

Sheffield Bridge Club – Guide for TDs

Duplicate Sessions

This version prepared 30 October 2011 by Barrie Partridge, Chief TD.

This guide is intended to cover the running of an ordinary club session of Duplicate Pairs, specifically at Sheffield Bridge Club. There are some differences between each session of the week, particularly Saturdays, for which there is a separate guide, but most of this guide is general.

Greeting the Stand-By.

The first thing to do on entering the club is to see if the Stand-By has arrived and if so to greet the Stand-By and check that he/she is active in pairing off odd players.

How many tables?

Before even thinking about the movement, I always like to know exactly how many tables there are. So the first move is to get everyone out of the bar and into the playing areas and sat down. Aim to ring the bell by 7.10pm at the latest for an evening session. You need to fill up any empty pairs of seats from Table 1 upwards. On Saturdays, it's a bit easier as you will have allocated starting positions as you take table money as players arrive. You will need to be aware, for movements generally upstairs, of any pairs that require to sit downstairs, and in the event of this, it is recommended that, for sociability, at least two tables are sited downstairs.

Sometimes, when you are about ready to start, you will get players not sure whether their partner is coming. They need to decide, if necessary by attempting to phone. If there is an expected late arrival, have the Stand-By fill in if not needed elsewhere.

A difficulty arises when the Stand-By is fixed up with an odd player and there is another player who is expecting their partner to arrive a bit late, and assuming the player will arrive, there will be a half table. That's the time when it's most important to be sure whether the missing player is really on his way, because if he doesn't turn up, then you would have to change the movement or have two sit-outs. If he is going to turn up, it's easy as he sits out the first round.

Obviously we discourage any late arrivals, but sometimes the traffic can be particularly bad in some part of Sheffield or the weather can cause delays. As a TD, you have the right to turn away a late arrival, but you should make every effort to provide for a late arrival unless there would be disruption to the movement.

Once you know how many tables there are, only then do I recommend that you select the movement and distribute the movement cards and the boards. You can often get a volunteer to help with this while you read any notices of forthcoming events etc and announce the movement.

Selecting the Movement

Movement cards are found in the office at the right hand end of the long work-top by the windows, but often the Howell Movement cards are kept on the library shelf. Please keep Mitchell and Howell movements separate and each group in order of the number of tables. Each envelope contains a set of movement cards and some instructions and advice concerning the movement. Many movements are satisfactory for when there is a half table, but in some cases there are different movements for when there is a sit out, and there are good reasons for these, as is explained on a separate guide to the movements that we use.

If there is a half table, it is best to vary the orientation of the sit-out from one session to another. With many movements for even numbered tables, it's best to have a missing NS so that moving EW pairs sit out, so if you have a movement for an odd number of tables (except 10½ tables), it's best to try to have the sitting pairs sit out. Please do check for advice on the envelopes containing the movement cards.

On Saturdays, the Howell movement cards are used. In the event that there are less than 7 full tables on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday evening, (usually due to extreme weather,) a Howell should be used. Reasons are that with a small number of tables, it is fairer to have trophy points reduced, and also, if there is a half table, then you avoid having lengthy sit-outs. There is a problem with Tuesdays insofar

as although it is possible in theory to play a Howell with Aggregate scoring, there is no software at present that can cope with it, and complicated scoring by hand would be needed. In the event of a snowstorm on a Tuesday evening decimating the turnout, it is best to switch to Butler IMP Pairs (or Cross-IMPed Pairs if fewer than four tables) with a Howell movement.

TD Announcements

The Steward(ess) will sometimes provide a slip of paper that I will have prepared, but also, please check the club calendar and notice boards in order to announce forthcoming events. When you announce the movement and forthcoming events, try to face the whole room. Try to be concise with the announcements and if you are not getting full attention, then stop till you do. If you stop you'll usually find that those who actually were trying to listen will shush everyone else! That usually works, but if it doesn't, I say "I'm sorry, I can't shout too loudly"! That works! You don't want to treat the members like they are kids at school, tempting though it may be at such moments (!), but you want to get your message across!

