



ADVICE TO BUSBRIDGE DIRECTORS AND SCORERS

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Scoring Method

The Club will use the 'Neuberg' method for calculating Match Points from now on.

The White Book (78.3) specifies the use of Neuberg's formula¹ when "scoring a board with fewer results than other boards at MP Pairs". This method is used by Sims organisers when (re)scoring club results and, if we do not also use it, there can be noticeable discrepancies² between the two sets of club results. Hence we should adopt it.

Please set Scorebridge up accordingly: 'Club Preferences', 'Scoring Preferences', and select 'Neuberg' under 'Match Point Calculation Method'.

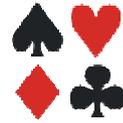
Correction Period

The Club's 'correction period' (Law 79C) will normally run until the end of the next corresponding session. This is consistent with the suggestion in the White Book (79.1). The correction period for Sims results is set by the Sims organiser and has to be complied with, even if it shorter than the Club's.

- For the first Tuesday session of the month, 'the next corresponding session' will be a fortnight later. In other cases, it will generally be a week later; but longer if the club is closed for a BH (or other reason).
- The period runs until 'the end' of the session so that those who rely on the printed results have time to see them and ask for them to be corrected.
- Ideally, the results are corrected by the end of that session. 'Corrected' means that representatives of both sides agree on what the correct score should be; the results will have to be rescored at home later, of course.

¹ <http://www.ebu.co.uk/lawsandethics/articles/neuberg/default.htm>.

² <http://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/FAQ/whylocal.asp>.



- If the results are queried but the correct score cannot be agreed by representatives of both sides by the end of the session then generally it is too late. (I would be prepared to hear appeals and grant an extension in exceptionally important cases, eg Sims. See 'After the results are published'.)

Scoring Errors

From time to time, it may be necessary to remind players of the need to score correctly. Also remind them that it is the shared responsibility of N and E: after scoring the result, N should hand the traveller to E and ask E to check it. Encourage anyone who spots a likely mistake on the traveller to bring it to the director's attention that same evening. If a North repeatedly makes scoring errors, he or she should be asked not to sit N – or E. (The director has the power to assign seats: Law 5A.)

Scoring errors inevitably cause problems but, under the approach below, only rarely need they delay publication of the results, and only rarely occasion fines.

Errors where contract and score are inconsistent

What to do depends upon whether the recorded score is 'valid' or 'invalid'. If there is a contract and outcome that can give rise to that score, it is 'valid'; it is 'invalid' if there is no outcome on any contract that can give rise to it.³

- If the **score** is a VALID one, accept it – do NOT change it. "Custom and practice says we go with the numerical score in case of dispute."

So if the traveller shows 4♠ by N making 10 tricks for NS +650, score it as NS +650. Similarly, if the traveller says 6NT by N making 12 tricks for NS +690 (NS vulnerable), score it as NS +690.

In Scorebridge, enter the contract, declarer, and number of tricks made exactly as recorded and then overwrite the calculated score with the one shown on the traveller.

However, if the **contract** itself is highly unlikely and the correct contract is clear, change it. So if the traveller says 4♠ by E making 10 tricks for NS +420 and (from the other results or the hand record) it is virtually certain the contract was played by N, change the declarer to N.

- If the **score** is INVALID and the correct score is clear, CHANGE it. (I can think of no examples other than ones in which the scorer has not taken vulnerability into account correctly.) This type of change is specifically countenanced by the White Book (9.1).

So if the traveller says 4♠ by N making 9 tricks for NS -50 when NS are vulnerable, change it to NS -100. Similarly, if the traveller says 4♠ by N making 10 tricks for NS +420 when NS are vulnerable, change it to NS +620.

In Scorebridge, enter the contract, declarer, and number of tricks made exactly as recorded and do NOT change the calculated score.

- If the **score** is INVALID and the correct score is NOT clear...

If it is an ordinary Club session, accept it – do NOT change it.

³ Scorebridge flags up invalid scores but accepts them if the scorer insists. When Sims results are submitted to them, ECats try to eliminate all errors (and generally succeed); presumably other Sims organisers (and the EBU in de course) will do the same.



In Scorebridge, enter the contract, declarer, and number of tricks made exactly as recorded and then overwrite the calculated score with the one shown on the traveller. Then leave it to the players concerned to protest! – if they do, proceed as in ‘After the results are published’.

If (and only if) it is a Sims event, CHANGE it.

You will first need to contact the players concerned. Tell them that the score they have recorded is invalid (and they will be fined). Ask representatives of both sides to agree upon a valid score before the end of the Sims correction period. Tell them that, if they can not, you will take the decision for them. Then score it.

Other errors

- If the result is scored on the wrong row, or if the EW pair number is wrong, this will usually be evident (Scorebridge will show the correct pair numbers – provided you selected the correct movement!) and the corrections will therefore be obvious. If this is not the case – if it is a complete pig’s breakfast – then it will probably be because several pairs have done the same thing. Treat them as procedural errors by the pairs concerned: see ‘Procedural Misdemeanours’.
- If there is an error on a name slip and it has to be corrected after the results are published, again treat it as a procedural error: see ‘Procedural Misdemeanours’.

After the results are published

If a player tells you that you have scored something incorrectly, you have the ‘duty and power’ (Law 81C3) to put things right “within the correction period”.

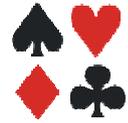
If it is obviously your error then of course you correct it. Otherwise you need to establish that the published result is indeed wrong: ask representatives of both sides to confirm they agree a valid replacement result. If they do this before the end of the correction period, amend the results (BDBC website and EBU, plus Sims if necessary) – and fine them for any procedural irregularity (see ‘Fines for scoring errors’).

