

Doubles – Session 1

By Baloney Bill, Queen Victoria's Weary, Burdened, Unappreciated, Old Servant

OK, now that you know all of the things that you wanted to know about bidding and a few things that you didn't, guess what? *There's more!!!* (But don't tell anybody – it'll be our secret.) You can actually compete in the bidding without even naming a suit or bidding no trump. Exciting, huh?

For example, if RHO bids one club, sometimes you can just pull out the double card and slap it on the table with a nasty sneer. That's a competitive bid. You know about that bid, don't you? It's called a _____ double. For this kind of double, you need _____ count, and no more than _____ cards in RHO's bid suit. Your double requests that partner bid her best suit, unless opener's partner responds with something other than a pass, then she can ignore your double if she wishes.

Examples:

RHO opens one club. You double. LHO passes. Partner feels free to bid her best suit, because your takeout double promises support for all the unbid suits and shortness in opener's suit. How many points does partner need to bid something? _____ If partner has 10+ points, she bids her suit at a level higher than necessary to let you know, e.g. 1C – X – P – 2H.

Two more examples:

- 1C – X – 1H – P (partner may pass if opener's partner responds)
- 1C – X – 1H – 1S (partner is free to respond to your takeout double with 6+ points, and in this particular case, how many spades? _____)

Rebids by takeout doubler: After partner bids something, pass if your hand contains 15 or fewer points. You may raise partner's suit one level with 16-17 pts and 4+ cards in her suit, but consider passing your partner's minor suit bid. With more points (18-19), jump raise partner's suit, or bid a strong new suit if you have 5 trump or jump in your new suit with 6+ trump.

You will find the takeout double very useful in competitive bidding. You might find the following types of doubles useful as well: Balancing, Responsive, Lead-directing, Negative, Support, DSI, Penalty, and various types of redoubles.

Well, what the heck, let's talk about **balancing doubles** while we are at it. You have to be in the *balancing seat* to make a *balancing double*. Balancing?? All that means is that your LHO has bid, followed by two passes, and if you pass, the bidding is finished. If you decide to bid in the balancing seat, you don't need as many points to do so!

For example, you can employ a takeout double with as few as 8 points *in the balancing seat*, e.g. 1H – P – P – X (don't forget to sneer at your opponents).

After your partner responds to your takeout double, it's best to pass unless you have a very strong hand as in some of the examples previously mentioned.

Let's try some hands now and have _____!!!