



EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

Annexe A

EBL SYSTEMS POLICY 2000

(Adopted December 1994; amended October 1996 and January 2000)

1. Objectives

The objectives are to ensure that EBL Championships can be properly operated and adequately administered, with a fair and equal chance for all competitors, while at the same time affording proper consideration to progress and innovation; to ensure that players are in no doubt as to what is expected of them with regard to preparation and filing of systems material for EBL Championships.

Additions or amendments to this policy will normally be put into effect only after four months' notice.

2. Definitions

Average Hand	a hand containing one card of each rank
Weak	high card strength below that of an average hand
Strong	high card strength a king or more greater than that of an average hand
Natural	a call or play that is not a convention (as defined in the Laws)
Length	three cards or more
Shortage	two cards or less
Long Match	a match of 17 or more deals
Short Match	a match of less than 17 deals

For the purpose of this Policy, a Highly Unusual Method (HUM) means any System that exhibits one or more of the following features, as a matter of partnership agreement:

- A Pass in the opening position may have the values generally accepted for an opening bid of one, and the player who passes may hold values a queen or more above the strength of an average hand (an average hand contains 10 HCP)
- By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level may be weaker than pass.
- By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level may be made with values a king or more below average strength.
- By partnership agreement an opening bid at the one level shows (a) either length or shortage in a specified suit or (b) either length in one suit or length in another

2.2 Classification of Systems

In order to facilitate recognition and handling, systems material will be identified by one or more of the following:

- a EBL coloured sticker;
- the appropriate name (hand printed or typed) colour;
- a check mark on a convention card next to the appropriate colour - in keeping with the following descriptions:

Green Natural

Blue Strong Club/Strong Diamond, where one club/one diamond is always strong

Red Artificial: this category includes all artificial systems that do not fall under the definition of Highly Unusual Methods (HUM) systems [see definition below], other than Strong Club/Strong Diamond systems (see 'Blue').

Examples would be a system where one club shows one of three types - a natural club suit, a balanced hand of a specific range, or a Strong Club opener; or a system in which the basic methods (other than the no trump range) vary according to position, vulnerability and the like; or a system that uses conventional 'weak' or 'multi-meaning' bids (with or without some weak option) in potentially contestable auctions, other than those described in the main part of the EBL Convention Booklet

Yellow Highly Unusual Methods ('HUM') as defined above.

2.3 Brown Sticker Conventions and Treatments

The following conventions or treatments are categorised as 'Brown Sticker':

- a) Any opening bid of two clubs through three spades that:
 - i) could be weak (may by agreement be made with values below average strength) AND
 - ii) does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.

EXCEPTION:

- iii) The bid always shows at least four cards in a known suit if it is weak. If the bid does not show a known four card suit it must show a hand a king or more over average strength. (Explanation: Where all the weak meanings show at least four cards in one known suit, and the strong meanings show a hand with a king or more above average strength, it is not a Brown Sticker Convention.)
- iv) A two level opening bid in a minor showing a weak two in either major, whether with or without the option of strong hand types, as described in the EBL Conventions Booklet.
- b) An overcall of a natural opening bid of one of a suit that does not promise at least four cards in a known suit.

EXCEPTION: A natural overcall in no trumps.

- c) Any 'weak' two-suited bids at the two or three level that may by agreement be made with three cards or fewer in one of the suits.
- d) Psychic bids protected by system or required by system.
- e) None of the foregoing restrictions pertain to conventional defences against strong, artificial opening bids or defences against 'Brown Sticker' or HUM conventions.

Additional to the classification of systems in 2.2 above, any partnership using one or more 'Brown Sticker' conventions must indicate this alongside its system classification.

2.4 Encrypted Signals

Additional to the restrictions on bidding methods and conventions above, players may not use signalling methods by which the message or messages conveyed by the signals are hidden from the declarer because of some key available only to the defenders (i.e. encrypted signals are not allowed)

3. Systems allowed at EBL Championships

In relation to the aspect of Systems to be allowed at EBL Championships, the events will be divided into three categories:

Category 1: Open Teams Championships & Women's Team Championships

For such events all classifications of systems will be permitted, subject to adequate disclosure, but teams using HUM systems must submit their Convention Cards in advance in accordance with the Conditions of Contest and will be subject to a reduction of seating rights, as follows:

Whenever a team with one or more pairs using a HUM system opposes a team that has no such pair, the HUM systems team will be the 'Away' team, and lines up first throughout.

No special seating rights or line-up restrictions shall apply when two teams containing HUM systems pairs (regardless of line-up) oppose one another.

Category 2: No events

The use of HUM systems is prohibited.

'Brown Sticker' conventions will be permitted, subject to adequate disclosure, but players using them must submit their Convention Cards in advance in accordance with the Conditions of Contest.

Category 3: All Pairs Championships, Junior Team Championships, Senior Team Championships and Mixed Team Championships

The use of both HUM systems and 'Brown Sticker' conventions is prohibited.

