



EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

**10<sup>th</sup> EBL Main Tournament Directors Course**

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**TIPS**  
**to be a**  
**TOP**

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## WARMING

Screens

Board 2. Dealer East

Board 1 played and registered, South closes the screen and puts the second board on the table.

South and West pick up the cards and push the tray to the other side.

West, counting his cards, is thinking of the play of the previous hand and suspects a possible revoke by the declarer in a 4♠ contract (10 tricks made).

West tells South he would like to call the TD and, turning his head, looks at the TD, so he calls him with a gesture.

While the TD is arriving at the table the tray is pushed by North with a "Pass" by East (dealer).

The TD tries to determine the sequence of the events to decide if he has to apply law 64A1 or 64B4. He discovers that on the North/East side no one realized that the TD was called.

It is not possible to determine if West summoned TD before or after East's call.

The revoke actually happened and TD has to apply 64A1 (4♠-1) or 64B4 (4♠ made but it is possible to apply 64C).

### Tip

Undoubtedly the auction period had started (17A1) but this is not enough not to penalize the revoke. If the TD cannot establish which action happened before the other he could consider that the actions were simultaneous. This situation is not covered by the Laws (33 is related to simultaneous calls and 58A concerns simultaneous play).

What do we have to do?

In the insoluble cases I apply the law...**play bridge !**

In other words, I try not to assign anomalous results.

Don't forget that, especially in a pair tournament, our assigned score changes all the other scores.

Practically, in the example given, I will apply 64B4 verified with 64C.

This approach (**only in 50/50 cases !!!**) may be used in other similar situations. The important thing is to remember that **51/49 is not the same as 50/50 !!!!!**

*NB I apply this approach **only** if it is impossible to determine the facts and the two sides **don't dispute!** If there is a dispute about the facts and I cannot determine what happens then I assign the worst to both pairs.*

## STEP BY STEP

In many occasions the TD doesn't need to go through all the steps to arrive at a conclusion because the right sequence of the questions will keep out some options and simplify the case.

### Example A

SCREENS: the most common case happens when the two partners have received different information/explanations.

### First Step

The right explanation is verifiable on the C.C. or from the system which the players have with them (seldom a player persuades us he was the one who made a mistake or we are able to verify with another pair which plays the same system).

We can discover that:

- a) The player who has had the wrong explanation does not complain about any damage....OUR JOB IS FINISHED!
- b) The player who has had the wrong explanation complains about damage.

We go on to the ...

### Second Step

As usual we will go around finding a panel of the same class as the player.

**If it is a bidding problem I prefer to ask men when the player involved is a man or women when it is a woman. It is a matter of style !**

**If it is a play problem it does not matter.**

**Remember that it is not enough asking “what do you bid with these cards” having given the right explanation but also “what do you bid if you are told ... (wrong explanation)”.**

**In case the bid (or the play) chosen is different** an adjusted score will be assigned which could be weighted based on the opinion of the panel. Something more has to be given to the innocent side. If we obtain 0.5 we round in favour of the innocent side.

If the panel takes the same action with the right and with the wrong information we ask whether it is easier to do it with one explanation or the other.

Remember that in many cases (typically after a hesitation) it is enough to know whether the experts bid or not.

### Double step

When it is not possible to establish what the right explanation is:

One of the explanations is assumed given **to both players and** we verify with the usual methods the possible damage and its extent.

After that we give the other explanation **to both players** doing the same.

We assign the worst to the offending side.

Remember, during this check **both players get the same information!**

**Example B**

		♠ J	Board 5 N / NS
		♥ A 7 2	
		♦ 8 7 4 3 2	
		♣ A K Q 4	
♠ 9 6 5 3 2	W	N	♠ K Q 10 8 7
♥ J 4 3		E	♥ 10
♦ Q 10 6		S	♦ A K J 9
♣ 9 2			♣ 10 8 5
		♠ A 4	
		♥ K Q 9 8 6 5	
		♦ 5	
		♣ J 7 6 3	

W	N	E	S
	1♦	1♠	2♥ <sup>A</sup>
3♠ <sup>A</sup>	4♥	4♠	... pass
pass	5♣	pass	5♥
All pass			

2♥ = not forcing but not weak

3♠ = preempt

Result: 5♥ +1

At the end of the play East summons the TD complaining that, after 4♠, the tray has been a long time on the other side of the screen.

