

SHEFFIELD BRIDGE CLUB

REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Updates prior to the 2010 AGM were ratified at that AGM. Amendments since the 2010 AGM are marked in blue.

This edition is dated 30 September 2011.

The purpose of this document is to provide regulations that are supplementary to, and subservient to, the Constitution of Sheffield Bridge Club. The definitions of Rule 2 apply to these regulations

Unlike the wording of the Constitution, which can be changed only by the Membership at a General Meeting of the club, the information within this document can be updated by the current Committee. However, decisions taken by the Committee during the year that result in a change to these regulations shall be subject to ratification by the Members at the subsequent Annual General Meeting or earlier by Extraordinary General Meeting. The Committee is responsible for keeping this document under constant review and updated whenever necessary.

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1. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Rule 5(h) of the Constitution contains the words within brackets: “except in an emergency”. This is defined as: “except when one or more decisions by the Committee are considered to be required before the next scheduled Committee meeting”

Decisions that are required urgently may alternatively be made using electronic conferencing, letter, telephone or e-mail.

2. GUESTS AND VISITORS

Rule 12(b) of the Constitution contains the words: “No Guest or Visitor shall be allowed to be introduced into the Club to participate in events organised and run solely by the club during the Club’s financial year more than a reasonable number of times”. The last five words are defined as “generally not exceeding 3 times in any 12 month period for those living within 20 miles travelling distance from the Club and generally not exceeding 10 times in any 12 month period for those living beyond 20

miles travelling distance from the Club, but the Committee may take special circumstances into consideration”.

3. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The maximum level of the annual subscription may, as stated in the Constitution, be changed only by proposal at a General Meeting.

The current annual subscription is £36. Members may obtain a discount by one of the following routes:

1. Standby discount or exemption from standby duty. Current annual subscription is £24
2. Student discount for full-time students under the age of 25. Current annual subscription is £5
3. Refugee discounts for those approved by the Committee. Current annual subscription is £5
4. Discounted annual subscription for those members who have elected to play only in the Club's afternoon duplicate sessions:

£8.00 from 1 August 2010

£8.00 from 1 August 2011 for those members who have carried out or are exempted from standby duties; and

£12.00 from 1 August 2011 for those members who have not carried out or are exempted from standby duties.

5. Re players who are not Club Members but who were part of a Club Team or Teams that participated in the Yorkshire League in the 2008/09 or 2009/10 Seasons.

Discounted annual membership subscription for such of those players who have elected to continue to pay for the Club but only in Yorkshire League matches. £6.00

4. TABLE FEES

The levels of table fees are (as stated in Rules 13(c) and (d) of the Constitution) determined by the Committee. Current fees are:

Evening duplicate sessions: £3.50 (£5.00 for Visitors and Guests)

Waddington League and Open League matches: £3.50 (£2.00 for afternoon matches)

Other private matches of max 32 boards: £3.50 (£4.50 for Visitors and Guests)

Special events: as shown on the Club Calendar. (£1.50 additional for Visitors and Guests except for Swiss events on Sundays or Bank Holidays.)

Afternoon duplicate sessions: £2.00 (£2.50 for Visitors and Guests)

Students and Refugees (as described in Regulation 3, above): £1.50 any session (£1.50 for Visitors and Guests)

5. CLUB PROGRAMMES OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL EVENTS

A programme of regular events shall be publicised on the Club notice board. These shall include regular weekly bridge sessions and classes.

Conditions of Contest for all events shall be publicised on the Club's notice board.

6. RUBBER BRIDGE

Rubber Bridge may be arranged at the club subject to space being available. In the event of Rubber Bridge being played, the maximum stake permissible (Rule 14(b) of the Constitution refers) is 50p per 100.

7. BEST BEHAVIOUR AT BRIDGE

The Club's policy on behaviour is as currently posted on the Club notice board.

8. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Rule 11 of the Constitution refers.

(added 17 August 2011)

(a) If, in the opinion of the Committee, the conduct of any member (whether on or off the Club premises) is injurious to the character or interests of the club, but no written complaint has been submitted to the Secretary, then the following procedures shall apply.

- (i) The Secretary shall, in writing, require the member to appear before the Committee to explain his/her conduct.
- (ii) The member may be accompanied by a friend and any witness to the alleged conduct.
- (iii) If the Committee finds the misconduct established it shall be entitled to impose any one or more of the sanctions set out in these Regulations.
- (iv) The member shall have the right of appeal against any decision made by the Committee and the conduct of such an appeal shall be in accordance with these Regulations.
- (v) If the member fails or refuses to appear before the Committee, the Committee shall be entitled to proceed in his/her absence.

(b) The Committee shall be entitled to suspend the membership of any member who is the subject of a complaint under section (c) hereof, or an allegation of misconduct under section (a) hereof, until the completion of the processes set out in these Regulations if it considers such a suspension to be in the best interests of the Club.

(c) The procedures for complaints concerning members in respect of which a written complaint is submitted to the Secretary shall be as follows.

