

## WBF LC Commentary

### Law 26 – Lead Restrictions after a Withdrawn Call

This law describes the rectifications in the play when a call is cancelled and replaced by another. It has changed considerably in the 2017 code. When the two calls are comparable, there are no lead penalties. If not, declarer may prohibit the lead in any one suit that has not been specified in the legal auction. This includes suits completely unrelated to the withdrawn call.

For a suit to be exempt from a lead penalty the legal auction must have imparted suit-specific information (i.e., information about the actual holding in that particular suit).

Examples:

20. North is the dealer, but East opens 2♥ showing 5 hearts and a minor, weaker than a one-level opening. South does not accept 2♥ and North opens 1NT. East overcalls with 2♥. This pair plays that 2♥ shows hearts and a minor, which basically has the same meaning as his withdrawn call, although it could now be stronger. It is reasonable to deem these calls comparable. That means there are no lead penalties.

21. Same situation but now the replacement bid of 2♥ just shows hearts.

The legal auction becomes

W.	N.	E.	S
	1NT	2♥	2NT Pass
♣	X	3♦	All Pass

2NT is Lebensohl; the double shows clubs

In this case the two 2♥ calls are not comparable, so Law 26B applies. The fact that East showed both suits in the legal action does not remove the lead penalty, but restricts the rectification to prohibiting the lead of spades or diamonds.

22. W	N	E	S
	Pass	2♦	3♦.
X	Pass	2♥	All Pass

2♦ showed a 4-4-1-4 shape with 11-15 HCP.

The substitution of a 'pass' by East causes us to again examine Law 26B. This time there are no lead restrictions upon West because East's opening bid of 2♦ has already specified each of the four suits (by guaranteeing length in ♠, ♥ and ♣; and shortage in ♦).

A player who is subject to a lead penalty following a withdrawn call also remains constrained in respect to Law 16, even though no specific cross-reference to Law 16C2 appears within Law 26B. Any such UI constraints remain in effect for the duration of the play, i.e., even after declarer has exercised his Law 26 option by prohibiting the lead of a different nominated suit.