

Chapter 1

Overview

History

The card game of Bridge traces its roots to Whist, which was popular in Europe as early as the 1500s. Card play itself goes back even farther, to the 10th century in China. Decks of cards containing kings, queens, and jacks came to Europe from the Muslim world in the late 1300s. Suits such as spades, hearts, etc. were added by the French about a century or so later. Bridge whist evolved in the 1800s, and this allowed the dealer to choose the trump suit or permit his partner to do so. The concept of having no trump suit was added at this time. Dealer's partner placed his hand on the table for dealer to play, thus becoming "Dummy." All of this was in place by 1886.

Bridge Whist morphed into Auction Bridge around 1904, when the idea of having a competitive auction to decide the contract and the declarer was added. The object of the game was still to take as many tricks as possible, but penalties were added for failure to make the contract. Game and slam bonuses could be earned even if they were not bid. Thus, buying the auction at the lowest level possible was a good idea.

On a cruise through the Panama Canal in 1925 Harold Stirling Vanderbilt set forth the rules for the modern game of Contract Bridge, borrowing concepts from a French version of the game. Vanderbilt's version mandated that only tricks that a side agreed to take during the auction count toward game and slam

bonuses. Additional tricks which were not part of the contract count only their normal value. The “Commodore” also added the vulnerability component and made some improvements to the scoring system. As a result of these changes contract bridge was popularized to the extent that it swept the country, and the word “Bridge” became synonymous with the contract rather than auction version. From high society to steelworkers to actors and grips, virtually everyone played bridge. Some even played it well. Names you might recognize would include President Dwight Eisenhower, Playboy Enterprises founder Hugh Hefner, comedian George Burns, actors Omar Sharif and Don Adams (TV's original Maxwell Smart), and basketball star Wilt Chamberlain.

There are two main types of contract bridge in play today among “We few, we happy few” who still play the game. The first type is duplicate bridge which is played for masterpoints in clubs and in tournaments. This includes both matchpoint and IMP games for pairs and teams. The second is rubber bridge which includes old style “above/below the line” two game rubbers, and the newer, faster form where players play four deals and change partners. Of the 4-deal type, there are Chicago and Cavendish styles. Of all of these, Simplicity Bridge will emphasize the Cavendish 4-deal method.

Mechanics

Bridge is a partnership-based card game for four players. The purpose of the game is for two players (partners) to work together to beat the other two players (the other pair, or pair of partners). By doing so, the winning pair is

rewarded with something, which could be anything from the other pair's money to masterpoints to a trophy to just the pure joy of knowing you beat the pants off the other guys. (I suppose that could actually happen in strip bridge, but someone would have to invent that version.)

The best way to show you this game is to walk you through it. We will use the Cavendish 4-deal style of Contract Bridge. The other types are somewhat similar and can be learned quickly if necessary. You will need three other people, a square table about three feet per side (but we are not picky about this, any surface around which four people can comfortably sit with enough room for the cards to be played will do). You will need four chairs, at least one but preferably two decks of regular playing cards, some paper and pencils for keeping score, and your favorite beverages. If you will be playing outside in the wind you will need something to keep the cards on the table from blowing away. A polished rock will do nicely.

Take the jokers etc. out of the deck of cards, leaving 52 cards of four suits (ranked from highest to lowest spades (black, pointy), hearts (red, rounded), diamonds (red, pointy), and clubs (black, rounded "puppy paws"). If you forget note that they are in alphabetical order, C being lower than D, etc.) with each suit having 13 cards (in order from highest ranking to lowest: ace, king, queen, jack (also called knave), 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. Mix the cards face down. Each player pull out (draw) a card. The person drawing the highest ranking card will be the dealer. Dealer chooses a seat and sits. The person with the second highest card sits opposite the dealer and is his partner. The other two players sit

in the two remaining seats, hopefully not taking an hour to figure out who sits where. They are partners for this round of four deals. In the event of a tie, say two aces, the higher ranking suit wins (the ace of spades beats the ace of hearts, etc.)

Now you are ready to play bridge. In our form, you will play four deals or hands with your partner, then switch, play four deals, switch one last time, then play four deals. That completes a round called a "Chukker" which is a term we borrowed from Polo. If there is time, you will play one more chukker.