Dismissing the Stand-By

In order for the Stand-By system to be effective, you need to ensure that the Stand-By remains available to you until you are fully satisfied that he or she is not required. Usually, this will not be until the movement has virtually started. At that point, you should tell the Stand-By that he or she is definitely not required and instruct him to collect a Free Game Voucher from the Steward before going home. Until that time, a Stand-By can expect to be provisionally allocated one partner, then no partner, then another partner and so on.

We must therefore be very careful not to dismiss a Stand-By prematurely. The dismissal of a Stand-By should be our last action before starting to play ourselves. Before either, we must ensure that every table has complete pairs with no missing players, and no more than one "half table".

Once you know whether or not you need the Stand-By, please initial the right hand column on the file in the downstairs playing area. This will ensure that the Stand-By will be logged as having carried out the duty to receive a subscription discount.

Once started.

Before you finally sit yourself, check (especially if someone else has handed out the boards) whether you need a relay between Table 1 and the highest number table, and if so, you need to position these additional boards – you don't want the highest number table to play the wrong boards in Round 2. Also, if you have tables both upstairs and downstairs, find the table from where the moving pairs will go downstairs and ask the sitting pair to ask all their departing opponents to take boards downstairs as necessary. You need to make a similar arrangement to ensure that boards downstairs get brought upstairs.

As soon as you get a moment, collect the table name slips and (Fire Regs requirement) keep them with you.

Calling the rounds

To ask players to move for the next round, ring the bell three times so that it can be clearly heard by all.

It is normally best to try to time the ringing of the bell for when about 70% of the tables have completed the present round. There is another consideration of completing the movement (see "Timing the rounds", below). Some tables may need a little chivvy from time to time. If at the time when you wish to ring the bell, there is a table that has not yet started a board (by taking the cards out of the board) you may tell the table not to play the board or, if the adjacent tables are also a little behind, you may instruct them to play the board. With bridge-mates, boards played at the end of the session need to be input manually to the computer. Award Average to each pair for an unplayed board.

If any players at a table have taken their cards out of a board before you call a round, they **must** be allowed to play the board. There was a time when the club had a rule that if a table was still bidding a board when the move was called, then either an "average" was given or the board may be played at the end of the session. Nowadays, this is not acceptable as not only is it against Law 8B and, for that matter, against EBU policy, but it could be abused by pairs in order to avoid bad scores.

You need to be aware of possible slow play at your table or if you have been called away for a ruling during the round, and be prepared to ring the bell before your own table has completed play.

Timing the rounds

We aim to play at a rate of 8 boards per hour. This should be achievable with rounds of 3 boards but is less easy with rounds of 2 boards.

The club has a policy whereby we do not call a new round after 10.30pm. If necessary, the movement will need to be incomplete. This should rarely happen now that we no longer attempt more than 13 rounds of 2 boards or 9 rounds of 3 boards.

If we are playing rounds of 2 boards, you should aim to call the move (allowing 5 minutes for getting started) by or at 20, 35, 50 and 5 minutes past each hour. Thus 13 rounds of 2 should finish about 10.35pm. You can still complete a 13x2 movement even if you have up to 10 minutes slippage.

If we are playing 9 rounds of 3 boards, aim to call moves by the following times: 7.43 – 8.05 – 8.28 – 8.50 – 9.13 – 9.35 – 9.58 – 10.20. These are intervals of 22½ minutes. It is expected that we call the last round by 10.25 to finish the movement by about 10.45

Rulings

When you are called to another table, you should always take the Law Book. This saves having to leave the table where the ruling is needed to then go off and get it. Most irregularities can be resolved by a book ruling. If you have not yet played the board in question, you need to avoid paying any attention, as far as possible, to the board number and to cards and bids on the table. If you gain information about the board that makes the board later unplayable at your own table, then you should award Average+ each way at your table (Law 16B refers).

