

# The Laws of Bridge 2007

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**Remember that these Laws will not apply for 3-4 months. Don't use them yet!**

### **Insufficient Bid (Law 27)**

There have been some important changes here. So I include here the full version of the new Law 27 (my emphasis), This article is much more detailed than anyone really needs at this stage, but it will be useful to come back to it later when we need to start applying the 2007 Laws.

#### **LAW 27 - INSUFFICIENT BID**

##### A. Acceptance of Insufficient Bid

1. Any insufficient bid may be accepted (treated as legal) at the option of offender's LHO. It is accepted if that player calls.
2. If a player makes an insufficient bid out of rotation, Law 31 applies.

##### B. Insufficient Bid Not Accepted

If an insufficient bid in rotation is not accepted it must be corrected by the **substitution of a legal call**.

##### C. Replaced at Lowest Level by Bid, Double or Pass

1. If the insufficient bid is replaced by a **bid at the lowest legal level or double or pass that incorporates the information contained in the insufficient bid**, the auction and play continues with the information arising from the withdrawn bid authorized for both sides (Law 16D does not apply), but see 2 following.
2. At the end of the play the Director shall award an adjusted score if he judges that without assistance from the insufficient bid the contract could well have been different\*, and the non-offending side is damaged.

##### D. Replaced by Any Other Call

1. If the insufficient bid is replaced, except as 27C1 allows, by any bid or a pass the offender's partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call. The lead restrictions in Law 26 may apply and see Law 23.
2. If the insufficient bid is replaced by a double or redouble, except as 27C1 allows, the double or redouble must be withdrawn and replaced by a pass. The offender's partner must pass whenever it is

his turn to call. The lead restrictions in Law 26 may apply and see Law 23.

#### E. Premature Replacement

If the offender replaces his insufficient bid before the Director has ruled on rectification, unless the insufficient bid is accepted as A allows his substitution stands. The Director applies C, D or F, accordingly.

#### F. Replaced with an Insufficient Bid

If the offender attempts to replace the insufficient bid with another insufficient bid the attempted call is cancelled and a pass is substituted. His partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call. The lead restrictions in Law 26 may apply and see Law 23.

\* as to number of odd tricks, denomination, or declarer

### **Comment**

Note that the current Law on insufficient conventional bids has gone (a good thing in my view). Compare the present and new versions with an example. (intervening calls in brackets). These are as I see the new Law. I believe that some guidelines will need to be produced, so see this as a work in progress.

1D – (1S) – 1H.

Currently the only bid you can make to allow partner to bid again is 2H. In the new Laws you can replace the insufficient bid (abbreviate to IB) with a legal call at the lowest legal level, or a pass or a double, but with one important proviso. The new bid must **incorporate** the information carried by the IB. It may convey extra information, but it must minimally convey the information that the original 1H carried. Put it another way: partner should not get any info from the 1H call that he does not get from the new call.

Without the interpose, a 1H response conveys the info that ‘I have enough HCP to respond and I have at least 4 hearts’ So replacing your IB of 1H with 2H means that partner has no special info from the 1H bid that he doesn’t also get from your 2H bid. He gets more, but that doesn’t matter. The principle is: did partner get any special info from the 1H bid than he would have had the bidding gone 1D – (1S) – 2H?

Supposing that you use a takeout double of 1S to show responding values plus a 4 card heart suit: now you could legally replace your 1H bid with a X (which shows the same thing).

When could you legally substitute a pass for an IB? You are playing a strong 1C system (say Precision) with a negative 1D response (less than 8 HCP). The bidding goes

1C – ( 1S ) – 1D (responder perhaps didn’t notice the 1S overcall. Provided your agreement is that, over the overcall pass would show a 0-7 hand, now you could

substitute a pass for your 1D insufficient bid. The 1D bid has given no info to partner that the pass would not give.

You might even be able to substitute a new suit at the lowest legal level. Example: NS are playing a strong artificial 1C opening, and the initial responses are artificial showing only your point count range. Thus 1C – 1H shows 6-8 HCP but nothing else. The bidding goes 1C – (1S) – 1H. If the director is satisfied that NS have an agreement to show point range over an interpose bid, and, say, 2C would show 6-8 HCP, he could allow South to correct to 2C. North has exactly the same info from the 2C bid as he would have from the 1H bid without the interpose.

Note that the insufficient bid is authorised information to all players at the table, including partner. That means that partner is legally entitled to make use of having seen your IB, However this comes with a major proviso. If the IB allowed the side to get a good result that they may not have without the IB, the Director will adjust the score. This is covered in C2, and is similar to the present Law.

These are rather simple examples. Life won't always be that easy. In the above situation, what if your doubles of the 1S overcall merely promise values and not specifically a heart suit? Are you entitled to replace your IB with a double? I would think not, but this needs to be clarified.

Another sequence:

1D – (2S) – 1NT

Over 1S, our 1NT promises say a good 7-10 HCP and a stopper. Over 2S our 2NT shows a good 10-12 HCP and a stopper. Am I entitled to change my IB of 1NT to 2NT and have bidding proceed? Under the present Law I certainly could. Under the new Law, I'm not so sure. My IB over 1NT conveyed a message about the limits of my point count that was not present in the message from my 2NT bid. But supposing it is acceptable. Partner, with a good 14-15 HCP has heard my IB and knows from this that my hand at the most holds 10 HCP. This is authorised info to him. He decides to pass 2NT, and there are only 8 tricks available. We get a good score. Even though partner has acted legally, the Director is entitled to adjust the score to (e.g. 3NT off 1) if he believes that my 1NT bid helped us to a good score).

The Director is going to have to quiz the player making the IB (perhaps away from the table) about his intentions and may have to study the pair's system card in reaching his decision, But there should be no need for the Director to look at player's cards in reaching a decision.

Another couple of common examples:

1C – P – 1C

West opens 1C, East does not notice this, and opens 1C himself (IB). Under the current Law, there are two possibilities. If the 1C is conventional (less than 3 clubs), the IB over 1C is conventional and partner is barred. If the 1C bid is not conventional then East is entitled to correct it to 2C and bidding proceeds, always with the proviso

that the Director may adjust the score. What happens under the new Law? East's insufficient 1C bid conveys the message that 'I have some number of clubs and an opening hand'. There is no legal sufficient bid, pass or double that he can make that conveys the same message. As I see it, he will have to make the bid good, but partner will always be barred.

4NT (Blackwood) – 4D (IB). If the Director is satisfied that East was answering Blackwood (to show whatever many Aces he holds) but at the wrong level, then East will be allowed to correct it without penalty,

What happens in the common situation where an offender attempts to correct an IB before the Director is called? The current practice, when the Director is finally called, is to cancel any such attempts (which may become subject to lead penalty). He will then give LHO his option to accept the IB, and will explain to the offender what his rights and obligations are if LHO does not accept. If not accepted, the offender may choose another option to correct the IB (his previous one will be subject to lead penalty). But things will change with the new Laws. Note E above, If the offender replaces his IB before the TD is called, the TD will still offer LHO the right to accept the IB (LHO always has the first option), but if he doesn't the offender is stuck with his premature attempt to correct the IB, and the TD will rule on the correction on the basis of C, D or F above..

There will be quite a lot of discussion on this Law and I'll try to keep readers informed.

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