

**Minutes of the meeting of the WBF Laws Committee
Maastricht, 4th September, 2000.**

Present: T. Kooijman (Chairman)
R. Cohen (Co Vice-Chairman)
C. Martel (Co Vice-Chairman)
G. Endicott (Secretary)
V. Anderson
J. Auken
J. Gerard
D. Morse
J. Polisner (WBF General Counsel)
A. Riccardi
W. Schoder (WBF Chief Tournament Director)
J. Wignall (Drafting sub-committee Chairman)

Guests: R. Colker
D. Stevenson
L. Trent
H. De Wael
N. Wood

Apologies: The President Emeritus and as for the previous meeting.

1. At the request of an appeals committee chairman the Committee considered the circumstances of an appeal which had been adjudicated. A player had made a claim by showing his cards and informing defenders that on the basis of the known information he would make his contract through a double squeeze. His opponent had requested him to play out the cards and, in violation of Law 68D, declarer had done so. In the play that followed, subsequently voided by the Director under Law 68D, he failed to fulfil his contract as claimed. The Declarer now called for the Director who declared the subsequent play of the cards to be void and determined that as between expert players it was clear the statement of claim lacked nothing for clarity, the play of the squeeze being perfectly evident. The opponents stated that declarer had demonstrated that he could be careless in executing the squeeze.

When the matter had come to appeal the appeals committee had supported the Director in ignoring all play subsequent to the claim and in finding that the statement of claim, each player respecting the abilities of the other, contained no flaw. The Laws Committee agreed that the voided play in such a situation is wholly null and shall not be given any attention in determining the validity of the claim. When the statement is made an opponent who has any doubt about it must summon the Director at once; play must cease entirely. The questions of irrationality, inferiority or carelessness must be judged in relation to the statement accompanying the claim and the lines of play that are not excluded by the statement. On the occasion in question the appeals committee found that the intended play was entirely clear from the statement, but in any case the continuation of the play of the cards was void and could not affect the issue.

2. The Committee discussed the stages for the next General Review of the Laws. The plan so far in prospect was that the Review proper should commence in Montreal, August 2002, with the revised Code of Laws being published in 2005. It was agreed that the revision might be published in 2004, should the efficiency and speed of the review allow of it. The Committee felt that an early establishment of a drafting sub-committee is desirable. In the period from September 2000 to July 2002 the drafting sub-committee should be giving attention to the underlying philosophies of the laws, the style of their presentation, and the orderly assembly of subjects to be examined. To this end the Secretary should invite proposals and observations from appropriate sources and distribute them to the sub-committee. Some subjects and aspects that deserve attention were mentioned.

3. The Committee acknowledged its responsibility for a review also of the Laws of Contract Bridge, both in relation to traditional rubber bridge and in relation to the form known as 'Chicago' which is popular in many places. The Secretary reported his knowledge that the Portland Club is giving attention to the subject and it was agreed he should invite Mr. Davenport of that club to liaise directly with Mr. Ralph Cohen who would provide in particular material relating to 'Chicago'. The Committee would look forward to hearing from them when they had assembled proposals for its consideration.

4. Detailed attention was given to an interim report on drafting of laws for on-line (i.e. electronic) bridge. Substantial progress had been made by a group comprising Messrs. Kooijman, Wignall, Endicott, and Segraves. Bill Segraves has proved a tower of strength in co-ordinating the work and in developing text. The Committee recorded its admiration of, and respect for, his efforts. A number of ideas and recommendations were noted for the attention of the working group. The Committee expressed its pleasure at the prospect of having final proposals for the text and presentation of on-line laws in the not-distant future. It was agreed to hold a further meeting of no great duration in order to have a look at one or two paragraphs of the interim report not so far addressed.

The meeting then adjourned.