

# The Laws of Bridge 2007

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

## **Law 12: Director's Discretionary Powers**

This area covers the use of the director's powers to award an adjusted score. There are some significant changes here. It's best to start by summarising the present Law.

The Director awards an adjusted score after an infraction. There are two types of adjusted score: an assigned adjusted score (AssAS) or an artificial adjusted score (ArtAS).

An assigned score is an actual bridge score given in place of the actual score obtained. When a result has been obtained at the table, you should adjust with an assigned score.

An ArtAS is given where it has not been possible to obtain a score at the table after an irregularity. It is awarded as a percentage of the maximum available matchpoints, not as a bridge score e.g. an average = 50% of the available matchpoints, av+ = 60%, and av- = 40%.

**Law 12C2** tells the Director that, in assigning a adjusted score, he gives the non-offenders the best result that was likely on the hand, and the offenders the worst result they might have got without drawing too long a bow. Take a common situation : in a competitive situation, EW bid to 5HX over NS's 4S for -500. It is decided that the 5H bid was based on UI, so you revert the score to what would have happened in 4S by South. The probable result is 4S for 620. But there was a reasonable chance that South may have made 11 tricks, so you award EW -650. This is called a 'split score'.

Supposing you decide that NS would probably make 4S but there was a significant chance that they would be off 1 for -100, you must still award them their +620.

In this latter instance, **Law 12C3** allows the appeals committee (and in some jurisdictions this has been extended to the Chief Director) to vary this to 'achieve equity'. This process produces what is called a 'weighted score'. For example, if you think that there was a 60% probability that NS would make 4S for +620, but a 40% probability that they would have gone off for -100, you can use a calculation to arrive at an adjusted score somewhere between the two extremes. Some situations might be more complex and there may have been several possible outcomes had the infraction not occurred.

### **The changes**

There is an additional clause in 12B which explains the objective of adjustment – to redress damage to non-offenders and remove any advantage gained by offenders through their infraction.

**12C2** says that, if the non-offending side has contributed to its own damage by a serious error (unrelated to the infraction) or by wild or gambling action, it does not get relief for whatever part of the damage is self-inflicted.. Two possible situations:

- (a) a non-offending player believes that there has been an infraction, but takes a gambling action on the basis of 'If it comes off, good. If it doesn't the TD will adjust the score for us'.
- (b) NS are pushed to 5S by a 5H bid based on UI. 5S is cold, but declarer revokes and goes off for -100. This is an example of serious error causing the damage and not the infraction. NS would not get an adjustment, but EW would still get -650.

**Law 12C** now allows the Director to award a weighted score (as described above). However it allows the Regulating Authority not to allow this, and in effect to revert to all or part the current Law 12B. My tip is that in Australia, we'll opt to follow the new 12C.

This has important implications for club directors. Not all club directors are experienced or expert players, and it does require considerable experience to work out the probabilities for a weighted score. The RA will need to produce guidelines for this process, so I won't go into detail here. There is one consolation: Where you have to award a weighted score, the new 12C allows the Director to award an artificial adjusted score where the possibilities are numerous or not obvious. What sort of situation would warrant this? Perhaps there was MI early in the auction that skewed the subsequent bidding a play to such an extent that one couldn't make a reasonable guess as to the likely result without the infraction.

### **Artificial adjusted score**

The Law now makes it clear that an Av+ is 60% (or more if your average on the other boards was higher) and an Av- is 40% (or less if your average on the other boards was less).

In teams an Av+ = +3 imps and an Av- is -3 imps. This may be varied by the tournament organiser with the approval of the RA.

### **Summary:**

So what will the Director do under the new Laws when faced with an infraction that requires score adjustment? In most cases, he will simply assign the score that would have applied had the infraction not occurred. There is no provision for awarding a split score as explained in the example above (NS +620, EW -650). If there is some doubt as to what the outcome would have been without the infraction, he may apply a weighted score allowing for the various probabilities. If there are so many possibilities or the possibilities are not obvious, then he may award an artificial adjusted score. Directors should strive to apply an assigned score rather than an artificial score if at all possible. (This summary is based on the assumption that Australia will adopt the new Law *in toto* and not exercise any of its options.