In WBF events the Category definitions are as follows:

Category 1: Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup

Category 2: Knock-out matches of the Olympiad, : of the Rosenblum Cup and of the McConnell Cup and other Teams Championships as decided by the WBF Rules and Regulations Committee:

Category 3: Olympiad (Round-Robin), all Pairs Championships. Junior Teams Championships. Rosenblum Cup and McConnell Cup (short matches), at Transnational events and the IOC Grand Prix

4. Systems Material

For all Category 1 Teams events, where Yellow (HUM) systems are permitted, any pair using a HUM system is required (in addition to the normal timely filing of the Convention card and Supplementary Sheets) to submit **the full system** in English at the beginning of the Championship.

Pairs using Green, Blue or Red systems are encouraged to submit their full system in English at the beginning of any EBL Championship.

In decisions taken by Tournament Directors and by the Appeals Committee, pairs who have submitted their full system will be given the benefit of any support this provides for an explanation given at the table, as far as this goes.

5. Convention Cards/Supplementary Sheets

The principle of adequate disclosure requires that competitors fully disclose **all conventions and treatments requiring defensive preparation**. In addition to the Convention cards, pairs will use Supplementary Sheets to achieve this objective.

The use of Supplementary Sheets is not strictly limited for all events, provided that the entries are properly numbered to correspond to appropriately cross-referenced numbers on the Convention card itself. The sheets must readily legible and the numbered entries must be separated by discernible heavy lines. While brevity is encouraged, particularly for Category 2 and Category 3 events, full disclosure must not be prejudiced in any way as a result.

All conventions and treatments requiring defensive preparation must be listed on the front right part of the EBL Card. They must be explained and fully developed (including competitive agreements) either in the appropriate section on the outside or inside of the card, or, where there is inadequate space there, in the first numbered entries on the Supplementary Sheets.

The front right part of the Convention Card must include:

- i) All artificial openings (except strong one club/two club openings)
- ii) Response to natural openings which are weak and conventional
- iii) All conventional defensive bids used over natural openings of one of a suit (making sure that all two suited intervention is detailed precisely; the best way to do this is to write: 'Two Suiters' and include a reference number to an early Supplementary Sheet entry, which will provide the particulars).

If a pair uses any bid which should have been listed here, but which has been left out, and their opponents do not get to their best contract, there will be a strong presumption that the opponents have been damaged by not being able to prepare a defence. The offending pair may also be liable to incur a procedural penalty.

Any pair playing a HUM system or 'Brown Sticker' convention has a special obligation to present a complete description of both their bids and subsequent developments (especially competitive developments). If a pair uses an auction that is not fully described, then the same presumption of lack

of advance notice (with adjustments and penalties as described in the preceding paragraph) shall apply.

For each tournament, the Conditions of Contest will state the date by which, and the address at which, systems material and Convention Cards (together with telephone and fax number or email addresses of the individuals best equipped to deal with queries regarding the system) must be received. The onus is jointly on the pair, the non-playing captain (where relevant), the NCBO and the Zonal Organisation to obtain the information required to meet this deadline. Failure to meet this deadline will result in automatic penalties, which will be fully described in the Conditions of Contest. Problems with systems should be referred to the Chairman of the Systems Committee or his nominee in accordance with details given in the Conditions of Contest.

After the closing date for submission of systems, the following will be the policy governing any changes to the Convention Card and Supplementary Sheets:

- a) Deletion of an item or a statement will be permitted upon application to the Chairman of the Systems Committee or his nominee
- b) A change replacing an agreement with another or to introduce a fresh agreement, where the new material is not Brown Sticker, will normally be permitted. The permission to use the new agreement will operate at the discretion of the Chairman, but will normally be from the morning of the second day after notification of the change is issued to other contestants
- c) Neither the replacement of a Brown Sticker convention with another Brown Sticker convention, nor the introduction of a new Brown Sticker convention will be permitted

It is strongly emphasised, and all contestants must note, that the policy stated above will be rigorously applied.

6. Defence against Yellow (HUM) Systems and Brown Sticker Conventions

For Team events in Category 1, the following regulations will apply to defensive measures against HUM systems.

- i) A pair opposing a HUM system pair will submit two (clearly legible) copies of their defence to the HUM system at an appropriate time and place prior to the start of that segment, to be specified in the Conditions of Contest. Such defences are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention card.
- ii) In preparing the defence against a HUM system, pairs using Green, Blue or Red systems are allowed to change their systems, including opening calls. Pairs using a HUM system are not allowed to change their opening calls.
- iii) The pair using a HUM system must inform the opponents in writing (two clearly legible copies) about their counter-defence at the table prior to the start of the session. In preparing their counter-defence, the pair using a HUM system is not permitted to change any of the highly artificial aspects of its system.

For Teams events in Category 1 and Category 2, the following regulations will apply in relation to defensive measures against Brown Sticker Conventions:

A pair may prepare written defences against the 'Brown Sticker' elements of any system. Such defences will have to be given to the opponents (two clearly legible copies) at an appropriate time and place prior to the start of that segment, to be specified in the Conditions of Contest. Written defences against Brown Sticker conventions are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention card.

7. Number of systems allowed per team

For Category 1 events, a maximum number of four Red or Yellow Systems, of which only three may be Yellow, will be permitted for each participating team. A System, for the purpose of this section, may include different methods for different vulnerabilities.

Both members of the partnership must use the same methods.

8. Additional Regulation for EBL Pairs Championships

In the EBL Pairs Championships, psychic conventional opening bids are prohibited.