

PARTY BRIDGE

Contract Bridge in the Home or Club

by

Marvin L. French
mfrench1@san.rr.com
www.marvinfrench.com
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INTRODUCTION

This book is for the social bridge player who wants to hold private bridge parties. Such parties can vary in size from a one-table game in the home all the way up to a many-table contest for a tennis, golf, or other social club.

Playing contract bridge in the home is a delightful way to entertain a group of friends who are familiar with the game. It is also a way to increase one's circle of friends. Home bridge parties are frequently unstructured, the host(ess) having no plan as to how they should be conducted. Sometimes there is a "tally" purchased from a stationery or book store, giving instructions for pairing a group of individuals, but no one is sure what sort of bridge to play or how to score the results. This book describes in detail many variations of party bridge, for both individuals (changing partners) and fixed partnerships.

Clubs for tennis or golf, or both (e.g., a country club) seem to have a lot of bridge enthusiasts, for you often see them playing informal rubber bridge games in the clubhouse. Besides the proper procedures for conducting such games, this book includes ideas for organizing club bridge parties or even club championships.

Marathon bridge, a year-long event for cash or charity, is fully described, as are Calcutta games, in which contestants are auctioned off to bidders who contribute to a pool of prize money.

In these pages the reader will also find recent revisions to the laws of rubber bridge, the official rules for Chicago (four-deal) bridge, suggestions for food and drink, recommended equipment and supplies, tips for improving one's game, and comments concerning rules, ethics, and proprieties.

Chapters on duplicate bridge are also included for those who wish to try this form of the game in a social situation.

Perhaps the book is misnamed. It is aimed at those who want to play bridge at parties, not those who want to party at bridge games. Those who attend, or hold, party bridge games merely to have an outlet for gossip and other conversational entertainment, or as an excuse for eating and drinking too much, will not find much of interest herein.

Many thanks to: Todd Lofton, Jean Lewin, Barbara Schulte, my sister Jeanne Flynn, and especially my wife, Alice Leicht, for their help in the preparation of this book.

1

RUBBER BRIDGE

Rules of the Game

It is commonly accepted that the official laws for any game ought to be followed to the letter. Doing so results in fewer misunderstandings and arguments, making the game more enjoyable. This is especially true for a complicated game such as contract bridge, the official rules for which are contained in a small volume entitled *Laws of Contract Bridge, 2003 Authorized Version*. Anyone playing standard rubber bridge or the Chicago version should have a copy at hand. The list price is only \$5.95, available from the source shown in Chapter 8, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**. It includes these changes to the 1981 laws:

- The bonus for doubling and defeating non-vulnerable opponents is increased by 100 points (300 vs 200) for the fourth and subsequent undertricks. Instead of the previous "one, three, five, seven, nine," etc., the rule is now "one, three, five, eight, eleven," etc. As before, the bonus is twice as much for a redoubled contract.
- The bonus for making a redoubled contract is increased from 50 points (as for a doubled contract) to the more logical 100 points.
- Either defender may accept declarer's lead from the wrong hand. If neither accepts it (a partnership consultation is not legal), declarer may lead any suit from the correct hand. No longer is it required that the same suit be led.
- The revoke penalty is no longer an automatic two tricks. The two-trick penalty now applies only when the offending player (not the offending side) wins the revoke trick. Otherwise the penalty is one trick. However, if the offending player (not the offending side) subsequently wins a trick with a card he could have legally played to the revoke trick, he loses that trick too. Penalty tricks are paid from tricks won by the offending side on the revoke trick or later, not from previous tricks.
- The bonus for having the only partscore in an unfinished rubber is increased from 50 points to 100 points.

The laws also include the rules for four-deal (Chicago) bridge and alternative "Club Laws" for those playing rubber bridge in a club environment.

Rules regarding the draw for partner, seat position, pack, and right to deal first vary somewhat with the type of game being played. Chapter 3, **GAMES FOR INDIVIDUALS**, and Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**, include applicable drawing procedures.

Each side deals a different pack, the dealer's partner shuffling the other side's pack during the deal and

placing it to his/her right. Before dealing, a player picks up his/her side's pack from the left and offers it to the right hand opponent for a mandatory cut.

Keeping Score

The result of each deal must be recorded, preferably by a member of each side. Scores are entered under two side-by-side columns labeled "WE" and "THEY." A scorer enters points scored by his/her side under "WE" and opposing points under "THEY." A horizontal line divides the score into two parts, the lower ("below the line") for trick scores and the upper ("above the line") for premium scores. Whenever a game is won, another horizontal line is drawn under all trick scores, across both columns, indicating the start of a new game for both sides. Subsequent trick scores are entered below that line. Table 1-1 shows the value of trick scores.

Trick Points

The first six tricks taken by declarer of a contract constitute the "book," which does not count in the scoring. Points for each trick over book (up to the number specified in the bid) taken in a successful contract are scored below the line according to the following table:

Trumps	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
Spades or Hearts	30	60	120
Diamonds or Clubs	20	40	80
Notrump, first trick	40	80	160
Notrump, added tricks	30	60	120

Table 1-1. **Trick Scores**

The first side to score 100 trick points below the line wins the game and becomes vulnerable. When a game is won, any trick points previously scored by the other side do not count toward the next game. A rubber consists of two or three games, with the first side to score two games winning the rubber.

Tricks taken should be neatly overlapped in groups of four cards. After taking six tricks ("book"), it is helpful to everyone if a new row (or new angle of arrangement) of "quitted tricks" is started by declarer. Defenders arrange their tricks in the same fashion, with one defender handling all tricks taken by the defense. The defensive "book" consists of tricks necessary to hold declarer to his/her contract, after which a second row (or new angle) of "undertricks" may be started.

Neither declarer nor defenders should collapse the "book tricks" into a single pile, a common practice, because the opposing side may not be sure how many tricks are in that pile. Figure 1-1 is a picture of "quitted" tricks (tricks won) after a deal has been completed.

The contract was four hearts, defeated by one trick. Declarer arranged the first six tricks taken (the “book”) in one line, and started another line of additional tricks. The defender on the right has managed all tricks for his side, with the “book” for his side, four tricks, placed in a row, and the setting trick in a second row (representing trick or tricks in excess of the defensive book).

Such careful arrangement of tricks makes the settling of disputed tricks much easier. The cards should not be mixed together until the result is agreed and recorded on the score sheet.

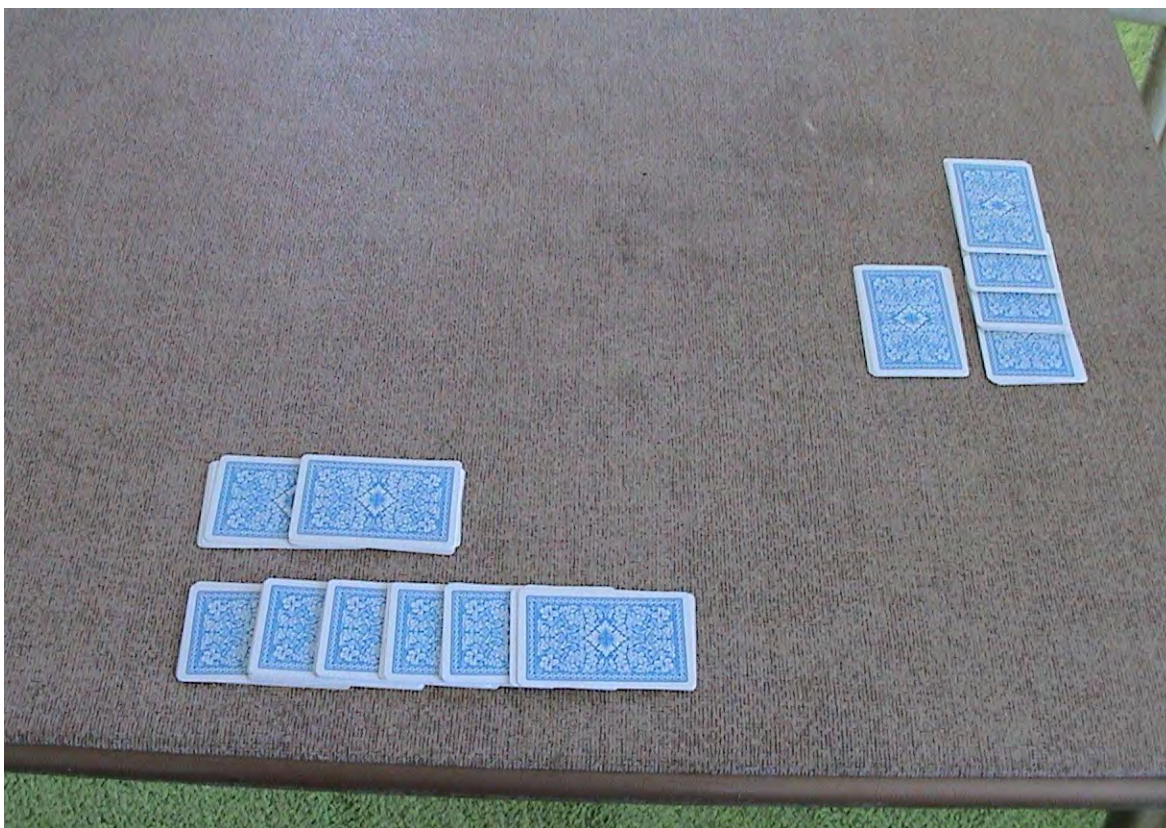


Figure 1-1. **Arrangement of Tricks Won**

Premium Points

All other points scored are "premiums," which are scored above the line for:

Winning the rubber when the opponents have not won a game.....	700
Winning the rubber when the opponents have won one game.....	500
Having won the only game in an unfinished rubber.....	300
Having the only partscore in an unfinished rubber.....	100
Making a doubled contract.....	50
Making a redoubled contract.....	100

Slams:

Bidding and making a small slam, not vulnerable.....	500
Bidding and making a small slam, vulnerable.....	750
Bidding and making a grand slam, not vulnerable.....	1000
Bidding and making a grand slam, vulnerable.....	1500

Overtricks:

Each trick made in excess of a contract (overtrick).....	Trick Value
Each doubled overtrick, not vulnerable.....	100
Each doubled overtrick, vulnerable.....	200

(For redoubled contracts, multiply doubled premiums by two)

Honors:

Four trump honors (A, K, Q, J, 10) in one hand.....	100
Five trump honors in one hand.....	150
Four aces in one hand at a notrump contract.....	150

Undertricks (in opponents' defeated contract):

Each undertrick, undoubled, not vulnerable.....	50
Each undertrick, undoubled, vulnerable.....	100
First undertrick, doubled, not vulnerable.....	100
Second and third undertricks, doubled, not vulnerable.....	200
Fourth and subsequent undertricks, doubled, not vulnerable.....	300
First undertrick, doubled, vulnerable.....	200
Second and subsequent undertricks, doubled, vulnerable.....	300

(For redoubled contracts, multiply doubled premiums by two)

Figure 1-2 is a blank rubber bridge scoresheet and Figure 1-3 shows scores for a typical rubber.

	WE	THEY
Premium Scores		
Trick Scores		
Total Scores		
Plus/Minus		
Net Scores		

Figure 1-2. **Blank Scoresheet**

	WE	THEY
Premium Scores	200	500
	30	500
Trick Scores	60	120
	240	100
Total Scores	530	1220
Plus/Minus	-1220	-530
Net Scores	-690	+690

Figure 1-3. **Typical Rubber Bridge Score**

"WE" started by bidding and making two spades, with an overtrick. The 60 point trick score was entered below the line, and the 30 point premium for one overtrick above the line. "THEY" then bid and made a

small slam in diamonds, scoring 120 trick points below the line and a 500 point slam premium above the line. A horizontal line to indicate a game then "wiped out" the "WE" partscore, which could no longer count toward a game. "WE" then bid and made two hearts, doubled and redoubled, with 100 honors. That scored 240 points below the line, and 200 points above (100 for making a redoubled contract and 100 points for honors), and another horizontal line was drawn. "THEY" countered by bidding and making a second game, three notrump, scoring 100 points below the line and a 500 point premium above the line for winning a rubber in which the other side has scored a game.

The columns were then totaled, resulting in 530 points for "WE" and 1220 for "THEY," who accordingly won the rubber by 690 points. Scores are traditionally rounded to the nearest 100 points, resulting in a score of +700 for "THEY" players and -700 for "WE". When rounding, a score ending in 50 is rounded up to the next hundred. Since rounding results in all scores being even hundreds, it is usual to drop the two zeros and record a win of +7 for "THEY" and -7 for "WE."

Fastidious types may choose to omit rounding, but the common social practice of recording gross points instead of net points is not only contrary to the laws of contract bridge, but also raises a question: If the game is played for a money amount based on scores (as all one-table games should be, if only for a small fraction of a cent per point) and everybody has a positive total, who pays off?

As an analogy, imagine investing in ten stocks on Wall Street. Some of the stocks make money, others lose money. Does one expect to keep only the winnings and not subtract the losses? The same concept applies to most games of chance involving cards. Poker players don't count only the pots they have won when determining how they stand. They subtract the money they have lost.

The Back Score

A running tabulation of accumulative net points scored by each individual is known as the "back score," sometimes called the "wash," maintenance of which is usually undertaken by just one player (closely monitored by all!). Net points for a rubber are rounded to the nearest 100 points (50 points counts as 100, -50 as -100) and entered opposite (or under) the player's name. As a check, the total for all players should be zero. Rounding 50 to 100 is an American, not a universal, custom. Other parts of the world may just drop the 50, rounding down.

As each rubber is completed, the net score for each player is algebraically added to his/her previous score, giving a new accumulative total. The total of the new scores must be zero also, a check that is made after scoring each rubber. Table 1-2 shows a typical back score for five players sharing time at a table, after five rubbers. Each player has sat out for one rubber, resulting in no for that rubber. The winning pair for each of the five rubbers won (after rounding) by 5, 8, 3, 7, and 4 (hundred) points, respectively (work it out). If the stakes are a tenth-of-a-cent per point, player 1 has lost 70 cents, player 2 has won \$1.40, player 3 has lost 20 cents, player 4 has lost \$1.90, and player 5 has won \$1.40.

Player	1	2	3	4	5
Jane	+5	-3	0	-7	-7
Joseph	+5	+13	+10	+10	+14
Dorothy	-5	-13	-13	-6	-2
Edward	-5	-5	-8	-15	-19
Martha	0	+8	+11	+18	+14
Check Total	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1-2. A Typical Back Score (Five rubbers)

Note that every column must total zero, a check that should be made after each rubber is recorded.