Completion of two chukkers is a Rubber. At the conclusion of a rubber everyone settles up (losers pay winners) and new people can enter the game by selecting cards like you did when you started the chukker. This is known as "Cutting In."

So let's start our chukker. Dealer, pick up a deck of cards and mix 'em up really good, face down (shuffle). When you are satisfied that they are mixed (about 5-7 riffles is sufficient) present the deck face down to the player on your right to cut. That player takes a portion of the deck, from 1/4 to 3/4 off the top and places it on the table between you and the remaining portion of the deck. You then reach for the remaining portion and cover the portion closest to you, thus completing the cut. If it is always done this way there is no danger of the deck being put back to its original pre-cut condition. Now begin to give each person a card from the top, beginning with the player on your left and continuing to distribute (deal) the cards clockwise until all 52 cards are distributed. If you have done this correctly you should get the last card and everyone should have 13 cards.

[NOTE: In games with experienced players there are two decks at the table, while the dealer is shuffling and dealing the live deck, the dealer's partner is shuffling but NOT dealing the deck used in the preceding hand. Instead, when the second deck is shuffled the dealer's partner places the deck on the table to his right, giving the deck a slight cut (putting a top portion at about a 45 degree angle from the rest of the deck). If you are in a windy environment place "the rock" on top of this deck to secure it. This deck is now ready for the next dealer. In the event players forget whose deal it is, just look to see where the Ready Deck is positioned. It will be on the next dealer's left, shuffled and ready to be presented to the player on the new dealer's right for a cut.]

OK, now everyone should have 13 cards.

Everyone sort your cards into suits so you can follow suit easier. It doesn't matter which suit is where, except that it may be easier for you to alternate red and black colors. Now we are ready to go. The person to the dealer's left makes the first play of a card (leads out, or leads). Choose any card and put it face up on the table. Good cards to lead are:

Top of a sequence (the king from KQJ)

4th one down from your longest decent suit (the 7 from KJ8742)

Second card in a broken sequence (the queen from AQJ10)

Now the next person to the left of the opening leader places his cards face up on the table so everyone can see them. This person will not have anything to do but watch (or maybe go get everyone a beer) for the rest of the hand. His official title is "The Dummy" and the hand he places down is the "Dummy" hand

as well. The hand is placed in front of the player with the suits in descending order, each suit lined up next to another and pointed towards dummy's partner, who is called the "Declarer" and will play both his cards and the dummy's cards. To save space, cards in each row partially cover one another with the highest ranking card and all other cards covering until the lowest ranking card is completely exposed. It will look something like this, but shmushed together:

Hearts	Spades	Diamonds	Clubs
A	8	K	4
J	7	J	3
9	4	8	
6		3	

If there were a trump suit it would be placed on the dummy's right hand side, and from declarer's perspective across the table it would be on his left. Since we will play this deal without a trump suit (notrump) it doesn't matter, but it is wise once again to lay it out red-black-red- black or black-red-black-red just to keep things from getting too confusing. (Yeah, like THAT could happen.)

Now that dummy is on the table declarer plays one of dummy's cards to what will be this collection of a card from every player, four total, constituting what we call one "Trick." Which card should declarer play to this trick from dummy's hand? Declarer play is an art, perfected over a lifetime, but it starts with some simple rules.

Follow suit if you can. If you can't follow suit then throw away (Discard) a card you think won't have any trick taking value in this hand. High cards win

tricks. Long suit cards win tricks. The lead must come from the hand which wins the trick, so if you win the trick in dummy you must lead to the next trick from dummy. It is generally good to play high cards from the short side first, so that you don't get caught in the wrong hand and strand good cards in the other hand. For example, suppose it looks like this.

Dummy's hand has a suit containing AK4 and in your hand are the QJT9876532 of that suit. If you play the 4 first and then the ace and king from dummy you will strand seven potential winners in your hand, being unable to play them unless you have a side-suit entry to your hand. So get in the habit of playing the ace, then the king, and having the 4 as a way to get to the other good cards. We call this transportation. High cards in other suits can also be transportation. Always pay attention.

