special care must be exercised to avoid pointing to one particular bid which could induce a call or a lead based solely on the question. The Director should be called immediately any player feels that a "pointed" question has been asked.
- 6.4. The Tournament Committee may prescribe the use of screens for any stage of any event. If this occurs the Tournament Committee will set out procedures for the use of the screens in the Supplementary Regulations.
- 6.5. For the purposes of Regulation, the current alerting procedures as adopted by the A.B.F. (introduced January 1, 2004 and updated June 1, 2008) and as amended by the A.B.F. from time to time, shall be adopted also by the NSWBA.

7. OFFENCES (PUNCTUALITY, SLOW PLAY AND MOBILE PHONES)

- 7.1. The Chief Tournament Director (CTD) will maintain an Offence Register in which warnings and fines will be recorded.
- 7.2. Players should be seated 5 minutes before the start of play. Any unit not seated and ready to play within 5 minutes after the start of a session may, at the discretion of the Director, be penalised as follows:

	in a match involving a total of 30 Victory Points	in a matchpoint pairs event
From 5 to 10 minutes late:	1 VP	25% of a top
From 11 to 15 minutes late:	2 VP	50% of a top
From 16 to 20 minutes late:	3 VP	75% of a top
From 21 to 30 minutes late:	5 VP	125% of a top

and in other cases on a basis which the Tournament Committee deems to be equivalent to such scale. For delays of over 30 minutes in matches, the Director may assess a more severe penalty, including default of the match and disqualification from the event. A substitute pair or player may be used by the Director to complete the movement. It is the responsibility of the players to know when sessions are due to commence.

- 7.3. Failure to complete a session on time is not the only index of slow play. The Director may penalise a partnership at any time if he considers its slow play disruptive of the movement.

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- 7.4. Where a round, session or match is not completed in the time allotted, both pairs at the offending table may, at the discretion of the Director, (subject as hereinafter provided) be penalised as follows:

	in a match involving a total of 30 Victory Points	in a matchpoint pairs event
First offence:	warning	warning
Second offence:	1 VP	25% of a top
Third offence:	2 VP	50% of a top
Fourth and subsequent offences:	3 VP	75% of a top

If the period of time between any two consecutive offences by the same pair exceeds six (6) calendar months, the later offence will be deemed to be a first offence.

- 7.5. Both pairs at the table shall be penalised unless the Director has been called to the table during the session and has ruled one pair to be innocent of slow play or unless the Director has sufficiently observed the table to rule that one pair be exempted from penalty. The Director may in his absolute discretion (and whether or not he has been requested to do so by any player or players) appoint a monitor or monitors to observe play at any table and to report to the Director on the time taken by each pair or its conduct or any other relevant matter and the Director may act on the report of a monitor as if he himself had observed the play.
- 7.6. Where a pair is penalised for a late start, the starting time shall run from the official commencement time of the session. The Director may in his absolute discretion alter the length of a session (including changing the number of boards to be played) at one or more tables to facilitate or maintain the orderly progress of an event. The Director may make time calls or call attention to delays in completing individual matches, but competitors should not rely upon him to do so.
- 7.7. Except as provided in clause 7.8, offences will carry over from session to session, irrespective of a change of event.
- 7.8. In knockout teams events, a fine of 1 VP is deemed to be the equivalent of 3 IMPs. Where both sides are judged to be at fault, both teams will carry-over the fine into the next match.
- 7.9. Mobile phones and other similar electronic devices
- 7.9.1 Mobile phones (and other similar electronic devices) must be turned off during session time. If a player's phone sounds and is switched off immediately there will be no penalty. If a player answers his phone during a session then that player's unit will be penalised as follows:
- | | in a match involving a
total of 30 Victory Points | in a matchpoint
pairs event |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| First offence: | 1 VP | 10% of a top |
| Second offence: | 3 VP | 50% of a top |
| Third and subsequent offences: | 6 VP | 100% of a top |
- 7.9.2 If the hand records or scores for the event are available online during the session then a player who consults an electronic device during the session may be disqualified from the competition at the discretion of the director.
- 7.9.3 All mobile phone offences and fines will be recorded in the Offences Register.
- 7.9.4 If the period of time between any two consecutive offences by the same player exceeds twelve (12) calendar months, the later offence will be deemed to be a first offence.
- 7.9.5 Players, for professional reasons, may apply in writing to the Council of the NSWBA to be exempted from the penalties provided for in clause 7.9.1.