2

CHICAGO

This form of contract bridge, much used for money games played in bridge clubs, is well-suited to home play. Named after the city in which it originated, it is sometimes called "Club Bridge" or "Four-Deal Bridge." Its effect is to avoid rubbers of long duration, especially desirable when multiple tables are in play, or when five or six players are taking turns playing at a single table. No longer do others have to wait while a seemingly endless rubber is played out. Chicago follows the laws of standard contract (rubber) bridge, except as modified by the special rules that follow.

The Chukker

Instead of a rubber, Chicago has a chukker, sometimes called a wheel (presumably because the deal goes once around the table), comprising four deals bid and played. It is interesting that the term "chukker," which also designates a period of play in polo, actually comes from a Hindi word meaning wheel. Each chukker takes about 20 minutes to play on average, making for a faster game than rubber bridge, in which rubbers typically take half an hour and may drag on for 40 to 50 minutes.

A passed-out hand does not count as one of the four deals, so the same dealer deals again. An inadvertent fifth deal is void if attention is drawn to it before there has been a new draw for partners or the game has ended; otherwise the score stands as recorded. A sixth or subsequent deal is unconditionally void and no score for such a deal is ever permissible.

In case fewer than four deals are inadvertently played, the score stands as-is for the incomplete series. The fourth deal need not be played unless attention is drawn to it before there has been a change of partners, or (when there is no change of partners) before bidding has begun on the first hand of the next chukker.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability is not determined by the previous scores, but by the following schedule:

- First deal: neither side is vulnerable
- Second and third deal: only dealer's side is vulnerable
- Fourth deal: both sides are vulnerable

Since partnerships are vulnerable more often in Chicago than in standard rubber bridge, total scores are correspondingly higher. Taken with other effects of Chicago scoring, one expert estimates that stakes are effectively increased by 30% compared to standard rubber bridge. Other estimates range between 20% and 50%. That is, for the same per-point stakes, more money will change hands per unit of time in a Chicago game than in a standard rubber bridge game. Consistent winners will welcome this effect, while consistent losers might want to play for lower stakes.

Trick Scores, Premiums, and Penalties

The points for tricks taken over "book" (six tricks) in a successful contract are the same as for regular rubber bridge. For bidding and making (or completing) a game (100 or more trick points), a side receives an immediate premium of 300 points if not vulnerable for that deal, 500 points if vulnerable. There is no extra premium for winning two or more games (i.e., no "700 rubber"), each game being scored separately. Slam premiums and penalties for defeated contracts are in accordance with normal rubber bridge scoring, which varies according to vulnerability. Honors also count the same.

Partscores

As in regular rubber bridge, one or more partscores made previously may be combined with a partscore made on a current deal to complete a game of 100 or more points, provided the previous partscore has not been "wiped out" by an intervening game scored by either side.

A side that makes a partscore on the fourth deal, if the partscore is not sufficient to score a game, receives a 100 point premium. There is no premium for a partscore carried forward to the fourth deal from a previous deal, even if it has not been "wiped out," nor is there any premium for a partscore made on the last deal of a chukker that cannot be completed. It must be made on the fourth deal in order to get the 100 point premium. "Home-grown" variations of Chicago are often in error regarding this partscore premium. It is better to play the game according to the official rules, which were developed by veteran players who gave the subject a lot of thought.

Deal Out of Turn

When a player deals out of turn, the mistake may be corrected anytime before the last card is dealt if no player has seen one of his/her cards (Looking at cards before dealing is complete is an impropriety). If the mistake is noticed after the last card is dealt, or after a player has looked at any of his/her cards, there is no redeal. The player who should have dealt bids first, but this right is forfeited if not exercised before the actual dealer calls. If the actual dealer does call before the error is noticed, each player thereafter calls in rotation.

Vulnerability and scoring values are determined by the position of the player who should have dealt, regardless of who dealt incorrectly. Neither the rotation of the deal nor the scoring is affected by a deal out of turn. The next player to deal is the one who would have dealt next if the deal had been made by the correct player. Usually this means that a player deals twice in succession.

Keeping Score

All players are responsible for the proper maintenance of the score sheet, and it is highly recommended that each player keep a score. Failing that, at least one score should be maintained by each side.

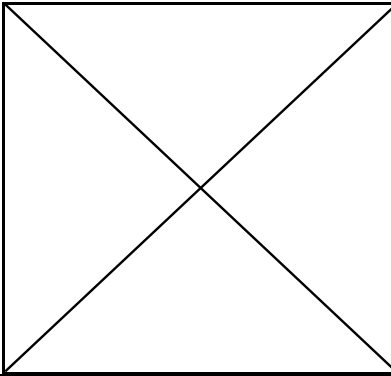
		
	WE	THEY
Premium Scores		
Trick Scores		
Total Scores		
Plus/Minus		
Net Scores		

Figure 2-1. **Score Sheet for Chicago**

As a reminder of vulnerability, two intersecting diagonal lines are drawn near the top of the score sheet, forming four triangles (see Figure 2-1). The numeral "1" is inserted in the triangle that faces the first dealer. After play of the first deal is complete and the score entered, "2" is inserted in the next (clockwise) triangle, which faces the second dealer. The numerals "3" and "4" are subsequently inserted prior to the start of those deals, each in the triangle facing the current dealer.

The actual deal number, recorded or not, is conclusive as to vulnerability. There is no redress for a bid influenced by a scorer's failure to maintain the figure properly or to enter a previous deal's results. Any error or omission discovered should immediately be corrected, and the deal or deals rescored properly according to deal number. Figure 2-2 shows the completed scoring for a typical chukker.

	WE	THEY
Premium Scores		130
Trick Scores	1390 400	90 190
Total Scores	1790	410
Plus/Minus	-410	+1790
Net Scores	+1380	-1380

Figure 2-2. **Typical Chukker Score**

The player on the scorer's right dealt the first hand, so "1" was written in the triangle facing that direction. Considering the scorer as "South," East-West played the first hand in three spades, making four, with 100 honors. The partscore of 90 was entered below the line, and the 30 point overtrick combined with the honors premium, 130 points in all, above the line. So far, just like rubber bridge.

North-South wiped out that partscore by scoring a vulnerable slam in diamonds with an overtrick on deal 2. "Vulnerable" because the dealer is vulnerable on dealer 2, regardless of whether it is a second game or not. It is common practice for Chicago scorers to combine these points into one number and enter it below the line, hence the 1390 point entry (750 for the vulnerable small slam, 500 for game, and 140 trick points). Entering all points as one number below the line (when a carryable partscore is not involved) tends to avoid confusion as to how many hands of the chukker have been played. A horizontal line was drawn to indicate a game completion.

North-South then bid and made three notrump on the nose, scoring a non-vulnerable game. "Non-vulnerable" because only the dealer's side, East-West in this case, is vulnerable on deal 3. The trick score of 100 points was added to the game premium of 300 points, a total of 400 points entered below the line, and another horizontal line drawn.

East-West scored again on the fourth and last deal of the chukker, dealt by North. East bid and made two spades with one overtrick, scoring 60 points for the bid, 30 points for the overtrick, and a 100 point premium for making a partscore on the fourth deal, for a total of 190 points.

The total score was 1790 points for North-South, 410 for East-West, for a net result of +1380 for North-South, -1380 for East-West. These are rounded into 100's: +14 for North-South, -14 for East-West.

To avoid confusion as to how many deals have been played, each deal should be scored even if there is no advantage to either side (e.g., one side is penalized 100 points, but also scores 100 points for honors).

The "back score" of accumulative player scores is maintained in the same fashion as for rubber bridge, described in the previous chapter.

Optional Rules and Customs

A variation of Chicago, popular in New York City, makes the dealer's side not vulnerable instead of vulnerable for the second and third deals, with the other side vulnerable. Supposedly this makes for a livelier game, since a dealer is more likely to make a high-level preemptive bid when not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents. While not mentioned in the official laws for Chicago, this variation (unlike others) is generally recognized as a valid form of the game. Other variations (e.g., duplicate-style scoring, not counting honors, not carrying over partscores, different bonuses for partscores or games, etc.) are not so recognized.

One standard but doubtful rule is the redealing of a passed-out hand. It distorts the game somewhat, because a non-vulnerable player in the fourth position should never pass out a hand when the opponents are vulnerable (giving them another crack at a vulnerable game). Making the dealer non-vulnerable on the second and third deals doesn't solve the problem, because the vulnerable player in fourth position will pass out a potential partscore hand in order to have another chance at a vulnerable game or slam.

Since the essence of the game is speed, if a deal is passed out when passed-out deals are not being counted, the pack that was shuffled for the next deal should be used by the dealer without reshuffling, resulting in a switch of pack ownership.



3

GAMES FOR INDIVIDUALS

When there is only one table of bridge with four, five, or six players, or when there is more than one table but it is desirable for each table to play as a separate unit (as when separating skill levels or sexes), a single-table procedure for changing partners after every rubber or Chicago chukker may be used. See the next chapter if fixed partnerships are preferred.

The players each draw a card from a shuffled and fanned-out pack for original partners, for the right to deal first, and for choice of seat and pack. The player who draws the highest card deals first and gets choice of seat and pack. Second highest is dealer's partner, third highest chooses either of the remaining seats, fourth highest gets the remaining seat. If there are five or six players, anyone drawing a lower card sits out for the first rubber or chukker.

The host/hostess should announce the type of bridge to be played, Chicago or regular rubber bridge. He/she should also state beforehand which bidding (e.g., Stayman) or play (e.g., lead of the ace instead of the king from ace-king) conventions will be allowed. Of course the wishes of all players should be considered before deciding on these matters, but the host/hostess has the final say. Leaving such decisions to the other players can make them uncomfortable and may lead to arguments and disagreements among them.

After the first rubber or chukker, the method of changing seats depends on the number of players.

Four Players

Since there is no one else waiting for a rubber to end, and typically no time constraints, the game of choice with four players is standard rubber bridge, not the Chicago version. Why not play the classic form of the game? Besides, Chicago lacks the excitement of two sides, each with a game and a partscore, battling hand after hand to win a 500 rubber.

The high-card player remains in the same seat as a "pivot" and the other three rotate clockwise after each rubber (or chukker): pivot's left hand opponent becomes his/her partner, partner becomes right hand opponent, and right hand opponent becomes left hand opponent. After three rubbers (or chukkers), players again draw for deal and choice of seat, unless all have agreed in advance to continue the same progression without bothering to change.

The drawback of continuing without change is that one's left-hand opponent and right-hand opponent are always the same with a given partner, and one person gets to sit still all the time instead of moving. If it is desirable that one person remain in the same seat, perhaps due to a physical limitation, players 3 and 4 (per the original draw) can switch seats when a new cycle of three rubbers (or chukkers) begins.

Five Players

With five or six players Chicago bridge is preferable to rubber bridge, to avoid long sit-outs. The host/hostess should play in the game, despite the consequent necessity for players to sit out some of the time. The other players will not mind sitting out, and it would be embarrassing for them if the host/hostess did not participate in the game.

For the rest of this chapter, substitute "rubber" for "chukker" if playing standard rubber bridge.

Five players can be matched up fifteen different ways, each player having four possible partners against three possible opposing pairs ($4 \times 3 = 12$) and sitting out for three of the matchups ($+ 3 = 15$). There are a number of procedures to ensure that no matchup is repeated before all possibilities are exhausted. One of the simplest goes this way for five chukkers: The "sit-out" entering the game after a chukker takes the seat vacated by the player who is next to sit out, the player to the left remains in the same seat, and the other two switch seats.

While this procedure works for five chukkers, the sixth chukker would result in a repeat matchup. To avoid this, the movement changes at the sixth chukker: The player to the right of the new player remains seated, while the other two switch seats. That works all right for chukkers six through nine, but the tenth chukker would see another repeat matchup. For those who want to complete the "cycle" of 15 chukkers, here are the full instructions for movement relative to the entering player (who sits in the seat vacated by the next person to sit out):

Chukker	Movement
1	As per draw for partners and sit-out
2-5	Player to left of newcomer sits still, other two switch
6-9	Player to right sits still, other two switch
10	Player to left sits still, other two switch
11	Other three all move, rotating counterclockwise
12	Player opposite sits still, other two switch
13	Other three all move, rotating clockwise
14	Player opposite sits still, other two switch
15	Other three all move, rotating clockwise

There are other ways to achieve the full cycle of matchups, but this one has a nice symmetry: Besides partnering every other player three times, a player sits three times on the left and three times on the right of every other player. Needless to say, very few sessions of play last for the full cycle of 15 chukkers, but multiple sessions are common for bridge players (e.g, playing at lunchtime, on a cruise, or any sort of continuing competition).

Rather than go by the above instructions, an alternative "guide card" method achieves the same matchups. Giving each player a number based on the initial draw of the cards, here are the matchups for each chukker:

Chukker	Matchup	Out
1	1-2 vs 3-4	5
2	1-3 vs 2-5	4
3	2-4 vs 1-5	3
4	3-5 vs 1-4	2
5	4-5 vs 2-3	1
6	3-1 vs 2-4	5
7	2-1 vs 3-5	4
8	2-5 vs 4-1	3
9	3-4 vs 5-1	2
10	3-5 vs 4-2	1
11	4-1 vs 2-3	5
12	5-1 vs 3-2	4
13	2-1 vs 5-4	3
14	3-1 vs 4-5	2
15	5-2 vs 3-4	1

If a player's departure reduces the game to four players, they can revert to the four-player progression described above, with a new draw for partners, pack, deal, and seat position.

Drawing for deal and pack selection when the sit-out comes into the game is player-optional. A simpler procedure is to let the incoming player deal first, using the shuffled pack. Decide on one procedure in advance and stick to it throughout the session of bridge.

Six Players

With six players there are two sit-outs for each chukker. The participants draw as for the five-player movement, except that the drawers of the two lowest cards sit out. The sit-outs come in together after every chukker, replacing the two whose turn it is to sit out next. A draw for deal, pack, seat position, and partners is made at the start of each chukker, with the proviso that no repeat partnership is allowed. If high card has already played with second highest, he/she plays with the next lower one who has not yet been a partner.

Even with six players, it is advisable for the host/hostess to participate. With two sit-outs for each chukker, a second card table can be set up so that the two players who are sitting out can amuse themselves by playing gin rummy, backgammon, or some other two-person game.

After seven chukkers four players will have partnered every other player once and two players (those who first sat out) will have partnered all but each other. If the same progression continued, the next chukker would see an unavoidable repeat partnership. For the next chukker, therefore, the two players

coming back to the table become partners (for the first time) and the others draw to see which two sit out to start a new cycle of seven chukkers.

