

Lesson – Claims, Revokes and Insufficient Bids by MARVIN 2/9/13

Discussion – The ACBL currently has 91 laws to define correct procedure for all aspects of Duplicate Bridge, such as the conduct of players, bidding, auctions, and play. The tournament Director can be called if a player believes any of the rules have been broken. This lesson provides an overview of three situations that frequently lead to Director calls. These are Claims, Revokes and Insufficient Bids.

Claim – A claim occurs when a player or declarer states that a specific number of tricks will be won, faces the remaining cards, and **states a line of play**. Play is stopped at this point.

If a claim is made, and is disputed by the opponents, the Director should be called to resolve the issue and confirm that the claim is valid.

Example -

	Dummy	
	♠ --	
	♥ --	
	♦ 32	
	♣ 2	
West		East
♠ 3		♠ --
♥ 64		♥ AK
♦ --		♦ Q
♣ --		♣ --
	Declarer	
	♠ AK2	

NOTE: In each of the following cases, spades are trump, declarer claimed, but no line of play was stated. Assume that the declarer was questioned and was unaware of any outstanding trump. As you can see each case involving the same hand, may result in different outcomes.

A. – If the dummy is on lead and declarer has not stated a line of play, the Director will generally award a trick to the defense, because declarer would normally ruff with the lowest trump (the 2♠), and West could over ruff!

B. - On the same deal, if the lead were in declarer's hand, the Director would normally allow declarer to **win all of the remaining tricks**. It is assumed that declarer would normally play trumps from the top down!

C. - Finally, if the East and West hands are **reversed**, the Director should allow Declarer to **win all of the remaining tricks**, as it would be irrational for declarer to under ruff if East ruffed with the 3♠.

Special Note: If only trumps are left, a player normally leads them from the top down. If a player is trumping, she normally plays trump from the bottom up.

Remember, when making a claim, always **STATE A LINE OF PLAY!**

LAWS 68, 69, 70 and 71 apply to a Claim.

Revoke – A revoke occurs when a player could have followed suit, but didn't. A revoke becomes **established** when the offender or the offender's partner leads or plays to the next trick. Once a revoke is established, it cannot be corrected, unless it occurs on the 12th trick and was discovered before the hands are returned to the board.

When a revoke has been established, a Director should be called immediately. The Director will assess the situation, and generally state that play should continue until all of the cards are played. At the end of the hand, the Director should determine if any problem occurred and determine if a penalty should be assessed and what it should be.

Revoke resolution – If there was an established revoke, the following apply:

- A. If the offending side did not win the revoking trick, and won no subsequent tricks – **0 trick penalty;**
- B. If the offending side won the revoking trick and no more tricks – **1 trick penalty;**
- C. If the offending side did not win the revoking trick, but won 1 or more subsequent tricks – **1 trick penalty;**
- D. If the revoker won the revoking trick and 1 or more subsequent tricks – **2 trick penalty.**

NOTE: More than 2 tricks can be awarded if an offender's revoke prevented an opponent from winning tricks that could have been won!

Example – Spades are trump; East is on lead and leads the 5♦. Play proceeds as follows from the 10th trick:

A.

				North					
				♠					
				♥					
				♦ 10					
				♣ Q32					
		West			East				
		♠ K6			♠ 3				
		♥ 7			♥				
		♦ 4			♦ <u>5</u> 6				
		♣			♣ 7				
				South					
				♠ 2					
				♥ 34					
				♦					
				♣ J					
E	S	W	N						
<u>5</u> ♦	2♠	6♠	10♦	Leads 5♦; West wins 6♠					
3♠	3♥	<u>7</u> ♥	2♣	Leads 7♥; East wins 3♠					
7♣	J♣	<u>K</u> ♠	3♣	Leads 7♣; West wins K♠					
6♦	4♥	<u>4</u> ♦!	Q♣	Leads 4♦ and East wins with 6♦					

The revoke was established on the 10th trick; West revoked; West won the revoke trick and won the 12th trick as well. This results in a **2 trick penalty** to be awarded to North/South.

B. SPECIAL RULING – A revoke in a No-trump contract can present an additional factor as is evidenced by the following hand. The contract is 3NT and the diamond suit is divided as follows:

Dummy	
♦AKQ654	
♦J97	♦108
You	
♦23	

There is no outside entry to dummy, but diamonds break 3-2, so there are six tricks available. However, the opponent with the **J97** accidentally plays a heart on the first round of diamonds and wins the fourth round. This opponent takes the rest of the tricks. Declarer would get 1 trick back, because the revoker did not win the trick of the revoke, but won a later trick. That costs declarer 3 tricks, which is not equitable. The Director must thoroughly review the play. In order to restore equity, and declarer is given 3 tricks back.

LAWS 61, 62, 63 and 64 apply to a Revoke.

Insufficient Bid – An Insufficient bid is made if the next bid in rotation is lower than the last bid.

If an insufficient bid is made, the Director should be called immediately to explain all of the options and how the bidding can proceed.

The next player in rotation can accept the insufficient bid. If the insufficient bid is not accepted, the bid can be corrected to the next legal bid in that suit. The bid can be changed to another denomination, or a higher level than the next legal level, or to a pass. If any of these actions are taken, the offender’s partner must pass for the rest of the auction. The offender cannot double. Additional penalties may occur. The Director should provide the available options and the impact of each on the bidding process.

Example –

A.	N	E	S	W
	1NT	2♠	2♦!	

In this example, West can accept the bid as a legal call and play proceeds; or South may be allowed to change the bid to 3♦; **or** South can make an acceptable sufficient bid or Pass, but then her partner **must** pass for the remainder of the auction. A lead

penalty may exist (i.e. if E/W gets the contract, the Director can give them the option to require or forbid the lead of a Diamond!).

NOTE: South cannot change her bid to a double!

B.	N	E	S	W
	1♠	P	3♠	P
	4NT	P	4♦!	

In this example, if the Director is convinced that South was answering Blackwood, but at the wrong level, then South would be allowed to correct to 5♦ with no penalties.

C.	N	E	S	W
	1♦	1♠	1♥!	

In this example, South may substitute 2♥ or a Double (where this is a negative double, implying a 4 card heart suit) without penalty. However, a pass would not give that impression and the offender's partner would have to pass for the remainder of the auction. There could be lead penalties if the offender passes.

D.	N	E	S	W
	1♥	P	1♠	P
	2♥	P	2♠	P
	2♣!			

In this example, North wanted to shut South out of the bidding. North made an insufficient bid, which was not accepted by the opponents. North then bid 4♥, which forced South to pass for the remainder of the auction. In this instance, N/S could be awarded a negative score adjustment due to the potential advantage gained by the improper use of an insufficient bid.

LAWS 27 and possibly 23 APPLY.

NOTE: Please call a Director immediately when a problem has occurred. If action is taken without a Director's instructions, it may cause further damage or approval of an opponent's improper action.

References - Laws of Duplicate Bridge, 2008

Duplicate Decisions, 2008

(Both of these books are available on-line from the ACBL)