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8. FOULED BOARDS

- 8.1. Where a board is fouled as defined under Law 87, in Butler or other events in which the scoring method involves the IMP conversion of the difference between the score obtained and some datum score, the Director shall:
- (a) Providing that the hand has been played by sufficient pairs in the identical faulty form (by four tables or one third of the field (with fractions being rounded up), whichever is less), treat it as a separate deal determining a separate datum for the changed board and calculate scores for that part of the field from this datum. If the Director proceeds in this way in events using median scoring, he shall, after calculating all scores, determine the average of all the scores (in IMPs) obtained by those pairs who played the true board and, separately, the corresponding average for those who played the fouled board. He shall then add to the scores of those who played the fouled board such integer number which most nearly makes these averages equal.
 - (b) Award an adjusted score of 2 IMPs to those pairs who played the fouled board.
- 8.2. Whenever the Director finds it necessary to act in any of the above ways, he shall publish along with the results of the session a clear statement explaining his actions.
- 8.3. In Butler scored pairs events and team events with matches of fewer than 11 boards, average plus and average minus will be deemed to be +2 and -2 IMPs respectively. For teams events with longer matches, average plus and average minus will be deemed to be +3 and -3 IMPs respectively.
- 8.4. A board turned through 90 degrees shall not necessarily be regarded as a fouled board in individual, matchpointed pairs or IMP scored pairs events.

9. SPECTATORS, CAPTAINS, AND CLOSED ROOMS

- 9.1. Spectators will be allowed to watch play (at one table only) in the open room(s) but there shall be no spectators in the closed room(s). A spectator may not watch play at more than one table and should, if possible, be seated and should refrain from looking into more than one hand or moving round the table during the bidding or play. Spectators must remain silent unless spoken to by a player or official. Provided that a spectator observes these conditions and matters of general etiquette, a player has no right to object to his/her presence at the table.
- 9.2. Captains are entitled to watch only the table in the closed room at which their team is playing, but are not entitled to leave the closed room while that table is still in play (except as allowed by the Director).
- 9.3. No person other than players, captains, working officials or Directors are entitled to access to the closed room except with the express permission of the Director.
- 9.4. A player may not watch at any table at which his own team is playing, including times when he is not playing in that session. A player, having completed play in a session, may not watch at any table where boards are being played which he himself has previously played.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 10.1. At the conclusion of any session of any tournament conducted by the NSWBA, the Director may complete and provide to the Tournament Committee a report of all incidents occurring during that session and must do so if required by the Tournament Committee.

11. DRESS, SMOKING AND BEHAVIOUR

- 11.1. Contestants in NSWBA tournaments shall adhere to the standard of dress required by the Council of the NSWBA for members and visitors to its club rooms.
- 11.2. Good manners are considered an essential part of bridge and the Director is specifically empowered to require players to adhere to a high standard of manners and decorum. The Director shall in his report inform the Tournament Committee of any departure from these standards by any player. The Tournament Committee may at its discretion refer any such matter to the Rules and Ethics Committee for its consideration.
- 11.3. Smoking is prohibited at all times in the playing area of any tournament conducted by the NSWBA. Failure to observe such prohibition shall be a breach of good manners entitling the Director to exercise his disciplinary powers under the Laws and shall be reported to the Tournament Committee in the Director's report.

