

Bidding over double by *Derrick Browne*

Partner opens 1-major and the next player makes a takeout double. Let's consider responder's actions over the double, taking advantage (as we have before) of US expert Larry Cohen's offer to utilise his material.

Single raises. e.g. 1H (X), 2H have pretty much the same meaning as they would have if the opponents had not doubled, say 6-10 and support.

The jump raise e.g. 1H (X), 3H should be played as pre-emptive, with a weak hand and 4-card support.

What if you really have a limit raise? The modern way to show a limit (or better) raise over an enemy double is to jump to 2NT (called "Truscott" or "Jordan"), e.g. 1H (X), 2NT. The other way to show 10+ points is to redouble; do this when you have no fit for partner.

New suits are commonly played as natural and forcing at the 1-level, and as natural but non-forcing if at the 2-level. Thus after 1H (X), now 1S shows 4+ spades and 6+ points, but after 1H (X), now 2D is natural with 5+ diamonds but is not forcing (you could redouble with 10+ points, so it is probably less than that).

On the following deal, West opened 1S and North made a takeout double. What action should East take?

Dealer West, NS vul.

NORTH  
S A6  
H KQ43  
D A65  
C 9875

WEST  
S KJ753  
H J65  
D 2  
C AK42

EAST  
S 42  
H A982  
D KQ87  
C QJT

SOUTH  
S QT98  
H T7  
D JT943  
C 63

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1S	Dble	Redble	2D
Pass	Pass	Dble	All pass

In response to 1S, East would normally bid 2D, but not after North doubles – now East should redouble to show 10+ points. South bids 2D regardless. What should West do over that?

After your side has announced ownership of the hand by redoubling, it is usually best to either double the opponents yourself or pass the decision around to partner, as here. The vulnerability has East doubling (penalties) on what would otherwise look like a notrump hand.

West leads the CA, with East playing the CQ as an honour signal, promising the CJ. At trick two, West leads a low club, with East's C10 winning. East leads the S4, partner's suit, with (say) the S10 eliciting the SJ which drives out the SA.

If declarer now plays the DA and another diamond, East wins the DQ. A second round of spades is won by West and now a third round of that suit allows East to trump with the low diamond. Thus the defence will garner three trump tricks, plus two clubs, a heart and a spade, for 500 points – more than the score for a non-vulnerable game.