First Step

The TD has to verify if there was a hesitation.

*Law16B2. When a player considers that an opponent has made such information available and that damage could well result he may announce [...] that he reserves the right to summon the TD later (the opponents should summon the TD immediately if they dispute the facts that unauthorized information might have been conveyed).*

The Screen Regulations state that, with screens in use, a hesitation has to be more than 20" long. This takes into account difficult sequences but also the possibility (in true usually not used by the players) to vary the time to push back the tray.

In case of different opinions looking at the cards of the player involved could help.

This first step seldom solves the problem but sometimes we discover that the hesitation was made by the partner of the player who complains!

In this example NS admit the hesitation but North affirms that, having demanded the game red against green, they are in a forcing pass situation.

### Second Step

If North is right of course we don't need to go on, for this reason the first action will be to verify if the panel believes that this is a Forcing Pass situation.

If all the panel agree we stop and keep the score.

If we find different or doubtful opinion we move to the next step

(Obviously if the forcing pass has been alerted at the table by North the problem does not exist.)

### Third step

Playing with screens we now need to check if we can know who was likely to hesitate.

If the panel supposes that, in the sequence, both players have reason to hesitate we can stop here but if someone identifies the culprit or charges most of the responsibility to the guilty side we move to the next step.

N.B. without screen this step does not exist

### Fourth Step

To go on now we need to know if the hesitation has an unambiguous meaning or not..

If the meaning of the hesitation is unambiguous or at least probable we move to the next step.

If there is not a probable meaning or even two conflicting meanings we must check if the partner has played at two tables or not.

In the example given imagine that panel affirms that it is not clear if South was thinking to double or bid 5♥. Well, if North has doubled we move to the next step but if he bid 5♥ we stop here.

### Fifth Step

Only after having passed all the previous sieves we ask the panel what they bid with North's cards and, if the worst decision for NS could be considered a logical alternative, we adjust the score.

N.B. The "Code of practice" is very strict about the "logical alternative": This means that also if everyone bids we must ask "do you think strongly to pass?". If we get the majority of the panel thinking strongly to pass we have to adjust the score.

## NASTY PROBLEMS

- a) During the bidding a player corrects an earlier explanation but the opponent cannot change his bid because his partner has already bid (21B1).
- b) After the opening lead defender discovers the information he got does not correspond to the hand described; usually it is dummy's hand but sometimes is the hand of the declarer (for example declarer ruffs the lead, and, asked by dummy, confirms not to have cards in the suit **but** the explanation given denied a void).

The method used by most of the TDs in these cases is basically passive.

In case a) they reserve the rights of the player who cannot change his bid anymore and invite to continue (from this moment they know the true meaning of the bid involved).

Only at the end, if summoned, they will collect the complaints of the player (often unfortunately correlated to the knowledge of the hand) and the consulting with the experts will begin - asking what is their bid having had the right information in time.

In case b) the TD tells the players to play the hand reserving innocent side's rights.

So, in both cases, at the end, TD finds himself in an unstable situation with many sequential questions.

In both situations the innocent player has the possibility to play at two **or more** tables and, having seen all the cards, finding the good choice is easier!!!

The goal of the method suggested is to reduce the choice of the innocent side to a maximum of **two** tables.

**Of course we presume that the second explanation given is correct (case a) and the first explanation given is wrong (case b).**

In a) I suggest that the TD should ask the player at the moment what his bid would have been having had the right information at the right time.

