

QUACKS. EVALUATE YOUR HAND

Which would you prefer:

QJxx

Xxx

QJx

KJx

Partner opens 1S

This hand has Queens and Jacks. Quacks. 10 HCP. You bid 3S (or 3D if you are playing Bergen) RELUCTANTLY but you are not happy. This hand is FLAT. No shape. 4-3-3-3 hands are flawed. Declarer cannot ruff in dummy easily.

A bad 10 points.

KJxx

X

Axxx

Xxxx

Partner opens 1S on this hand.

This hand has only 8 HCP but is a better hand than the first that has 10 HCP. This one has shape . Downgrade the first one to 9 pts and upgrade the second one to 11 points (dummy points).

IF I DON'T MAKE THE CONTRACT, I SHOULDN'T HAVE BID IT **by Larry Cohen**

Common belief: If a contract goes down, you shouldn't bid it.

Verdict: False. We don't bid contracts we expect to make every time.

Another question I get asked frequently: "How do we stay out of 4?" You had 30 high card points, a 9-card fit--you did well to stay out of slam! Sometimes good games will go down because of bad luck: two finesses offside, a bad split somewhere, a surprising ruff.

Sometimes, you'll have the strength for game and it will go down. Was there anything that could be done? No.

One thing that's important to note is whether you are in a pushy game (one that was only bid at a handful of tables) or a game that my grandmother would bid. If you bid a lot of pushy games and they go down, then it's time to consider whether to adjust your style or evaluation. If you bid one of those games that everyone in the room is in and it goes down, then that's just normal.

What percent of the time should you go down in a freely bid game or slam? This depends a little on the form of scoring. You want to bid games more at imps (teams). That said, going down on about 30% of your bid games at matchpoints (regular club games) is normal.

Just as with that misconception, you can avoid getting down on yourself by looking to see the results of other tables in play. Sometimes you'll get depressed because everyone else made the contract (must have been the excellent defense against you), but frequently you'll see others with the same result.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE OPPONENTS GET INTO YOUR AUCTION

Your partner opens with 1D and you are just about to respond when your RHO (Right Hand Opponent) gets into the act. The nerve !

You have this hand.

S 762
H Q1063
D Q8
C KQJ10

IF your RHO bids

Pass

Double

1H

1S

2C

1NT

Then You Bid

1H

Redouble: shows 10 or more HCP

1NT

Double: A Negative Double

Pass. This is a trap pass and you hope that partner will make a reopening takeout double and then you will pass, converting her takeout double to a penalty double.

Double. This is a PENALTY double. Partner opened the bidding. She has 13 points. You have 10 HCP. Your side has more than their side. Teach them respect. They will not make 1NT and you will collect a nice plus.

CHECKBACK STAYMAN **by Barbara Seagram**

Checkback Stayman is a nifty convention which is used most commonly after an opening bid of one of a minor and then a one of a major response and then the opening bidder jumps to 2 NT.

1 D - 1H
2 NT - 3C by responder is now Checkback Stayman

Why are we doing this??

The opening bidder may also have a four card other major suit OR may have 3 card support for the responder's 5 card major.

Let's have a look at above auction again:

1 D - 1H
2 NT - 3C

Responses to 3C are as follows:

3D says: I do not have 3 card support for your major suit (H) nor do I have 4 cards in the other major .

3H says: I have 3 card support for your H suit but I do NOT have 4 spades.

3S says: I have a 4 card S suit but do not have 3 card support for your H suit.

3 NT says: I have both 3 card support for H and also a four card S suit.

Now let's check out the other major suit situation:

1D - 1S
2NT - 3C

Responses to 3C are as follows:

3D says: I do not have 3 card support for your major suit (S)nor do I have 4 cards in the other major (H)

3S says: I have 3 card support for your S suit but I do NOT have 4 hearts.

3H says: I have a 4 card H suit but do not have 3 card support for your S suit.

3 NT says: I have both 3 card support for S and also a four card H suit.

The only time you would ever use this convention is if you have 4-4 in the majors or you have 4-5 in the majors or you have one five card major.

The responder now places the contract, equipped with more information about opener's hand.

Let's look at two situations in which it would be useful to be playing Checkback Stayman:

North

S K543
H KQ87
D Q76
C 42

South

S AQ76
H J106
D AK83
C A5

South opens

S	N
1D	1H
2NT	3C * (Checkback Stayman)
3NT	4S

Note that if NS was not playing Checkback Stayman, North would have now bid 3NT after South's jump to 2 NT. If the opening lead was a C , then South would never be able to make 3NT. He would have to drive out the AH and then EW would be able to cash 4C tricks quickly. 4S is an easy contract.

Let's look at one more example:

S AQ742
H 32
D 765
C Q43

S K65
H AQ7
D Q32
C AKJ2

S	N
1C	1S
2NT	3C * (Checkback Stayman)
3S	4S

North can easily make 4S but 3NT by South is doomed on a D opening lead by West.

Checkback Stayman is alertable as are all the responses. You need to have enough points to be in game in order to use this convention.

We never want to miss an 8 card major suit fit. Remember that it is always much safer to play the hand in a major suit contract than in No trumps.