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## Law tip: Insufficient Bids (Law 27)

By *Ed* - Posted on *01 May 2013*

All bridge players make **Insufficient Bids (IBs)**, some more than others! If someone makes an insufficient bid, the next person to bid must immediately call the Director. Quickly changing it to a sufficient bid is **not allowed** – many players will do this and the next player meekly accepts it. Don't – call the director as you have options.

1) You can accept the **IB** and make any legal call. Sometimes this is useful. Let's say you hold

♠Q75

♥874

♦QJ43

♣764

Your partner opens **1S** and next makes an **1B** of **1H**. This would be a time you would consider accepting the bid of **1H** and then bid **1S** as this tells your partner you have minimal spade support.

1) You can also pass or double the one Bid.

2) You can choose to **not accept** the **IB** in which case there are a number of things declarer can do:

a) Correct the bid to the lowest available level in the same denomination. So in the example above the bid could be corrected to **2H**. If this option is chosen then the bidding carries on.

b) Correct the bid to another bid that has the same or more precise meaning than the **IB**. This can be a bit tricky to determine. But an example could be if you are holding

♠T97

♥AQ76

♦K7532

♣65

Your partner opens **1D** and next overcalls **1S**. You now make an IB of **1H**. If, in your system, a double of **1S** in this sequence guarantees a 4 card heart hold, then you would be allowed to change your 1H to X and the auction carries on. A more common application of this is where someone has accidentally answered 4NT incorrectly by bidding 4H to show one ace (as if it was Gerber) when they should have bid 5D. If the **IB** is not accepted then they can change it to 5D. It also applies to transfers eg someone responding 2H as a transfer to a 2NT opener instead of 3H. As long as both

are transfers to spades then it can be changed.

c) Make any other call including pass (but not a double except as in the example above). If this is done then their partner may not bid again. Furthermore if the suit of the **IB** is not mentioned in the legal auction then, when the partner of the **IB** comes on lead for the first time, declarer may demand or forbid a lead of that suit. So if there was an auction that started

**SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST**

1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	1 ♦
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and the bid is **not accepted** and substituted for a pass and it carried on to look like

**SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST**

1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	

then West has the opening lead so South can demand or forbid a lead of a diamond as that suit was an **IB** but not then bid in the legal auction.

It gets really tricky when the **IB** is totally artificial but we won't get into that now! The key thing to remember that, when there has been an **IB**, both the next to bid and the bidder of the **IB** have a variety of options, so make sure they are explained and choose the one that will best advantage / least disadvantage you.

*(Emphasis and items bolded for emphasis)*