



1 Doubles and Redoubles

I have been asked by a member to write about the bids ‘Double’, ‘Redouble’ and what their usual meanings are. Their literal meanings are to change the score of the doubled or redoubled contract roughly by doubling or quadrupling the raw score if the contract is made (and increasing the penalty if it is not). However the way in which the score changes is a little more complex in tournament bridge than in rubber bridge. Nowadays with the ubiquity of bridge pads there is not so much reason for understanding how any score is arrived at but most will remember that it is generally the aggregate of two components.

The first of these components is the “trick score” (“below the line” for rubber bridge players). In other words, for every trick made (above 6 tricks) of a making contract one scores 20 points for minor suit contracts and 30 for major suit contracts (for no trumps it is 40 for the first trick and 30 for the subsequent tricks). These scores are doubled or quadrupled for doubled and redoubled contracts.

But, in addition to this component of the score there are bonuses for any part-score and any game contract. These are numerous but the common ones are 50 for a part-score, 300 for a non-vulnerable game and 500 for a vulnerable game. Rubber bridge players call these bonuses “above the line” scores. Some of these are greater for making doubled or redoubled contracts. Another type of “above the line” score is a penalty for failing in a

contract; these are greater for failing doubled and redoubled contracts and depend on the number of tricks by which the contract has failed (and the vulnerability).

You can see that it is all rather complicated! Here are a three non-vulnerable examples.

Contract	Score	Notes
2♣ doubled making 2	180	2 × 40 for the doubled tricks, 50 for a part score, 50 for making a doubled contract
3♠ doubled making 5	730	180 for the 3 doubled tricks 50 for making a doubled contract 300 for the game bonus 100 per doubled overtrick
5♣ doubled down 3	-500	100 for the first down trick but 200 for the subsequent down tricks

In brief, the bids Double and Redouble “up the ante” for the previous bid. Note that you cannot further “up the ante” beyond Redouble!

So much for the basic meaning of Double/Redouble. While these bids are sometimes made in the expectation of extracting a larger penalty from an over-optimistic opponent, nowadays better players use them as “take-out” bids: do something sensible

partner. The most common situation is when an opponent has opened the bidding and you have a good hand but no convenient overcall; often you will double and your partner will understand that she expects you to bid (although you may elect to pass if you think it is wise). There are many variations of this situation and I would need a whole book to cover them. One way to tell whether you are watching an expert partnership is to notice their doubles: almost of all of them will be for take-out. However, there is one situation where your double will always be for penalty: when either you or your partner has made a pre-emptive weak bid somewhere in the auction.

Finally, what if your opponent has doubled you and you redouble? Sometimes you will do this because you are pretty sure you will make the contract. But Redouble can have another meaning: it says “Help, partner, I think I’m in trouble - do something sensible”. Which meaning does it have? Ah - it depends - and there’s another whole book.

2 Club news and comments

Open B Tournament Our next Open B tournament is on 21st March and it would great to have a good turnout from our members. Entries close on Wednesday 18th March so don’t miss out. Please bring an item for the raffle to the club rooms - or two if you are so inclined.

East Taieri Church The East Taieri Church - are putting on a Neighbours Day on Sunday 29th March from 2 pm – 4 pm so if you want to see what else Mosgiel has to offer go along.

Gardening Thanks for great work by Judith and Lawrie Smeijers for doing some of the pruning along Church Street. What a great effort!!

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