

STAMFORD BRIDGE CLUB

20th January 2016

Take Out Doubles Part Two

First - Revision from June 2015

A take out double requires partner to show **the nature of his hand and its strength**

We've looked at situations where the opponents have opened the bidding e.g:

(1♣) - Dbl - (Pass) - ?

where a "normal" double shows the other three suits

(1♣) - (Pass) - 1♠ - Dbl

Where a "normal" double shows hearts and diamonds, the unbid suits

Today we'll look at these types of auction:

Partner opens and the opponents overcall in a suit:

e.g. 1♦ (2♣) X where X shows the
 majors

 1♥ (1♠) X where X shows the
 minors

 1♠ (2♣) X where X shows
 hearts & diamonds

These are traditionally known as **negative doubles*** but are just a form of **takeout double**

to distinguish them from **positive doubles which are for penalties*

As you'll see, we shall restrict ourselves to auctions where the opponents bid a suit (so not, say, where they double or bid no trumps).

We'll also have an example later where the opponents bid and support a suit and partner overcalls

e.g. (1♥) 1♠ (2♥) X where again double is for takeout and, here, shows the minors

Traditionally this is known as a **competitive double** but, again, it's just another example of a **takeout double**

To date where double has been our side's first call we've used **S O S** as a memory aid:

Support for all unbid suits (at least 3 cards in each suit – more usually 443 or 444)

Opening values

Shortage in the opened suit(s)

Can we use our SOS guideline still?

Well, yes, with some refinement.

Support

With partner and an opponent bidding a suit each, there are now just **two suits** for which we **usually** have 4card support

Opening values

No! We don't need opening values.

Partner, in bidding, has shown values so this condition is very much relaxed.

When responder doubles it depends on the level at which this is done. This is the guideline:

1 level	6+ high card points (“hcps”)
2level	8+hcps
3+level	10+hcps

The minimum requirements at the 2 and 3 levels are lower than for suit bids because they often don’t commit the partnership to a higher level* (suit bids are forcing).

***so we may play at the 2 level with a combined 20 hcps (22hcps at the 3level)
... reasonably comfortable**

Shortage

Yes we’ll probably have at most a doubleton in the opponents’ suit. The more cards there the more defensive the hand and the more reluctant we should be to “get busy”.

We can consider a fourth criterion

Tolerance

We're likely to have 2/3 cards in partner's suit.

Let's look at some examples:

Partner opens 1♦ and right hand opponent bids 2♣ (be flexible with hcps)

♠ A 7 6 5

♥ K Q 9 6

♦ 9 8 4

♣ 3 2

Perfect for X with 4/4 in the majors. We have some diamond support in reserve.

♠ K 9 8 3

♥ A 9 6

♦ 10 9 8 3

♣ 5 3

Would prefer a 4th heart but X is fine. An ace and a king are worth more than 7 hcps. We have real diamond support in reserve.

♠ K J 9 6
 ♥ Q 10 9 6 3
 ♦ 8 7 4
 ♣ 2

*Distribution makes up for lack of hcps.
 Perfect for X. If partner rebids 2 ♦ happy too.*

♠ K 9 8 3
 ♥ A 9 6
 ♦ 3
 ♣ J 10 6 5 4

X is dangerous. It may work if partner bids a major (especially spades) but often he'll rebid 2 ♦. Better to pass – the hand looks good for defence (trump stack, short in partner's suit)

There are some sequences that have quite strict rules:

1♣ (1♦) X Promises 4/4majors
(This gives opener two bites of the cherry should 4th hand bid 2♦)

1♣/ (1♥) X 6+, denies 4spades
 1♦
(often no heart stop - else bid no trumps with a balanced hand)

1♣/ (1♠) X Always promises 4hearts
 1♦
(2♥ instead would show 10+hcps with 5+hearts)

(Talk Hand 1)

We want to be flexible but we do put more emphasis on the majors. After, say, 1♣ (1♠) you hold:

♠ 7 3

♥ K Q 6 3 2

♦ 8 6 5

♣ Q 4 2

You are not strong enough to bid 2♥ (10+hcps) but X is OK with this light hand and a fifth heart. If partner bids 2♣/2♦ /2♥ you'll pass (but be most pleased with 2♥)

Any auction where the opponents bid a major, our X promises 4cards in the other major

e.g. 1♠ (2♣) X Shows 4hearts (often 4diamonds too)

1♥ (2♦) X Shows 4spades (often 4clubs too)

Again, whilst we want some flexibility, we put greater emphasis on knowing of the possibility of a major suit fit

You'll see in these examples and the workshop that these doubles generally show flattish hands. In fact don't use these doubles with:

- An invitational hand with a 5card major and 4card side suit (bid 2major, forcing)
- A game forcing hand with a 4card major and a 5card minor (example on next slide)

♠ 7 4 3

♥ 8 5

♦ A K J 10 6 4

♣ K Q 4

♠ A 9 5

♥ A 10 7 6

♦ Q 8

♣ A J 10 9 6

1♦ (1♠) X (P)

2♦ (P) ? 3N is likely

1♦ (1♠) 2♣ (P)

2♦ (P) 2♥ (P)

3♣ (P) 4♣ (P)

4♦ (P) 6♣* All P Much better!

*anyone for 7♣?

To what level to we use Takeout Doubles?

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT IS ESSENTIAL

**Very modern bidding allows takeout
doubles to very high levels but a
reasonable stopping off point would be 4♥
(this includes a double of 4♥ as takeout)**

That approach translates to

1♠ - (3♦*) - Dbl is for **takeout
*bid below 4♥ (hearts and clubs)**

1♣ - (4♠*) - Dbl is for **penalties
*bid above 4♥**

We mentioned at the start the use of **competitive doubles**, again another **takeout double**. Here's an example:

(Talk Hand 2)

We can also use takeout doubles after partner has made a takeout double.

e.g. (1♠) X (2♠) X

where the second double is for takeout (sometimes called a responsive double).

You'll find a couple of examples in the workshop hands.

From today's and June's workshop you will see that the use of takeout doubles is so beneficial that we are moving towards a general rule:

“Doubles are for takeout until we've found a fit”

Now there are some rules that generate exceptions to this. We shall consider these in a separate workshop.

Those exceptions become our **penalty doubles**.

Let's play some bridge

Small clue : on one hand (if you're in the right compass position), you can **cue bid the opponents' suit** to say “partner, I'm forcing to game but I'm not sure what the contract will be. Please co-operate.”