Don't Forget to Pre-Alert Short Club Systems

From time to time our Tournament Directors encounter situations where a partnership is playing a **1♣ opening that may contain one club or even no clubs**.

These methods are classified as **Red Systems** under the StepBridge Australia regulations and **must be pre-alerted** before play begins.

Why is a pre-alert important?

A 1♣ opening that may be short is unusual. Opponents are entitled to know this before the auction starts so they can make informed decisions during both the auction and the play.

The pre-alert is separate from any announcement or alert made during the auction.

Remember these obligations

If your partnership plays a 1♣ opening that may contain one club (or fewer):

- ✓ Pre-alert your opponents before play begins.
- ✓ Ensure your system card accurately describes the agreement.
- ✓ Make any required announcement or alert during the auction in accordance with StepBridge procedures.

Completing only one of these steps is **not** sufficient.

Why does it matter?

Failure to disclose an unusual agreement can lead to Director calls and difficult rulings. While not every failure will result in an adjusted score, it can create unnecessary disputes and may disadvantage opponents.

A few moments spent giving a proper pre-alert helps ensure everyone is playing with the same understanding.

Good disclosure leads to better bridge and fewer Director calls.

Did you know?

A 1♣ opening that promises **two or more clubs** is generally **not** a Red System. However, if your partnership agreement allows the opening to be made on **one club or fewer**, it **must** be pre-alerted before play begins.