If a player's departure reduces the game to five players, they can revert to the five-player progression described above, with a new draw for partners, pack, deal, and seat position.

Playing for Money

Bridge played at a single table should include some sort of stake, if only a twentieth-of-a-cent per point. Why? Because it discourages "hand hogs" from ruining the game by bidding too much. It also makes for a sharper game, since players are more on their toes when even a little money is involved. Those who continually lose will start studying up on the game, thereby raising their level of bidding and play. In fact, everyone's game will tend to improve, since all of us like to make money and no one enjoys losing it.

Some social games are played for a set amount of money (e.g., "a quarter a corner"). It is more logical to reward wins and punish losses in proportion to points won or lost. Bridge is a game of skill, which ought to be recognized in the payoffs. If one player has the only minus score in a group of four, he/she should pay the other three in accordance with the points they won. This is only right. Winners should win and losers should lose. In a "quarter-a-corner" type game there would always be only one winner and three losers. That isn't right.

One must be careful, however, not to declare a "stake" that would be uncomfortably high for any player. This difficulty may be avoided by including a proposed stake in the invitation to play: "I'm getting up a quarter-of-a-cent-a-point game for Friday night, are you interested?" That gives the invitee an "out" if he/she doesn't want to admit that the stakes are uncomfortable: "Sorry, I've got something doing that evening."

Small stakes make for a friendlier game in which no one worries much about a partner's mistakes (or one's own). At a twentieth-of-a-cent per point a player would have to lose by 5,000 points to be out \$2.50, a loss that anyone can accept with good grace.

Certainly the stakes must be clearly established and agreed to by all before the first deal, to avoid any misunderstandings. It is disconcerting, to say the least, to find you have lost \$100, not the \$10 according to the stakes you had assumed.

Multiple Tables

With more than one table of players it is better to play Chicago chukkers rather than regular rubber bridge, to avoid the waiting that a long rubber may cause.

Since it is impractical to have detailed partnership understandings with so many partners, the host(ess) should announce a limited number of conventional bids that may be used by all. For instance, conventions could be limited to Blackwood and Stayman. For an experienced group, adding Jacoby transfer bids and/or weak two bids might be appropriate. It is unwise to go much further in the direction

of complexity, and all partnerships must stick to the announced restrictions. It is not fair for two individuals who are an experienced partnership to use their arsenal of conventional bids and partnership understandings when playing together.

It is not customary for a multi-table game to base money winnings (or losses) in direct proportion to the scores achieved. Prizes are awarded to the highest scorers, or they can share in a pot of money to which all contribute equally at the start.

Two or Three Tables

A popular procedure for two or three tables is the use of "tally cards," available in most stationery stores. The tallies give instructions for table and seat locations of the players, with space for recording of scores. They often include a method of assigning player numbers to men and women such that mixed partnerships will result for the first four rounds (of seven) for a two-table game and the first six rounds (of eleven) for a three-table game. Some tallies refer to this type of game as "progressive bridge," a misnomer. Progressive bridge, described in Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**, is a game in which players change tables according to scores achieved. Instead of using tallies, partnerships can be switched by simple oral instructions. Here is the starting setup for a two-table game

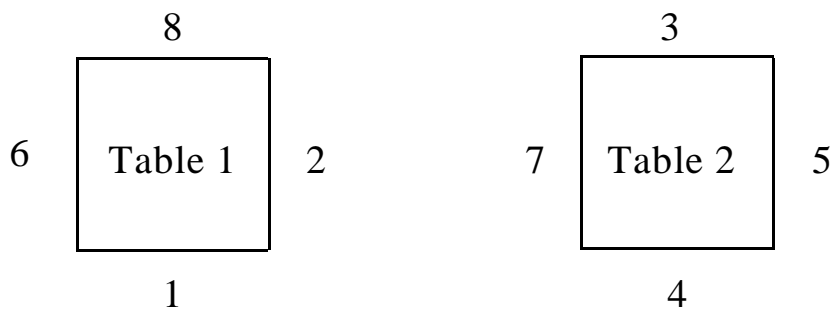
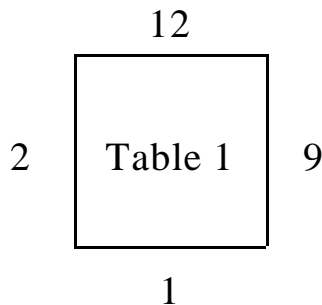


Figure 3-1. Two-Table Individual Seating



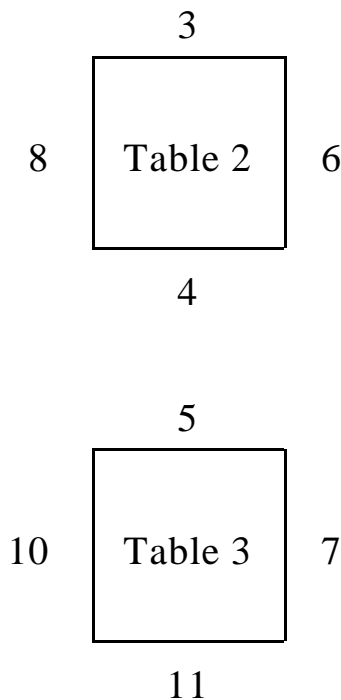


Figure 3-2. **Three-Table Individual Seating**

These games can be run without tallies, as follows:

- 1) Players take their places at random, but the highest number position at Table 1 is usually taken by the host or hostess, who remains in the same seat throughout the contest. Alternatively, the position may be assigned to a player who is physically limited.
- 2) When players are seated, inform each player of his/her number, according to the Figure 3-1 or 3-2, and identify the player holding the next-lower number. For two tables, player 7 is "below" player 1 (since player 8 is stationary). For three tables, player 11 is "below" player 1 (since player 12 is stationary).
- 3) After each round of play, all players except the stationary player at Table 1 move to the seat vacated by the next-lower number player. Each moving player will therefore "follow" the same person throughout the bridge session.

A complete two-table game, in which every player is partnered by every other player, requires seven rounds of play. Playing Chicago (four-deal) chukkers results in a total of 28 hands for the entire session. If that is too many, the game can be cut short after any round.

A complete three-table game requires 11 rounds of play totaling 44 hands if Chicago is played. While that is too many rounds for a single session of bridge, it makes for a nice two-session game, afternoon and evening, with a dinner break after five or six rounds. Otherwise the game can be cut short at any point.

Whatever the method of switching partners, players should record their net score (points scored minus points scored by opponents), not gross score, for each chukker played. Recording gross scores violates the laws of contract bridge, which mandate net scoring. If the prospect of carrying a negative score is unacceptable to the participants, the "Victory Point" method of scoring described in the next chapter may be used.

The simplest method for recording net scores is to round off to the nearest hundred and record hundreds only (e.g., +840 is scored as +8, -1650 as -17). Scores ending in 50 are rounded up to the next higher hundred. Each score is added to a player's previous score(s) to obtain an accumulative score. As a check, the scores of all participants should add to zero after every round of play and at the end of all play. Score sheets may be saved to resolve any discrepancy in this regard. There should be no problem if all four players agree on the score of each chukker, but some people have trouble adding a positive score to a negative score.

Four or More Tables

Individual play with sixteen or more players can be complicated and awkward. With equal numbers of men and women a possibility is to play the progressive bridge game described in Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**, but change partners after every chukker.

The procedure is this: Initial partners are established by one sex's random draw of opposite sex names. After each chukker is completed and the players have changed tables in accordance with the rules of progressive bridge, all pairs switch partners with their new tablemates. At the end of play, the highest scoring person of each sex receives a prize.

A word about individual games: Bridge is a partnership game, not really a game for individuals. The greatest enjoyment of bridge comes from skillful play with a familiar partner. You will seldom see quality bridge being played in a game for individuals. That is why some people dislike such games intensely. It may be better to have separate parties for those who want to play as fixed pairs and those who don't mind changing partners.

4

GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS

One-Table Set Game

In a set game two pairs play without changing partners. This is the typical game for two couples playing an evening of bridge. Since there is no one else playing, the duration of a rubber is unimportant. As in a four-player game of individuals who switch partners, the preferred game is therefore standard rubber bridge, not the Chicago version.

Players each draw a card from a shuffled and fanned-out pack for the right to deal first, for pack selection, and for seat position, with high card winning all three rights.

The superstitious have the right to require a new draw after every rubber, but it is more convenient to continue the normal deal rotation, deal the same packs, and sit in the same seats for the entire session of bridge. Luck exists only in retrospect, not in prospect, for high cards have no memory and do not know which way they are supposed to be running (nor how the bathtub is oriented).

Multiple Tables

Games of fixed partnerships can involve prearranged partnerships, *ad hoc* partnerships arranged at the bridge party, or a combination of both. With equal numbers of men and women, one sex can draw for partners of the other sex, with a resultant "mixed pair" competition. If a regular partner is drawn, a player must draw again.

Arranging fixed partnerships by lot can lead to some problems, however. For one, a very weak player can make the bridge party a miserable affair for the unfortunate person who draws him/her as a partner. Also there may be, unknown to the host(ess), two persons who should not be paired for private reasons. It may be better to arrange partnerships in advance, consulting with the participants, with questions like: "Who would you like to play with?" "Is there anyone you'd rather not play with?" "I'd like to pair you with John. Is that okay?"

In a multiple table game, players draw for deal, pack, and seat position for every rubber or (preferably, and assumed from here on) for every Chicago chukker.

Progressive Bridge

There are many amateur arrangements for "progressing" during a bridge party consisting of fixed partnerships. A popular procedure uses numbered tables to which pairs are assigned by random draw.

After playing a chukker, winning pairs move to the next lower number table (but the winners at Table 1 remain there), and losers stay at the same table (but the losers at Table 1 move to the highest number table). The game continues in this fashion until the host(ess) declares that the game is over.

Another popular movement has winning pairs moving to the next lower number table (the winners at Table 1 remaining there), and losers moving to the next higher number table (the losers at the highest number table remaining there).

The pairs record their accumulative net scores throughout the bridge session, and give that information to the person responsible for determining the winners. The pair with the highest score wins whatever prize is offered, while there may be a booby prize for the lowest scoring pair (not a good idea, that). As pointed out before, recording gross scores instead of net scores is contrary to the laws of contract bridge.

This movement has the "Swiss" philosophy of pairing both stronger teams and weaker pairs with each other as the movement progresses, giving some weaker players a chance to move up in the standings (and stronger players a chance to move down). One drawback of this progression is that repeat matches are likely. Besides, the movement doesn't even fulfil its supposed aim. For instance, the first round winners at the highest number table, if they continue to win, will meet only losers of the preceding round until they reach Table 1. That's an unfair advantage. A better movement is described next.

Swiss Pairs

In 1970 Nate Silverstein of the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) devised a one-winner pair game that is usually called a "Swiss Pair" game. There should be at least six pairs, preferably more. Partnerships can be established by lot or prearranged.

Whatever the method of determining partners, pairs draw for pair number and initial table location. Pairs 1 and 2 start at Table 1, 3 and 4 at Table 2, etc.

Each round of play entails one four-deal chukker of Chicago. Players at a table each draw a card from a shuffled and fanned-out pack to determine who gets first deal, choice of pack, and choice of seat (high card wins). At the end of the chukker the points are totaled and the difference, positive for one pair and negative for the other, is added to each pair's accumulative score. Alternatively, net scores for each chukker can be converted to Victory Points for winners-losers according to the following schedule:

Winners' Net Points	Victory Points
----------------------------	-----------------------

0-40	10-10
50-140	11-9
150-240	12-8
250-340	13-7
350-540	14-8
550-740	15-7
750-940	16-4
950-1240	17-3
1250-1540	18-2
1550 or more	19-1

The idea behind Victory Points is to reduce the effect of unusually large scores. The "19-1" maximum score ensures that no one will have the embarrassment of a zero accumulative score.

When the first round is completed and the scores for all pairs are known, the game's director carefully records the results of each match. The director then determines matchups for the second round. This is Swiss pairing in which the pair with the highest score plays the pair with the next highest score, and so on until all pairs are matched for the next round. Table assignments are inconsequential, but the game director may choose to assign tables to pairs in ascending order, with the top two pairs going to Table 1.

This progression continues for succeeding rounds, with the proviso that no pair can play another pair more than once. If two pairs matched by accumulative score totals have already played, then the higher pair plays the next lower pair not yet met.

The game continues for any predetermined number of rounds, certainly at least five rounds for three tables (only 20 deals of Chicago, and all pairs will meet once).

The philosophy behind Swiss pairs is to give weaker pairs a better chance to do well in the scoring. With winners meeting winners and losers meeting losers, some winners will certainly fall in the standings while some losers will certainly rise. If the number of pairs and rounds of play are such that all pairs meet each other, then this factor is eliminated and the event might as well be a simple round-robin (all pairs meeting in any order).

It is possible to introduce some element of seeding by assigning the stronger pairs to different tables for the first round. However, the Swiss pair concept is aimed at handicapping strong pairs and aiding weak pairs, the opposite of the philosophy behind seeding. It would be more logical to assign beginning positions according to ability, pairing strong against strong and weak against weak. But who would accept the designation of "weak pair" graciously? Perhaps the best procedure is the usual compromise of assigning first-round positions by random draw.

The director of the game establishes the policy for allowable bidding and play conventions. If partnerships for the contest are determined by lot, the conventions allowed should be restricted to the very basic ones, perhaps just Blackwood and Stayman. This is especially desirable if there are inexperienced players in the group.

Round-Robin Pairs

If the number of pairs is not excessive, each fixed partnership can play a chukker or two of Chicago with every other pair. A two-table round-robin, each pair playing two chukkers against each of the other three pairs, entails 24 deals. A three-table round-robin of single chukkers takes 20 deals, while four tables require 28 deals. The round-robin concept is not feasible for more than eight pairs unless two sessions of play are planned. The Victory Point schedule for Swiss pairs is a good alternative to just accumulating net scores.

Since every pair meets every other pair in a round-robin, the order of play is unimportant. The host(ess) can make up a schedule of pair numbers that meet on each round of play, then assign numbers to pairs by random draw.

5

MARATHONS

This form of party bridge features a round-robin competition for any number of fixed partnerships. Individual matches are played in homes, pairs taking turns being the host pair or the guest pair, following a schedule established in advance by random draw.

Marathons are usually designated as afternoon or evening marathons. Afternoon marathons are typically for women, evening marathons for women or both sexes (marathons for men, who seem to prefer familiar foursomes, are rare). The schedule usually calls for one match a month, possibly skipping one, two, or three summer months, with the exact day for play a matter of agreement between the two pairs. If a pair's members do not live in the same home, they decide on their own who will host the match.

