

## DOUBLES – Session 3

By Baloney Bill

Have you ever employed a **penalty double**? It's so fun (when it works), plus you can sneer at your opponent when you put out the double card.

If you double your opponents and set their contract, you receive many more points than if you failed to double. Let's not worry about counting points in this lesson, ok? If you double and your opponents make their contract, you will LOSE many more points than you would have lost had you simply passed. So, be careful when you decide to employ a penalty double.

### Penalty doubles:

- Any double of an opponent's bid in excess of 3 spades is for penalty, unless opponent opens a suit at the 4+ level.
- If you and your partner have agreed upon a suit at any level, and opponent interferes (e.g. 1H – P – 2H – 2S – X), that X is a penalty double. In this case, opening bidder thinks that she can set 2S, and make more points that way than competing to 3H.
- Anytime an opponent overcalls partner's opening preempts, your double is for penalty (e.g. 3H – 3S – X).
- Here's Mel Colchimaro's rule: Add the level of your opponents' contract to the number of opponents' trump you hold; if it adds up to 9+, then lay down your double card!!
  - E.g. Opponents have bid 4 spades; you possess 5 spades, so double!

### So... a penalty double is used when:

- Opponents' contract seems too high;
- If the opponents have stolen your bid and you will likely get set if you continue bidding, but think you can set them;
- If you have length in opponents' suit and even an honor or two;
- Partner has bid, and you think your combined values can set your opponents; *if partner has not bid, your double is for takeout, not penalty.*
- Partner has opened, partner's LHO has overcalled 1NT, and you double. This is a **penalty double, even though most low-level doubles are for takeout.**
- This example is a little more advanced, but what the heck. Partner opens 1S, her LHO doubles, and you redouble (showing 10+ pts, but poor support for partner's spades). Opp's partner bids 2C, which your partner doubles. That's a **penalty double!**

OK, a little quiz... what kind of double?

1. 1H – 1NT – X ( Your partner opens 1H, opp overcalls 1NT and you double) \_\_\_\_\_
2. 2S – 3D – X \_\_\_\_\_
3. 1C – X \_\_\_\_\_
4. 1D – 1S – X \_\_\_\_\_
5. 1D – 2S – X \_\_\_\_\_
6. 3H – 3S – X \_\_\_\_\_
7. 1D – P – 2D – 2S – X \_\_\_\_\_