To play a card from dummy, Declarer reaches across the table and grabs it, then puts it face up in the middle of the table next to the card played by the person who made the opening lead. Now the person to the declarer's right plays a card, following suit if possible. Which card should that person play? He has a partner. The card he plays depends on the card played by his partner and the one played from the dummy. It's usually wrong to play an ace on your partner's king. It's usually wrong to play a low card if you can beat the card played from the dummy hand and your partner's card can't beat it. Beyond that, fake it for now. We'll get into better and best plays later when we cover card play technique.

There should be three cards face up in the center of the table. It's declarer's turn to play now. If he can win the trick he might choose to do so. If not, follow suit. At any rate, he puts the fourth card in the center of the table, face up. This set of four cards constitutes one trick, in this case the first trick. Whoever contributed the highest card wins the trick, picks it up like it's a mini-deck and places it face down on the table in front of him. Once a trick has been collected in this fashion players can't look at the cards again. So be sure you see all the cards and remember them before the trick is turned.

We have 12 more tricks to go. Play continues with the player who won the trick leading to the next trick. Someone wins, collects that trick, and leads to the next one. As a matter of form, once one defender has collected a trick he collects all of those won by his side so the tricks are all together. Declarer, of course, collects all the tricks won by himself or dummy since he is playing the dummy's hand. It's best to offset each trick in some fashion so that it's easy to count how many tricks you have collected. Most players stand the first trick with the long axis tall, then the next trick laying on it's side, then tall, etc.

Play to this hand ends when all 13 tricks have been completed. The hand is then scored based on how many tricks each side took versus how many the declarer was contracted to take. We'll save scoring for later in this chapter.

That was deal number one of this chukker. Deal number two starts with the player to the left of the person who just dealt giving the cards to that player for a cut, then distributing the cards beginning with the player to his left. The opening lead is made by the person to the new dealer's left, dummy comes down

and off we go. We do this four times, until each person has been dealer. Then we change partners and do it again, another four hands.

To change partners, the original dealer remains seated. Everyone else plays musical chairs, moving one seat to the left. If there is room, courtesy demands that the person to the right of the player who doesn't move walk around the back of that player, facilitating the quick and simple movement by all.

At the end of the second set of four deals we do the musical chairs thing one more time, then play four more hands. When that is done each player will have played four hands with each other player, and we will have completed a full chukker (three mini-chukkers). Start over, play one more chukker, and that completes a "Rubber" of bridge. Now the losers pay the winners at whatever stakes were agreed. At this point players can quit, new players can enter, or the game can end. Whew!

Before you do any further reading, I recommend that you get three other people together and play a chukker. Don't worry about scoring or bidding or any such thing, just play 12 hands of notrump and see what happens. Get a feel for the movement.

Playing with a Trump Suit

The auction component of contract bridge is really fun. Both sides use a coded language to bid for control of the hand. When the smoke clears, one side is victorious, having "bought" the contract, and is considered to be on offense in the hand. The other side defends, trying to prevent the declarer from doing what his side promised to do. When the defenders are successful in that mission, the

contract fails (goes down), and the defenders have successfully defended and “Set” the contract. Defense is a critical part of the game, and an area worthy of extended study – but not at the moment.

During the auction both sides may try to get a specific suit named as trump. If one side can do that, everyone must live with it. Trump suit cards are boss. High trumps beat low trumps, but even the two of trumps beats the ace of any of the other three suits. But there’s a catch – no matter what suit is led (including trumps), everyone must follow suit if they can. Only when you have no more cards in the suit which is led can you play a trump on the trick, and if it’s the highest trump played to that trick you win the trick.

Remember our example hand with three cards to the AK4 in dummy opposite the other ten cards in that suit in declarer’s hand? When playing without trumps that’s an enormous holding, worth ten tricks all by itself. If that suit were named as trump it would be a gonga as well. But what happens if some other suit is named as trump? As long as trumps are available in the opponents’ hands that wonderful long suit can’t be run, because it will be trumped every time it is led. So, the introduction of a trump suit really adds another dimension to the game.

I’d like for you to play another chukker now, this time with a trump suit every hand. In the first hand play with spades as trumps, then play the second hand with hearts as trumps, then diamonds, then clubs. Now you change partners for the second round of four hands, but this time we’ll make it more fun.

You probably noticed that sometimes you liked the trump suit and

sometimes you didn't. If you didn't like the trump suit you and your partner probably took fewer tricks than the other pair against whom you played. Now we'll fix that problem, at least a little bit.

