

# Playing Teams vs. Matchpoints

In the upcoming Sectional tournament there is a 0-1000 Swiss Team event. If you haven't tried teams before, here's a guide on some key differences between a teams event and a matchpoint pairs event. The general team strategy is:

1. Try to make your contract (overtricks are less important)
2. Try to set the opponents (as giving them an overtrick is less important)
3. Bidding and making games is very important, as an example below will show.

A difference from Pairs is you have a team of 4 people consisting of a N/S and E/W pair. If you need a pair for your team, sign up at the partnership desk. At the start of the game, you will be assigned a team number and a "home" table, say B2. Your entire team sits at table B2, until the director says to start the match and move. The N/S players remain at table B2. The E/W players sit at the "corresponding" table. Usually, the "corresponding" table is the same table number with an adjacent letter. So the E/W players go to table A2. The director will advise if there are any exceptions to this.

Another difference is that each board you play is not compared across the "field". Rather, it is only compared with one other team. So, if you and your partner are sitting N/S against team #3, say, then your teammates are sitting E/W at another table against the team #3 N/S players. After you play some number of boards against the other team (typically 5-7 boards), the E/W players return to sit at their home table with their N/S teammates. You then compare the results of each board played at both tables.

The score you win or lose on a board depends on the *magnitude* of the difference in results. For example, if at your table you bid 3 Spades and make 4, then your result is 170 on the board. If the opponents at the other table bid 4S and made 4, then your partners have a result of -420 or -620, depending on the vulnerability. So the net difference on the board is -250 or -450. This highlights an important feature of team scoring: if you miss bidding a game that makes, and the opponents bid it, then you lose a lot, especially if you are vulnerable. It is important to avoid large negative scores in team games (or "telephone numbers", like -800 or -1100), unless you are **very** confident your partners will be getting even larger positive scores!

The net difference on a board is translated into an "IMP" score (short for International Match Points), using the IMP table you see at the side or bottom of most scorecards. So the difference of -250 translates to -6 IMP's, and -450 is worth -10 IMP's. For each board played against the other team, you calculate the net score difference and convert that to IMP's. Note that a difference of 0 or 10 is considered a "tie", or 0 IMP's. So another feature of IMP scoring is that there is no IMP advantage to scoring 430 over 420, which is significant in matchpoint scoring.

You total the IMP's for the boards, both positive and negative, and get the net IMP result. Typically, the team "captain" that won the match (with a positive IMP result) goes to the other table to confirm the IMP result. If there is a discrepancy, the captain should check each board with the other team to find the discrepancy. Once the result is agreed upon, the winning team captain completes a little card that shows the winning team's number, the losing team's number, and the net IMP result. Both team captains then initial the card, which the winning team captain delivers to the director. Note that there may be a tie, where the net IMP's are 0, in which case either team should complete the card and report the result. The director compiles the results of the matches, and then posts the table assignments for the next round of play. The team captain looks for the table assigned to their team number, and directs their N/S pair to that table. Let the next round begin, and have fun!