Smaller marathons may wish to play in two-month periods. Say you have six pairs playing five matches each year (a pair doesn't play itself!). That's a nice number for a small marathon. There are 15 opportunities to be a host, but each pair should be a host $1/2$ the time. $7-1/2$, that doesn't work, so the hosting can't be distributed evenly in a given year. It takes two years for that.

Here is a possible schedule for the first year, with each pair assigned a number from one to six. The leftmost pair is host, and each match must be completed within a two-month period.:

1 & 2	3 & 4	5 & 6	Jan & Feb
4 & 5	6 & 1	2 & 3	Mar & April
3 & 1	5 & 2	6 & 4	May & June
2 & 6	4 & 1	3 & 5	July & Aug
1 & 5	6 & 3	4 & 2	Sept & Oct.

1 is host 2 times
2 is host 2 times
3 is host 3 times
4 is host 3 times
5 is host 2 times
6 is host 3 times

Call that Pattern 1. That's a total of 15 hostings, divided as evenly as is possible among the pairs. Each pair has played against all the other pairs, but pairs have hosted a different number of times, but a second year will even that out.

For the second year have 1, 2, and 5, switch places with 3, 4, and 6 in the pattern. Then the former will host three times instead of two and the latter two times instead of three.

Call that Pattern 2, and it looks like this:

3 & 4	1 & 2	6 & 5	Jan & Feb
2 & 6	5 & 3	4 & 1	Mar & April
1 & 3	6 & 4	5 & 2	May & June
4 & 5	2 & 3	1 & 6	July & Aug
3 & 6	5 & 1	2 & 4	Sept & Oct.

Again, the leftmost pair is host. Now pair 1 hosts 3 times, 2 hosts 3 times, 3 hosts twice, 4 hosts twice, 5 hosts 3 times, and 6 hosts twice. So, after two years, each pair has hosted five times, 1/6 of the number of matches (30). Then go back to pattern 1 the next year.

Rows can be switched with no effect on the result, and individual pairings can be swapped as long as the pairings aren't modified.

If monthly matches are desired, Pattern 1 is used for the first six months and Pattern 2 for the last six. Be warned, however, that it may be difficult to get pairs to meet on a monthly schedule for an entire year. If a match isn't played on schedule, however, it can be made up in the next month, no problem, as long as all matches are completed by the end of the schedule time..

Another popular plan has all pairs meeting at the same place and time (e.g., second Tuesday afternoon of every month at the Officer's Club). A pair that cannot play on the specified day must make up the match by hosting their scheduled opponents at home that month.

Larger groups can hold marathons lasting a longer period and hold the final game in a club, restaurant, or hotel banquet room. Scheduling games more frequently than once a month to fit more matches into a single year is not recommended, however. It is hard enough to get pairs to meet a monthly schedule. An alternative plan is to schedule an incomplete round-robin, not all pairs meeting and not all pairs hosting, to limit the calendar time required.

A women's group in San Diego has two afternoon and one evening marathons running concurrently, ending with a single awards dinner for all at a hotel. Some women play in both an afternoon and the evening marathon.

An "awards game" scheduled at the end of the marathon combines all players in a final bridge contest. This game is usually hosted by the marathon coordinator, but anyone can volunteer to host it. The natural inclination might be to hold this game in December, the last month of the year, but that is not a good idea. With so much else going on that month, it is difficult to get everyone together at the same time. That leaves November as the best choice. The type of bridge game played in this event is optional. See Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**.

Marathons need a focus. The focus can be as simple as bringing club members together in a social way, but more often marathons are run for the benefit of some charity. An entry fee for each pair is established, with all money (less prize expenses) going to the designated charity. The participants are owed a complete accounting of this money at the end of the marathon, including the name, address, and

telephone number of the beneficiary. Just good business, that's all. Alternatively, all of the money can go to prizes or cash awards.

Conditions of Play

The conditions and rules of play are printed and distributed to all participants. Included should be a specification that the Laws of Contract Bridge must be followed, guidelines for food to be served, and general remarks about proper ethics and deportment. Add a summary of Chicago rules if Chicago bridge is to be played. A schedule shows the "draw" of competing pairs for each month of the marathon, hosting obligations, and everyone's telephone number. It is helpful to provide the telephone number(s) of one or more persons who may be called to resolve any problem arising concerning bridge law or marathon rules.

A match consists of 20 deals, or perhaps 24 if the players are experienced (not often the case). Passed-out hands are not usually counted. The standard game of rubber bridge is usual, but playing the Chicago version would be more logical for a contest of this nature. It isn't fair to equate a two-rubber match (of ten hands each) with a ten-rubber match (of two hands each).

Players draw for deal, seat position, and pack, high card winning those rights. Thereafter the deal passes in normal rotation. It is customary for the two pairs to switch directions after every rubber/chukker or at the halfway point (accommodating those who believe that good cards run in a particular direction during a match). A common procedure has all four players moving one seat to the left (i.e., clockwise) after every rubber. If switching seats does not affect luck, at least it has the merit of aiding blood circulation.

When the specified number of deals have been played, an unfinished rubber is scored by awarding 300 points for a completed game and 100 points (it used to be 50) for any partscore that has not been "wiped out" by an opposing game. If Chicago bridge is played there will be no unfinished chukker, since the four deals of a chukker divide evenly into 20 or 24.

Informal marathon rules often include a prohibition against redoubling, but this rule violates the laws of contract bridge. Another common practice is to record gross scores for each pair instead of net scores. This also violates the laws, which mandate net scoring. However depressing it may be, a pair that scores 2,000 points to an opponents' 3,000 points has a net of -1,000 points, the number that should be recorded as their score for that match, while the other pair receives credit for 2,000, not 3,000. Besides being illegal (i.e., contrary to the laws), gross scoring leads to indiscriminate doubling and redoubling. The rule against redoubling becomes unnecessary when scoring is in accordance with the rules of the game.

If the prospect of carrying a negative score is too repulsive for the participants, the Victory Point method of scoring may be used. Victory Points also have the advantage of reducing the effect of extra large scores, thereby leveling the field somewhat. The net score of a match is converted to Victory Points for winners-losers according to a schedule such as the following:

Winners'	Victory Points
Net Points	Winners-Losers

0-90	10-10
100-290	11-9
300-490	12-8
500-790	13-7
800-1090	14-8
1100-1390	15-7
1400-1690	16-4
1700-1990	17 -3
2000-2490	18-2
2500 or more	19-1

Forms are provided by the coordinator for recording the result of each match. These must be signed by a member of each pair and sent to the coordinator. When each month's matches have been completed, the current standings should be mailed or e-mailed to all participants. It is not right that the coordinator, who usually participates in the marathon, should be the only person to know every pair's standing. At least those interested should be able (and encouraged) to telephone for the current standings.

Failure to complete a match in the specified time period is just not permissible, and should be punished in some predetermined fashion. An acceptable solution for those who can't meet the schedule is to arrange for substitutes. Habitual delinquents should be replaced permanently.

On rare occasions a pair may be dropped from a marathon because of unacceptable deportment at the bridge table. Participants should be warned of this possibility, and known "bad actors" should not be invited to participate. Entry fees are not refundable.

Smoking is definitely not "host-optional." No smoking is the general rule, except perhaps outside during a break at the halfway point of a match. It is not considered polite for dummy to leave the table for a quick smoke. Smokers are free to form a marathon of their own, after all.

Food and Drink

Establishing guidelines for food and drinks to be served is highly desirable, to avoid some possible pitfalls. It is disconcerting to attend a game hungry and find only peanuts served, or to eat a big meal beforehand only to have another one served up by the host(ess). Guidelines will also preclude a "prestige contest," with each pair trying to outdo every other in the elaborateness of food served.

Guidelines may call for simple snacks, appetizers/hors d'oeuvres, soft drinks and maybe wine, or a complete meal. The meal may be restricted to an uncomplicated entree such as pasta or a casserole, salad, and rolls. An evening marathon usually ends with dessert and coffee. Chapter 7, **FOOD AND DRINK**, has more on this subject.

One reason for keeping things simple is that the host(ess) should be as free as possible to play bridge without running to the kitchen every few minutes. To avoid that problem, some marathons suggest that a meal be served before the game starts. Another reason for simplicity is that elaborate meals take too much time to serve and consume.

Although wine may be offered by the host pair, the general rule should be BYOB for alcohol. Non-drinkers can hold a marathon of their own if they can't endure seeing alcohol consumed in their homes. Needless to say, it is very bad form to become intoxicated during a match.

Food at the final awards game is logically a pot-luck affair.

Prizes

Prizes are usually awarded to the first and second place finishers in both the marathon and the final party, which is scored separately from the marathon. Prizes may be money or merchandise, customarily the latter. In order to avoid the tailoring of prizes in accordance with the popularity of the winners, the nature and value of prizes should be established and made known to all participants at the start of the marathon.

6

MIXING SPORTS WITH BRIDGE

Here's an idea for mixing tennis and bridge: Get eight or twelve people together for a session of tennis doubles to be followed by a session of bridge. The tennis courts are treated as "tables," with switching of partners (if desired) and opponents exactly as described in Chapter 3, **GAMES FOR INDIVIDUALS**, for a two or three-table bridge game for individuals, or Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**, for a two or three-table game with fixed partnerships. The tennis matches can be standard sets, shortened sets of "no-ad" games, or just a certain number of games (divisible by four to equalize serving), according to how many matches are necessary and how much time is available.

But suppose some tennis players don't play bridge, and some bridge players don't play tennis? The answer is obvious: the former play tennis only, and the latter bridge only, with perhaps a pot-luck lunch (or dinner) in between for all participants.

The same idea can be extended to other sports, such as golf, that include a partnership concept.



7

FOOD AND DRINK

Even for simple games following dinner or lunch, it is customary to have some sort of snacks to accompany a bridge game. Nuts, pretzels, "party mix," M & Ms, or similar items should be located on just two opposite corners of each table. Greasy or messy foods such as potato chips, buttered popcorn, chocolates, or crumbly cookies are not appropriate. There is no pleasure in handling cards made greasy by some careless eater or viewing a table with crumbs scattered around. Coasters or cocktail napkins should be provided for drinks.

When more serious food is called for, short of a full meal, any sort of cold or hot hors d'oeuvres will do as long as they are not greasy or messy. A nice custom is the serving of dessert and coffee at the end of an evening bridge session.

Full meals are most conveniently served buffet style. The card tables serve well as dining tables, provided they are covered with tablecloths during mealtime. Small place mats don't do the job, while larger ones overlap in an unattractive way. Standard 52-inch square tablecloths, widely available, are just right for 36-inch square bridge tables.

In planning a meal watch out for foods that may be unacceptable to one or more guests. For a small party it is easy to inquire about allergies (or even likes and dislikes) of guests before deciding on the menu. For a larger group, it is simply a matter of providing a variety of foods so that people can skip dishes they don't want. One might think that foods like rice or pasta are universally enjoyed, but not so. Some people are allergic to, others inexplicably averse to, many foods that are usually considered innocuous.

Pot-luck meals are appropriate for bridge parties of two or more tables. To avoid duplication of effort, each person or pair should be responsible for a designated class of food (hors d'oeuvre, salad, entree, side dish, or dessert). Wine drinkers usually contribute a bottle of wine as well.

Strong alcoholic drinks do not mix well with quality bridge playing, but if quality is not a factor, do whatever is customary in your group. Most people can handle a little wine. Sodas, coffee (both kinds), tea, lemonade, and other soft drinks are always in order.

8

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

The equipment needed for party bridge is neither extensive nor costly. Most of it can be used over and over again, so the amortized cost is very little. Besides the items described below there is a need for good lighting, proper temperature control, freedom from drafts, and other environmental amenities. Soft background music is enjoyed by some, detested by others, so be sure to ask whether anyone minds before putting Mozart into the CD player.

Card tables - Sturdy, 36 inches square. Smaller tables just don't have enough room for score pads, pencils, snacks, drinks, dummy's cards, and tricks won. Larger tables require undue reaching to play the dummy, especially for shorter persons. A felt cover makes a perfect surface for card play. The felt prevents cards from sliding away when dealt or played to a trick, and facilitates the picking up of cards.

Chairs - Folding chairs are acceptable if they are fairly comfortable. Bridge players have to sit for hours at a time, so use good ones. Armchairs are nice, but should be small, not large, preferably with casters. Chairs must be of the right height for the table so that even a short person can reach the dummy without excessive stretching.

Good cards - Two packs per table, with different backs and traditional American design: no gimmickry, no foreign cards with unfamiliar face cards and markings. Exercise any urge for novelty by choice of design on the back (but please, no nudes). Bridge cards have a special shape, narrower than cards for other games so that thirteen can be held easily. Don't substitute wider cards that are designed for games such as poker or gin rummy.

Pencils - Sharpened soft-lead pencils with good erasers, four per table

Score pads - At least one for each side, more if requested. Commercial score pads are not necessary; simple blank tablets or small sheets of paper will do. Anyone can draw lines.

Laws of Contract Bridge, 2003 Authorized Version. As with any game or sport, a book of the laws should be available for settling rules violations or disputes that may arise. List price is only \$5.95.

Bidding boxes - These have become more and more common in tournament play, and in fact are mandatory for regional and national championships of the American Contract Bridge League. However, they are also appropriate for social bridge games, even in the home.

Bridge supplies are available from Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies, 3600 Chamberlain Lane, Suite 206, Louisville, KY 4024-9966, toll-free number 1-800-274-2221. They have a wide selection of new and popular bridge books, and also have a free catalog that includes bridge books, instructional materials, and other items of interest for bridge players. Their web site is www.baronbarclay.com.

9

IMPROVING YOUR GAME

Anything worth doing is worth doing well, the adage goes. Can you imagine an amateur pianist playing wrong notes for years on end, excusing himself by saying, "I just play for fun." But that is exactly what a large number of social bridge players will say. Now, what fun is there in doing something badly? In not winning? Why will tennis players, golfers, or skiers spend big money to improve their skills, but will play bridge all their adult lives without spending a nickel on lessons or instructive books? And never improve, because bridge cannot be mastered just by playing. As with any other sport or game, mastery takes instruction, study, and practice, not just practice. By "mastery" we don't mean real expertise, but only the ability to make the basic bids and plays.

As an analogy, take tennis. To play the game enjoyably you must learn to serve; hit forehands, backhands, and overheads; volley; and lob. That's all. You don't have to hit hard with extreme accuracy, or cover the court like a rabbit, to say you play the game.

