

BRIDGE – INTERMEDIATE LESSONS I – 27

“Doubles” and Their Many Meanings

There are thirteen (13) “Doubles” in the game of bridge. Each one has a vastly different meaning as to objective, distribution, and strength; yet all are similarly presented during the bidding process, simply, by the use of the word “Double”. For one Partner to fully understand the meaning of the specific “Double” that the other Partner intends at any particular time, Partnerships must have agreement and full appreciation of the varied, and unique bidding environment in which each “Double” is employed. In alphabetical order, they are as follows:

1. Balancing Double: - A Re-Opening Take-Out Double made in the close-out (4th) seat by a Player whose opposition has dropped the bidding at a low level. Such “Doubles” can be made with fewer HCP’s than one made in the direct (2nd) seat, although, not necessarily.

Examples: 1H – P – 1-NT – P (or) 1D – P – P – Dbl.
P – Dbl.

2. Conventional Doubles: - A number of “Doubles,” each an integral part of a list of conventions (“DONT”, “DOPI”, “DOPE”, “DEPO”, “Brozel”, or “Cappelletti,” to name just a few), and each with a specific meaning associated with the convention of which it is a part.

Examples: 1-NT – Dbl. (A part of the “DONT” Convention) - A conventional Overcall asking Partner to “puppet” “2C” so that the overcalling Partner can evidence his/her 6-card or longer suit with which he/she wishes to interfere and compete in the bidding process.

1-NT – Dbl. (A part of the “Brozel” Convention) – A conventional Overcall asking Partner to “puppet” “2C” so that the overcalling Partner can evidence his/her single suit with which he/she wishes to interfere and compete in the bidding process.

1S – P – 3S – P

4-NT – 5H – Dbl. (Shows zero Aces in the “DOPI” Convention used to show the number of Aces subsequent to a “Blackwood,” ace-asking bid by Partner, post interference by the Responder’s RHO.

3. Lead-Directing Double: – A “Double” by a would-be Defender requests the lead of that suit, subsequent to an artificial bid by the opposition, on their way to their final contract.

Examples: 1-NT – P – “2D” – Dbl. (or) 1S – P – 3S – P
4-NT – P – “5H” – Dbl.

4. Lightner Double: - A Specific Lead-Directing Double asking for an unusual lead against a slam bid; usually that of the lead of the first suit bid by Dummy.

Example: 1S – P – 3S – P
4-NT – P – “5H” – P
6S – Dbl.

5. Maximal Double: – A “Double” opposite Partner’s “Negative Double.” It shows an opening hand with HCP count greater (at least one King better) than minimum opening count.

Example: 1D – 1S – Dbl. – 2S
Dbl.

6. Negative Double: - A “Double” by a Responder to an opening, one-of-a-suit bid by Partner, at Responder’s first opportunity to bid, following an immediate, intervening overcall by the would-be Responder’s right-hand Opponent. It evidences that the Responder does not meet one or both of the requirements; i.e., the necessary high-card points and/or the suit length for a response to Opener’s bid, but yet Responder would like to show his/her 6 HCP’s or more, and intended suit(s).

Examples: 1C – 1S – Dbl. (or) 1C – 2H – Dbl.

7. Penalty Double: - A “Double” presented at or above a pre-emptive 4S bid by an Opponent, or one by a Responder to Partner’s opening one-of-a-suit after Responder’s RHO has made a 1-NT overcall, or by a Player of either team, at any level of bidding, after Partner has already made a call other than “Pass”. A “Penalty Double” is made with intent to punish the Opponents, score-wise, for what is perceived to be an un-makeable contract.

Examples: 4S -- Dbl. (or) 1D -- 1-NT -- Dbl. (or) 1H – 1S -- 2H -- 3C
Dbl.

8. Re-Opening Double: - A “Take-Out Double” by an Opening Bidder with intent to re-open the bidding process, subsequent to his/her Responder having previously “Passed,” after one or both of the Opponents has overcalled.

Example: 1H – 2S -- P -- P
Dbl.

9. Responsive Double: - A “Double” for Take-Out by a Responder to an Overcaller, following an immediate raise to the 2- or 3-level in Opener’s same suit, (1) over Partner’s “Take-Out Double” or (2) over Partner’s Overcall; or (3) over a supported weak 2-bid, following Partner’s “Take-Out Double.” The availability and use of “Responsive Doubles,” assists in allowing the overcalling team to further compete.

Examples:

- (1) 1D -- Dbl. -- 2D -- Dbl. (Shows support or tolerance for any of the other three, as-yet, un-bid suits)
- (2) 1D -- 1H -- 2D -- Dbl. (Shows absence of support for Partner’s Heart suit, but the desire to compete, here, in either Clubs or Spades)
- (3) 2D -- Dbl. -- 3D -- Dbl. (Shows support or tolerance for any of the other three, as-yet, un-bid suits)

10. Rosenkranz Double: - A “Double” or “Re-Double” by a Responder to Partner’s Overcall, showing at least 3-card support, *with an A or a K*, in Partner’s Overcall suit, following **two different suits** bid by the Opponents (Example 1), or following a “Negative Double” (Example 3). (As opposed to a direct raise of Partner’s overcall suit which shows 3-card or longer support, *without the A or the K* in Partner’s overcall suit (Examples 2 and 4). The use, or lack thereof, in these instances, encourages, without potential loss of a trick, in *facilitating* or *inhibiting* the lead of this suit by either of the Partners, on defense, when holding either the Ace or the King, *without* the other top honor.

Examples: (1) 1C – 1H – 1S -- Dbl. (2) 1C – 1H – 1S – 2H
(3) 1C – 1H – Dbl. – Re-Dbl. (4) 1C – 1H – Dbl. – 2H

11. Snapdragon Double: - A “Double” similar in character to a “Take-Out Double.” It is a “Double” by a 4th-seat Player subsequent to the first three consecutive Players having each bid a new suit. It follows Partner’s direct, non-jump, new suit, overcall, and a third suit bid by the 4th seat Player’s right-hand Opponent. It promises 5 cards or more in the fourth, as-yet, un-bid, suit, plus tolerance (at least a doubleton honor) for Partner’s overcall suit. (“Snapdragon Doubles” and “Rosenkranz Doubles” are mutually exclusive, and cannot both be used in similar bidding sequences, as the bidding environment for both is identical.)

Example: 1D – 2C – 2H -- Dbl. This “Snapdragon Double” promises a 5-card Spade suit plus 3-card (or longer) support for Partner’s Club suit.

12. Support Double: - A “Double” or a “Re-Double” by an opening Bidder, (usually through the 2-level of Responder’s new suit), following an Overcall or “Take-Out Double” by Opener’s right-hand Opponent, showing 3-card support for Responder’s response of a potential 4-card or longer, new suit bid by Partner.

Examples: 1C – P -- 1H -- 1S (or) 1D – P -- 1S -- Dbl.
Dbl. Re-Dbl.

13. Take-Out (Informative) Double: - A “Double” subsequent to a bid by the Opponents, at or below the level of 4H, under the condition that Partner has not yet bid, exclusive of a previous “Pass.”. Such “Doubles” evidence comparable opening count or better, or its equivalent, and ask Partner to bid his/her best suit so as to attempt to compete in the bidding process.

Examples: 1S -- Dbl. (or) 1H -- P -- 2H – Dbl.