



MATCHPOINTS

VS

IMPS

THE SCORING METHODS

MATCHPOINTS (% Pairs)

- You get compared with every other table that plays the same hand.
- You score a point for everyone you beat, regardless of the score difference. +120 beats +110
- Every hand is equal.

IMPS (+/- Teams)

- Usually comparing against one other result.
- You take the score at your table and the score from the other table and add them together.
- The bigger the score difference, the bigger the IMP Score.
- Game/Slam hands are more important, overtricks don't matter.

MATCHPOINTS



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

MATCHPOINT SCORING

One point available from every score comparison. If there are 11 tables playing the same hand, 10 is a top on a board.

1 point for everyone you beat, $\frac{1}{2}$ a point for everyone you tie.

$$10/10 = 100\%$$

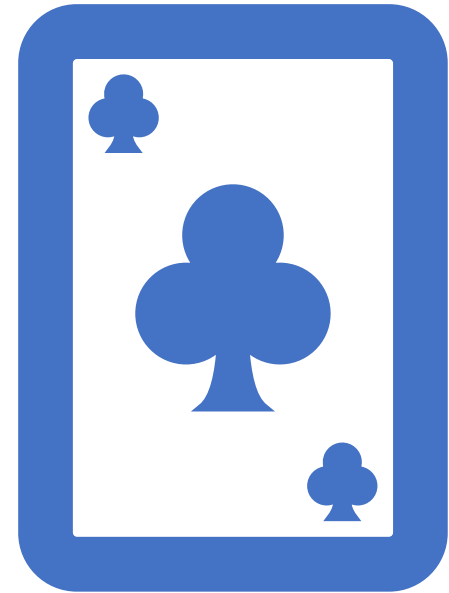
$$5/10 = 50\%$$

Matchpoints is a Mental Game

- Matchpoints is a game of relentless focus
 - Every hand is equal and every trick is important.
- Don't compound bad results
 - The most important part of bridge, amplified by the form of scoring.
- Be a good partner
 - Keeping partner playing their best is probably the most important skill needed at matchpoints.
- Know Your opponents
 - Against the best players in the club, it's ok to make riskier bids.
 - Take advantage of the players you know don't stop bidding.
 - When playing against weaker players, let them make their mistakes.

General Philosophy at Matchpoints

- Vulnerability is everything, being non vulnerable is a license to bid.
 - Down 2 NV is good bridge
- Game Bonus doesn't matter unless the field is in game.
- NT before minors.
- Majors before minors.
- Aggressively compete for the part score.
- Don't get stolen from.
- Every Trick Matters



Vulnerability

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♣

??

YOU

♠ 952

♥ AQT42

♦ 542

♣ 97

License to Bid

At Match Points there is a big incentive to get the opening lead right. Making an aggressive overcall when non vulnerable will help stop partner from giving away tricks on lead.

Vulnerability

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♠

??

YOU



94



32



AQ854



AJ94

Danger of Bidding

-200 is a disaster at matchpoints

Overcalling at the 2 level has 3 major risks

- 1) The auction ends and we are playing at the 2 level with no fit
- 2) Partner pushes to game
- 3) Partner competes and we are too high

Don't Push to Aggressive Games

Plus scores win matchpoint games.

No Game Bonus

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1 ♣	P	1 ♥
P	2 ♥	P	??

YOU

♠ KJ2

♥ KJ93

♦ 762

♣ KT4

Take your Plus Score

You only need to bid games the field is in.
Partner has 12-14 for their 2H response.

Our maximum combined strength is 25 and
we have no shortness or length to help take
tricks in game.

We are better off passing, taking our plus
score and trying to win the hand in the play.

FULL DEAL

 **765**

 **AQ84**

 **KJ**


 **A982**


 **KJ2**

 **KJ93**

 **762**





 **KT4**

 **765**
 **AQ84**
 **KJ**
 **A982**

 **KJ2**
 **KJ93**
 **762**
 **KT4**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
2♥	S	+1	140	
4♥	S	-1		50
2♥	S	+1	140	
2♥	S	+1	140	
2♥	S	+1	140	
4♥	S	-1		50
2♥	S	=	110	
2♥	S	=	110	
4♥	N	-2		100
2♥	S	+1	140	

 **765**
 **AQ84**
 **Q4**
 **A982**

 **KJ2**
 **KJ93**
 **762**
 **KT4**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
2♥	S	-1		50
3♥	S	-1		50
2♥	S	+1	110	
2♥	S	+1	110	
2♥	S	+1	110	
3♥	S	-1		50
2♥	S	=	110	
2♥	S	=	110	
3♥	N	-2		100
2♥	S	+1	140	

Majors over Minors

The difference between +140 and +130 is everything at matchpoints. This can sometimes influence our decision making during the bidding.

Majors Before Minors

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1♥	P	1♠
P	2♦	P	??