Judgement Rulings

If there has been a hesitation or some other irregularity that may involve a judgement ruling, then most of the time you will be able to ask the table to complete the play of the board and call you back if any concern remains. However, in the case of a hesitation (or similar), try to ascertain straight away whether there is agreement that a hesitation actually took place.

If you have been called back at the end of the board, then you should say that you will make a ruling at the end of the session, even if you have already played the board. Make sure at this stage that you or, if you have not yet played the board, the players take a record of the bidding sequence and, if possible relevant, the early play to the hand.

When making a Judgement Ruling, unless it is clear-cut, it is best to consult with one or two other players, particularly other TDs, at the end of the session. You will need to explain any relevant matters of Law to them, usually the first paragraph of Law 16A. Consultation on the original ruling gives less cause for appeals.

Appeals

In the event of an appeal against a ruling by you, these will usually relate to Judgement rulings. Chapter 11 of the Law Book refers to Appeals. It is best for an appeal to be heard at the end of a session and for the TD to assemble two or three of the stronger players present to form the appeal panel. Both pairs involved should be given the opportunity to attend the appeal. Further guidance on appeals is given in the EBU White Book.

If most people have already gone home by the time you may be seeking an appeal panel, it is then best to contact the Chief Tournament Director who will make appropriate arrangements to hold an appeal either by phone or at an appointed time at the club.

There are forms in a file in the office for compiling details of appeals.

Appeals may appear to be a considerable hassle, but have usually been conducted without too much inconvenience.

We do not take deposits for appeals.

If as a result of an appeal, one side wishes to appeal further, the Chief TD should be contacted so that further arrangements can be made.

Psyches

Psyches should be recorded if you have been called to a table where an alleged psyche has occurred. There are Psyche reporting forms in the same file with the Appeal forms. You need to make a ruling when a psyche (or deviation or mis-bid) has occurred. The ruling relates to whether the partner has “fielded” the psyche or deviation or mis-bid. Chapter 6 of the Orange Book refers. All this should be done at the end of the session, and, again, if you are in any doubt, consult with others.

Rulings at your own table.

It is usually fine for a TD to make a “book” ruling at his own table, but usually if a “judgement” ruling is needed, I recommend that where the ruling is not required till the end of the play of the board, which is usually the case, that the TD arranges for another TD (assuming that there is another TD playing) to give a ruling at the end of the session. I think that this is better than a method that I have previously used which was to automatically rule against myself and then usually appeal against my own ruling!

EBU White Book

We have, in the office, a copy of the EBU Guide for Tournament Directors, also known as the White Book. Printed versions are no longer produced but Rob Turner has compiled a current version. Updated versions are also available at the EBU web site and can be referenced via the office computer.

Average Plus on a Tuesday

The new EBU White Book gives advice on artificial scores for aggregate scoring. An Average Plus / Minus are 100 points more / less than the average score for the board from the other tables. That means that an average for the board has to be calculated separately.

Excess penalties on a Tuesday

If your score on a board is reduced by applying the “Excess Penalties” as shown on the back of the Personal Score Card, and if the reduction takes your score below a score that has actually been achieved without “excess penalties” by another pair sitting in the same direction, then the reduction on your score will be limited such that you do not score less than the other pair.

Example. At Love All, you defeat your opponents in 5S doubled for +1400. This would be reduced for you to +600. If another pair actually bid and make 6H in your direction for +980, then your score will not now be reduced to +600 but it will be reduced to +980 instead.

The above was recommended by the EBU in 1951!

Multiple Teams Movements

On a few evenings during the year we run Multiple Teams events. A set of sheets with clear guides for the best movements for SBC for Multiple Teams, for as many and as few tables as we are likely to have, can be found in an envelope in the TD’s drawer in the office and on the club’s web site.

I am not proposing to produce similar for when we have the Rodger Mixed Pivot Teams because, strangely, although the movements are more complicated, they are shown in Manning much more clearly than the normal movements! A copy of Manning’s Guide to Duplicate Bridge Movements is available in the office.

