

Bridge Is A Timed Event

Bridge is a timed event and all players deserve a smoothly run, timely game. To this end the Game Directors are expected and empowered by ACBL, the Board and the club manager to take action as deemed necessary to ensure that rounds finish within the allotted time.

The clock is set by the directors at the beginning of the game to provide 7 1/2 minutes (ACBL recommended time) for each board and to keep track of the amount of time remaining in each round.

Players are expected to be aware of time used and remaining in each round. Failure to finish on time is distressing to waiting players (both in front and behind the slow pairs). When a pair takes more than their share of the allotted time for each round, they are placing competitors at a disadvantage. It is their responsibility to make up for lost time as quickly as possible – no matter who is at fault.

Actively ethical players will make a concerted effort to start the game on time, and to catch up when they have fallen behind, regardless of the reason for their lateness. All players are expected to develop this good habit.

Slow Play Penalties

Remember: Slow play is a violation of bridge law subject to penalty, and the penalties are well deserved when slow pairs disrupt the normal progression of the game.

According to ACBL Laws 12 and 86 the game directors may remove one or more boards from a round and award a "no score" whereby the computer applies the pair's percentage game values for the day to the unplayed board. It is much like a sit-out.

Every effort should be made by the game directors to remove boards before they can be played when they see there is insufficient time remaining to finish the round. In our club, directors may apply the 2-minute rule. If bidding has not begun when only 2 minutes are left in the round, the director may pull the board.

The director should presume that a pair finishing a round late by more than two or three minutes on more than one occasion during a session is responsible for slow play. There is a strong expectation that the director will penalize such a pair. For chronic slow play, the director may pull a board and assign "average minus" to the offenders rather than "no score."

At the discretion of the Game Directors, slow play penalties will be deemed to be either disciplinary (and unappealable) or procedural. Appeals committees should tend strongly to reject all routine appeals against slow play penalties. Furthermore, when such an appeal is denied, a penalty should be assigned to the appellant for making a frivolous appeal.

Slow play affects many people in a game. Everyone thanks you for your efforts to finish each board and each round within the time provided!