

Cross-IMP Scoring

The majority of Pairs sessions are scored using Match Points (MPs).

Sometimes, we score Pairs sessions using Cross-IMPs, which are explained here. Cross-IMP scoring can be seen as “Teams scoring for Pairs”, where:

- games and slams are more important;
- making a contract is more important than worrying about overtricks; and
- unrealistic sacrifices are even worse than in MPs.....

What are IMPs (International Match Points)? It is a non-linear comparison of how far your score is from that of others. If you bid and make 4♥ vulnerable you get +620; if you went one off you are -100; the difference is 720, or 12 IMPs (see the table below, which is on the bottom of a score card). But the difference between 4♥ (620) and 4♥+1 (650) is only 1 IMP.

0 - 10 = 0 IMP	220 - 260 = 6 IMP	600 - 740 = 12 IMP	1750 - 1990 = 18 IMP
20 - 40 = 1 IMP	270 - 310 = 7 IMP	750 - 890 = 13 IMP	2000 - 2240 = 19 IMP
50 - 80 = 2 IMP	320 - 360 = 8 IMP	900 - 1090 = 14 IMP	2250 - 2490 = 20 IMP
90 - 120 = 3 IMP	370 - 420 = 9 IMP	1100 - 1290 = 15 IMP	2500 - 2990 = 21 IMP
130 - 160 = 4 IMP	430 - 490 = 10 IMP	1300 - 1490 = 16 IMP	3000 - 3490 = 22 IMP
170 - 210 = 5 IMP	500 - 590 = 11 IMP	1500 - 1740 = 17 IMP	3500 - 3990 = 23 IMP
			4000 and up = 24 IMP

Scoring

Hand 15 from 26/2/2026 is shown right as an example.

Taking N/S Pair 4 for the example, they go two off in 2♠ making 6 tricks, for -200. This is then compared against the results from the other tables.

Board No 15 N/S Vul Dealer South									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	NS X	EW X
3	6	4♥	E	♠7	8	100		+31	-31
4	5	2♠	N	♣2	6		200	-1	+1
7	1	3NT	E	♣2	10		430	-27	+27
9	8	3NT	E	♣7	10		430	-27	+27
10	2	5♦	W	♣A	10	50		+24	-24

As summarised in the table on the right, on Table 1, N/S Pair 3 make +100, which is 300 more than “our” N/S Pair 4. From the IMPs table above, a difference in the range 270-310 equates to 7 IMPs.

Table	NS Score	Pair 4 diff.	IMPs
1	+ 100	- 300	- 7
2 (Pair 4 N/S)	- 200		
3	- 430	+ 230	+ 6
4	- 430	+ 230	+ 6
5	+ 50	- 250	- 6
<i>Hand 15 Total N/S Pair 4 =</i>			- 1

This is repeated for all tables to derive a total, in this example -1 for N/S pair 4 on this hand.

This is divided by the number of scores compared (4 in the above example). (NB: Not 26/2/2026 scores.)

This is then repeated for all hands, to derive an overall score.

On Hand 15 above, you will see that E/W Pairs 1 and 8, who both bid 3NT and made 3NT+1, get +27 IMPs (before division) – games are good!