

1. **Law 6: The Shuffle and Deal.** This law has been changed to require that two adjacent cards in the deck not be dealt to the same player. The law continues to recommend that cards be dealt in rotation clockwise (although other methods are legal). Obviously, this is in the absence of a dealing machine.
2. **Law 7: Control of Board and Cards.** This law has a couple of changes. The old Law 7A required that the board be placed in the center of the table until play is completed. The new 7A goes further to say, "it is placed in the center of the table where it shall remain, correctly oriented, until play is completed." So, the board should not only remain on the table throughout the bidding and play, it should not be twisted from its proper orientation at any time during.
3. **Law 53: Lead out of Turn Accepted.** A lead out of turn to trick thirteen may not be accepted and must be retracted.
4. **Law 26: Call Withdrawn, Lead Restrictions.** This law has been revamped from the previous version and is now simpler. It does not apply in cases where a comparable call has been made or where a call is changed due to it being unintended (see previous articles in this series). When a player withdraws a call and replaces it with another to correct an irregularity and he later becomes a defender, declarer may choose one suit that was not specified in the legal auction by the offender and prohibit his partner from leading that suit the first time he obtains the lead (including opening lead). Such a prohibition continues for as long as partner retains the lead. There are no longer any cases where declarer will have the option to require the lead of a particular suit. For example, suppose a player makes an insufficient 1H bid over a 1S bid and replaces it with a pass and does not bid later in the auction. If the offending side is later on defense, declarer may choose any one suit at offender's partner's first turn to lead and forbid him from leading that suit while he holds the lead.

Now, the rule change Mike covered that isn't so easy to understand:

**Law 23: Comparable Call.** This is a completely new law that represents what is probably the biggest change. As mentioned in the *July Bulletin*, the lawmakers have been moving towards more equitable solutions following irregularities rather than imposing arbitrary penalties that needlessly distort the outcome of a board. That is the intent of this law, and it expands the idea first seen in the insufficient bid law in the 2008 version to other laws. Its basic goal is to allow a player to substitute a "comparable call" for an illegal one, without penalty, as long as any information from the illegal call does not give the offending side an advantage. It will now apply to certain passes, bids, doubles, and redoubles out of rotation in addition to insufficient bids. A comparable call is defined as one that replaces a withdrawn call if it (a) has the same or a similar meaning as that attributable to the withdrawn call; (b) defines a subset of the possible meanings attributable to the withdrawn call, or (c) has the same purpose (e.g., an asking bid or a relay) as that attributable to the withdrawn call.

So, for those out-of-rotation calls that used to result in partner being barred from bidding, the director may be able to allow a substitution that permits normal play to continue under the new laws. The director should now do so in the laws mentioned above if the substituted call has the same or a very similar meaning as the withdrawn call, or if it is a "subset" of the meanings of the withdrawn call (such as a pass out of turn at partner's turn, later corrected to a pass of partner's opening one-level suit bid), or if it performs the same function as the withdrawn call (such as a 2C bid over partner's 2NT, intended as Stayman and corrected to 3C, also Stayman).

Mike noted that this law is confusing and will take some time even for ACBL to sort out its nuances. Chances are directors at local clubs and at tournaments will have a difficult time it. To make a ruling when called to the table, the law requires, first, that the director ascertain the partnership agreement on bidding and, second, work through the logic to determine what constitutes a “comparable call.” The “subset” language adds a level of complexity.

So, when you’re involved a director call where Law 23 comes into play, remember that the director is doing his or her best to follow it. And remember that, whatever he or she rules, we must respect the director and abide by it.