Dealer sorts his cards and looks at them. If he has a long suit (6+ cards) he names it as trump and play commences with the opening lead by the player to dealer's left. Since dealer "Declared" which suit would be trump, he is now called the "Declarer." and his partner is the dummy. If dealer doesn't have a suit he wishes to name as trump, he says "Pass" and his partner must now name the trump suit. In this case, dealer's partner becomes the declarer, dealer's right hand opponent makes the opening lead, and dealer puts down his hand as dummy. (Remember that the trump suit is always on dummy's right.) The hand is then played normally. Go ahead and play four hands like that.

That still may not have been a very satisfying experience, because you or your partner may have named a trump suit that one of you didn't like. Change partners for the last round of this chukker and we'll see if we can't make things a little more fun.

This time dealer sorts his cards, memorizes them, and hands them to his partner. Meanwhile, dealer's partner does the same thing. The other pair will be defenders on this hand and just sort and play their own cards. Now dealer has his partner's hand and his partner has dealer's hand. Each remembers his original 13 cards, with extra attention to suit lengths. Dealer now states which suit he would like to have as trump. If partner agrees he says "Pass" and becomes the dummy. If partner does not agree he states a different trump suit.

That will be the trump suit on this deal, and he will be the declarer. Good partners don't hog the hands, so don't overrule dealer unless you think he's made a bad choice of trumps. Remembering the hand you originally held is critical to this process. Play four deals like this, completing the chukker.

Now play another chukker but this time we'll add one more twist. Dealer and partner can specify a trump suit or say "No Trump." Remember that each of you may speak only once, and Dealer's partner has the right to be the ultimate decision maker. Oh, and try to play first in spades or hearts, if your two hands contain at least eight cards combined in those suits. Next best choice is notrump. Play in diamonds and clubs only if it's clear that notrump isn't a good idea. The reason for this will be evident later on when you learn how to keep score. In this chukker practice remembering cards, not only those you held but those played to each trick. See if you can predict which cards will be the last four played. Also in this chukker emphasize timely play. Don't agonize over every action. If you can't play well at least play fast and get it over with quicker!

The Auction

The defenders have been a patient lot. Dealer and dealer's partner have been having all the fun choosing the trump suit or perhaps no trump at all. Ah, but now the defenders get their revenge, because we are going to fight about who gets to be declarer with which suit as trump. What you need to know here is that the possibilities are ranked in order, with clubs being lowest, then diamonds, then hearts, then spades, and finally no trump as the highest-ranked possibility. Don't worry, now comes the example which will clear things up for you. Cut for

partners and let's start another chukker.

This time, both pairs look at their cards and then exchange them with partner. Did you forget to memorize your cards before you gave them away? Too bad, so sad, once they are gone they are gone. So take a good look at your hand when you sort it, and remember how many cards were in each suit. Also remember if you had some nice big cards like aces and kings in the hand, and if they were in the long suits. Those things are important when choosing a trump suit or notrump.

Dealer gets to act first, and either passes or suggests a trump suit (or notrump). Dealer's left hand opponent (LHO) acts next, and may pass or make another suggestion, but it must be higher-ranked than what dealer suggested. For example, if dealer passed then LHO may start the "Bidding" with clubs. On the other hand, if dealer suggested hearts, then LHO's only options are spades, no trump, or pass. This same restriction applies all around the table, and for now we go around only once. So if dealer suggests notrump the auction is over and dealer becomes declarer. (Please note that it is bad form to do this just to hog the deal.)

The auction ends when someone says notrump or when dealer's right hand opponent has had a chance to bid or pass. It is possible that an auction could look like: "Hearts" - "Pass" - "Pass" - "Spades" and that would complete the bidding, all four players having had their say, and the person who mentioned spades would be declarer and play the hand. In that case the original dealer would be the person on opening lead, and his LHO would be the dummy.

Play a chukker in the manner just described.

I'll bet it still wasn't very satisfying, although certainly it's been the most fun you've had thus far. The problem is that whoever mentions the top suit or notrump controls the deal, right? Ah ha, we have a fix for that, too. Now we can introduce levels of bidding to our auction, and to make things really exciting we'll penalize you if you don't make the bid you contracted to make during the auction. 50 Lashes!!! No? Well, we'll think of something.