YOU

♠ J942

♥ J7

♦ A932

♣ K82

THE FALSE PREFERENCE

Partner's 2D Bid showed 5H + 4D with 12-18
HCP

We clearly like diamonds more than hearts.

If our partner has 16-18 points we belong in game, so passing 2D carries some risk. We also know that we have a combined minimum of 21 points and 7 hearts and 8 diamonds

The correct bid on this hand is to bid 2H. It keeps the auction alive and hearts pays more.

FULL DEAL

 **J942**

 **J7**

 **A932**

 **K82**

 **53**

 **KQ942**

 **KQ86**

 **A4**

 **J942**

 **J7**

 **A932**

 **K82**

 **53**

 **KQ942**

 **KQ86**

 **A4**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
2♥	S	+1	140	
2♦	S	+2	130	
3N	N	-1		50
2♦	S	+2	130	
2♦	S	+2	130	
3N	N	-1		50
2♦	S	+2	130	
2♦	S	+2	130	
3N	N	-1		50
2♥	S	+1	140	

NT over Minors

The difference between +120 and +110 is everything at matchpoints. This can sometimes influence our decision making during the bidding.

NT Before Minors

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1♦	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	??

YOU

♠ T84

♥ QJT7

♦ A953

♣ K82

Which Partial is Better?

We have an 8 card diamond fit

Partner's 1D bid initially promised 3. The only time it can be 3 is when they are 4-4-3-2. We know they do not have this shape because they would have supported hearts.

Even with our sure 8 card diamond fit, we are much better off playing in 1NT.

This could be true even if we don't have a perfect club stopper.

FULL DEAL

 **QJ93**

 **43**

 **KQ74**

 **AJT**

 **T84**

 **QJT7**

 **A953**

 **K82**

	QJ93
	43
	KQ94
	AJT

	T84
	QJT7
	A953
	K82

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
1N	S	+1	120	
1N	S	+1	120	
2♦	N	+1	110	
2♦	N	+1	110	
2♦	N	+1	110	
1N	S	+2	150	
1N	S	+2	150	
2♦	N	+1	110	
2♦	N	=	90	

Competing for the Part Score

Don't let the opponents have the contract at a low level. Competing for the part score has multiple ways you can gain.

Competing

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

		1 ♠	P
2 ♠	P	P	??

YOU



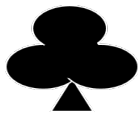
92



KJ53



A94



QT85

Don't Sell Out

Risk vs Reward here suggests balancing double is correct.

Multiple ways to win

1. It could be our hand when partner has a nice hand with the wrong distribution to act
2. We could buy it for 3 of a suit and go down 1 or 2 undoubled for a better score than -110
3. The opponents may compete to 3S and go down.

The major risk of bidding is going for a number. Going -300 or -500 is entirely possible. We have to weigh this risk against the possible gains.

FULL DEAL

 **92**

 **KJ53**

 **A94**

 **QT85**

 **865**

 **A742**

 **Q865**

 **K4**

 **92**
 **KJ53**
 **A94**
 **QT85**

 **865**
 **A742**
 **Q865**
 **K4**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
2♠	E	+1		140
2♠	E	=		110
2♠	E	=		110
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠	N	-1	50	
3♥	S	-1		50
3♠	E	-1	50	
3♥X	N	-1		100
2♠	N	=		110

Don't Get Stolen From

Sometimes we have to aggressively double the opponents to compensate for our expected plus score.

Don't Get Stolen From

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1♥	1♠	2♥
2♠	3♥	3♠	??

YOU


♠ **KJ4**
♥ **K53**
♦ **JT542**
♣ **T9**

Protect Your Scores

When we are entitled to +140, defending 3S undoubled risks us getting only +100.



We don't know for sure that 3S is going down, but we rate to get a below average board if it makes even if we don't double.

 **2**
 **AQT84**
 **K73**
 **A542**

 **KJ4**
 **K53**
 **JT542**
 **T9**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
3♥	E	=	140	
3♠	E	-1	100	
3♠	E	=		140
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠	E	-1	100	
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠X	E	-1	200	
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠	N	-1	100	

 **2**
 **AQT84**
 **K73**
 **A542**

 **KJ4**
 **K53**
 **JT542**
 **T9**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
3♥	E	=	140	
3♠	E	=		140
3♠	E	=		140
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠	E	-1	100	
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠X	E	=		730
3♥	N	=	140	
3♠	N	-1	100	

Matchpoints During the Play

Every Trick Matters: Should we risk the contract for overtricks?

NORTH

♠ A 4
♥ K 4 3
♦ A J T 7 4
♣ A 8 4

LEAD: Q ♠



SOUTH

♠ K 7
♥ A 5 2
♦ 9 3 2
♣ K Q J 7 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

			1♣
P	1♦	P	1N
P	3N	P	P
P			

- Count your tricks
- 10 sure tricks, any chance at 11?
- We win the King of spades and play a diamond to the ten, it loses to the Queen.

