

Remember that these will not apply for 3-4 months, so don't use them now!

Claims and Concessions (Laws 68-71)

There are some significant changes here. First of all, a change of terminology. 'Acquiescence' becomes 'Agreement'. This occurs when you agree with an opponent's claim or concession and raise no objection before your side calls on the next board or before the round ends (whichever is earlier). This is the same as at present.

The current Law says that, after a concession or claim, play ceases. **All play subsequent to a claim or concession shall be voided by the Director** The sentence in bold has now been deleted. Indeed the new Law goes further. It says that, though the Law requires that play cease, **if any play has occurred after the claim this may provide evidence to be deemed part of the clarification of the claim. The Director may accept it as evidence of the players' probable plays subsequent to the claim and / or of the accuracy of the claim..**

A word of comment here. A common situation is where declarer in a suit contract claims, forgetting that there is a trump outstanding. If a defender queries the claim and asks to play out the hand, this often alerts declarer to the fact that a trump could be outstanding. So he will proceed to play another round of trumps, whereas without the query he may well not have drawn the outstanding trump. I do not believe that this Law is intended to protect declarer in this situation.

With this change in the Laws, it is even more important that directors should continue to educate players with this message: *When declarer claims and you are unhappy about it or wish to dispute it, it is **never** in your interest to ask for play to continue. You have nothing to gain and possibly something to lose. Always call the Director.*

There is another new clause relating to a defender's claim. The Law says: **The Director does not accept any part of a defender's claim that depends on his partner selecting a particular play from among alternative normal* plays.** For example: Defending a NT contract, West is cashing out his established diamond suit, and claims all the tricks, saying 'I'll lead my last card (a spade) to partner's winner.' But East has two winners (a spade and a club) and at trick 12 has to decide which to save. If discarding the spade was a logical alternative, then the claim would be disallowed.

*normal includes play that would be careless or inferior for the class of player involved.

Procedure after Director is called.

Law 70B sets out the procedure for the Director to follow when he is called to a disputed claim: First he requires claimer to repeat his clarification statement, Then he

requires all hands to be faced, then he hears objections from the opponents. This order will change under the new Law.

Claimer's clarification still comes first. But secondly he hears opponents' objections. Then he **may** require the players to face their remaining cards.

Note also that, when hearing opponents' objections, his considerations are not limited only to those objections.

There are some other minor changes in this area of the Laws, but this is enough to be going on with.