Now imagine a long-time tennis player serving sidearm, refusing to hit backhands, never volleying or lobbing, and playing only with other weak players, all the while saying, "I just play for fun"? What fun would that be? Very little, which is why you don't often see tennis players of that sort.

Bridge is like tennis in this regard. To really enjoy the game you must learn the basics: opening the bidding, responding, rebidding, defensive bidding, defensive play, and dummy play. That's all. You don't have to do these things expertly, but you do have to learn about them if you want to say truthfully, "Yes, I play bridge."

There are three good ways to learn or improve on bridge skills:

- Read instructional books
- Hire a bridge teacher for private or semi-private lessons
- Attend public bridge classes

Note that the most popular way of learning, playing socially with friends, is not listed. The reason is that it is the worst* way to learn bridge or improve one's game. Most social players are woefully ignorant of the basic principles of the game, let alone the finer points. They are a fount of misinformation and poor advice. Four neophytes getting together to practice what they are learning from the same book or bridge instructor will do a lot better than they would by learning from friends who supposedly know the game. (And will soon be trouncing those friends at the table!)

*Or nearly the worst. The worst is to learn from one's spouse.

Bridge Books

For those who learn well from books, instructional reading is the best way to gain bridge knowledge. An hour of bridge reading is worth many hours of bridge classes (and an eternity of bridge playing, because it takes forever to learn much by merely playing the game). One must practice what one reads, however. It is not possible to become a good player by merely reading books for a year and then sitting down at the bridge table. The interaction with partners and opponents is indispensable for becoming an accomplished player.

There are many books on bridge, mostly pretty good, on the market. Be wary of library books, which are often too far out of date to be worth reading. Some old classics, however, will never be obsolete. Generally speaking, books on the play of the cards do not become outdated, but books on bidding do.

Books for beginners:

Play Bridge at Home, by Tony Forrester

Improve Your Bridge at Home, by Tony Forrester

Basic Bridge in Three Weeks, by Alan Truscott

Standard American Bridge Updated, by Norma Sands

Introduction to Declarer's Play, by Eddie Kantar

Introduction to Defender's Play, by Eddie Kantar

Books for intermediate players:

Bid Better, Play Better, by Dorothy Truscott

How to Play a Bridge Hand, by William S. Root

How to Defend a Bridge Hand, by William S. Root

Recommended reading for all: *Why You Lose at Bridge*, by S. J. Simon (a classic)

The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge, published by The American Contract Bridge League (ACBL). The current Sixth Edition (2002) puts bridge knowledge at your fingertips, with 900-plus pages of fascinating facts. It includes bridge history; biographies; a description of leading bridge personalities; definitions; technical plays; bidding conventions; the laws of contract bridge (rubber bridge, Chicago), and much more.

All these books are available from the source listed in Chapter 8, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**, if you can't find them in a bookstore. Here's a tip: Don't read too much at one time. Reading in small

chunks, week after week, absorbing the material well, will result in better retention than is possible with marathon reading.

Private Instruction

Experienced tournament players or money bridge players, even if not expert, are worth listening to. They are usually not too thrilled about tutoring, however, unless they are closely related (by blood or romance) to the pupil or are getting paid. One doesn't ask a professional of any occupation for free instruction, and that goes for bridge pros too. Watch out for the supposed "expert" who pretends a knowledge not actually possessed. People who talk a good game do not necessarily play a good game.

A professional bridge teacher, someone who makes a living teaching bridge, is probably the best choice for a beginning or inexperienced player. Although usually not expert players themselves, bridge teachers are generally good at explaining the elementary aspects of the game ("Them that can, do, them that can't, teach"). They tend to be more patient than an expert, they proceed more slowly, and they understand well the difficulties of learning the game (having had a bit of trouble themselves).

Private instruction from a professional can be rather expensive, however. A popular solution is to get a group of friends together in one of their homes, perhaps rotating the hosting responsibility, and pay a bridge teacher to come in for several hours a week. Two tables of pupils are a good compromise between the high cost per person of one table, and the lack of personal attention with three or more tables. As players become more knowledgeable they can gravitate to larger (and less expensive) public bridge classes, in which lectures and practice of principles learned is emphasized more than personal guidance.

Bridge Classes

Most duplicate bridge clubs have bridge classes for beginning, intermediate, and sometimes even advanced players. The ACBL has a "hot line" toll-free number for locating bridge classes in any area: 1-800-467-1623 (1-800-467-2623 in Canada).

By the way, most bridge "clubs," are public, not membership, clubs. The name is somewhat of a misnomer in that regard.

10

RULES, ETHICS, AND PROPRIETIES

Playing by the rules makes a game more enjoyable. Rules are not written to make a game dull, but to make it better. There is an unfortunate tendency among social bridge players to ignore many rules of the game, usually with the remark "We play for fun, not for blood." Those same people will go out and play a game of tennis as if it were a Wimbledon match, with all rules strictly in force: no foot faults, two serves per point, close attention to the lines, no touching the net, and so forth. Or they will play golf with no deviation (improving lies, etc.) from the rules. The game of bridge deserves the same respect.

Contract bridge has a code of ethics that must be followed scrupulously if the game is to be enjoyed. "Coffee housing" with remarks intended to fool opponents, deliberate hesitations to mislead opponents or to help partner, peeking at an opponent's cards, and other unethical behaviors have no place in the game of bridge. Those tempted to such activity should find other games.

Passing information to partner by forbidden means, knowingly or inadvertently, is contrary to the philosophy (and rules) of the game. The only permissible communication with partner is through the language of bids, passes, doubles, and redoubles. Extraneous communication by facial expression, needless hesitations, gratuitous remarks, etc., concerning the nature of one's hand, is not proper grammar in the language of bridge bidding.

Speaking of language, bids should be preceded by a number (e.g., "one club," not "uh club" or "ay club"). Say "pass" or "I pass" instead of "no bid" or "bye." The denominations should be given their right names when pluralized (e.g., two notrump, not two notrumps; two clubs, not two club). Just make the call, don't announce it: "I'll bid a spade" should be simply "One spade," "I double" just "Double."

Other improprieties:

- Picking up cards before the deal is completed
- Commenting on the state of the score anytime after looking at one's hand, even if the bidding has not yet started
- When defending, unnecessarily inquiring about the number of tricks taken, when partner is on lead or is considering winning a trick
- Indication of expectation or intention of winning or losing a trick before the trick has been completed
- Reaching for a trick before all cards have been played to it
- Detaching a card from one's hand before the right hand opponent has played to the trick

- Holding cards carelessly, allowing others to see one's hand
- Mixing the cards before the result has been agreed upon

On this last point, it is entirely proper to hold one's hand below the table, out of sight. A little-known trick to prevent others from seeing one's cards: Place the little finger of the hand holding the cards on the front side of the cards. The finger prevents the cards from tilting forward and becoming visible to an opponent (some people do look).

The Laws of Contract Bridge include more extensive language concerning ethics and proprieties.

11

SOCIAL DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Playing duplicate bridge in the home is a delightful way to entertain a group of friends who are familiar with the game.

These chapters concern social duplicate bridge, not organized commercial tournament bridge, which is a whole different world. The words "duplicate bridge" may evoke a picture of nasty people playing expertly in big bridge tournaments, an unattractive prospect for most social bridge players. Using duplicated hands in party games can be a lot of fun, however. After playing duplicate bridge socially with friends, tournament bridge will seem much less intimidating for those who wish to try it.

The duplicate form of contract bridge provides for the playing of the same deal more than once. Each contestant (which may be an individual, a pair, or a team-of-four) tries to do better than others playing the same hands. The luck factor associated with having good or bad cards is thereby eliminated, providing a better test of skill and more fairness..

The players are provided with "guide cards," "tally cards," or oral instructions telling them where to sit, which hand(s) to play, and sometimes with whom to play as a partner, at every stage of play. For most games each table in play has a "table marker" identifying the table's number, and each contestant is assigned an identifying number.

Detailed instructions for running formal duplicate games are beyond the scope of this book. Those interested may wish to obtain a book on direction, one of which is identified in the Chapter 16, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE.**

The Duplicate Board

The four hands of each deal in a duplicate contest are kept separate and intact, filling four "pockets" of a duplicate board Figure 11.1 shows a board with cards removed from the four pockets, while Figure 11.2 shows another board with cards in the four pockets.



Figure 11.1. **Duplicate Board with Cards Removed from Pockets**

An arrow on the face of the board points North to facilitate the orientation of the board vis-a-vis the players. Vulnerability for each side is shown (vulnerable hands also have a red-painted pocket), as well as the number of the deal and designation of the "dealer" (first person to bid). In Figure 11.1, showing board No. 5, only North-South are vulnerable and North is dealer.

For the first 16 boards, vulnerability and dealer position are marked as follows:

VULNERABILITY

Boards 1-4	None	North-South	East-West	Both
Boards 5-8	North-South	East-West	Both	None
Boards 9-12	East-West	Both	None	North-South
Boards 12-16	Both	None	North-South	East-West

North is the dealer for board 1, East for board 2, South for board 3, and West for board 4. This rotation is repeated for subsequent boards. The vulnerability and dealer pattern provides that each direction (North, East, South, and West) will be dealer once for each of the four possible vulnerabilities.

Boards 17-32 and 33-48 repeat the vulnerability and dealer pattern of boards 1-16.



Figure 11-2. **Duplicate Board With Cards in Pockets**

Board 10 in Figure 11-2 has cards not yet removed from their pockets. East-West are vulnerable and East is dealer (North is at the bottom in this picture).

At the start of a game, the designated dealer for each board removes the cards and shuffles, then deals them into four piles on his/her side of the table. Each pile becomes a hand that the dealer places into a pocket of the board. An opponent may request a cut before the deal, but this is not customary.

The Director

It is desirable to have a "director" in charge of any duplicate contest. The director's duties include technical planning of the game, distributing duplicate boards to the proper tables, calling for player movement and board movement at specified intervals, settling any disputes or other problems that may arise, and tabulating scores when the game is complete. The director should be thoroughly versed in the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, which are sometimes difficult to interpret and apply. Ideally the director does not participate in the contest, but small informal games may include a playing director.

When the director must make a ruling concerning an infraction (lead out of turn, insufficient bid, etc.), the applicable law should be read from the book. Besides avoiding possible error, a ruling coming directly from the book is likely to be accepted more graciously than one coming from the director's memory. In no case should an infraction be handled by the players at the table--that is the director's job.

Rules for Duplicate Games

The rules for duplicate bridge are established by The Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. The laws are revised occasionally, so it is important to have the latest version (2007, as of this writing). The list price is only \$7.95. See Chapter 12, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE.

One of the most important (indeed, vital) rules is the provision that cards are played to a trick by placing each card face up on the table in front of the player, not in the center. Cards are left face up until the trick (four played cards) is completed and all players are satisfied that they have seen all cards. Each card is then turned over in front of the one who played it, and pointed in the direction of the side winning the trick. Subsequent cards are placed on top of previous cards, from left to right, with an inch or so of offset to the right for each trick.

In duplicate bridge the opening lead is made face down. There are technical reasons for this, but the main one for social players is that if the lead is by the wrong defender it can be withdrawn without penalty provided it has not been faced. After a check that the right player is leading, the card is turned face up. Each player in turn plays a card by facing it on the table.

At the end of play, the number of tricks won by each side is clearly indicated by the number of cards each player has pointing in each direction. Any disagreement must be resolved before the cards are picked up. Figure 11-3 shows the played cards at the end of a deal.

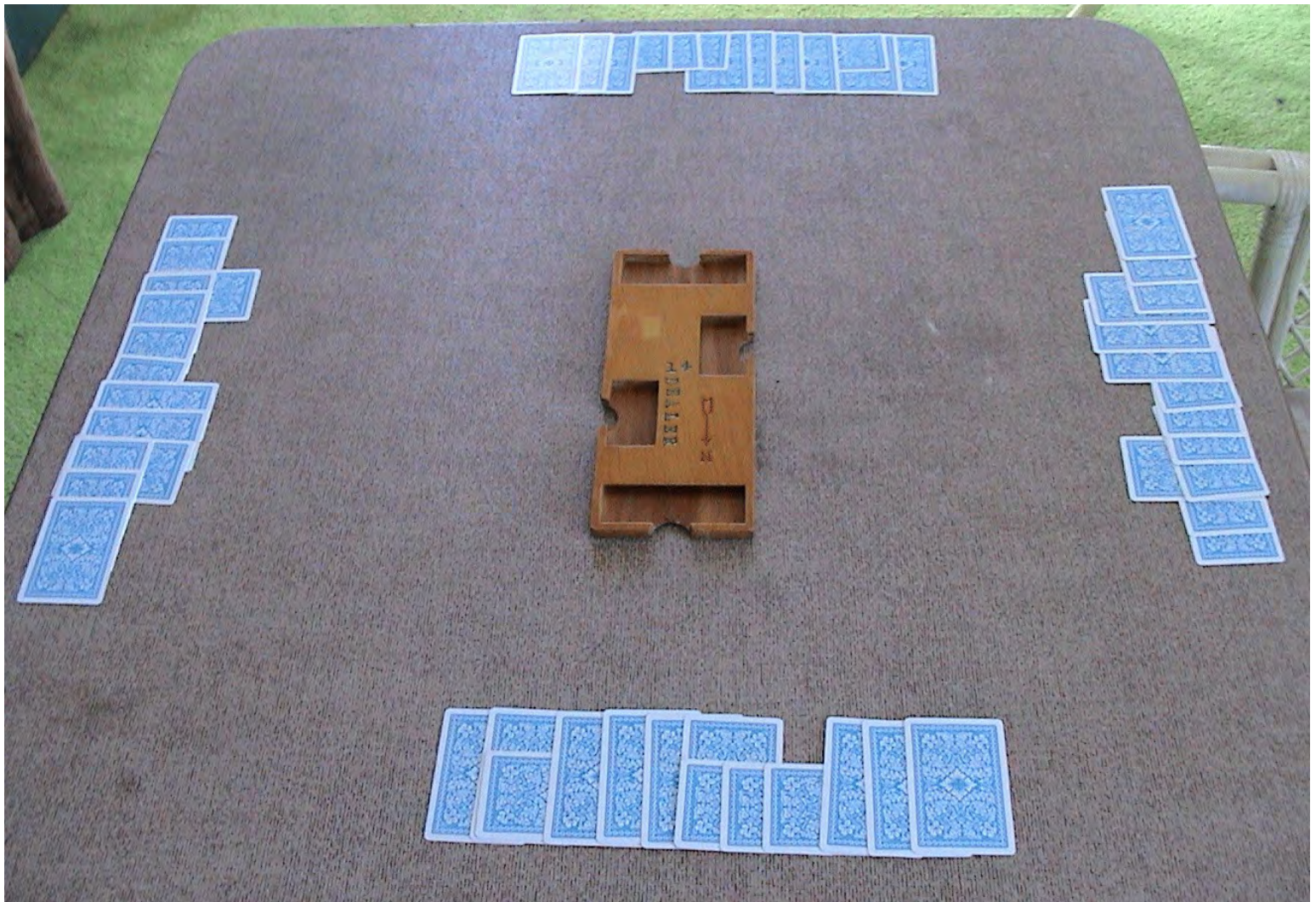


Figure 11-3. **Played Cards After a Duplicate Deal**

The picture shows the played cards at the completion of a deal. North-South has won nine tricks, as shown by the cards placed by the North and South players with the long side of the cards running North and South. Similarly, the four tricks won by East-West are “pointed” in their direction. After all players have played to a trick, cards faced in front of the players and not put in the middle, players turn over their card and point it in the direction of the side winning the trick. The trick history runs from left to right for each player.