Fines for scoring errors

Do NOT apply fines for scoring errors that ‘merely’ inconvenience the scorer AND can be resolved without contact with the players concerned. However, ALWAYS apply fines if contact with the players concerned is required in order to correct the error.⁴

Fine BOTH NS and EW, and by the same amount; and fine pairs without regard to “who started it” (say by being the first to score on the wrong line): all are deemed equally culpable. If someone makes scoring errors on more than one board during the same session, the fine is 10% of a top for the error on the first board, 20% for that on the second, and so on.

⁴ Fines are omitted when the results are rescored by ECats (and perhaps others) for a Sims.



Procedural Misdemeanours

Slow Play

The existing “Busbridge Guide to Bridge Happiness” covers slow play in a way that I at least can not improve upon: call attention to it if necessary. It is on the BDBC website⁵ and a copy is (or was) on the club notice board.

When calling attention to it, say that that players should take the obvious steps to avoid slow play: move promptly, get the next round under way quickly, make the opening lead *and* spread dummy BEFORE entering the contract on personal scorecards, and hold a post mortem ONLY IF there is time at the end of the round.

Tell them that the committee had asked directors to maintain a steady tempo that leaves time for a refreshment break and enables the session to be completed by about 10:30. Tell them how long you are allowing for each round⁶ and that you will call the move promptly throughout the evening.

If necessary, announce when players should have started the last board of the round; and remove a board that has not been started.⁷ If the director cancels the play of a board (and the players do not agree play it in the interval) it will be scored as Average/Average, or as Average minus/Average plus if the director deems one pair to be responsible and the other not.⁸

Add that playing directors cannot be watching everything all the time and, if a pair feels disadvantaged by another pair’s slow play, they should not feel guilty about drawing this to the director’s attention. (Slow play can disadvantage not just those at the same table but also those next due to play at that table and those who are waiting at the next table.)

Other Procedural Misdemeanours

ALWAYS apply fines for serious procedural misdemeanours at the table: for example playing the wrong boards, scrambling the hands when sitting out, replacing hands in the board in wrong orientation, and the like.

These actions are based on Law 90A (“The Director ... may also assess procedural penalties for any offence that unduly delays or obstructs the game, inconveniences other contestants, violates correct procedure ...”).

The fine of 10% of a top is the ‘standard amount’ shown in the White Book (12.5); for repeated offences, multiples of the standard amount are applied (White Book 90.2).

⁵ <http://www.busbridgebridge.org.uk/> ‘Documents’ / ‘BDBC Bridge Etiquette’.

⁶ Suitable round times for Club movements are shown on the ‘Movement Choice’ table in the Director’s Box.

⁷ The White Book (81.4.1) says: “As a matter of principle, a TD should not remove a board from a table because it is late once an auction has commenced, unless the table was told not to play the board. In the latter case a procedural penalty for both sides should be issued and the board cancelled.”

⁸ The White Book (12.12) provides guidance; it also explicitly states (12.13) that it is illegal to use the Scorebridge option (Shift+Delete) to score the board as ‘not played’ by those pairs: “At such a time the TD should decide whether to give Average+, Average or Average- to each side as is required by Law 12C2A”. Scorebridge takes proper care of Average + (setting the score to 60% or to the overall score if it is higher) but, sadly, not Average- (setting the score to 40% only and not to the overall score if lower).



Arrow Switches

Single winner movements are the preferred choice (see below). Recommended movements are shown in the 'Movement Choice' table in the Director's Box; this also shows the required amount of Arrow Switching in Mitchell movements.

In a perfectly balanced Mitchell movement there is no competition between NSs and EWs: NSs compete only with other NS, and EWs only with other EWs. However, if the Mitchell movement is not perfectly balanced (if it is not completed, or if there is a skip), there is a degree of competition between NSs and EWs, although this is not measured *unless* there is an Arrow Switch.⁹ Using unswitched Mitchell movements, therefore, it is not possible from club results alone to compare NSs with EWs. However, there are some indications derivable from Sims results.

John Spiers drew attention to the fact that, in a recent Sims, there were consistent differences between our local (BDBC) scores and national scores. In every case, NS scores were *lower* nationally than locally and EW scores were *higher*. (This was not the case for other clubs.¹⁰ Moreover, the differences were substantial: there was at least one change of 6 percentage points; and changes of 4 percentage points were common.)

In other words, BDBC NS results were significantly *poorer* against EWs generally than against BDBC EWs; and BDBC EW results were significantly *better* against NSs generally than against BDBC NSs. From this it follows that BDBC NSs were (on this occasion) *below* the overall average, and BDBC EWs were *above*.

This suggests NSs were relatively weak, EWs were relatively strong. But this is not captured in club results alone unless we arrow switch – in other words, arrow switching is necessary to improve not just the degree of competition but also the fairness of competition. This is true regardless of the number of tables.

If the event is a Sims, "You may use any movement you like – the final overall results will be shown as single winner, of course, so you may prefer to use a scrambled Mitchell, but it really doesn't make any difference".¹¹

⁹ See <http://www.busbridgebridge.org.uk/> 'Documents' / 'Club Standard Movements Rationale'.

¹⁰ Compare Busbridge results

<http://www.simpairs.com/localranking.asp?ClubId=006688BusbridgeDuplicateBridgeClub01428645405&session=006688&NSEW=EW>
with for example those of Leatherhead

<http://www.simpairs.com/localranking.asp?ClubId=006688LeatherheadBridgeClub01372453565&session=006688&NSEW=EW>.

¹¹ <http://www.ecatsbridge.com/Documents/files/SimultaneousPairsInformation/BGB-instructions.pdf>, p3.