

FYI Card Snapping

Arnprior Duplicate Bridge Club, 2017

Carol and David Sulpher want to report some observations they made from their recent Bridge cruise with Larry Cohen. These observations are about card snapping. We all know what card snapping is, right?

They came face-to-face with the practice of card snapping, and discovered that it happens everywhere. Carol found that she herself is bothered by card snapping and asked players on the cruise to avoid snapping. Each time she felt that the opponents' reactions indicated that others had asked them to avoid snapping. And each time, the snapping stopped. That suggests that people can control their snapping.

One lady used her card holder to ask people to refrain from snapping, and said that the Directors at her Club had always taken snapping seriously, and worked with players to reduce and eliminate snapping.

Why is card snapping a problem for some people? We don't know for sure, but for some people, card snapping is very aversive, causing discomfort, distraction, even pain. Here are some conditions that can be profoundly affected by card snapping:

- 1) it may aggravate tinnitus;
- 2) it may activate a startle response;
- 3) it may aggravate their PTSD;
- 4) it may cause hearing aids to amplify snapping sounds to painful levels;
- 5) it may cause people to be distracted and lose focus and concentration;
- 6) it may cause distress to people with psychological or neurological sensitivity to noise that makes them unable tolerate loud, crisp, or sudden noises.

ACBL considers card snapping to be completely unacceptable. In fact, ACBL guidelines call for the possibility of an adjusted score as a result of persistent card snapping. Law 74 of **ACBL Laws of Duplicate Bridge** makes it quite clear: *A player should carefully avoid any remark or action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player or might interfere with the enjoyment of the game.* The key is that enjoyment of the game is the primary consideration, and there's no question that some people's enjoyment of the game is reduced because of other people's card snapping.

Here are some wise words from Carol:

If you tend to get excited, or even a little aggressive when playing your cards, we ask that you give extra thought to placing your cards down gently on the table. Dropping the cards just before they hit the table is a practice that helps decrease the likelihood of snapping your cards.

And ... if a player forgets to play his/her cards gently, and the person is asked by a player to please refrain from snapping, a sincere "I'm sorry" is in order, followed by extra attention to correcting his/her actions.

The Arnprior Duplicate Bridge Club prides itself on being a friendly approachable club for all. If members and newcomers feel uncomfortable with any misbehaviour at their tables, snapping, for example, they should ask the person causing the problem to refrain from doing it any more. If the problem persists, the Director should be called, where it will be dealt with according to established protocol. All of the Directors at our club are prepared to stand behind anyone asking for help. Every person's assistance is required to ensure a happy, comfortable playing environment for all.