This is a big step forward but poses some difficulties

I suggest that the TD should say:

**“Certainly I will consider that you might have now some more information** but could you please write here (give him a PEN and a NOTEPAD hiding what he is writing to the opponent!!!) what your bid would have been having had the right information in time?...*if you prefer you can bring the player out of the table....to whisper in an ear... or what you believe is better!!!*

I believe this is not a waste of time. To ask at the end of the play is more annoying and a lot less significant.

If the player tries to refuse, force him to do it explaining that later complaints will be less significant.

Clearly the next action (if asked) will be easier (sometimes already solved) but there is another action that we can do:

we know the substitute bid but his partner does not know it so we can ask him what is the meaning of some bid (including the one suggested). Most of the time, knowing the hand, he will give us the right answer but sometimes we could discover that the innocent side has no means to find the best contract !!!.

Case b) is easier.

**“Certainly I will consider that you have seen the dummy** but anyway could you please show me what card you would have led?”

Believe me, a lot of problems have already found the solution!

In a) it will be easier to suppose the continuation of the bid.

Giving an adjusted score we have to take care that the player involved has had an advantage but not as big as if we would have asked at the end of the play.

In any case, having been helped by a panel, we must judge if the possible call suggested is admissible.

In b) we may have already solved the problem if the alternative lead does not change (or worsen !) the result.

If it is a better lead, asking the panel, we must evaluate how much help was given looking at dummy cards (REMEMBER: if you ask at the end he knows dummy cards and the full hand!)

Someone could disapprove this method asserting that the answers to our question are given “under pressure” but the **reality is that you bid and play under pressure!!!**

	♠ K 6 2	Board 12 W / NS
	♥ J 9 7 6 5	
	♦ A Q 2	
	♣ K J	
♠ A	N W E S	♠ J 9 7 5 4
♥ A Q 4 3		♥ 2
♦ 10 9 8 5 4 3		♦ 7 6
♣ 3 2		♣ A 9 8 5 4
	♠ Q 10 8 3	
	♥ K 10 8	
	♦ K J	
	♣ Q 10 7 6	

W	N	E	S
pass	1♥	2♥ <sup>(1)</sup>	2NT <sup>(2)</sup>
3♣ <sup>(3)</sup>	4♥	All pass	

- (1) 2♥ explained at first as ♠ + min but...when the tray comes back East reminds they play it as ♠♣
- (2) Fit inviting +
- (3) P/C

If TD makes a passive action South will chose later the best bid... knowing the hand!

If we know **now** his substitute bid his options diminish.

South could propose to bid 3♣ having this options:

- X to penalize at least one of the suit (now known) of the opponent
- 2NT natural
- 2♠ inviting + in ♦
- 3♣ fit ♥, inviting+
- 3♦ long ♦, weak
- 3♥ fit ♥, weak

The final contract would have been probably the same 4♥ which went 2 off after the lead ♠A and ♦.

If TD has made a **PASSIVE** action:

At the end of the play South definitely will complain that, with the right information, he would have chosen another bid (2NT or X).

And now... we begin our pilgrimage to the experts who usually give us different opinions and we start to calculate the different numbers of tricks in the different contracts to get a reasonable weighted score.

If TD has made an **ACTIVE** action:

If South has chosen a bid which does not change the final result of the board, everything is finished (no risk to assign an undeserved adjusted score!).

If the bid chosen improves the score of the non-offending side we have to collect experts' opinions (possibly asking opinion also about non-offender's suggested bid if they have chosen another) and give the appropriate adjusted score.

As you certainly have realized, during the bidding it is not easy to decide what is better (4♥? 3NT? Penalize opps?)

**In the unlucky case we are going to meet the same number / kind of problems that we usually have with a passive action but...in many case, what we decide is what would have happened.**

		♠ 9 8 2	Board 1	
		♥ J 9 6 4 2	N / none	
		♦ K Q 3		
		♣ A 10		
♠ K 6 5		N	♠	
♥ 8 7		W	♥	
♦ J 10 9 8 5		E	♦	
♣ Q J 4		S	♣	
		♠		
		♥		
		♦		
		♣		

W	N	E	S
	pass	pass	1NT
pass	2♣	pass	2♦
pass	3♥	pass	3NT
All pass			

2♣: Stayman      2♦: no 4card major      3♥: 4♥ + 5+♠

Lead ♦J ...TD!!!!

