

Decisions by the WB Laws Committee

The WB Laws Committee (LC) occasionally receives from WB Member National Authorities (MNAs) enquiries asking for decisions on various aspects of the Laws of the Sport of Bowls – such as clarification on the intent of, and guidance on the interpretation of, a specific law. Where these enquiries are considered to be of general interest, the enquiry and accompanying LC decision has been included in this section of the WB website.

Laws	Members' Enquiries and Laws Committee Decisions
12	<p>June 2011 – Bowls England:</p> <p>Bowls England requested clarification on the law for drawing the rinks of play. Their concern was “It seems as though many people are not offering the away team the available rinks to make a draw and the home team is choosing the rinks which suit their players.”</p> <hr/> <p>LC Decision:</p> <p>The relevant law in this case is law 12.1 which is clear in its intent - “The Skips, their representatives or the Controlling Body should make the draw for the rinks on which games are to be played”.</p> <p>The Oxford Dictionary definition of ‘draw’ is “an act of selecting names randomly to decide winners in a lottery, opponents in a sporting contest, etc.”. In the context of law 12.1, it would read “an act of selecting rink numbers and opponents randomly to decide opponents in a sporting contest”.</p> <p>It follows that, for any scheduled event, there should be sufficient rinks made available for a draw to take place. Therefore, for a single game scheduled at a club, more than one rink should be made available for the draw and for competitions involving more than one rink of play (e.g. inter-county or inter-district competitions comprising a Side of three or four disciplines) the minimum number of rinks required should be made available. Rinks cannot be allocated to individual games or disciplines in advance. The rink numbers available should preferably be consecutive (e.g.. rinks 1,2,3 and 4 or rinks 2,3,4 and 5) and not interspersed with other games being played at the club.</p> <p>There are a number of ways in which the draw for rinks and opponents can take place (e.g. numbers for rinks to play on drawn from a hat by respective Skips; team representatives swapping scorecards containing the names of their skips and then shuffling and pairing the cards). The LC does not have a preferred option except to say that there should be a random draw done for rink numbers and opponents.</p> <p>Finally, the LC recommends that the method to be used for drawing rink numbers and opponents should be included in the Conditions of Play for the event being played.</p>
16.3.3 and 50.1	<p>April 2011 - Bowls New Zealand:</p> <p>Law 50.1 requires that if a game is stopped because of darkness, weather conditions or any other valid reason then the game should be continued either on the same day or on a different day. Law 16.3.3 gives the Controlling Body for an event powers which include the ability to alter or amend the programme of the event as it considers necessary or appropriate if the weather or other conditions are unsuitable and the ability to suspend play temporarily in, or abandon, any game.</p> <p>There are occasions, such as when competing teams have to travel long distances to take part in an event, in which it is impractical to continue a game at a later time or date when adverse weather conditions cause that game to be stopped. If a Controlling Body decides to exercise its powers under law 16.3.3 – for example, by declaring that the game is null and void or declaring that the result of the game will be determined by</p>

	<p>the scores as they stood after a pre-determined number of ends have been completed – does this override the requirement to continue the game later as required by law 50.1?</p>
	<p>LC Decision:</p> <p>If a Controlling Body decides to exercise its powers under law 16.3.3 to deal with a situation such as that described, it should include within its Conditions of Play any regulations which it deems appropriate to resolve the situation (these regulations can differ from those described in law 50). In such circumstances, the regulations in the Conditions of Play override the requirements of law 50.</p>
37.1.7	<p>February 2011 – Bowls South Africa:</p> <p>Bowls South Africa formally applied to World Bowls for dispensation to include in its Domestic Regulations & General Conditions of Play an amendment to law 37.1.7 (this law requires the skip in a team game to keep the score card). Bowls SA requested the authority to allow the skip to delegate this duty to another member in the team.</p> <p>The rationale behind the Bowls SA request was as follows:</p> <p>“We have received numerous complaints about the skip having to keep the score card. In the past the skip was able to delegate this duty. Under the new rules he may not do so. Many skips wear glasses to read and don't need them to play. By having to keep the card they are required to constantly put on and take off their spectacles.”</p>
	<p>LC Decision:</p> <p>The LC rejected the application for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The concept of a skip marking a score card is not a new one – law 37.1.7 in the Crystal Mark Edition required the skip of a Pairs game to keep the score card. 2) The sentence in the rationale which reads "In the past the skip was able to delegate this duty" is factually incorrect – the skip did not previously have the power to delegate this duty. Law 37.1.8 in the Crystal Mark Edition stated that skips could delegate their own powers and any of their own duties – keeping the score card (other than in a Pairs game) was the duty of the Second and not that of the skip. Law 37.1.8. also specifically stated that the skip in a Pairs game could not delegate their own duty of keeping the score card. 3) One of the LC's underlying principles is that Domestic Regulations will only be considered in situations where it can be demonstrated that these regulations are necessary to deal with local circumstances or conditions. There is nothing in the rationale which suggests that the situation faced by Bowls SA is purely a local one (around the world, players wear glasses to read but not to play). Bowls SA, therefore, has not provided the LC with sufficient grounds for it to approve their request. <p>However, it is not the LC's intention that a player suffering from a physical or mental condition be placed at a disadvantage when playing the sport. Therefore, in situations, where opponents and officials agree that a player suffering from a physical or mental condition would be placed at a disadvantage if the letter of the law was to be followed, the LC would have no objections to a suitable, pragmatic solution being introduced to deal with the situation. This would, however, need to be dealt with on a case by case basis - not by the introduction of a Domestic Regulation.</p>