12. TIE-BREAKS, REPLACEMENT OF UNAVAILABLE PAIRS OR TEAMS

- 12.1. Differences of fractions of a matchpoint, percentage, IMP or Victory Point will be sufficient to determine placings.
- 12.2. Ties shall be broken by successively applying the following procedures until a winner is determined:
- 12.2.1 For Swiss Teams or Swiss Pairs
- (a) the total score of all opponents shall be determined. The team or pair with the highest total shall be deemed to have had the most difficult draw and shall be ranked highest;
 - (b) in the case of two-way ties, the winner of the match between the two equally scoring pairs or teams (if such a match occurred) shall be ranked higher;
 - (c) the pair or team with the greatest positive or least negative IMP difference shall be ranked highest, with the positive net IMPs in each match capped at the minimum required for a 25-5 VP win;
 - (d) the pair or team with the greatest number of wins in VPs (a draw is equal to ½ win) shall be ranked highest;
 - (e) the total scores shall be recalculated by successively deleting the worst result, then second worst result, *etc.* of each of the tying pairs or teams;
 - (f) ranking shall be determined by lot.
- 12.2.2 For Knock-out Teams
- Four board playoffs to be played immediately the tie is agreed. (Scoring errors made in the original match may be corrected up until the time limits set out in Section 13, hereunder. Where the original match is no longer tied after the correction of such scoring errors, the result of the tie-break will be immaterial.)
- 12.2.3 Round Robins
- Apply the procedures of clause 12.2.1 for Swiss Teams or Swiss Pairs, excepting (a).

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12.2.4 Matchpoints

- (a) Where an incomplete movement was used, the total matchpoints of all the tying pairs' opponents shall be determined. The pair with the highest total shall be ranked highest.
- (b)(i) The scores of each of the tying pairs shall be compared on all boards which they played in the same direction. Each pair shall be awarded two matchpoints for each (tying) pair whose score they have beaten, and one matchpoint for each (tying) pair whose score they have equalled;
 - (ii) On boards where the pairs played in opposite directions or only one pair played the board, they shall be awarded two matchpoints for a score above the average on the board, one matchpoint for an average score, and zero otherwise;
 - (iii) The scores obtained by means of (i) and (ii) shall be added, with the highest scoring pair ranked highest.
- (c) In the case of two-way ties, the pair scoring higher in the round between the two pairs (should it have occurred) shall be ranked higher;
- (d) The pair with the best score against the highest placed pair in the field shall be ranked highest, then successively to the second-highest placed pair, *etc.*

12.3. Should a pair or team be unavailable for the next stage of a competition, that pair or team shall be replaced by the next placed pair or team in the section from which the withdrawal took place.

12.4. Should the Tournament Director permit a non-qualified unit to play in one or more sessions of an event (see clause 4.1), that unit shall be charged no table money or entry fees. The unit shall not be entitled to qualify for any final of the event and shall not be entitled to win any prizes or reward leading from the event.

13. SCORING PROCEDURES

13.1. The number of tricks won by the declaring side must be clearly recorded in the appropriate column of the travelling score sheet or pick-up slip.

13.2. In multi-session events, errors in scoring made by the players may be corrected within 30 minutes of the posting of scores for the session or up to 30 minutes before the start of the next session, whichever is later, except that in teams or Butler pairs events, where the players are required to provide the Director with the results of matches played, errors in scoring made by the players may be corrected up to 30 minutes after the match scores have been agreed upon.

13.3. Errors made by the official scorer may be corrected up to the start of the next stage of the event.

13.4. At the conclusion of an event, the results will become official 30 minutes after the posting of scores, after which time no further corrections may be made.

13.5. After posting the official scores, the Director must contact all players who were shown as having qualified for any further stage of the event in any posting of provisional scores, but who have no longer so qualified.