There are 13 cards in each suit, and 13 cards dealt to each player. So, even if one player had all 13 spades and named spades as trump, the most tricks he could take are 13, right? So we say that there are 13 tricks available to be had in each deal. I suppose we could bid 13 spades, but whichever pair wins the bidding war will take at least half of the available tricks, so we just assume that the first six tricks are part of the package in a bid. Thus a bid of one of something is really a statement that you expect to take seven tricks - one plus the assumed six, which, by the way, someone way back when gave the name "Book." So, the bidding levels are one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven. If you bid seven you are boasting that you expect to take all thirteen available tricks, which is quite a feat! In fact that even has a name; it's called a Grand Slam, and with the money you win for making it you could eat at Denny's!

In the previous chukker you only had one chance to bid or pass, and you had to make the best of it. This time we start again with the dealer but we continue around and around the table until there has been a bid followed by three passes, which ends the auction. What happens if all four players pass? In

that case the cards are tossed in and the original dealer re-shuffles and re-deals, then things continue normally. Now it's time for a new chukker with a full auction.

Dealer calls out first, and may say "Pass" or make a bid for a contract. Once a bid is made all subsequent bids must be higher. For example, if I make a bid on eBay of \$50 for your car, someone has to bid \$50.01 to outbid me. Same thing in a bridge auction. In bridge, the bids are a combination of a number (of tricks over Book) and a denomination (a suit like spades or notrump). So, dealer might start the proceedings with a cry of "One Club" which we write as 1C in bridge notation. (Being the basically lazy bums we are why use seven strokes when we can use only two?)

Assume the dealer called one heart (1H). Dealer's LHO must bid at least one spade (1S), or pass. Let's assume it was 1S. Now dealer's partner may bid or pass, but if he bids the bid must be higher than 1S. Let's say he bids one notrump (1NT). Now the action is on dealer's RHO (remember, that's right hand opponent) and what to do? There is no suit that outranks notrump. "Oh No, Mr. Bill...Noooooooo" Oh, wait, there is a way to keep bidding. Go up a level. RHO (we also call him "Righty") can bid at the two level in any suit he wants to mention, including the one bid by his partner. Cool, huh? Anyway, this continues until there are three passes or someone bids 7NT. There's also double and redouble, which are calls which say "No Way Jose" but we'll save those until we do the scoring stuff. OK, do your thing, play a chukker like this.

Hey, now we're having fun, yes? Hopefully after a few hands you resisted

the temptation to just keep bidding until no one could bid any more. That's no fun. You want to try to hit a contract you can make but not without working at it. So I'm going to have you play another chukker, but this time I'll give you some guidelines to help you decide what to bid and how high to bid.

If, between your hand and partner's, you have a suit with eight or more cards, you can safely bid to the two level provided that your hands contain appropriate high card values. With a nine card suit (maybe 4 in one hand and 5 in the other, etc.) you are safe at the three level. A ten card suit rates a bid at the four level. Beyond that, you'll need another long suit as well.

Remember that high cards, long suits, and trumps take tricks. The more high cards (aces through tens, called "Honor Cards") held by a partnership the better, especially if the high cards are in the long suits. Some honor cards have special values. These are the ace, king and queen, which are cards which can win

tricks right away, or quickly. For that reason these cards or combinations thereof have "Quick Trick" value. Some folks call these "Defensive Tricks" or "Honor Tricks" but to keep things simple let's agree to call them quick tricks. Here are the quick trick values:

AK = 2

AQ = 1 1/2

A = 1

KQ = 1 (but some experts count it as only 1/2; it's really position dependent)

Kx = 1/2 (this is a king unsupported by an ace or queen in the

same suit, but with an accompanying card so that it is not a singleton)

If you have 2 1/2 quick tricks in the partnership and a suit which, when the two hands are combined, has at least eight cards you can be pretty confident that you'll make a one level contract in that suit, especially if the quick tricks are in the suit you bid. With that quality of suit and 3-4 quick tricks you are pretty safe at the two level, especially if the suit is a bit longer, 9 combined cards. With 4 1/2 to 6 quick tricks and a 9+ card suit you should be safe at the three level. With even more you can go to the four and higher levels and expect to make your contract most of the time. Bid and play another chukker, paying attention to the combined quick trick and long suit counts.

