

## SUPPORT DOUBLES

Barbara, along with co-author, David Bird, are working on book # 27. It is a sequel to Practice makes Perfect and this time, it is based on 25 MORE Bridge Conventions You Should Know. The book comes out this Fall.

Learn all about Support Doubles from the segment in the new book.

To bid accurately, particularly in competitive auctions, it is essential to know how many trumps will be at your disposal. Several bidding innovations aim in this direction. Here is an example of the Support Double:

LHO means Left Hand Opponent. RHO means Right hand Opponent.

	You	LHO	Partner	RHO
K3				
A104				
43	1C	Pass	1H	1S
AQ10643	DbI			

The support double is ONLY made by opener bidder at his first opportunity to make a rebid.

Your Support Double shows exactly three hearts. It says nothing about your overall strength. Partner will initially assume that your hand is minimum but you can bid strongly thereafter when you have extra points.

If instead you were to raise directly to 2H (or 3H or 4H), you would promise 4-card support, showing your strength at the same time. A rebid of 2C would show extra club length but deny three hearts. The opportunity for a Support Double arises when your RHO bids 2H or lower so there is still space for you to give a single raise of partner's suit.

	You	LHO	Partner	RHO
Q852	A4			
K1083	Q75		1D	Pass
QJ3	A10942	1H	2C	DbI
J4	K86	2D		Pass

You rebid 2D, warning partner that there is only a 4-3 fit in hearts.

	You	LHO	Partner	RHO
A87	KQ1042			
KQ963	82			
AJ9	KQ7	1H	Pass	1S
63	J94	DbI	Pass	3S
		4S		Pass

You show your 3-card spade support and partner judges he is worth a game-try.

You accept the offer and a good game is reached.

If RHO interferes with a Double, instead of a suit, you show a 3-card fit with a Support Redouble.

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
1H	Pass	1S	DbI
ReDbI			

Here is a good hand. Practice your declarer play on this one!

				1092	
				Q108	
				AK6	
				A753	
AJ4					8763
3					62
QJ10974					8532
K104					QJ9
				KQ5	
N	E	S	W	AKJ9754	
1C	P	1H	2D	---	
DbI	P	6H	All pass	862	

The Bidding: North uses a Support Double to show his 3-card heart support. West is likely to hold some top diamond honors and South likes the chance that his partner's values will be where they need to be, rather than in diamonds. Not expecting to win any bidding prizes, he leaps spectacularly to 6H.

The Play: West leads the D Q and declarer is surprised to see that more than half of North's points are in diamonds. How would you play the slam?

West's overcall makes him the favourite to hold the S A, but East might well hold the S J. However, there is a second chance lurking in the diagram: clubs may break 3-3! You win the diamond lead and play dummy's other top diamond, discarding two clubs from your hand.

You cash the ace of clubs and ruff a club with a high trump. You return to dummy in trumps and ruff another club in your hand. When the 3-3 break comes to light, the position of the adverse spade honors becomes irrelevant. After drawing trumps, you discard the S 5 on the 13th club and concede a spade trick to the ace. If clubs had not broken 3-3, you would have taken the best remaining chance, finessing East for the S J.

Always try to not put all your eggs in one basket. Have a back-up plan if at all possible.

## DISCARDING

by Ron Klinger

When declarer is playing a long suit and you as a defender are forced to discard, this can be a challenge. If you discard the wrong thing, declarer may now make her contract or make these valuable overtricks. How can you know what on earth to discard? Here are a few guidelines.

### 1. Keep Parity (equal length) with Dummy

If dummy holds 4 cards in a suit & you also have 4 cards in that suit, keep the same length as dummy if you can beat one of dummy's cards.

e.g Dummy

AKQ4

J108 (partner)

7532 (you)

96 (declarer)

South has 3 sure tricks in dummy. Look what happens if you, East, discard one of your cards in this suit. Declarer's 4 now becomes a trick. You cannot afford to pitch one of these cards. Find something else to discard.

However, if dummy (above) had AKQ9, East could now throw one of her cards in this suit as even the 7 cannot ever win a trick.

Dummy  
KJ82

Q10 Partner

9743 You

Declarer  
A65

South has 3 tricks in this suit because the Q falls on the second round of the suit. If East discards a card, declarer can score 4 tricks.

Dummy

D K8742

D J10

D Q953

D A6

Declarer

Declarer can set up one extra trick by playing Ace, King, trump a D in his hand...cross to dummy on another suit and then ruff another D. If there is now still another entry available in dummy, declarer can now throw away a loser on the fifth D in dummy.

If East were to discard one of her D's, then South will need one less entry to dummy to establish this D suit.

## 2. Keep parity with declarer

If the bidding has revealed that declarer has a specific 4 cards or 5 card suit, do not discard from that suit if you also hold 4 cards in that suit, unless declarer is discarding that suit.

e.g Dummy  
62

J98

10743

AKQ5  
Declarer

South has bid this suit and has three tricks. If East discards a card, South has four winners.

3. Try to Keep at least one Card in Partner's suit so that you can return partner's lead

If you are likely to obtain the lead only once, try to keep at least one card in partner's suit. However, if it is highly unlikely that you will obtain the lead at all, it is better to discard all your cards in partner's suit so that partner will know how many declarer now has. Also, this way you will be able to keep parity with dummy or declarer in other suits, because you are able to discard partner's suit.

4. If none of the above apply, watch declarer's discards. You can usually afford to throw the same suit that declarer is discarding.

5. If declarer could have ruffed a suit in dummy but fails to do so and pulls all the trumps, then you might as well discard the suit that declarer could have ruffed in dummy. Declarer could have losers in that suit. You are playing against a bridge player, not someone who does not know what they are doing.

6. Make a mental note when declarer shows out of a suit. You can afford to discard that suit, unless you now need to keep parity with dummy.

Ed. Note: When discarding, always keep a bodyguard for your honour cards, as a defender. If you have Kxx, you can afford to discard one of this suit but keep one card to protect your King from being eaten by the Ace. A Queen needs two bodyguards and a Jack needs three. An Ace needs no bodyguards.

## THINKING AT BRIDGE - by Eddie Kantar

				North					
				7				S.	
				AKJ875				H.	
				D. Q762					
				C. K8					
West								East	
S. AKQJ109								S. 632	
H. 942								H. Q6	
D. K54								D. A93	
C. A								C Q10743	
W	N	E	S	South				S.	
1S	2H	2S	P	854					
4S	All pass			H. 103					
				D. J108					
				C. J9652					

**Opening lead: H Ace**

**Bidding Commentary:** Normal. East does not count 2 HCP for that HQ after North's vulnerable two level overcall. It's unlikely to be worth the cardboard it's printed on.

**Defensive Commentary:** South starts a high-low with the H10 and North continues with the king and jack.

**Play Commentary:** With a heart overruff impending, West does best to discard a diamond from dummy, a sure loser in any event. The intention is to ruff a third diamond in dummy after drawing two rounds of trump. (See next paragraph)

**Defensive Commentary:** When South sees what West is up to, he can frustrate West by also discarding a diamond at trick 3. Now West cannot trump a diamond as South can overtrump. Down one.

Stray jacks and queens in suits that have been bid by the opponents are unlikely to be worth much. Count them at your own risk. However, if partner bids notrump after the opponents have bid a suit, jacks and queens in their suit(s) retain their value.

When faced with a certain dummy overruff, consider the possibility of discarding a loser from dummy in a second suit where declarer also has a loser. The idea is to ruff that loser later. Ed. note: This is called a Loser on a Loser.