West complains about information received and South admits he made a mistake (“I play Smolen with another partner”).

A **Passive TD** lets the play continue and, at the end, West will propose as automatic the best lead for the defense.

An **Active TD** will invite West to show him what his lead would have been with the right information (if the dummy is on the other side close the screen and **remember that anyway we must consider that he has seen the dummy**).

Here is not important to know what the best lead is but to know how to act.

(OK!!! If you are curious the best lead is ♣, partner has ♣K9xxx and ♥A, but at the table West chose ♠)

- a) If the lead chosen is inconsequential or detrimental. No problem: we keep the score. In this case a passive action could give the non offending side an undeserved weighted score because of the opinion of the panel.
- b) A different lead is better. In this case the TD asks the panel and if they chose another lead asks a possible second lead and / or what they think about the different lead proposed by the non-offender. Clearly the rounding usually given to the non-offending side has to be more...rounded.

## KNOWING TOO MUCH HURTS?

When screens are in use sometimes we meet this kind of problem:

- a player makes a bid and immediately realizes he has forgotten the system (25B and **NOT** 25A)
- he informs the screenmate about the meaning of the bid he has made

Now the screenmate knows the cards of the opponent but also how the bid will be explained on the other side of the screen and...

We are going to look at some examples but before that, we state that in these situations **score stands**.

		♠ 6 2	Board 13 N / all
		♥ A 9 7 6	
		♦ Q 10 7	
		♣ A Q 5 2	
♠ A 8 4	N W                  E S	♠ K J 9 7 5	
♥ K J 5 4		♥ 2	
♦ K J 3 2		♦ A 9 8 5 4	
♣ K J		♣ 7 6	
		♠ Q 10 3	
		♥ Q 10 8 3	
		♦ 6	
		♣ 10 9 8 4 3	

  

W	N	E	S
	1NT	2♠ <sup>(1)</sup>	pass
2NT <sup>(2)</sup>	pass	3♦	pass
4♠	All pass		

East asks about 1NT strength, North replies 12-14 but immediately says “oops, I made a mistake, vulnerable we play 15-17”.

Now East knows North has a weak balanced hand which on the other side will be described as strong. He has to chose among the overcalls over strong no trump and ...hope.

- (1) ♠ + Minor
- (2) Relay

Result: 4♠ - 2

At the end of the play East summoned the TD complaining that if he had been in the other side of the screen with the **only** information of a strong NT, he would have not bid with this nastiness: “I decided to risk an overcall only because I knew the true hand of North”.

**In the moment he took the decision to overcall he knew everything.**

**He took a risk and lost.**

		♠ 9 7 5	Board 8 W / none
		♥ K 2	
		♦ 4	
		♣ A Q 10 8 7 5 4	
♠ K J	W	N	♠ Q 10 8 4
♥ Q J 7 6			♥ A 10 8 3
♦ A Q 9 6 5			♦ K 10 8 7
♣ J 9			♣ 3
		♠ A 6 3 2	
		♥ 9 5 4	
		♦ J 3 2	
		♣ K 6 2	

W	N	E	S
1♦	3♣	pass	4♠
All pass			

Result: 4♠ -6 = -300

North bid 3♣ and immediately jumps and says: “I made a mistake, I wanted to make a preempt but we play two suited ♥♠”.

Knowing the explanation which will be given in the other side East has many possible bids but she decides to pass hoping the opponents will land in an awful contract.

When, at the end of the play, she summons the TD she affirms that she did not double 4♠ being afraid that North could remove to 5♣.

**UNLUCKY !!!**

*If someone feels sympathetic with the player who had “too much information” I point out that, when this happens, a player usually tries to be clever and we know only the cases were he did not guess.*