

ACBL Laws Commission Minutes
Atlanta, GA – July 28, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 10:04AM EDT.

Members Present:

Chip Martel

Adam Wildavsky

Peter Boyd

Allan Falk

Robb Gordon

Matt Koltnow

Eric Rodwell

Rebecca Rogers

Aaron Silverstein

Matt Smith

Howard Weinstein

By Phone:

Al Levy

Roger Stern

Guests present:

Marcin Wasłowicz - Video Surveillance

Piotr Wzorek - Video Surveillance

Since there had been no meeting in March, the Laws Commission approved the San Diego Minutes via email. The commission now ratified that approval. A motion was made, seconded, and approved that email approval of minutes would be sufficient from now on.

There was discussion about “Comparable Call” in the new Laws based on commentary by Ton Kooijman, chair of the WBF Laws Committee who wanted input.

Question 1 is: May we consider a 1NT answer on a 1D opening bid a comparable call with a pass OOT at partner’s turn to open the bidding? The LC was generally in favor of allowing this as a comparable call.

Question 2 is: May we consider a 2D answer (transfer) on a 1NT opening bid from partner similar to a pass OOT at partner’s turn to open the bidding? Here the strength of 2D is unlimited. The LC was generally opposed to allowing this as a comparable call.

The discussion segued into the matter of what offender’s partner is allowed to “know” – what is authorized information and what is not. The offender’s partner is not allowed to know or take inferences from the disallowed action. However, he is allowed to know the legal repercussions of his various choices, having himself or his partner barred being among those possibilities. To be referred to WBF Laws in Orlando.

Law 7B – either opponent can give permission to look at another player’s hand.

There was general consensus that the next version of the Laws should state explicitly that 'the specific supersedes the general.

Law 12 – The Commission expressed general agreement with Ron Gerard’s opinion that dropping a readily available defensive trick after an infraction can be a "serious error" for more than 'high level' players.

The question was raised under what circumstances an action (such as 5 level decision) is a serious error by the non-offending side after there has been unauthorized information transmitted by an opponent. This example involves a case where in a competitive auction, Team B has unauthorized information and bids 4♠ over 4♥. Now Team A (the non-offending side) bids 5♥.

The following commentary was endorsed by the LC after considerable discussion.

In these cases, we distinguish among three results. Rn is the normal result had the infraction not occurred, Re is the expected result after the infraction when play continued normally, and Ra is the actual result, including the infraction and the unrelated serious error or wild/gambling action. Examples:

- 1. If team A had not made its gambling 5♥ bid, they would have beaten 4♠ two tricks and gained two IMPs (+100, -50), with their teammates in 3♠ - 1. After the 4♠ bid they were in a better spot: as they were going to lose four IMPs without the infraction when they went down in 4♥. (-100, -50) Therefore, team A was not damaged by the infraction; they were damaged by their wild and gambling 5♥ bid. They must keep their score of lose 11 IMPs (-500, -50). Team B is not allowed to gain from its infraction; it receives a score based on the expectation had the irregularity not occurred. (+100, +50 for win 4 IMPs).*

2. *The facts are comparable but for one, this time 4♠ would have been made (teammates in 3♠ + 1). Then the calculation becomes:*

With normal play by team A after the infraction (but not bidding the gambling 5♥) their result is - 6 IMPs (-420, +170);

Without the infraction their result is + 2 IMPs (-100, +170);

The difference between those two IMP results, 8 imps, is the portion of the damage which was caused by the infraction. Since Team A lost 8 IMPs on the board (-500, +170), they get eight IMPs back for 0 IMPs on the board.

Team B receives – 2 IMPs (+ 100, –170), the score they would have expected to receive had the irregularity not occurred.

Law 13 – discussion of what is authorized in a 14-12 fouled hand. That a player acted with an incorrect number of cards is authorized for all players. Knowing **what** that card is can be problematic and might justify an adjusted score.

The ACBL LC agreed to suggest to the WBF LC that discussion of Law 13 and 14 should be separated in the commentary.

Law 15 – The ACBL LC felt that the commentary could have been written more clearly. There was long discussion about the Law itself, but the consensus was that the commentary is misleading and should be re-written.

There was no old or new business.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50AM EDT