

PREFACE TO THE 2017 LAWS OF DUPLICATE BRIDGE

In contrast to other Mindsports like Chess and Go, Bridge is a comparatively new game and as such is continually evolving. The first Laws of Duplicate Bridge were published in 1928 and there have been successive revisions in 1933, 1935, 1943, 1949, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1997, and 2007. Through the 1930's the Laws were promulgated by the Portland Club of London and the Whist Club of New York. From the 1940's onwards the American Contract Bridge League Laws Commission replaced the Whist Club, while the British Bridge League and the European Bridge League supplemented the Portland Club's work.

Now responsibility for regular revisions has been adopted by the World Bridge Federation whose Laws Committee is charged with the task of reviewing the Laws at least once every decade. It is fair to state that this latest review is the most extensive to date. Many, many submissions were received from individuals, Tournament Directors, NBO's and Zones and all were considered at length by the Committee. After meeting at a number of Championships and after exchanging some thousands of emails consensus was eventually achieved. The thanks of the whole Bridge world are surely owed to the hard-working Committee members whose names appear below. In particular Ton Kooijman called on his vast experience to act as Chairman and guide the task to a successful conclusion. But no praise is too high for the Secretary, Laurie Kelso, who did all the collating and clerical work, most of the drafting, and devoted countless hours of his time. Without him the job would never have been finished.

The trends begun in the 2007 Revision have been continued - the increased discretion given to Tournament Directors, the attempts to rectify a situation rather than to penalise, and maintaining the position of Regulating Authorities. It is not expected that the Code herein will last indefinitely (indeed right up to the time of publication there were still ongoing discussions on certain laws) but the framework is there, tried and tested, for future editions.

The Committee acknowledges with gratitude the substantial help it has received from many individuals. It was all greatly appreciated.

The members of the WBF Laws Committee were:

Max Bavin
Maurizio Di Sacco
David Harris
Alvin Levy
Chip Martel
Howard Weinstein
John Wignall
Adam Wildavsky
Laurie Kelso (Secretary)
Ton Kooijman (Chairman)

John R. Wignall, MNZM