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- 13.6. Where there is a discrepancy on the official score sheet between the score entered and the contract, declarer or number of tricks made, the director shall make every effort to contact the players involved to ascertain the correct details. Where this is not possible, the director may only change the score recorded when:
- (a) an impossible score is recorded, or
 - (b) there is a definite error in scoring according to the vulnerability.
- In cases where a score is apparently recorded on the wrong side, the director may not change the score, but will treat the board as fouled for one round and award average to both sides.
- 13.7. In Swiss pairs events with an odd number of pairs, where it is necessary for the director to employ half matches, the following procedures will be used to obtain Victory Point scores for those pairs who sit out for half matches.
- (a) Where matches are of less than 12 boards, the director will double the total IMP difference obtained by the pair in the boards which they played and convert this score to Victory Points according to the scale being used in the event;
 - (b) Where matches are of 12 boards or more, the IMP difference obtained on the boards played will be converted to Victory Points on a scale for a match played over that reduced number of boards, or any such similar scale which the director deems to be appropriate.
- 13.8. In median scored IMP pairs events with an odd number of pairs, where a number of pairs sit out for one round, and each pair's score on a board is calculated as an IMP difference from a datum score, the Director will calculate an average score for every board played. The calculated average will be awarded to each pair that failed to play that board.
- 13.9. Forfeited matches in IMP scored teams or pairs events
- 13.9.1 If a pair or team is unable to play or complete a match, the Director may find that unit to be in default and declare the match forfeited. In an event scored by Victory Points (VPs), the offending unit shall score 0 VPs for that match. The non-offenders will be given a score of 18 VPs in a match involving a total of 30 VPs or, in other cases, a score that the Tournament Committee determines to be equivalent to this scale.
- 13.9.2 At the end of the event, the non-offender's score in the forfeited match will be adjusted to the highest of:
- (a) 18 VPs;
 - (b) the mean VP score of the non-offenders for its completed matches; and
 - (c) the mean VP score of the opponents of the offenders in completed matches.
- 13.9.3 For the purposes of determining the draw for subsequent rounds in a Swiss event, if necessary, the Director will also make this adjustment after 50% and 75% of matches have been played.
- 13.9.4 If it is necessary to assign an IMP score for a forfeited match, the non-offending side shall be credited with the maximum number of IMPs that earned the assigned Victory Points score. The offending side will be assigned the corresponding negative score.
- 13.9.5 In events not scored by Victory Points, the scores awarded to the respective sides shall be determined according to the formula in clause 13.10. The offending side will be assigned the corresponding negative score.

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- 13.10. In IMP-scored teams or pairs events, where the play of one or more boards is not possible through no fault of the players, the following IMP scores will be assigned:
- (a) if 1-3 boards are unplayed: 2 IMPs per board unplayed;
 - (b) if 4-7 boards are unplayed: 1 IMP per board unplayed + 3.0 IMPs;
 - (c) if 8 or more boards are unplayed: the following formula will be applied: $A = M/U$, where
 - A is the number of IMPs to be assigned per board unplayed;
 - U is the number of boards unplayed; and
- 13.11. M is the maximum number of IMPs in the range which scores 18 Victory Points in the corresponding WBF VP scale for the number of boards unplayed. Where there is no WBF VP scale corresponding to the number of boards unplayed, the nearest lower numbered VP scale is used. (For instance, if 13 boards are unplayed, the 12 board VP scale would be used.). Fractions will be rounded to the nearest 0.5 IMPs with 0.25 and 0.75 rounded up.
- 13.12. When electronic scoring units (such as Bridgemates) are in use the NS pair shall be responsible for entering the score into the unit and the EW pair shall be responsible for checking that the correct score has been entered against the correct board. If a board becomes unplayable (due to a pair seeing the traveller on a board they have not yet played) then both pairs will be deemed to be at fault and awarded a score of average minus on the unplayable board. At the end of each round, both pairs are responsible for re-checking that the correct scores have been entered for the round.

14. PROCEDURES PENDING APPEALS

- 14.1. Draws for Swiss Pairs or Swiss Teams events will be made immediately following the scoring of all matches in any session. No alterations will be made to the draw following an appeal which results in a change of score.
- 14.2. In Butler events where all scores are taken into account in determining the datum score (including cases where some number of extreme scores are eliminated), provisional datums and results will be determined when appeals are pending. Subsequent draws will be made on the basis of these results up until the result of the appeal is known. Should any appeal result in a change of score, the datums and results for that session will be altered accordingly.
- 14.3. In Butler events where only a selected number of scores are used in calculating the datum, scores pending appeal will not be included in calculating the datum on a board. (The Director may in his absolute discretion include an equivalent number of scores to calculate a valid datum for a board.) Should any appeal result in a change of score, the only alteration in result will be in that match which involved the appeal.

