

## Conduct and Etiquette

Law 74 in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge is entitled “Conduct and Etiquette”. What this is about is summarized perfectly in the first statement of that Law: “A player should maintain a courteous attitude at all times.” Unfortunately, not all Bridge players abide by this Law. The NSWBA has set up a “Congress Conduct and Etiquette Committee”, of which I am a member. This committee deals with complaints of “bad behavior” at congresses and other State-level competitions. Examples to date have included claims that a player accused her opponent of cheating, that a player stood up and shouted abuse at the whole room for making too much noise, and that a player walked around the table and threatened his partner with physical violence!

At the Club level, the Director is the one who has to rule on breaches of conduct. Hopefully our directors will never have to deal with such extreme examples. However, even minor breaches of etiquette can cause discomfort to other players, so we should all try to always be at our most courteous best. Small things you can keep in mind include:

- Avoid annoying or embarrassing remarks
- Don’t criticize your opponents or your partner at the table
- Always welcome players to your table, and don’t carry on postmortems after they arrive
- Play your cards face up on the table so that all players can see them clearly
- Be tolerant of slow movement of the elderly (most of us are heading for that category rather quickly!)

Be aware that in some cases poor table manners becomes a direct breach of the Law. For example, if you show obvious displeasure at your partner’s choice of lead – by frowning, shifting in your seat, slapping your card down, even raising an eyebrow – you have given your partner unauthorized information, and your partner is obliged by Law to ignore it. If you change suit because your partner looks unhappy, Director may be called and will adjust the score accordingly.

It’s important to remember that bridge is a GAME, and is for the enjoyment of all. You can help raise the level of enjoyment by acting with courtesy.

Reminder: There is a guide to Conduct and Etiquette in the Club’s Program, and a Code of Conduct on display above the Director’s table.

Enjoy your Bridge!

*Peter Peterson*

Tournament Director