In the event that the complaint alleges improper behaviour on the part of a member of the Committee, that Committee member shall leave any meeting at which the complaint is discussed for the duration of such discussion and shall not be permitted to vote on any matter in connection with the complaint against them.

Stage 1 (Instigation)

An investigation committee (“the Investigation Committee”) of up to three persons, delegated by the Committee, shall investigate any allegations relating to the conduct of a Member, a Visitor or a Guest where such allegations are presented to the Secretary in writing.

Any complaint presented to the Secretary must be accompanied by the following:

- a. full details of the claim by the complainant including specific details of dates, witnesses and the specific words or behaviour on which the complaint is based;
- b. a written witness statement from anyone that the complainant wishes to suggest as a witness in support of the claim (the Committee shall not be obliged to obtain any evidence in support of the complaint);

For the avoidance of doubt, the Committee shall not be obliged to investigate a complaint until:

- i. it is accompanied by a letter or a witness statement in support from a member other than the complainant; and
- ii. all such evidence referred to in any complaint is presented in the above specific form.

Notification of a complaint must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Committee within 14 days of its occurrence or it will not be considered by the Committee unless there are extraordinary circumstances of which the Committee will be the sole judge.

This procedure applies to all current and future complaints and all such information not yet collated by the Committee will no longer be their responsibility but will instead be the responsibility of the complainant.

The Club Committee hereby delegates (amended 16 March 11) Mary Whyms, Jonathan Brayshaw and Ann Wall as the standing initial Investigation Committee (“IIC”) in order to initiate the process of dealing with complaints received. The IIC’s primary duty shall be to consider the complaint received and, in the event that the IIC by simple majority considers that the wording of such complaint is arguably inflammatory, impolite or contains unsubstantiated or frivolous allegations, it shall write to the complainant inviting them to re-submit their complaint in a form that does not offend these principles and inform the complainant that the only action that the IIC intends to take in relation to their complaint in its current form is to report to the Club Committee at the next meeting and recommend the dismissal of such complaint.

(Added 16 March 11) The IIC (or a representative of it) shall have power to conciliate between the complainant and the person the subject of the complaint if it considers it appropriate to do so.

In considering any complaint concerning behaviour at the table, the IIC will give due weight to whether the complainant consulted the tournament director before the end of the session of play.

In the event that the IIC considers that a complaint merits full investigation, it may either proceed to investigate the claim itself as the Investigation Committee or, in the event that the IIC or any of its members feel they may be conflicted in relation to

such investigation, they shall return to the Club Committee and request that a specific Investigation Committee is formed to investigate the complaint.

Stage 2 (Investigation)

The Investigation Committee shall investigate such allegations fully through thorough enquiry and collection of all relevant facts, along with written statements (where appropriate) from the accused, the alleged victims and possible witnesses.

During this stage, the Investigation Committee may decide to dismiss such allegation or complaint.

Unless such allegation or complaint is dismissed, a reasonable period of time shall be given (normally 7 days) for the alleged offender(s) to be invited to explain or defend their position or behaviour in writing. The alleged offender(s) shall be given full details of all the evidence submitted.

Counterclaims may be made at this stage for due consideration, and full details of the counterclaims must be provided to the Investigation Committee and to the complainant.

The Investigation Committee shall then report to the Club Committee, supplying all documents and making any recommendations that it may see fit.

Stage 3 (The Club Committee)

The Club Committee shall consider the report of the Investigation Committee. By way of guidance, Committee Members should consider with objectivity, weighing the facts only and with impartiality and fairness. Only the matter in hand, and not past history, should be considered.

The Club Committee may decide to hold a hearing. In addition, the alleged offender(s) may require that a hearing be called.

Alleged offenders and complainants for a hearing must be told in writing of the reasons for the hearing and be given a reasonable period of notice, along with an opportunity to attend and to invite a witness, and/or have their representative attend the hearing if they so choose.

The disciplinary hearing must reach conclusions based on evidence submitted. Where the facts are in dispute, a decision may be based on the balance of probabilities.

Any decision(s) taken, and the reason(s) for them, must be communicated to all relevant parties. Such decisions may be posted on the Club notice board at the discretion of the Club Committee, either with or without the names of any or all of the concerned parties.

Where the Club Committee, after reviewing all the evidence, considers that the complaint has no substance or has been brought frivolously, it may decide that one or more actions as set out below may be taken against the complainant(s)

The Club Committee may agree or disagree with the recommendations of the Investigation Committee and may increase or decrease any recommended severity of sanction recommended by the Investigation Committee.

Members of the Investigation Committee who are members of the Club Committee will be ineligible to vote with the remainder of the Club Committee at this stage.

At the time of the decision, the Club Committee shall determine whether any sanction is to have immediate effect or whether the sanction is to be delayed to allow for a possible appeal.

Stage 4 (Notification of outcome)

Decisions of the Club Committee are to be notified by first class post to the complainant(s) and to the alleged offender(s).

Either of such parties have a right of appeal (in writing, and delivered to the Club Secretary within ten days of the notification to the party concerned of the decision of the Club Committee) against the Club Committee on the grounds of an incorrect verdict or where the sanctions are considered too severe.