15. APPEALS

- 15.1. In these Regulations representative of the Appeals Committee Chairman shall mean the Convener of the event, or, in his absence, any Deputy appointed by the Convener, or if there is no such Deputy, any member of the Council who is present.
- 15.2. All appeals must be submitted through the Director on the prescribed form within 30 minutes of the official score being made available for inspection. The grounds of the appeal must be clearly stated.
- 15.3. All appeals shall be submitted to the Appeals Committee Chairman (or his representative) by the Director as soon as possible after being informed of the appeal.

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- 15.4. All submissions from the Director shall be in writing setting out:
 - (a) the facts including all relevant hand records;
 - (b) the players identified by name and pair or team number;
 - (c) the grounds of the appeal and any other submissions of the players concerned;
 - (d) the law or laws which the Director considers applicable;
 - (e) the Director's decision.
- 15.5. The Director shall supply one copy of his submission to each of the parties concerned in the appeal and shall specify a time within which they may make any further submissions in writing.
- 15.6. The Appeals Committee Chairman (or the Convener of the event if notified of the appeal) shall forthwith constitute a committee of not less than three members from among available experienced players, appoint a Chairman (usually himself) and designate a time for hearing the appeal. No person having an interest in the outcome of the appeal shall sit on the Committee. As far as possible the appeal shall be heard prior to the next session of the Tournament in question, but in any event after the time limited for further submissions.
- 15.7. The Appeals Committee Chairman (or his representative) shall be responsible for ensuring that each member of the Appeals Committee receives a copy of the appeal, notice of the time and place of the meeting and any other necessary facts.
- 15.8. In cases where there is a serious dispute as to the facts, the Appeals Committee Chairman (or his representative) may arrange for the immediate taking of oral evidence if this is likely to assist in clarifying the facts for the Appeals Committee.
- 15.9. The Appeals Committee may seek further evidence from any of the players involved, or any other party as it thinks fit.
- 15.10. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be by majority and, in the case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 15.11. One copy of the decision of the Appeals Committee shall also be filed in the Appeals file. This copy of the decision is for record purposes only.
- 15.12. A copy of the decision of the Appeals Committee shall be posted on the NSWBA website.
- 15.13. These rules may be departed from by the Director or Appeals Committee Chairman (or representative) where circumstances dictate such a departure and in particular where justice requires a more speedy resolution of the appeal than these rules allow. In such cases the conduct of the appeal shall be in the hands of the Chairman of the Appeals Committee, but as far as possible the following shall apply:
 - (a) An oral hearing shall be held with the Director appearing before the Appeals Committee in the presence of a representative of each party to explain the facts and ruling given.
 - (b) Each party shall have the right through one of its members to address the Appeals Committee after the Director's report, to dispute any facts or to make any submissions.
 - (c) The Appeals Committee, once it has heard the Director's report and all submissions and any other evidence it deems necessary, shall retire to consider its decision.
 - (d) The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be communicated to the parties through the Director and a written record thereof shall be filed in the Appeals file.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General

Systems are classified according to the characteristics of their opening and overcalling structures, and will be identified by colour coding. In determining the classification of a system, the green, blue, red and yellow criteria are to be applied in that sequence until the appropriate classification is determined. All entrants in ABF events must display at all times on their partnership's system cards a coloured dot indicating the classification of the system being played. In addition to these primary colour classifications, certain individual conventional calls and treatments are defined as, and require an additional, Brown Sticker.

1.2. Definitions

Average Hand: A hand containing 10 HCP with no distributional values.

Weak: High card strength below that of an average hand.

Strong: High card strength a king or greater than that of an average hand (i.e. 13+ HCP).

Natural: A call or play that is not artificial or conventional.