NORTH

♠ A 4
♥ K 4 3
♦ A J T 7 4
♣ A 8 4







SOUTH

♠ K 7
♥ A 5 2
♦ 9 3 2
♣ K Q J 7 3





WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
			1♣
P	1♦	P	1N
P	3N	P	P
P			

- Count your tricks
- 10 sure tricks, any chance at 11?
- We win the King of spades and play a diamond to the ten, it loses to the Queen.
- They play back another spade, taking away our last spade stopper.
- Should we take our tricks or risk our contract?
- At Matchpoints, in a normal contract, the % chance that one diamond honor is onside is so high that it is worth taking the finesse risking the contract.

 **A4**
 **K43**
 **AJT74**
 **A84**

 **K7**
 **A52**
 **932**
 **KQJ73**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+!	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+3	690	

 **A4**
 **K43**
 **AJT74**
 **A84**

 **K7**
 **A52**
 **932**
 **KQJ73**

C	D	result	Plus	Minus
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+!	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	+1	630	
3N	S	-1		100

When is it ok to risk our contract for overtricks?

- When we are in a normal contract
 - If we have bid to an aggressive contract and making it will be a good score, we should not risk it for an even better score.
- When the chance of success is very high
 - We are not recklessly looking to take the most tricks. We need to know that the chances of success are higher than the chances of failure.

NORTH

♠ 6 5 4
♥ A K Q
♦ Q 9 4 2
♣ J T 3

LEAD: 2 ♠



SOUTH

♠ A K
♥ 7 6 5
♦ K J T 3
♣ A Q 6

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

			1N
P	3N	P	P
P			

- Count your tricks
- We win the Ace of spades at trick one
- What is our plan?

NORTH

♠ 6 5 4
♥ A K Q
♦ Q 9 4 2
♣ J T 3



SOUTH

♠ A K
♥ 7 6 5
♦ K J T 3
♣ A Q 6

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
			1N
P	3N	P	P
P			

- Count your tricks
- We win the Ace of spades at trick one
- We knock out the ace of diamonds
- The opponents take out our other spade stopper.
- We have 9 tricks without the club finesse. Should we take the finesse?

Answer: YES, The opening lead told us that spades are likely 4-4. Losing the club finesse will still likely have us making the contract.

Declarer Play at Match Points

Should we try to make it?

NORTH

♠ 9 6
♥ Q 8
♦ A K T 9 8
♣ J T 9 4

LEAD: 2 ♠



SOUTH

♠ A 4
♥ K 7 5 2
♦ 5 4 3
♣ A K Q

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

			1N
P	3N	P	P
P			

- Count your tricks
- We win the Ace of spades
- We have 7 top tricks.
- Our best play to make the contract would be trying to play a small diamond to the ten.
- The chances of success are only 25% (need both the queen and jack in west).
- At matchpoints, we are better off knocking out the heart and going down 1 instead of taking an anti-percentage chance at making.

1

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

1 ♠ P ??

YOU

♠ A53
♥ K96
♦ KT32
♣ T98

2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

2 ♠ 2N P ??

YOU

♠ T3
♥ T85
♦ AQ984
♣ J32

3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

			1N
P	2♥	P	2♠
P	4N	P	??

YOU

♠ KJ2
♥ KJT
♦ AJT64
♣ K5

4

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1♥	P	2♥
P	P	3♣	??

YOU

♠ 94
♥ K87
♦ JT32
♣ KT72

5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

2♠ P ??

YOU

♠ K762

♥ AK3

♦ AJ4

♣ KQT

6

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

1♠ P 1N
P 3♠ P

YOU

♠ Q2

♥ KJ73

♦ QT94

♣ KJ3

7

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1♦	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	??

YOU

♠ A2
 ♥ QJ94
 ♦ T863
 ♣ Q54

8

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
------	-------	------	-----

	1N	P	?
--	----	---	---

YOU

♠ QJ3
 ♥ Q754
 ♦ AJ6
 ♣ KJ6

Answer Key

1. 2S We don't want to be aggressive to invite game at matchpoints
2. Pass Again its not a good idea to push to aggressive games at matchpoints
3. 6N This hand is close between 6S and 6N, with such a good hand and a possible side source of tricks, The extra 10 points NT will pay are inviting.
4. X They may make it but there is a big incentive to double them to try to get +300 instead of +50/+100
5. 3N 3NT might go down on a diamond lead on really bad day but its worth the risk at matchpoints for the extra 10 points.
6. 3N We have 8 spades but also have double stoppers in every suit. Consider bidding 3NT
7. 1N We have a known 8 card diamond fit, but NT pays more. You see the theme yet ?
8. 3N No reason to find a 4-4 fit when we are this balanced.