

Guidance for club directors (CD) at Stowmarket Bridge Club

Hesitation / Pause / Swift in making a call (aka BiT)

This aspect of Bridge is probably the most difficult to make judgements in a club environment as definition in this area is not clear. The following guidance aims to give directors a pathway that enables appropriate decisions whilst accepting that it is not perfect.

The director should consider applying the following *three* principles when called: -

- a) Nomenclature can at times cause misinterpretation and, in this instance, it is better to consider *hesitation / pause / swift in making a call* as a **Break in Tempo (BiT)**.
- b) At the table **try and not involve yourself to any great extent** because if you have not played the hand the greater you get to know the hand the more likely to compromise your ability to play the hand
- c) Players calling a director because of an alleged BiT may be correct in that unauthorised information (UI) may have been transferred – so whilst being fair and neutral the **benefit of doubt will rest with the non-offending partnership**.

Player who believes there has been UI (for example “Opponent (X) has Passed after a BiT and their partner (Y) has bid.”) *should at this juncture of the auction* state that they “Reserve their rights” to call the Director later **if they believe they may have been disadvantaged because of the UI**.

N.B Players should always call the CD when there is a perceived infraction.... (*“reserving rights” is just a short hand for saying “we all agree the facts and we can just continue for now without calling the CD”.*)

If there is any disagreement, then the CD should be called.

Step 1 Director called

The CD should just ask what happened while trying to avoid leading questions e.g. “did you hesitate”. Just ask what happened and hopefully the player concerned will say “I was just thinking about....” Or “I couldn’t decide what to do” etc – i.e. something *which would suggest they did break tempo*. The CD just tries to establish facts at the start (i.e. before the story becomes biased by the play of the cards or the subsequent result etc).

Having established the facts, the CD asks players to continue and call him back at the end of the hand if they feel they may have been damaged.

IMPORTANT: - This would also be a good moment for the CD to work out whether they have played the hand already or not. If they haven’t played the hand yet they might consider asking a colleague (if they have played the hand) to take over to minimise the CD’s own position being compromised . SEE NOTE (b) above

Step 2 What happens at the end of the hand

There cannot be any discussion of what may or may not have happened at the outset because that would just give the CD UI to everyone.

It is recommended that any review of the facts and the potential damage etc **always be carried out at the end of the session – when there is more time and without disturbing other tables**. Quite often by the end of the session the players feel less aggrieved by any issues and have calmed down. They may even just go home and let the matter drop. i.e. All good outcomes as far as the CD is concerned!

In assessing damage and logical alternatives etc, the CD should try to avoid referring to what happened at other tables. Just form a view about proceedings at the table concerned.