The cards must not be picked up and replaced in the board until the result of the deal is agreed by all four players. With careful positioning of the played cards, any disagreement as to number of tricks won or as to a revoke on a particular trick can be easily settled.

Playing the cards in this fashion preserves each hand so that it may be reinserted into the duplicate board for use by other players. It is extremely important, of course, that hands not be mixed in any way. Players should count the cards in a hand before looking at it, ensuring that there are 13. If the count is wrong, the director is called to straighten things out. Players may not touch the cards of another player at any time without the director's permission.

A player should shuffle his/her hand before replacing it in the board. Otherwise the next player to hold the hand would know the sequence of cards played on the previous round. Unbelievable as it may seem, there are sharpies who can make good use of such information.

Bidding and Play Conventions

The organizer of a duplicate contest specifies which special agreements between partners will be allowed. An informal home game involving inexperienced players may permit only Blackwood and Stayman, while a game consisting of experienced players may allow almost any partnership agreement.

When partnerships are playing with understandings that are not "standard," i.e., not in common practice by all participants, these must be made known to every opponent. The formal medium for communicating this information is the "convention card," a private score card that has conventions and other understandings indicated on the outward side and space for individual scorekeeping on the hidden side. The American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) has designed convention cards for use in all games in which ACBL masterpoints are awarded.

The current ACBL convention card is hideously complex in specifying the information to be provided opposing players. For social games involving any but experienced tournament players, it is better to simply require that everyone orally announce any special partnership agreements concerning bidding or play at the start of play with each opponent.

Initial Scoring

There are two phases to the scoring of a duplicate deal. The first phase is the actual score of each deal. All deals are scored separately, with previous partscores or games having no effect.

Vulnerability for each side is shown on the duplicate board for the deal. Points for tricks taken in a successful contract, undoubled, doubled, or redoubled; slam bonuses; and penalties for defeated contracts, are the same as in rubber bridge. Honors are not counted. A deal that is passed out scores zero for each side. Passed-out hands are not redealt.

Whenever one side bids and makes a partscore or game, it is awarded an immediate bonus in addition to the trick points:

For a partscore	50 points
For a non-vulnerable game	300 points
For a vulnerable game	500 points

The ACBL has inexpensive "Instant Scorer" cards that show the score for every possible contract and number of tricks taken, whether undoubled, doubled, or redoubled.

The Traveling Score

For an individual or pair contest "traveling score" sheets, commercially available, are customary. These score sheets "travel" with the boards, folded up for security reasons and tucked into the North pocket along with North's hand. After the deal is played, the North player opens the "traveler" and records the result of the hand on the line corresponding to his/her identifying number, then enters the East-West number(s) in the column provided. In a game for individuals, South's number is also entered. There are two separate columns for entering scores, one for North-South scores and one for East-West. The traveler is then folded and placed in the North pocket on top of North's cards.

Traveling score sheets are available from the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) for a price of \$3 for a pad of 200.

A more sophisticated method is the use of "pickup slips" on which the results of each round of play are recorded by the North player. These are picked up after each round by the scorekeeper (the director, in most games). Pickup slips are used exclusively in ACBL higher-level tournaments, but are optional in club-level tournaments.

Most duplicate players like to also record the scores for themselves on an individual score card. The best are those designed by the ACBL. The outer (public) side is used to disclose any conventions or treatments (special partnership agreements concerning bidding or play) used by the partnership, the inner (private) side for recording the score for each hand played. The private score is a good reference tool for postmortem discussions and is indispensable for finding and correcting any mistake in the final scoring. In a team-of-four contest it is mandatory that at least one private score be kept by each pair, because teams do their own final scoring by comparing the results of each partnership constituting the team.

Final Scoring

The second scoring phase involves the total score awarded to the contestant (player, pair, or team-of-four, depending on the nature of the contest) based on a comparison of the net score on each deal to the net score of the other(s) playing the same hands. The second phase score is what counts toward the ranking of the contestant in the duplicate contest. There are at least five methods of final scoring:

1) Actual total score on the hand, positive for the side that makes the score, negative for the other side. This method is used only for team-of-four contests, and was the only method for scoring such games before International Matchpoints were invented. When total point scoring is used the importance of slams overshadows the rest of the game. Slam bidding skills (and luck in slams bid) predominate in determining the winner. For this reason the other types of scoring shown below are almost universally preferred to the use of raw scores. They provide a better measure of all-round skill in both bidding and play.

2) Matchpoint score. The contestant is awarded 0, ½ or 1 matchpoint based on a comparison with the score(s) of those who play the same hand in the same direction. For each comparison, a better score receives one matchpoint, a tie receives one-half matchpoint, and a lower score receives nothing. Note that the size of the difference has no effect. Bettering another's score by 10 points (e.g., making four notrump when the other made four hearts) receives the same single matchpoint as would be received for bidding and making seven notrump when the other was defeated five tricks, doubled and redoubled.

If traveling scores are used, these are collected at the completion of the contest and given to a scorer (usually the director). The scorer calculates the matchpoint award for each contestant on every board.

The matchpoint scores are then transferred to recapitulation ("recap") sheets for totaling. The recap sheet has a row for each contestant and a column for each board. When totaling is complete and checked (each column should add to the same total), the contestants are ranked according to their final matchpoint totals.

There are computer programs available that make the task of matchpoint scoring much simpler. The main advantage of pickup slips is that the long and tedious task of manual scoring at the end of a tournament can be replaced by a computer program that does most of the work while the event is in progress. After the last round, the scorer enters the final round's results into the computer and all scores are ready for printout in a matter of seconds.

Matchpoint scoring in team-of-four events is called "Board-a-Match" (BAM), perhaps because each deal played may be considered as a separate match between two teams, with no other contestants' results on that deal having any effect. Two teams meet by assigning each pair of each team to a different table, in a different direction (i.e., one pair is North-South at one table, the other East-West at the other table). Each duplicate board is played at both tables, and the team scoring a positive number of net points (points scored minus opponents' points) receives one matchpoint, the other zero. A tie scores one-half matchpoint for each team.

Scoring for a BAM contest is simpler than for individual or pair games, because the contestants can do their own final scoring. Small differences, such as an overtrick or playing a partscore in notrump or a major instead of a minor, are given perhaps undue influence with matchpoint scoring. Matchpoints emphasize card-playing skills and partscore bidding judgment (especially in competitive bidding and doubling) more than other types of scoring.

3) International Matchpoint (IMP) score. The contestant is awarded IMPs for net score on each deal in accordance with the following table. If the contestant's net score is negative, then the applicable IMP score is negative.

International Matchpoint Scale

Point Difference	IMPs	Point Difference	IMPs
0-10	0	750-990	13
20-40	1	990-1090	14
50-80	2	1100-1290	15
90-120	3	1300-1490	16
130-160	4	1500-1740	17
170-210	5	1750-1990	18
220-260	6	2000-2240	19
270-310	7	2250-2490	20
320-360	8	2500-2990	21
370-420	9	3000-3490	22
430-490	10	3500-3990	23
500-590	11	4000-up	24
600-740	12		

This type of scoring is universally used for team-of-four competition in both national and international competition, and is usual in lesser events. It strikes a nice balance between the two extremes of total point scoring and board-a-match scoring, somewhat reducing the importance of large scores while only moderately increasing the importance of small scores.

It is possible to use IMP scoring for a pair event. The result a pair obtains on each deal is compared to the average score obtained by all pairs playing that hand in the same direction (usually throwing out the highest and lowest of those scores before averaging, if the number of tables is large, to prevent abnormal results from having an undesirable effect). The difference is converted into IMPs in accordance with the IMP scale, and the pair (or pairs, in a two-winner movement) with the highest total of IMPs wins the contest. This method of scoring IMP-pairs is called "Butler."

A superior method for scoring IMP-Pairs is to compare each score with the score of every other pair playing the same hands, determine the IMP result for each comparison, and add them all up. This is called Cross-IMP scoring (X-IMP. for short). The total IMPs scored on each board, often a large number, becomes more meaningful if the total is divided by the number of results (not by the number of comparisons, as might be supposed).

4) Victory Points. For short team-of-four matches, including Swiss-type team-of-four events (described in Chapter 14, **DUPLICATE GAMES FOR TEAMS-OF-FOUR**), various methods have been used to balance the excessive rewards of 10- or 20-point swings in board-a-match scoring and of slam swings (made at one table, not at the other) in IMP scoring. The most popular method for short matches of six to eight deals is a twenty-point scale of Victory Points awarded to winners-losers:

Total IMPs	Victory Points Winners-Losers
0	10-10
1-2	11-9
3-4	12-8
5-7	13-7
8-10	14-6
11-13	15-5
14-16	16-4
17-19	17-3
20-23	18-2
24-27	19-1
28 or more	20-0

Victory Points may also be used in Swiss Pair games, as described in Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**.

5) Win-Loss. Used in short team-of-four matches (e.g., Swiss teams) as an alternative to Victory Point scoring. Teams get one point for a winning match, one-half for a tie, and zero for a loss. Usually this type of scoring is modified to give only 3/4 point for a "winning tie" (winning by only one or two IMPs), with the other 1/4 point going to the loser.

After a specified period of play, teammates meet to compare results and arrive at a total score. When both teams agree on the result (reconciling any disagreement), the captain of the winning team submits the result to the scorekeeper for recording. If there are multiple rounds of play, each team is then given table assignments for the next round. When play is completed, the scorekeeper determines the overall standings for the event on the basis of the scores that have been submitted.

The American Contract Bridge League (ACBL)

The ACBL is a non-profit organization to which any North American citizen can belong. It is closely associated with the World Bridge Federation (WBF), which organizes and runs international bridge events and is responsible for writing and interpreting the Laws. Any bridge club can provide a membership application.

The ACBL publishes a fine monthly magazine, *The Bridge Bulletin*, free to all members. It includes many instructional articles of interest to all bridge players, beginning, intermediate, or advanced, as well as reports on major tournament results and upcoming events. This publication alone is worth the ACBL annual membership fee.

The ACBL conducts three kinds of tournaments in North America: National, Regional, Sectional, and Unit championships, in decreasing order of importance. Masterpoints, used for ranking players nationally, are awarded to successful contestants in each event, the number of points depending on the importance of the event and the ranking in the event. Privately owned bridge clubs, some also

non-profit, can award ACBL masterpoints (on a smaller scale) for success in club games. Local chapters ("units") of the ACBL are authorized to hold regularly-scheduled games in addition to Unit championships.

While there are a great number of lower-level championship tournaments, there are only three National American Bridge Championships (NABCs) per year. The NABCs are held in different cities every year, each NABC lasting more than a week and including a large number of events for every level of player, even novices. The NABCs provide an opportunity for watching (kibitzers are welcome) or playing against top bridge experts of not only North America, but of the world.

The ACBL offers more information in a free pamphlet called "Adventures in Duplicate," available at the address given in Chapter 16, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE**.

The ACBL has a web site that all bridge players should visit: www.acbl.org

12

DUPLICATE GAMES FOR INDIVIDUALS

In an individual duplicate game, players change partners after every round of play (which may be just a single deal). Since it is impractical to have detailed partnership understandings with so many partners, the host should announce a limited number of conventional bids that will be used by all. For instance, conventions could be limited to Blackwood and Stayman. For an experienced group, adding Jacoby transfer bids and/or weak two bids might be appropriate. It is unwise to go much further in the direction of complexity, and all partnerships must stick to the announced restrictions. It is not fair for two individuals who are an experienced partnership to use their arsenal of conventional bids and partnership understandings when playing together.

Two or Three Tables

Players at two tables exchange a set of boards at their convenience, while in a three-table game completed boards are passed to the next-lower number table (Table 1 passes boards to Table 3). The most convenient method of passing boards is to set a chair or small table midway between tables, to which the boards are passed and from which they are retrieved. This procedure avoids the possibility that someone passing a board will see part of a deal not yet played at his/her table.

A new set of boards is played each round. The eight-player game requires seven rounds totaling 14, 21, or 28 boards (2, 3 or 4 boards per round). The twelve-player game requires 11 rounds totaling 33 boards (3 boards per round). The longer games could perhaps include a food break somewhere near the mid-point of the contest, or a game can be cut short. To estimate the time required for a duplicate game, figure about seven or eight minutes per hand plus one minute extra for each round. Slow players must try to keep up with everyone else.

After each set of boards, scores are calculated and added to an accumulative total for each player.

There is an interesting five-round alternative to the 11-round three-table game, when six couples are participating: The hosts (numbered 1 and 7) play together throughout in the same position at the same table. They play against the other couples in turn, but each couple is together only at the host table!

Number all the guests of one sex from 1 to 6, and their spouses (or whatever) from 7 to 12. Start numbers 7, 1, 2, and 8 as West-North-East-South at Table 1; put 12, 4, 5, and 9 in the same directions at Table 2; and 10, 3, 6, and 11 similarly at Table 3. Players 1 and 7 remain stationary, while the others take the place of the next lower number of the same sex after each round (6 is "below" 2 and 12 is "below" 8). After the five rounds are complete, each guest will have played with every other guest of the opposite sex. The set of boards for each round (three or more) is shared among the tables as described above. The number of boards played per round determines the length of the game (e.g., four deals per round means 20 in all).