Clearing up at the end of the session

At the end of the session, assuming bridgemates have been used, you need to collect all the boards and put them in a pile in numerical order on the shelf above the computer in the office. You also need to collect all the table movement cards and put them away.

Misboarded boards in Pairs movements

Sometimes after a session it is discovered that a board has been misboarded during the session. The procedure is to identify if we can where the misboarding took place. Sometimes this is clear from the traveller. Other times we have to ask some players how they remember the board when they played it.

We take the tables that played the board before the misboarding and score the Match Points for them and pro-rata up so that a Top is the same as a Top on the other boards. Then we do the same for the tables that played the board in the misboarded state. Scorebridge does all this when you press the "Split Board" button. Scorebridge also applies an adjustment (Neuberg) (for reasons that are explained at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuberg_formula)

If a board was misboarded after being played at just one table or just before reaching the last table, then one of the "sub-fields" has just one table and their score cannot be compared, so they just get Average Plus.

If we know for certain who the culprit is we can fine a pair, but if you cannot prove fault, I would not suggest fining anyone.

Duplimated Boards

Please check whether duplimated boards have been prepared for the session that you will be directing. This will be the case for most regular club sessions and special events.

Boards for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings will be found in the upstairs playing area. Boards for other sessions will be found on tables downstairs. Boards may be available for 24 board and 32 board matches and these will be clearly labelled.

Most players are now familiar with duplimated boards but in the event of a player shuffling the cards, you can either announce that the hand record for the board will not be applicable or, if there are unused boards, you can swap the cards between the boards and announce that the cards for Board x will be as shown on the hand records for Board y.

Please note:

All odd numbered boards should have red-backed cards.
All even numbered boards should have blue-backed cards

and

For normal events, Boards 1 – 30 will have been duplimated.

There will be an A4 envelope containing the hand records for the event. The steward will early in a weekday evening session take photocopies. (It may be necessary for the TD to do this at the end of play for other sessions.) He will put these and the original into the envelope. Further copies can be taken at the end of the session if necessary. If this happens, please let the Steward or me know and we will consider making more copies in the first place.

If tables are in play downstairs, the hand records will be available in the downstairs playing area at the end of the session. They will be available upstairs only if no tables are in play downstairs.

At the end of the session, please leave the boards on the shelf above the computer in the office. Please ensure that no more than one card in Board 1 is turned face up as it is a nuisance to those duplimating if too many cards are left face up.

The boards are dealt randomly and freak deals should occur only as often as they should do when there is a random deal. If you get any complaints from the players, please save a copy of the hand records for me and let me know about it. Then I can monitor the situation to ensure that there is nothing awry.

Bridgemates

There is a manual for the use of bridgemates but the only essential operation that a TD needs to know is how to erase a score that may have been entered incorrectly. Press the OK button till you get "Board No ___" on the screen and insert the key. On the TD Options screen type "3" and follow the prompts. When the score is deleted, remove the key.

Discipline

Law 91 gives the TD the power to remove a player from a movement and, for that matter, from the club for the remainder of the session in play. It is very unlikely that you will ever wish to use such power and even if you are considering using such power, you should first discuss the matter with any

members of the club committee that may be present. In the event of using such power, you should report the incident to the Chief TD or club Chairman as soon as possible.

Complaints

In the unlikely event of a player wishing to make a complaint against you, you should refer the player to the Chief TD. If you wish to make a complaint against a player, then please contact the Chief TD.

TD Rota

The Chief TD is responsible for maintaining a rota of TDs. However, if you are unable to carry out a TD duty on a particular session, you should make arrangements with another TD for a swap. If you are unable to arrange a swap, you should then contact the Chief TD.

Contacting the Chief TD

I may be contacted by phone on 01629 58 4567 any time up till midnight.

If I am not available, Rob Turner, previous Chief Tournament Director, may be contacted for TD advice on 0114 236 8628

Both these numbers are on the list in the bar and in the Members' Handbook, and are also in the EBU diary.

+++++