

Lawson Bridge Studio News April 2015

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Club Games – Rates are for each player

Games: 6:20 pm at Ann Sather's Restaurant, 909 West Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 773-348-2378

Apr 1	I/N Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 4	Open Pairs District 13 STaC —\$12
Apr 6	Open Pairs Unit 123 STaC —\$12	May 6	I/N Pairs District 13 STaC —\$12
Apr 8	I/N Pairs Unit 123 STaC —\$12	May 11	Open Pairs Grass Roots Fund Month —\$11
Apr 13	Open Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 13	I/N Pairs Unit Game L505123A —\$10
Apr 15	I/N Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 18	Open Pairs Grass Roots Fund Month —\$11
Apr 20	Swiss Teams ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 20	I/N Pairs Grassroots Fund Month —\$11
Apr 22	I/N Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 25	No Game Memorial Day
Apr 27	Open Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11	May 27	I/N Pairs Grassroots Fund Month —\$11
Apr 29	I/N Pairs ACBL Charity Month —\$11		

Clarification on Stop Card

Last month I wrote on the use of the Stop Card. One player commented: "Stop cards, unlike alert cards, are optional at all levels as long as you consistently use or don't use them. I, for one, never do even in platinum events."

This prompted further discussion with ACBL on the use of Stop Cards. The official response (including highlights) was:

The full regulation for skip bid warnings and stop card usage is as follows:

- A. **How and When Made:** Players **should** protect their rights and the opponent's by announcing, prior to making an opening bid on the two level or higher, or prior to making any subsequent bid that skips one or more levels of bidding:
 1. When bidding orally by saying, "I am about to make a skip bid. Please Wait!"
 2. When using bidding boxes, by placing the stop card so the LHO sees it (the skip bidder is responsible for gaining LHO's attention). The skip bid is made. The stop card is replaced in the bidding box.
- B. **Skip Bidder:** The skip bid warning **may not be used to alert partner that a strength-showing bid is being made or not being made.** The warning **should be used all the time.** The tournament director may assess a procedural penalty (Law 90) for failure to comply.
- C. **Opponents of Skip Bidder**
 1. All Players
When RHO has announced a skip bid, the player following the skip bidder must wait for a suitable interval (about 10 seconds). In waiting the player's manner must be one that suggests he is an active participant in the auction (the hand should be studied during pause). any obvious display of disinterest is most improper.
 2. Experienced Players
Experienced players expected to maintain proper temp whether a skip bid is announced or not.
- D. **Questioning:** After a skip bid, players may ask questions but must still pause an appropriate amount of time for study.
- E. **Failure to Pause:** When a player acts with undue haste or hesitation, the tournament director may award an adjusted score (Law 16) and/or procedural penalty (Law 90).
- F. **Where Used:** The warning is effective for all ACBL sanctioned events. **For sanctioned games at clubs, the club may elect to discourage it's use and require no mandated pause.**

The highlighted portions show that players should use skip bid warnings, but it is not required. We do ask that a player use the warning for all skip bids (or not at all) – a player cannot use them in some situations, but not others.

You will also note that a bridge club can set their own rules for skip bid warnings.

All of this centers on the usage of "should." The ACBL position is:

- A. It is understood that "should" is the past tense of "shall". But one of the definitions of should is "used in auxiliary function to express a request in a polite manner or to soften direct statement". In addition, common usage suggests that "should" is not a command.
- B. We use "should" instead of "may" to indicate that although there are no penalties for not using the skip bid warning, it is preferable to do so. And we afford better protections in the bidding for its use.