Matchpoint scoring can be used for a two or three-table individual game, but International Matchpoint (IMP) scoring is more appropriate. To calculate an IMP score, a pair adds its result on a board to the result of the pair playing the opposite direction at the other table, and the sum is converted to IMPs in accordance with the IMP table in Chapter 11, **SOCIAL DUPLICATE BRIDGE**. With three tables, a pair gets two IMP scores for each deal, arrived at by comparing results with each of the two pairs playing that deal in the opposite direction.

Scores can be computed and standings made known to all after each round of play ("barometer scoring"), or results may be saved for summation after the contest is over.

Bringing in new boards for each round, until all available boards have been played, provides variety in vulnerability vs dealing position.

For a larger number of tables, matchpoint scoring is usual.

Four Tables

This number of tables is not well-suited to an individual type game. It is better to arrange a fixed pair or team-of-four contest, as described in the next two chapters.

The Rainbow Movement

This duplicate bridge movement for individuals is ideal for a number of tables that is not divisible by 2 or 3 (5, 7, 11, 13, etc.). In fact, no guide cards are necessary. The North players remain stationary, while the other players move as follows after each round: South goes to the next higher table, East skips a table upward, West skips a table in the other (lower) direction. For this purpose Table 1 is "above" the highest number table.

The players take an identifying number based on the table number of their starting position: North takes the table number, West the table number plus the number of tables, South the table number plus twice the number of tables, East the table number plus three times the number of tables. When scoring a hand, four player numbers must be recorded, two for North-South and two for East-West. Three partnerships are played on each round, each of the three moving players taking turns (South first, East last) playing a hand with the stationary North player as partner against the other two. When moving to the next table, the moving players revert to their original compass direction.

The boards are passed to the next lower number table after each round (the highest number table is "below" Table 1). The number of rounds is equal to the number of tables, while the number of boards played is three times the number of tables. The game can be lengthened by playing two hands per partnership (six boards a round) or the contest can be cut short after any round.

Moving players and boards in this fashion, the specified number of tables ensures that no two players will meet at the same table more than once, and no one will meet boards they have played before. Each player will play one hand with every other player who does not have the same compass direction.

It is advisable to give each participant a colored card with the player's number, the color identifying the compass direction of the player. If two players at a table have the same color, someone has moved incorrectly. The colored cards are also useful for ensuring that everyone plays each of the three hands sitting in the right compass direction. The use of colored cards suggested the name "Rainbow Movement" for this contest, which was devised by Oswald Jacoby and Shepard Barclay.

Matchpoint scoring is based on compass direction, so there are four winners. Placing the best players in the North seats is a nice custom: They don't get to play with each other as partners, the weaker players get to play a hand with every strong player as partner, and the strong players compete only among themselves in the scoring.

Repeating what was said in Chapter 3, **GAMES FOR INDIVIDUALS**: Bridge is a partnership game, not really a game for individuals. The greatest enjoyment of bridge comes from skillful play with a familiar partner. You will never see quality bridge being played in a game for individuals. That is why some people dislike such games intensely. It may be better to have separate games for those who want to play as fixed pairs and those who don't mind changing partners.

13

DUPLICATE GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS

It is possible to play a matchpoint duplicate pair contest with two or three tables, but other types of bridge (i.e., individual or team-of-four) are more appropriate with this number of players.

With four tables or more, a matchpoint duplicate pair game is feasible. A Howell one-winner movement is the best choice for four to eight tables. The eight pairs in a four-table game will play seven rounds of three or four boards a round, 21 or 28 deals. A seven-table Howell game is an ideal duplicate contest, with each pair playing all 26 boards and meeting every other pair.

The movement of pairs after each round of play in a Howell movement is irregular, requiring direction in the form of "guide cards" carried by each pair, or of table markers that include movement instructions for each pair at the table after each round. Both types are available from the source referenced in Chapter 16, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE**.

An easier game to run is the Mitchell movement, in which all North-South pairs remain stationary while the East-West pairs change tables after each round of play. There are two winning pairs, one in each direction. The movement of pairs and boards after each round is simple, requiring no guide cards: "East-West go to the next-higher number table, North-South pass the boards to the next-lower number table."

The boards to be played are divided evenly among the tables, the total number of boards determining the length of the game. In figuring how many boards to put into play, allow for at least eight minutes per board. Games that are taking too long to complete can be cut short after any round, no harm in that.

There is a complication if the number of tables is even: After half the rounds have been played, East-West must skip a table in the normal upward progression. Otherwise they will meet boards they have already played. The number of rounds played will be one less than the number of tables, so an eight-table Mitchell movement will have seven rounds and each pair will miss playing one set of boards. With an odd number of tables the East-West progression is completely regular, with all boards played by everyone.

An "anti-seeding" approach is popular in some circles, with stronger pairs playing North-South and weaker pairs East-West. Since each direction has a winner, the weaker players have a better chance.

Doop

Doop is a duplicate bridge game for two pairs, in which pre-dealt hands are played. Sessions (usually 26 deals) are based on the actual hands and matchpoint scores from ACBL Regional and National championships. For each deal, partnerships are told the matchpoint score that their result would have achieved in the actual tournament. The Deluxe version (\$59 at present) includes instructions, the devices and packs required, and hand records for four sessions of play (52 deals). Additional deals are available through refills (\$16 at present), each of which includes eight additional sessions. Doop never becomes obsolete, with new deals published regularly.

Doop is an excellent tool for becoming acquainted with the concepts of duplicate bridge without the necessity of purchasing duplicate boards. With only four persons participating, there is no pressure on anyone. Comparing scores with those achieved in actual ACBL tournaments is highly instructive, although sometimes humbling.

Doop is available from the source referenced in Chapter 16, **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE**.

14

DUPLICATE GAMES FOR TEAMS-OF-FOUR

A team-of-four contest is generally regarded as the most thorough test of bridge skill. A team-of-four may consist of five or even six players, playing four at a time. Five and six-person teams are usually formed only for multi-session play, with just four members scheduled to participate in each session.

For each deal, one pair of the team sits North-South against an East-West pair from the opposing team. Their teammates sit East-West for the same deal against the North-South pair of the opposing team. The element of luck therefore plays a small role. Success is determined by which team scores the most total points on the deal.

IMP Head-to-Head Matches

In expert circles, social bridge is increasingly taking the form of team-of-four competition between two teams playing duplicate bridge, with stakes based on International Matchpoint (IMP) scores. If possible, the two tables should be located in separate rooms, exchanging their half of the boards when they are completed. For each session of play, the game is divided into "halves," with teammates meeting to determine scores halfway through the session. The pairs of one team switch tables for the second half, so that each pair gets to play against both opposing pairs. A session of play may comprise any number of deals consistent with the speed, ability, and endurance of the participants. It is also quite possible to have multiple sessions.

There is no reason why this form of competition cannot be played with non-expert participants. The scoring for IMP matches is described in Chapter 11, **SOCIAL DUPLICATE BRIDGE**.

Round-Robin Matches

Three teams-of-four can compete simultaneously in a single session of duplicate bridge by using a round-robin concept. For a 24-board contest boards, boards 1-6 are placed on Table 1, 7-12 on Table 2, and 13-18 on Table 3, with East-West pairs playing at either of the two tables not occupied by their North-South teammates. At the completion of play, the East-West players carry the boards played to their North-South teammates at their "home" table and proceed to the table where they have not yet played.

After the second round of play, teammates meet to compare scores achieved against the other two teams (six deals against each team). The same procedure is used for the second half of the contest.

At the end of the session, each team will have played 12 boards against each of the other two teams. Depending on the time to be devoted to the competition, and perhaps on the skill level of

participants, the number of boards per round can be decreased to five or increased to seven (20 or 28 boards in all instead of 24).

Four teams make for a simpler round-robin, with each team playing separate matches against the other three. If eight boards are played per match, the round-robin will entail 24 boards in all, a good number for a single session of play.

Round-robin matches are not feasible for a greater number of teams unless multiple sessions of play are planned.

Almost any type of scoring described in Chapter 1, **RUBBER BRIDGE**, can be used for round-robins: Board-a-Match, IMPs, or Victory Points.

Knockout Teams

Knockout team contests are played like tennis matches, with losers dropping out of the competition after every match and winners meeting winners on the next round. As in a tennis match, strong teams may be seeded at opposite ends of the brackets that diagram the matches to be held, thereby maximizing the probability that the two strongest teams will meet in the finals. Alternatively, a random draw can be used, giving weaker teams a better chance of surviving for a round or two. If the number of teams is not a power of 2 (e.g., 8 or 16), one or more top seeded teams are given a "bye" for the first round of play, automatically advancing to the next higher bracket.

While knockout teams are not popular outside of American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) events, one can think of occasions when this type of competition would be appropriate in social bridge (e.g., a month-long contest among teams formed from members of a country club).

Scoring for knockout team events is now universally based on IMPs, with total point scoring a thing of the past.

Board-A-Match Teams

This type of game has each team playing two or more one-board "matches" with other teams. For each deal played, a team wins, loses, or ties, thereby getting 1, 0, or 1/2 Matchpoints. Board-a-match is a real test of card-playing skill and low-level competitive bidding ability, since even a ten-point difference can win a board. In a contest of any length, the more skillful teams rise to the top like cream. As a corollary, it is very uncommon for an underdog team to get lucky and win a board-a-match event.

Teams play each other in round-robin fashion, with the number of boards played in each match dependent upon the number of matches to be played and the time available to do so. Each table in a match relays boards with the other table until both tables have played all boards. Team members then meet to compare scores and see how many Matchpoints the team has won for the round, before proceeding to play the next opponents. After the round-robin is complete, the team with the most Matchpoints wins.

This informal round-robin method is suitable only for eight or fewer teams. Larger board-a-match events have prescribed directions for moving players and boards after each round of play, so that shuffling is necessary only for the first round. These are beyond the scope of this book, especially since this type of bridge is unlikely to interest social players.

Swiss Teams

This game is similar to the method used for many years in major chess tournaments when there was not enough time for a complete round-robin. In bridge, teams meet for short matches (six or seven boards). Teams are matched by draw for the first round of play. On the second round winners meet winners and losers meet losers. Thereafter pairings are based on overall records, highest team meeting next highest and so on, except that teams may not play a second match against each other. Since enough matches must be scheduled to obtain a significant win-loss record, usually two sessions of play are desirable.

It is usual to consider a win by only one or two IMPs as a $3/4$ win, with the loser credited with $1/4$ win. An alternate method of scoring uses a Victory Point schedule. Pairings are then based on Victory Points instead of win-loss records. Chapter 5 includes a Victory Point schedule that is in common use.

Swiss teams are very popular with weaker players, since they tend to meet each other early in the event while strong teams are knocking each other off. This approach gives the weaker teams a chance to be in there at the end.

An odd number of teams can be a problem. There are solutions, but it is better to avoid complications by arranging for an even number of teams. How many? At least 32 teams are needed for a meaningful contest, too many for most social events. We have described Swiss teams only to make the description of team games complete.

Marvin's Team Game - Six Pair Round-Robin Competition

This is an entertaining contest for three tables of players consisting of fixed partnerships. The six pairs can form fifteen different teams-of-four. Each pair can play on five of the possible teams (formed with each of the other pairs). These five teams play mini-matches against the ten other teams, using duplicate boards. Playing two matches per round requires five rounds. Each match is four deals, so everyone plays eight boards a round, making 40 boards in all, too many for one play-through session.

One possible plan: Start competition in the middle of the afternoon, break for food after two rounds, then play the last three rounds. Each round should take no more than one hour. Allow 15 minutes between rounds 1-2, 2-3, and 4-5 for scoring, bathroom, smoking, etc., and one hour between rounds 3-4 for eating and socializing. That makes about six hours and 45 minutes, say seven hours. If you start at 3:30 PM, you eat about 7:00 PM and finish about 10:30 PM. It takes time to get organized and give instructions, and some people will be late, so schedule the time of arrival for 3:00 PM.

A shorter game can be held by playing six-board matches (30 boards in all) or even four-board matches (20 boards in all), although the latter's matches are really too short. Alternatively, a six-board match could be shortened by just quitting at a certain point.

Suggested for food: Hors d'oeuvres during play, buffet dinner, dessert and coffee anytime after that. The emphasis should be on self-service unless a servant is available.

Scoring is either board-a-match (win, tie, or lose each hand, thereby scoring a 1, 1/2, or 0 for each hand) or International Matchpoints (IMPs). Board-a-match is easier for inexperienced players to score, but IMPs make for a more interesting contest. Weaker teams have a slightly better chance of getting lucky with IMP scoring than with board-a-match, and ties are rare. Since the matches are so short, a Victory Point schedule based on IMPs won can be created to minimize the effect of slam swings (slam bid at one table, not at the other) and unusually big IMP scores. Alternatively, matches could result in 3/4 wins for close scores (1-2 IMPs), giving 1/4 win to the loser, as Swiss teams usually do for win-loss scoring.

First prize goes to the pair winning the most matches. Second prize goes to the pair winning most points overall. If the prize is money (no doubt anted up by all at the start), a suggestion is 60% for first prize, 40% for second prize. No more than one prize per pair, so first-prize winners are ineligible for second prize. If Victory Point scoring is used, then first and second prizes are based on Victory Points only.

Pair Numbers and Team Members

After establishing who is the stationary pair 1, draw for the other pair numbers, and record the two names of each pair after their pair number.

The following schedule of play allows for one stationary pair (North-South at Table 1), while all other pairs move and play North-South twice, East-West three times. Each pair meets every other pair twice during the competition. The stationary pair might be the host/hostess (near the kitchen?) or a pair that has a physical limitation.

Round 1: NS/EW

Team 1 - Pairs 1/2

Team 2 - Pairs 3/4

Team 3 - Pairs 6/5

Round 2: NS/EW

Team 4 - Pairs 1/3

Team 5 - Pairs 4/6

Team 6 - Pairs 5/2

Round 3: NS/EW

Team 7 - Pairs 1/4

Team 8 - Pairs 5/3

Team 9 - Pairs 2/6

Round 4: NS/EW

Team 10 - Pairs 1/5

Team 11 - Pairs 2/4

Team 12 - Pairs 6/3

Round 5: NS/EW

Team 13 - Pairs 1/6

Team 14 - Pairs 3/2

Team 15 - Pairs 4/5

General Instructions

Four pencils, individual score cards, and the correct boards should be on the tables before starting.

East-West pairs start at the next higher table than their North-South teammates.

East-West has the right to require North-South to select seats (i.e., who is North, who is South) before taking their seats.

At the start of each round, determine that the boards and opponents are correct, then shuffle and play.

Play the boards on the table, then pass boards to next lower number table. (Table 3 is "below" Table 1), East-West move to next higher number table (Table 1 is "above" Table 3). Check for correct boards and opponents (but don't shuffle!), then play the next group of boards.

