

points counted for honors, chicane, slam, or under tricks, which are scored above the line, and which count exactly as in bridge.

Every hand is played out, and any points in excess of the thirty points necessary for the game are counted, just as in bridge.

When the declarer fulfills his contract, each trick above six counts two points in spades, four in clubs, six in diamonds, eight in hearts, and twelve in no trumps.

At the end of the rubber, the total scores for tricks, under tricks, honors, chicane, and slam obtained by each side are added up, two hundred and fifty points are added to the score of the winners of the rubber, and the difference between the two scores is the number of points won, or lost, by the winners of the rubber.

The penalty for each revoke is as follows:

The adversaries add one hundred and fifty points to their score above the line, in addition to any liability which the revoking player may have incurred for failure to fulfill his contract.

When either of the adversaries revoke, the declarer may add one hundred and fifty points to his score above the line, or may take three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own. Such tricks taken, as penalty, may assist the declarer to fulfill his contract, but they do not entitle him to score any bonus above the line, in the case of the declaration having been doubled or redoubled.

Before I go into the matter of the declarations any more deeply, I want to add a few hints to beginners at auction; hints, I trust, which will be helpful, and which will save my readers a considerable sum of money if only they will keep them constantly in mind.

HINTS TO BEGINNERS.

(1.) Keep the score; declare to the score; double to the score; play to the score.

(2.) At game all, twenty-four all, or in any similar situation, it is obviously wise to try hard to win the rubber; and, even if you have but faint hopes of winning the hand, to bid rather high and risk the loss of a trick or two, in the hopes of going out on the next deal, or of forcing your adversaries to overbid their hands; but remember that you may be doubled, and that your penalties for not fulfilling your contract may mount up to two or three hundred, or as much as you will win on the rubber; presuming, of course, that on the next hand you will have the luck to win it.

(3.) Third hand should always try to take his partner out of a spade declaration unless he has an absolutely worthless hand.

(4.) Do not insist upon calling two, let us say, hearts—when you have a good heart suit—simply because your adversary has called one heart. It is often wiser, in such a case, not to overbid, but simply to double, in case that you have a hand that you can double any suit that he switches to.

(5.) Do not bluff your adversaries too much, with a view to making them overbid their hands. The bluff may work, and they may leave you with the make, and hoist you by your own petard.

(6.) Remember that it is wise to bid your full strength at first.

(7.) Before leading, try hard to remember the various declarations that have been made, and to draw logical inferences from them.

(8.) When your own hand is difficult to open, lead from the suit in which your partner may have bid before being overbid. This is often particularly wise advice in opening a no trumper.

(9.) A good declarer is better for a partner than a brilliant player.

(10.) The best first declaration for the dealer is "one no trump"—provided, of course, that his hand justifies such a call.

(11.) Remember that in auction, much more than in bridge, you must bank more on your aces and kings than you must on your numerical strength in a suit.

(12.) Doubling, let us say, a bid of three hearts, is very different from doubling a bid of one heart. It may not take a very powerful hand to prevent the declarer from making seven tricks, while it would prevent his making nine. Try always to egg your adversaries along to a rash promise, and then pounce on them.

(13.) If your penalties are a good deal higher than your opponents' total score, let them go out, rather than risk a heavy penalty against you. Simply pocket the difference in your favor and commence another rubber.

(14.) Try to figure out who is to be the leader. This matter of "who leads" makes a vast difference in many hands at auction.

(15.) As the penalty is always fifty points a trick, no matter what the trump suit may be, it is easy to see that the bidder is continually laying odds on himself, because the penalty is always greater than the reward.

We come now to the matter of declarations, the most important part of auction, for, on it, depends a half of the skill of the best players. Naturally, the subject is a complicated one, and one about which four or five articles might easily be written, but as my space is limited, I must content myself with a dozen or so observations on the matter, leaving my readers to learn more of the matter from bitter and costly experience.

(1.) Bidding is often done, not with a view to fulfilling the bid, but to give information to one's partner, and help him in making an overbid.

(2.) Remember that only on your own, or your partner's, declaration can you score toward game. The game cannot be won unless your side is the maker of the final trump.

(3.) The right to play the dummy is worth, to a really good player, about one trick in every hand.

(4.) Be careful not to call no trumps, after an adversary has made a generous bid in any particular suit, unless you can stop that suit, as it is certain to be led in case your no trump make is allowed to stand.

(5.) Don't cling to your bridge prejudice against declaring diamonds. The player must push his score along, in auction, by any and every means that is certain.

(6.) Trump honors in auction are not so important as in bridge, except as trick winners, because of the enormous penalty points and the increased points, two hundred and fifty, for the rubber.

(7.) "One spade" is usually a tentative call, sparring for wind, as it were.

(8.) Don't overbid your adversaries any more than is necessary, unless you want to shut out a dangerous bid. Remember the penalties!

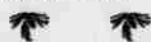
(9.) The second bidder should not double an original, or first, bid. It alarms the dealer's partner and the original bidder, and tends to make him lie low out of the range of the zone of peril.

(10.) When your partner has declared a suit in a hand which is being played as a no trumper, lead him the top of that suit, unless you have a particularly strong suit of your own.

(11.) Never take your opponents "out of" a black suit call unless you see a reasonably good chance of making the game in a red suit.

(12.) The man who declares a suit because he happens to hold five or six small cards in it is a very dangerous partner, indeed, and should be shunned as carefully as the upas tree.

(13.) Above everything, remember that the possible loss entailed by failure at no trumps is precisely the same as the possible loss entailed by failure at spades—not one point more, either above or below the line. Mr. W. Dalton, the well-known English writer on bridge, has wisely said: "If I were to take on the job of giving lessons in auction bridge, this would be the first point which I should endeavor to impress upon the minds of my pupils, and to impress so strongly that they would never lose sight of it. It is the main turning point of the whole game, that whereas the possible gain varies according to the value of the declaration, the possible loss remains absolutely the same."



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