Such rights of appeal should be explained to all parties. Should the right of appeal be exercised, then Stage 5 as described below, will apply.

Stage 5 (Appeal hearings)

In the event of an appeal, the Club Chairman shall appoint three Members of the Club, none of whom are members of the Committee, but all of whom are considered to be well-respected and impartial, to an appeal committee ("the Appeal Committee").

To achieve impartiality as far as possible, the Appeal Committee should be drawn randomly by the Chairman from a list of Members who have:

- (i) been Members of the Club for a period of not less than 5 years; and
- (ii) never been the subject of any disciplinary action by the Committee; and
- (iii) not been related to or have had more than an occasional bridge partnership with either the complainant(s) or alleged offender.

On the appeal being heard by the Appeal Committee, the Appeal Committee shall have power to overrule the conclusion of the Club Committee, or to uphold it, in which event the sanction imposed by the Club Committee may be confirmed or varied (to any sanction which the Club Committee was empowered to impose (see below), or to none).

The Appeal Committee will report its decisions to the Club Secretary who will accordingly notify by first class post the complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s).

Notes.

(a) Disciplinary actions that may be imposed by the Club Committee or Appeal Committee include, but are not limited to:

- requiring a written or oral apology
- issuing a written or oral reprimand with or without a warning as to his or her future conduct
- suspending such Member from the privileges of membership of the Club for specific sessions or from use of the stand-by facility

- suspending such Member from all the privileges of membership of the Club for a determined period not exceeding three months
- disqualifying an offender from collecting ladder points (also known as trophy points) or from winning any Club trophy for a period not exceeding one year (ladder points may be collected by partners or team mates of the offender but partners or team mates become ineligible to win non-ladder events)
- terminating the membership of the Member and such person shall not thereafter be admissible to the Club premises as a Guest or Visitor, unless specific permission is granted.

(b) In the event of a suspension or expulsion of a Member, the Member's subscription fees shall not be returned to the Member.

(c) Nothing in these regulations shall preclude the Club Committee from referring a matter of conduct to the Conduct Committee of the Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association, or to the Laws & Ethics Committee of the English Bridge Union if it considers it appropriate to do so.

(d) A suspension by a tournament director under Law 91A (Laws of Duplicate Bridge) cannot be appealed. However any such suspensions will be reviewed by the Club Committee

9. LEAGUE OPERATING GROUP (LOG)

Background

1. With effect from 1 February 2003 the Committee then in office accepted the responsibility of carrying out the functions of Sheffield and District Contract Bridge Association ("SDCBA"), namely to enter, supervise and manage the Teams that competed in the Yorkshire League (commonly called "the Inter Cities"); and to administer, supervise and be responsible for all matters relating to the Waddington and Open Local Leagues ("the Functions").

2. To ensure that the Club would not incur any expenses in connection with carrying out the Functions, SDCBA, immediately before its dissolution, transferred its funds (£2,533), to the Club.

3. The Committee adopted the term "Leagues Operating Group" ("LOG") to describe the entity of Club Members who agreed to carry out the Functions on behalf of the Committee.

4. In order formally to record and define the role and duties of LOG the Committee made on 12 November 2010 the Regulation Number 9 in accordance with the provisions of Clause 5(l) of the Constitution.

The Regulation

1. LOG members, (who are currently Raphael Grossman, Rob Turner, Peter Stubbs, Barrie Partridge, Dan Sequerra and Janet Hempson) must be members of the Club and shall be not less than three nor more than six in number.

2. The Committee and LOG shall seek to agree upon future members of LOG. However, the Committee has the right to appoint new members of LOG, either to replace a retiring member, to add to the number of members, or in substitution of an existing member. In the event of a proposed appointment each LOG member (who is

not also a member of the Committee) shall have the right to attend the Committee meeting at which the appointment will be proposed, to speak on the matter and to vote upon any appointment resolution.

3. LOG shall carry out the Functions in the way that it has been doing since 2003, without direct reference to the Committee. However LOG shall consult with and keep the Committee informed on all essential matters. Essential matters include a possible increase or decrease in the number of Teams competing in the Inter Cities; LOG's finances; and serious complaints made to LOG in connection with the Functions.

In the event of a material difference between the Committee and LOG over any essential matter, the procedure relating to an appointment described in 2 above, namely attending, speaking and voting at the relevant Committee Meeting shall apply.

The Committee shall maintain the existing LOG Banking Arrangements whereunder cheques are signed by two of the signatories specified from time to time by the Committee. The Committee will ensure that the monies derived from the funds received from SDCBA, supplemented by League and other fees, shall continue to be used in connection with the Functions.

LOG shall continue to manage and record its finances to the standards required by the Treasurer and Independent Examiner.

The Committee shall select two representatives and LOG one representative to serve on the Council of Yorkshire CBA; in the event that the Club's entitlement shall exceed three, additional representatives shall be selected first by LOG and then by the Committee. Any member of the Club who shall be an elected officer of YCBA shall not be counted as a representative.

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