

Claims & Concessions

Claims and concessions are commonly made at the bridge table. Typically this most often occurs when the player claiming exposes the remaining cards in their hand or when the player conceding throws in the remaining cards. More often than not these actions are accepted by everyone at the table and the players move on to the next hand.

There are, however, some traps for the unwary in the process of claiming and conceding, and in the event of any dispute the director is required to apply laws 68 – 71

Claims

When a player makes a claim of the remaining tricks (or concedes one or more tricks and claims the rest) he or she should immediately state the line of play to be followed to win the claimed tricks.

Such a statement might be – “I will draw the last trump, cross to dummy with a diamond and run the spades”.

Once a claim is made all play must stop. If the claim is contested the director must be called. No player may ask for the hand to be played out.

If the director is called the claimer should repeat the statement of claim. All players then place their remaining cards face up on the table and the director hears any objection to the claim and rules on whether the claim is valid.

In making a decision the director will not accept any change by the claimer in the stated line of play so it pays to make a full statement of claim even if a particular line is blindingly obvious.

There is another trap if a trump is outstanding and the claimer doesn't mention it in the statement of claim. If the director believes it is likely the claimer was unaware of the outstanding trump and could lose a trick to that trump by any normal play then the trump is considered to have won a trick for the opponents. “Normal play” includes careless or inferior play but not irrational play. It's the director's job to make that judgement.

Concessions

Concessions also carry a number of traps. A player concedes all of the remaining tricks if he or she abandons their hand, even if no concession is stated.

If their partner objects immediately to the concession then no concession has occurred, but if the player conceding has exposed some or all of the remaining cards in attempting to make the concession then those cards become major penalty cards. Even if the cards have not been exposed the attempted concession probably gave unauthorised information to the player's partner. In any case play must stop and the director should be called. Players must not continue play once a concession is made.