

Item 20S3-01: Appendix O Conditions of Contest for Online Play

Cheating: Cheating online is a serious offense, subject to the same penalties as cheating in live play. The following are examples of illegal action, but note that this list is not inclusive of all possible cheating methods: to communicate with your partner during a hand via any means other than chat to the full table, to communicate with a kibitzer during the game, to play using an account that is not yours, to gain advance knowledge of a deal, to play in one event using multiple accounts or to acquire information in any form concerning a deal yet to be played to completion.

Any accusation of improper behavior must be made privately to the director of the event, to the ACBL recorder, or to a reporting mechanism provided by the online platform.

Alerts: Alerts (including announcements) are made by the player making the call. An alerted call should be accompanied by an explanation. To alert a bid in an online game, type the explanation of the bid in the “Alert” space provided, before completing the alertable bid. Stating the common or popular name of the convention is not sufficient. You are encouraged to explain calls even if those calls do not require alerts. Any call that would be alerted after the auction in live bridge should be alerted at the time of the call.

Any contestant may request information concerning an opponent’s methods. Such inquiries should be directed to the player who made the call and must be asked in a private chat. Such inquiries should not be made to both opponents. A player is entitled to the correct agreements of their opponents only. Replies to these inquiries must likewise be given in a private chat. You are not obligated to answer questions about calls made by your partner.

Pre-alerts of any unusual methods for which the opponents need to prepare must be given before the auction period begins on the first board of a round or match.

Tempo: In general, bids and plays within 10 seconds are considered to be in tempo. An unusual variation in tempo in a tempo-sensitive moment of the auction or play will generally be deemed a “BIT” (break in tempo), regardless of the reason for the variation. A “BIT” can be an unusually slow call or play or an unusually fast call or play.

Claims and concessions: If you reject an opponent’s claim or concession, and continue play, the result of the board will stand as played. Instead of rejecting the claim or concession, you may call the Director for an adjudication of the result.

Unfinished hands: A hand that is partially completed when time expires is adjudicated as equitably as possible to both sides. Any doubtful point will be resolved against the partnership that is considered most responsible for not finishing in time.

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Undos: Unintended calls or plays will be rectified under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. A contestant who makes an unintended call or play should summon the Director immediately. As in live play, undos are permitted only upon instruction of the Director.

Table Chat: All chat is authorized information for opponents and unauthorized information for partner.

Convention Cards: Partnerships are encouraged to have a convention card that includes the players' real names. Pairs without cards will be at a disadvantage in misinformation rulings. A pair without a convention card must pre-announce their basic system and explain all their alertable calls in detail. Otherwise, if the system loads a default card for pairs without a convention card, then you should not assume that your opponents are playing those methods.

Information Available in the Software: All information provided by the software is authorized. For example, if the software has a button to view your convention card during the hand, then it is legal to use that button to view your own card. Consulting a written defense is allowed in any situation where it would be allowed in face to face bridge. Using any other aid to memory is illegal. Illegal aids include consulting a system notes document or tracking the cards played on paper.

Irregularities: The Director must be summoned electronically for any irregularity. Once the Director has been summoned, all play and bidding shall cease until the Director authorizes its continuation.

All human substitutes are eligible for masterpoint awards, subject to playing the requisite number of hands specified in the conditions of contest, unless their masterpoint holding disqualifies them from the event. No adjustments to the game scores of human substitutes may be made for the purpose of reducing their Masterpoint awards.