Length: Three cards or more.

Shortage: Two cards or fewer.

Artificial: An artificial bid is one which carries information concerning a denomination other than the one named or a bid concerned with values or controls without necessarily a preparedness to play in the named denomination.

Distributional Values: A hand with distributional values contains one or more shortages.

Balanced: For the purpose of classifying NT openings, balanced shall mean a hand with no more than one (1) shortage and that shortage shall be not less than two (2) cards in length.

Published: A System will be considered as published if it has been recorded in an accessible form and made available in that form to officials of the ABF and all registered players in an ABF event.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF SYSTEMS

2.1. Green (Natural) Systems

- (a) All one-level opening bids are natural (non-artificial) bids.
- (b) An opening bid of one of a suit guarantees length (3+ cards) in the denomination named. (Exception: a 4-4-3-2 shaped hand may be opened 1♣)
- (c) 1NT should be balanced. (**Note:** this does not preclude individual assessment of some hands, e.g. a hand with a singleton honour or a weak longer suit. The subsequent bidding methods however, should not be able to identify such hand types).
- (d) All one-level opening bids must, by agreement, promise at least 8 HCP.

2.2. Blue (Strong Club/Strong Diamond) Systems

This category includes systems that satisfy all of the following criteria:

- (a) One club/one diamond is artificial, forcing and always strong.
- (b) One of a major is natural.
- (c) 1NT is non-conventional.
- (d) The one-level opening in the other minor may be artificial with various possibilities not covered by the other opening bids.
- (e) All one-level opening bids must, by agreement, promise at least 8 HCP.

2.3. Red (Artificial) Systems

This category includes:

- (a) All systems employing artificial one-level openings that do not fall under the definition of Yellow (HUM) systems [see below], other than Strong Club/Strong Diamond (Blue) systems.
- (b) Any system in which the basic structure (other than the length of natural suit bids or the point range of openings) varies according to position and/or vulnerability.

2.4. Yellow (HUM) Systems

For the purpose of these Regulations, a Highly Unusual Method (HUM) means any System that has, as a matter of partnership agreement, one or more of the following features:

- (a) A Pass in the opening position that shows at least the values generally accepted for an opening bid of one, even if there are alternative weak possibilities.
- (b) An opening bid at the one level that may be made on high card strength a king or more below that of an average hand (i.e. 0-7 HCP and insufficient compensating distributional values).
- (c) An opening bid of one of a major with alternative possible meanings that the hand may be long or short in a specified suit.
- (d) An opening bid of one of a major with alternative possibilities that show length in one specified suit or length in another specified suit.

2.5. Brown Sticker Conventions and Treatments

Certain types of conventional calls or treatments are considered to place demands upon the opponents' defensive preparations. The conventions/ treatments in question are categorized as 'Brown Sticker' (BS). Any one of the following characteristics qualifies a convention/ treatment as BS if it is a matter of partnership agreement:

(a) Any opening bid of two clubs through three spades that could be weak and does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.

Exceptions:

- (i) Where all the weak meanings guarantee at least four cards in one known suit and only the strong options do not.
- (ii) A two level opening bid in a minor may show a weak hand with 5+ cards in either major only, or as an option among any number of strong hand types.

(b) An overcall of a natural opening bid of one of a suit that does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.

Exceptions:

- (i) A natural overcall in no trumps.
- (ii) Any cue bid that shows a strong hand.
- (iii) A cue bid in an opponent's known suit that asks partner to bid 3NT with a stopper in that suit.

(c) Any weak two-suited bid (whether it be an overcall, an opening bid or a response) at the two or three level that may by agreement be made with three cards or fewer in one of the suits.

Notes:

- I. None of the foregoing restrictions (a)-(c) pertain to conventional defences against strong, forcing artificial opening bids or defences against 'Brown Sticker' or HUM conventions. Conventional defences to 1NT are also unrestricted.
- II. Additional to the classification of system, any partnership using one or more 'Brown Sticker' conventions must individually list them on their system cards and/or supplementary sheets.