After playing the two matches of a round, teammates meet to determine the scores for each of the two four-board matches. A net score is computed for each board by adding the plus or minus score for each pair on that hand (e.g., -140 for one pair, +110 for the other, yields a -30 team score on the board).

For board-a-match scoring, a net plus wins one matchpoint, a tie wins 1/2 matchpoint, and a net minus score gets nothing.

For IMP scoring, the score for each hand is obtained by looking up that score on the IMP scoring table. For a net plus, the IMP score is positive; for a net minus, the IMP score is negative. A team's total IMP score for the match is obtained by subtracting IMPs lost from IMPs won. When recording team wins and losses, an optional method is to score a win of only one or two IMPs as a 3/4 win, giving 1/4 win to the loser. Another option is to convert IMP scores to Victory Points, as described in Chapter 11, **SOCIAL DUPLICATE BRIDGE**.

One team member reports the team's results for each of the two matches to the person acting as scorekeeper, who verifies that the scores received from both teams in each match are in agreement.

At start of the second and succeeding rounds, the correct boards are on Tables 1 and 2 (left over from the preceding round). Table 3 must exchange boards with a "bye stand" holding the four boards that were not in play on the previous round. Using sixteen boards ensures that all vulnerabilities are represented for all dealer positions (although perhaps not equally for each pair).

The following pages provide detailed instructions.

Round 1 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-2	1	1-4 vs Team 3 5-8 vs Team 2
3-4	2	5-8 vs Team 1 9-12 vs Team 3
6-5	3	9-12 vs Team 2 1-4 vs Team 1

Table 1	Pair 1 NS	Boards 1-4	vs Pair 5 EW
	Pair 1 NS	Boards 5-8	vs Pair 4 EW
Table 2	Pair 3 NS	Boards 5-8	vs Pair 2 EW
	Pair 3 NS	Boards 9-12	vs Pair 5 EW
Table 3	Pair 6 NS	Boards 9-12	vs Pair 4 EW
	Pair 6 NS	Boards 1-4	vs Pair 2 EW

Boards 13-16 on a bye stand near Table 3

Round 1 (6-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-2	1	1-3 vs Team 3 4-6 vs Team 2
3-4	2	4-6 vs Team 1 7-9 vs Team 3
6-5	3	7-9 vs Team 2 1-3 vs Team 1

Table 1	Pair 1 NS	Boards 1-3	vs Pair 5 EW
	Pair 1 NS	Boards 4-6	vs Pair 4 EW
Table 2	Pair 3 NS	Boards 4-6	vs Pair 2 EW
	Pair 3 NS	Boards 7-9	vs Pair 5 EW
Table 3	Pair 6 NS	Boards 7-9	vs Pair 4 EW
	Pair 6 NS	Boards 1-3	vs Pair 2 EW

Boards 10-12 on a bye stand near Table 3

Round 2 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-3	4	5-8 vs Team 6 9-12 vs Team 5
4-6	5	9-12 vs Team 4 13-16 vs Team 6
5-2	6	13-16 vs Team 5 5-8 vs Team 4

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 2 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 6 EW
Table 2 Pair 4 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 3 EW
Pair 4 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 2 EW
Table 3 Pair 5 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 5 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 3 EW

Boards 1-4 on a bye stand near Table 3

Round 2 (6-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-3	4	4-6 vs Team 6 7-9 vs Team 5
4-6	5	7-9 vs Team 4 10-12 vs Team 6
5-2	6	10-12 vs Team 5 4-6 vs Team 4

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 2 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 6 EW
Table 2 Pair 4 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 3 EW
Pair 4 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 2 EW
Table 3 Pair 5 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 5 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 3 EW

Boards 1-3 on a bye stand near Table 3

Round 3 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-4	7	9-12 vs Team 9 13-16 vs Team 8
5-3	8	13-16 vs Team 7 1-4 vs Team 9
2-6	9	1-4 vs Team 8 9-12 vs Team 7

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 3 EW
Table 2 Pair 5 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 4 EW
Pair 5 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 6 EW
Table 3 Pair 2 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 3 EW
Pair 2 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 4 EW

Boards 5-8 on a bye stand near Table 3.

Round 3 (6-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-4	7	7-9 vs Team 9 10-12 vs Team 8
5-3	8	10-12 vs Team 7 1-3 vs Team 9
2-6	9	1-3 vs Team 8 7-9 vs Team 7

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 7-9 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 10-12 vs Pair 3 EW
Table 2 Pair 5 NS Boards 10-12 vs Pair 4 EW
Pair 5 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 6 EW
Table 3 Pair 2 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 3 EW
Pair 2 NS Boards 7-9 vs Pair 4 EW

Boards 4-6 on a bye stand near Table 3.

Round 4 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-5	10	13-16 vs Team 12
		1-4 vs Team 11
2-4	11	1-4 vs Team 10
		5-8 vs Team 12
6-3	12	5-8 vs Team 11
		13-16 vs Team 10

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 3 EW
 Pair 1 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 4 EW
 Table 2 Pair 2 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 5 EW
 Pair 2 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 3 EW
 Table 3 Pair 6 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 4 EW
 Pair 6 NS Boards 13-16 vs Pair 5 EW

Boards 9-12 on a bye stand near Table 3.

Round 4 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-5	10	9-12 vs Team 12
		1-3 vs Team 11
2-4	11	1-3 vs Team 10
		4-6 vs Team 12
6-3	12	4-6 vs Team 11
		9-12 vs Team 10

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 3 EW
 Pair 1 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 4 EW
 Table 2 Pair 2 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 5 EW
 Pair 2 NS Boards 4-6 vs Pair 3 EW
 Table 3 Pair 6 NS Boards 4-6 vs Pair 4 EW
 Pair 6 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 5 EW

Boards 7-9 on a bye stand near Table 3.

Round 5 (8-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-6	13	1-4 vs Team 15 5-8 vs Team 14
3-2	14	5-8 vs Team 13 9-12 vs Team 15
4-5	15	9-12 vs Team 14 1-4 vs Team 13

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 5 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 2 EW
Table 2 Pair 3 NS Boards 5-8 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 3 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 5 EW
Table 3 Pair 4 NS Boards 9-12 vs Pair 2 EW
Pair 4 NS Boards 1-4 vs Pair 6 EW

Boards 13-16 can be put away.

Round 5 (6-board matches)

NS/EW Pairs	Team No.	Boards Played
1-6	13	1-3 vs Team 15 4-6 vs Team 14
3-2	14	4-6 vs Team 13 7-9 vs Team 15
4-5	15	7-9 vs Team 14 1-3 vs Team 13

Table 1 Pair 1 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 5 EW
Pair 1 NS Boards 4-6 vs Pair 2 EW
Table 2 Pair 3 NS Boards 4-6 vs Pair 6 EW
Pair 3 NS Boards 7-9 vs Pair 5 EW
Table 3 Pair 4 NS Boards 7-9 vs Pair 2 EW
Pair 4 NS Boards 1-3 vs Pair 6 EW

Boards 10-12 can be put away..

Recording Results

The scorekeeper records the reported scores for each round, both wins/losses and net scores, using tables similar to those below.

Wins and Losses

Pair	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Total
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

Net Points Won

Pair	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Total
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

If Victory Point scoring is used, there will be only one result to record for each team per round instead of win/loss and net points

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CALCUTTAS

A Calcutta game starts with an auctioning off of each contestant, which can be a person or a pair depending on the type of bridge game to be played. When the contestants have been determined, an auctioneer asks for bids on each one. Bidders may be spectators or players. The money raised goes into a pool to be distributed to the "owner(s)" of the winning contestants. Usually some side prizes are awarded directly to the contestants, to provide incentive to those who do not own themselves or a piece of themselves. A portion of the pool can go to a designated charity. Making the Calcutta a fund-raiser for charity may sidestep any local gambling laws that could otherwise apply.

All entrants are seeded according to ability before the bidding starts, with a number of the lowest ranked entrants lumped together as one entry ("the field") for bidding purposes. Including a field entry avoids the embarrassment of being the bottom seed. Whoever owns the field wins if any one contestant within the field succeeds in the contest. The prospective bidders should be given an ordered list of the seeded entries and a copy of the Calcutta's rules.

The entries are auctioned off in the order of highest seed to lowest seed (the field). There is a lot of guesswork involved in determining how much money will be in the total pool. It is wise to establish a minimum bid beforehand. It often happens that a high seed goes for a bid that was quite a bargain based on the later bidding for weaker entries. Many bidders will hang back at first, waiting to see how much money is coming in. Then, not wanting to miss out on the action entirely, they may bid too much (based on the odds of winning) for lower seeded contestants. Or, instead of bidding, they will go to the previous bid winners and offer to buy them out for more money than they paid, or to buy a percentage of the owner's interest. Such jockeying and bargaining is a large part of the fun in a Calcutta. The pool of money obtained from successful bidders can be divided in any pre-announced logical manner, (e.g., 60% for first place, 30% for second, and 10% for third).

A person owning an entry must, if asked, sell part of his/her interest to a player representing the entry. The price paid is based on the owner's cost. The maximum percentage a player may buy is one-half the percentage that the player represents in the entry (e.g., a player in a fixed pair game can buy up to a 25% share, since he/she is one-half of the entry).

One problem with Calcuttas is the matter of ethics. Suppose you come up against a contestant that you have bought, at a time when you have no chance of winning yourself. Would you be tempted to incur a deliberately bad result in order to benefit "your" entry? Owners must be cautioned in advance that results against those in which they have an interest will be closely scrutinized. If an unusual adverse result cannot be rationalized away by the owner, he/she may be disqualified from sharing in the pool. The best solution is to invite only highly ethical people to participate in a Calcutta, those who will play their best, not their worst, against an entry in which they have an interest.

The type of game played in a Calcutta is usually duplicate bridge, but there is no reason why some version of party bridge cannot be used. The Swiss Pair game described in Chapter 4, **GAMES FOR FIXED PARTNERSHIPS**, would be a good choice.

Calcuttas are well-suited to a sport or country club, perhaps deeming the game to be a club championship. Non-playing members will enjoy bidding for ownership of their favorite players and maybe kibitzing the play. The excitement can be increased for spectators and players alike if "barometer" scoring is used, announcing the standings of all contestants after each round of play



16

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR DUPLICATE BRIDGE

The equipment needed for duplicate bridge is not extensive. Most of it can be used over and over again, so the amortized cost is very little.

Card tables should have a hard surface suitable for writing on a single thickness of paper. A popular solution to tabletop crowding is the use of two small side tables at opposite corners, on which players can put drinks and food.

A set of duplicate boards - At least 16, enough for most home games, so that each of the four dealer positions may be assigned all four possible vulnerability situations. Baron Barclay (see chapter 8) sells a set of four boards for \$10.95, 32 boards for \$69.95.

Good cards - One pack per duplicate board

Traveling scoreslip sheets - For matchpoint individual or pair games. Available from Baron Barclay in pads of 200 for \$3. Recapitulation (“recap”) sheets for tallying up scores are also sold.

Guide cards - Player table-changing directions, when not using oral instructions

Convention/private score cards - Optional for home games. The individual scoring side of the ACBL's convention card is an excellent form for recording scores and is useful if only for that purpose. It includes the scale for converting net scores to international Matchpoint (IMP) scores. A simple version is available in quantity from Baron Barclay at a cost of \$5 per 100.

Table markers - Identifying each table's number. Homemade will do.

Bidding boxes (optional, but trendy) - These have become more and more common in tournament play, and in fact are mandatory for regional and national championships of the American Contract Bridge League. Figure 16.1 is a bidding box of standard design. The X card is for a double, XX for redouble. The S and A cards have special uses. There are multiple cards for calls that might be repeated (pass, double, redouble), and one card for each possible bid, from one club to seven notrump.



Figure 16.1. **Bidding Box**

Each player has a box of cards to his/her right that are marked with the possible calls: pass, double, redouble, all bids, and several special-purpose cards. A call is made by placing the appropriate card on the table in front of the player. The second and succeeding calls of each player only partially overlap the previous calls, so a "review of the bidding" entails only a look at the bidding cards around the table. When the bidding is over, the cards are replaced in the box and play begins. The process is simpler in practice than in the description.

Figure 16.2 shows several bid cards placed in front of a player so that opponents can read them. Each succeeding call is placed on the preceding one, working from left to right.



Figure 16.2. **Bidding Cards Placed on the Table**

While it takes a little time to get used to bidding boxes, and they might seem a bit stuffy for social games, they have a number of advantages:

- Calls made during the auction are never misunderstood, and the final contract (undoubled, doubled, or redoubled) is unlikely to become a matter of dispute.
- Informative bidding tone or volume, all too prevalent in social games (and illegal), is eliminated.
- Rooms with multiple tables in play are much quieter.
- Players with hearing problems (which they may not admit to), language difficulties, or speech impediments are accommodated.
- Bidding cannot be overheard by players who have not yet played that deal.

Bidding boxes are available from the first source listed below. The “Bridge Partner” version costs \$29.66 for a set of 4, while a pocket-size portable version for individuals is \$11.66.

Laws of Contract (Rubber) Bridge, 2003 edition. List price is \$5.95

Laws of Duplicate Bridge, 2007 edition - Laws for duplicate bridge differ in some important respects from the laws of rubber bridge, which should not be used for a duplicate bridge contest. List price is \$7.95.

Sources

Bridge supplies are available at Baron-Barclay Bridge Supplies, 3600 Chamberlain Lane, Suite 230, Louisville, KY 40241, toll-free number 1-800-274-2221, www.baronbarclay.com. They have a wide selection of new and popular bridge books, and also have a free catalog, which includes bridge books, instructional materials, and other items of interest to all bridge players..

The ACBL has free software teaching the game of bridge to newcomers, available at www.acbl.org.

For those with internet access, Richard Pavlicek’s website offers free access to printable material for the conduct of duplicate games. The URL is www.rpbridge.net. From there go to “The Home Page of Richard Pavlicek” and click on “Duplicate Forms.” The forms make running a duplicate game a cinch. Everything you need (except pencils and duplicate boards) is provided. All the duplicate forms are in PDF format, which requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader to view and print. This free software allows you to print the files on any printer with the same typeset layout as the original. If you don’t already have it, Mr. Pavlicek provides a link to obtain it.

Marvin French’s web site www.marvinfrench.com provides free downloadable files for both the Laws of Contract (Rubber) Bridge and the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. Also available is a file (Conventional

Wisdom) containing detailed instructions for filling out the ACBL convention card. These are in the section Bridge Laws & Regulations, accessible from the home page.