

BUSSELTON BRIDGE CLUB
TACTICS FOR TEAM COMPETITIONS

1. OVERVIEW.

When we play our regular club sessions we are scored for our performance using the Matchpoint Scoring System.

When we play in a teams event we are normally scored using the INTERNATIONAL MATCHPOINT Scoring System. (IMPs)

The two different scoring systems require different tactics in bidding and playing your hand.

We will be using IMP scoring for the Bob Brierley teams event.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPETITION.

When you play in a team in Bridge, there are two partnerships in the team. If you are playing N/S then you will play the boards against the E/W pair of the opposition teams, whilst your E/W teammates will be playing the same boards against the N/S pair of the opposition teams.

3. SCORING

The objective is for your team to score more points on each board than the opposition. Your team points are added together and compared against your opponents' team points. The difference in points between the two teams is converted to IMP's, (see the conversion table below).

When playing IMP's, hands with a big swing (i.e. a large difference in points) count much more than hands with a small swing.

EXAMPLE 1 :

As N/S you bid and make 2S scoring 110pts, at the other table where your teammates are playing, your E/W teammates bid and make 3D scoring 110 pts.

Your team score is 220 pts and the opposition team score is 0pts, the difference in points is 220 which converts to 6 IMPs to your team.

EXAMPLE 2 :

As N/S you bid and make 2S scoring 110pts, at the other table where your teammates are playing, your N/S Opposition bid 2S and make an extra trick scoring 140 pts.

Your team NET score is -30 pts (110-140) which converts to 1 IMP to the opposition team.

| Diff. in Pts. | IMPs | Diff. in Pts. | IMPs | Diff. in Pts. | IMPs | Diff. in Pts. | IMPs |
|---------------|------|---------------|------|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| 20 - 40 | 1 | 270 - 310 | 7 | 750 - 890 | 13 | 2000 - 2240 | 19 |
| 50 - 80 | 2 | 320 - 360 | 8 | 900 - 1090 | 14 | 2250 - 2490 | 20 |
| 90 - 120 | 3 | 370 - 420 | 9 | 1100 - 1290 | 15 | 2500 - 2990 | 21 |
| 130 - 160 | 4 | 430 - 490 | 10 | 1300 - 1490 | 16 | 3000 - 3490 | 22 |
| 170 - 210 | 5 | 500 - 590 | 11 | 1500 - 1740 | 17 | 3500 - 3990 | 23 |
| 220 - 260 | 6 | 600 - 740 | 12 | 1750 - 1990 | 18 | 4000 and up | 24 |

4. TEAM TACTICS

When playing IMP's, hands with a big swing (i.e. a large difference in points) count much more than hands with a small swing.

BIDDING GAME.

Be conservative in bidding Non Vulnerable games and adventurous when bidding vulnerable games.

Always note the Vulnerability of your side and the opponent's before starting bidding. If you are Not Vulnerable you can make more daring bids to push your opponents over their limit, especially if they are vulnerable.

Bid game whenever reasonable, especially when Vulnerable. Bidding and making game when the opposing pair does not bid, but makes game, is worth 10 IMPs vulnerable, but going down in game when your opponents make a partscore only costs 5 IMPs.

Non-vulnerable games should be bid on 50% chance of making. Vulnerable games should be bid on as little as 37% chance of making.

If you don't bid game but game was on, with a **non-vulnerable** game the difference is only 6 IMPs (400-150); or (420-170) = 250, but the difference between bidding a **vulnerable** game and not bidding it is 10 IMPs (600-150); or (620-170) = 450

BIDDING PART-SCORE.

Do not sell out too cheaply. Try to get any plus score up to the 3 level. Only compete at the 3 level when you are very shapely.

BIDDING SLAM.

Non-vulnerable and Vulnerable Slams should be bid on a 50/50 chance. If the Slam relies on a finesse (50% chance) then bid it.

Before bidding a Grand Slam, take into account the calibre of the opponents at the other table where your team mates are playing. It is often the case where a good partnership has gone down one is a grand slam, only to find that the opposition has settled for a small slam.

If you have a BETTER than 50/50 chance of making a slam, go for it, otherwise go for game, as going one down in a slam when there is a sure game will be a big swing.

Choose a safe small slam rather than a risky grand slam. Making Grand slam instead of a small slam is worth 10 IMPs, but going down when the other team makes a small slam is 14 IMPs.

GENERAL BIDDING.

Aim to play in the safest contract, even if it's a minor, rather than go down in no trumps.

Don't worry about getting the 10 extra points for being in NT instead of a major suit, since the difference is only 1 IMP.

Initial Overcalls at the 2 level must be sound, especially when vulnerable.

PENALTY DOUBLES

Only DOUBLE if the opponents have stolen your contract, by sacrificing at the game level with inferior cards.

Rarely double your opponents into game. It is too costly.

SACRIFICING.

A SACRIFICE should only be made if you are not vulnerable, and they would make game. A non-vulnerable sacrifice against a vulnerable contract is usually worthwhile, but against a non-vulnerable contract is at best a 50% chance.

A vulnerable sacrifice against either a vulnerable or non-vulnerable contract is rarely worthwhile.

When sacrificing against slams be certain that the slam would have made and that your team mates will bid slam.

PLAYING.

As Declarer it is vital to make your contract. Do not take risks which might make your contract fail, for the sake of an overtrick, as one trick will not make any difference when scoring in IMPs, the important thing is to make your contract every time you play a hand.

Don't worry too much about making overtricks, taking two extra tricks is only worth 1 IMP.

Concentrate on making your contract. If you go down 1 in a 4 Spade contract and the opposing pair (playing against your other team members) make their contract, that is a 10 IMP swing.

As Defenders it is vital to defeat the contract. Undertricks are relatively unimportant, except when the opposition sacrifices against a vulnerable game, in which case as many undertricks as possible are needed to get back the score you would have got bidding and making a vulnerable game.

5. DOS AND DON'TS

- DO - Bid games if they have a chance of making, particularly if you are vulnerable.
- DO - Bid slams that have a chance of making
- DO - Take risks to make your contract
- DO - Take risks to defeat a contract
- DO - Aim for the safest slam, game or part score
- DO - Be careful when sacrificing – they are bidding thin games and may not make their contract anyway plus if they double you it could be expensive
- DO - Compete to the level of the fit
- DO – Take care dealing with pre-empt – bad breaks are likely, they may go off – remember you are aiming for a positive score.
- DON'T - Double your opponents into game and give them a 'free' game bonus!
- DON'T - Make risky overcalls, especially when vulnerable – a score of -800 is a disaster!
- DON'T - Sacrifice against vulnerable games – your opponents are bidding thin games so will often go off giving you a positive score anyway.