Scoring

Now that you have the basics under control, it's time to put your money where your mouth is. In bridge, we do that by keeping score in points, and assigning a monetary value to a point. Some folks play for a dollar or more a point. Others (like me) prefer lower stakes like a tenth of a cent up to a penny a point. Generally, play very light stakes at first, then graduate to a stake which makes you pay attention to what you are doing. If it hurts a little to lose a rubber, you are at the right level. But, like in poker or any other form of wagering, don't play for more than you can afford to lose, because even though this is a game of skill there are still elements of luck that can bite you.

4-deal bridge uses the duplicate bridge scoring method because it's quick

and easy. Duplicate scoring is based on rubber bridge scoring, so if you are invited to play old style we/they rubber bridge it won't take much to learn that method. But it just takes too long in old rubber bridge to reach the most important part - the part where the winners get PAID! So, here's what you need to know to keep score.

Before we can look at the score it's important to understand the concept of vulnerability. In old rubber bridge, it takes two games made by one side to complete a rubber. Thus, rubbers are either two or three games in length. When one side has won a game, it is "Vulnerable" and the bonuses for making another are increased, as are the penalties for failing to make contracts. Duplicate scoring simply builds-in the vulnerability as a condition of each hand played. In our Simplicity Bridge game, in each set of four deals the vulnerability conditions are:

1st hand - Neither pair is vulnerable

2nd hand - The non-dealing pair is vulnerable, and dealer's side is not

3rd hand - Same thing, non-dealing side vulnerable, dealer's side not

4th hand - Both pairs are vulnerable.

Trick Payouts

Bidding and making a notrump contract: 40 points for the first trick over Book, 30 for each additional trick, regardless of how many tricks you contracted to take.

Bidding and making a spade or heart (called Major Suits by the way) contract: 30 points per trick taken.

Bidding and making a diamond or club (Minor Suit) contract: 20 points per trick taken.

Part Score Bonus

Bidding and making any contract below the Game level (see below): add 50 points to the trick payout.

Game Bonus

Bidding and making a Game, which is 3NT, Four of a Major, or Five of a Minor: Vulnerable -- add 500 points to the trick payout (do not add the part score bonus).

Not Vulnerable - add 300 points to the trick payout, no part score bonus.

Slam Bonus

Bidding and making a Small Slam, which is six of any denomination (12 tricks):

Vulnerable - add 750 points to the combined trick and game bonus payouts

Not Vulnerable - add 500 points to the combined trick and game payouts

Bidding and making a Grand Slam, seven of any denomination (13 tricks):

Vulnerable - add 1500 points to the combined trick and game bonus payouts

Not Vulnerable - add 1000 points to the combined trick and game payouts.

Penalties for Failure (50 Lashes Optional)

Not Vulnerable - lose 50 points for each trick shy of the contract. For example, if you bid four hearts (4H) and take only eight total tricks (fetching only two over book when you contracted to make four over book) then you are said to be "Down Two" and the other side gets to add 100 points (50x2) to their score. By the way, each opponent gets the full 100, just as when you make a contract both you and your partner get to tally up the full amount won. It's a partnership game!

Vulnerable - lose 100 points for each trick short of the contracted number.

Effect of Doubles and Redoubles

Earlier in the chapter we mentioned the concept of double. Although you will see that we sometimes have other meanings for these calls, a "Business Double" of an opponent's bid says: "No Way Jose" and Redouble after a double says: "Yes, Way." In other words, double says: "I don't believe you can make this contract." Redouble says: "Can too!"

If a contract is doubled and succeeds, multiply the trick score by two. If it succeeds redoubled, multiply by four instead. Oh, and tricks bid and taken are now counted at their doubled or redoubled values when determining if the game bonus is available. Hence, where 2S making 2 not doubled would score 110 points, now it scores 120 for the trick total and, since that number exceeds 100 (game level) the game bonus is earned, 300 not vulnerable or 500 vulnerable.

Sounds good, eh? But there's more! You are also entitled to compensation for being insulted by your opponents. After all, did they really believe you would be so foolish as to bid something you couldn't make? Collect an extra 50 points for the insult (not increased by a redouble).

