

Disciplinary procedures relating to potential cheating

Introduction

The SBU has recently clarified its disciplinary procedures. Although largely unaltered in concept, they have more detail now, largely to provide transparency. This was stimulated to a considerable extent by online bridge creating an environment where unauthorised communication between partners is easier than before. Bluntly, cheating is much easier than in face-to-face bridge.

This has resulted in an increase in cheating by players and pairs all over the world, and sadly it would seem that Scottish bridge is not exempt. How do we know? Computer methods now exist to analyse the play and can determine, by various statistical methods, that cheating is taking place. Briefly, this is by detecting spectacular improvements in results and identifying play and defence that cannot be found consistently by normal means. These analyses are now accepted by the bridge authorities as evidence of cheating.

The SBU has established an independent investigation panel that has access to both computer and manual evaluation tools which can detect cheating.

Procedure relating to potential cheating

The correct process must be followed when investigating potential cheating. This is essential, both to protect the innocent, but also to ensure that a valid investigation can be carried out.

A complainant is likely to approach their Club manager, TD, or Event Convenor for advice. We wish that as many of this group as possible acquaint themselves with the correct procedure to be adopted.

Advice should be given and should include the following points -

- The matter must be immediately referred to the Chair of the Investigation Panel.
- The complainant must **not** communicate in any way with the suspect or any other person.
- Cases of potential cheating will be investigated **only** by the Investigation Panel. It is not appropriate for any TD, Club, District, or other individuals to take any action whatsoever on the matter.
- The complainant must be reassured that their identity will not be revealed, and should be advised that the process will be greatly helped if they can provide, in writing or by email, the following -
 - BBO nicknames for the player(s) involved.
 - a list of events (including dates and performance levels) where suspicions have arisen.
 - Some evidence of typical performance levels before the period of suspected cheating.
- Note that for online play, much of the evidence is will be obtained from analysis of the hands played. This requires access to at least 200 hands, preferably 300. One or two suspicious hands is well short of the evidence required to process what is a very serious accusation.
- The investigation process will then commence. The complainant will be advised appropriately about progress, although details of the investigation will not be disclosed.

Please note that complaints relating to TD rulings, bad behaviour, etc., will be dealt with exactly as previously, and should not be referred to the Chair of the Investigation Panel.

The Chair of the Investigation Panel is –

Brian Short email - bdshort12@gmail.com mobile - 07788 447 455

He will be happy to speak to complainants or answer questions about the process outlined above.