

Scoring Duplicate Bridge - Competitive Bidding Part 1

- Social bridge - your purpose is to get a better score than the people at your table.
- Duplicate bridge - your purpose is to get a better score than all the other people sitting your direction holding your cards.
- How do you do that?
- This mini-lesson is about how duplicate scoring affects the tactics to use for good results.

1. North's hand: K9876 AQT 84 A52

W	N	E	S
(1D)	1S	(2D)	P
(P)	?		

Double - letting the opponent's play at the 2 level once they have a fit is basically accepting a poor score. This bid asks P to pick a suit. It is **NOT** for penalty.

2. Which of these are terrible scores?

- (a) -50?
- (b) -100?
- (c) -200?
- (d) -800?
- (e) -1400? At rubber bridge or social bridge, the higher the minus, the more terrible. At duplicate, they can be top boards.

3. Duplicate Scoring

- (a) Scoring: 1 point for every score you beat. 1/2 point for every score you tie
- (b) If a board is played 8 times, top on the board is 7
- (c) If a board is played 8 times, average is 3.5
- (d) This is completely different from social bridge, where you get the contract score.

4. Dealer E, Neither vul.

				Matchpoints	
	Contract	Made	NS Score	EW Score	
				NS	EW
1.	2SN	2	110	7	0
2.	3DXW	-1	100	6	1
3.	3DW	-1	50	5.5	1.5
4.	3DW	-1	50	5.5	1.5
5.	2SN	-1		50	3
6.	2DW	2		90	2
7.	3DE	3		110	1
8.	3DXW	3		470	0

- the scoring makes clear that the purpose of duplicate is to get a better score than the others holding your hands, not the people at your table.
- this is why overtricks are important: if everyone else makes 4H for 420, and you can make an overtrick for 450, you get a top board, the rest get below average.
- Being ahead of the Opp's by even 10 points can get you most of the matchpoints.
- 110 (the score for making 2H or 2S, or 3C or 3D) v. 100 (the score for going down 1 vul. or 2

not vul.) is a magic consideration in competitive bidding. If you think you will go down only 2 not vul. or 1 if vul, then the opp's get 100, instead of 110.

- That can be the difference between a top board and a bottom board.
- When you complain about not getting the cards - these hands and these decisions are the essence of duplicate and the difference between finishing at the top or the bottom.
- 200 is usually a horrible score.
- doubling the opp's at the 3 level if they are not vulnerable is not a good gamble: in the example, you can see that if you set 3DX 1 trick, you get a half matchpoint more than setting them 1 trick undoubled. But as you can see, if they make 3DX, you give up 5.5 matchpoints - the risk is way too much, unless you know for sure you can set them 2.
- different considerations if they are vulnerable - now setting the contract 1 trick, doubled, gains 200 points - usually a great matchpoint score.

5. South's hand: J5 732 J92 KT742

W	N	E	S
(1D)	1S	(2D)	?

Pass. You might force the Opp's to the 3 level but, if P has a 6c suit, he will compete to 3S, expecting you to have 3 card support. Also, partner still has a chance to bid, and partner should know as well as you not to let the opp's play at the 2 level if they have a fit.

6. South's hand: J5 K32 J92 T9742

W	N	E	S
(P)	P	(1D)	P
(1H)	1S	(P)	P
(2D)	P	(P)	?

2S.

Now you are the last to bid and it is your responsibility to make sure the opp's do not play at the 2 level if they have a fit. P will not expect you to have anything in S's. He knows you're trying to force the Opp's to the 3 level. Partner should know that you are bidding his hand as well as yours in this situation.

This is the lesson so far: at duplicate, you can't afford to let the Opp's play at the 2 level if they've found a fit.

7.	(1H)	1S	(1N)	P
	(2D)	P	(2H)	?

Pass. Not the same situation we've been discussing - Responder has indicated a weak hand and made a preference between 2 suits. He probably has 2 card support. *They haven't found a fit!*

This is also a very dangerous situation to bid 2S - R has S's, and not many cards in Opener's suit. You are quite likely to be doubled. You can expect that:

- trump may not split well
- spade honours are behind Partner's suit.
- H honours are behind your KH.
- the opp's will lead H's and may get the first 2 H tricks and a ruff (remember R has a xx in H's on this bidding)
- in our game, though, low level penalty doubles are not common, so you might get away with it.

8. If you want to read up on this, it is called “**balancing**”.

9. Competitive bidding is based on the Law of Total Tricks - the topic for next time :)

Possible future topics:

The Law of Total Tricks

More about competing for the 2 level

Competing for the 3 level

3 modern bids everyone should know - negative doubles, the cuebid raise and the cooperative double.