What if you overachieve and make more than your contract? Overtricks doubled non-vulnerable are worth 100 instead of their normal trick value of 20 for minors or 30 for majors and no trump, Vulnerable overtricks are worth 200 each. Redoubled overtricks are worth 200 not vulnerable and 400 vulnerable. What fun!

But there's a dark side, and it occurs when you fall short of your goal. Now you score nothing on your side, but the bad guys (your opponents) each get to score the following for every trick you are short of your bid:

# of Tricks Short	non-Vul Doubled	Vulnerable Doubled	Redoubled
1	100	200	Multiply by 2
2	300	500	Multiply by 2
3	500	800	Multiply by 2
4	800	1100	Multiply by 2
5	1100	1400	Etc.

Honor Bonuses

Duplicate style scoring deletes a fun thing from we/they above/below the line rubber bridge. That is the concept of special bonuses for having combinations of honors. We add them back in Simplicity Bridge. All honor cards must be in the same hand; we don't count combined hands for this. Honor bonuses must be claimed by the claiming side prior to the beginning

of the deal of the next hand or are forever lost. Here are the honor bonuses:

Holding four of the top five cards in the trump suit – add 100 points to your score, even if you fail to make your contract (thus easing the pain a bit)

Holding all of the top five cards in the trump suit (A, K, Q, J, and 10) – add 150 points to your score, even if the contract fails to fetch.

Holding all four aces in a notrump contract – add 150 points to your score, even if the contract failed.

Although rare, it is possible that the defending side could claim honors. This tends to occur after a bidding misunderstanding which lands the declaring side in a 2-1 trump fit or some such nonsense, often after an “obvious” artificial bid is passed by the bidder’s confused partner. If you don’t think it can happen, just wait until we make you bid without exchanging cards with partner! We start that next chapter.

It’s important to note that when playing rubber bridge each player must keep track of his own score, on paper. The reason for this is that you change partners every four hands, and what you lose when playing with Joe you may win back from Joe when Mary is your partner. At the end of a rubber compare your total score to that of the other players. High score gets the big bucks, low score pays everyone, and the two in the middle settle up the rest. After you do it once or twice it will be no problem. Some examples of our scoring method follow.

Bidding and Making 2S at Either Vulnerability	$(30 \times 2) = 60 + 50$ (part score bonus) = 110. Oh, right, we hand Honors (4 of the top 5 trump cards in one hand), so add 100 points to the total = 210.
Bidding and Making 4S non Vulnerable	$(30 \times 4 = 120) + 300$ (game bonus) = 420. Note that the part score bonus is not applied when a game bonus is earned.
Bidding and Making 4H Vulnerable with an Overtrick	$(30 \times 5 = 150) + 500$ (vulnerable game bonus) = 650. Overtricks are those won in excess of those bid.
Bidding and Making 6NT non Vulnerable	$(40 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 190) + 300$ (game) = 490. Now add the 500 small slam bonus. Total 990. Unlike the part score bonus, the game bonus is retained with the slam bonus.
Bidding and Making 7C Vulnerable	$(20 \times 7 = 140) + 500$ (game) + 1500 (grand slam) totals 2140. If this contract had been doubled we would score it $500 + 1500 = 2,000$ (game and slam bonuses) plus 50 for the insult (2,050) and finally double the trick score from 140 to 280 and add that in for a total of 2,330 on this hand!
4S Doubled (4Sx) Making 5, Vulnerable	$(30 \times 4 = 120) \times 2 = 240$. Add 200 for the doubled vulnerable overtrick and the score comes to 440. Now add 500 for the vulnerable game bonus and we are up to 940. Add 50 for the insult, and our total comes to 990. If not doubled we would only score 650 on this deal. Hey partner, did we have honors?

Conclusion

You have the basics. Remember that at this point you are still exchanging cards with partner. That practice will end soon, but for now you have enough information to begin playing this form of bridge. Keep score, and play for something, even a hundredth of a cent a point. With nothing at stake there's no reason to take the game seriously enough to work at getting better at it. Don't violate your religious beliefs or any school or public laws or anything, but find a way to make doing well somehow profitable and doing poorly somehow slightly

painful. And I was just kidding about the lashes!