

Negative Doubles Part 2

Our Discussion Continued
From Last Week

The Negative Double Above the 2-level

- Last week we considered the negative double when the opener's response will come at the one or two level.
- Now, we will look at the negative double when the opener's response will be at the 3 level or higher.

First Consideration

- On the back side of the convention card, there is a section titled “Special Doubles.”
- In that section, you indicate how high you play negative doubles.
- Some pairs play negative doubles through:
 - 2 spades
 - 3 spades
 - All levels.
- Personally, I think you should play negative double through 3 spades or through all levels.

A Partnership Agreement

- Talk it over with partner and agree on the level through which you play negative doubles.
- For our discussion, we will talk about playing negative doubles through three spades.

Consider This Auction

Responder's Hand

♠ K Q 7 4

♥ 4 2

♦ A 10 9 7 3

♣ Q 3

north east south west

1♣ 3♥ dble

An almost perfect hand for a negative double.

- If you were not playing negative doubles here, you would not have a bid.
- With negative doubles, your hand can support almost any hand partner has.
- With this hand you will pass whatever partner bids.

Another Example

Responder's Hand

♠ J 4

♥ A J 4 2

♦ 9 7 3

♣ A J 9 3

north east south west

1♠ 3♦ dble pass

3♥

- With 13+ points, once partner has chosen a suit, you can bid on to game.
- Once again you are getting to the same contract you would have bid, had east been silent.

When Opener's Response Will Be At the Four Level

Responder's Hand

♠ 8 4

♥ A 3

♦ K J 7 5

♣ A 10 9 7 4

north east south west

1♥ 3♠ dble pass

4♦ pass

- If partner's response will be at the 4 level, you must have opening count to make a negative double.
- You might be right on the edge here, but you surely want to give game a try.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ Q 8 6 5 4

♥ 4 2

♦ A 5 2

♣ Q10 9

north east south west

1♥ 2♦ pass

- You must pass with this hand.
- You might want to bid 2♠, but it would be wrong with this hand.
- You might want to double, but that, too, would be wrong with only 3 clubs.
- Partner still has a bid.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ Q 4

♥ A 4 2

♦ A 8 7 5 2

♣ 10 9 3

north east south west

1♠ 3♣ dble

- You can double with this hand, but it is not ideal.
- If partner rebids diamonds, pass
- If partner rebids hearts, sign off at 3 spades.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ Q 4

♥ K Q J 8 4 2

♦ J 8 7

♣ 10 3

north east south west

1♠ 3♣ dble

- This is another difficult hand.
- 9 points. Too weak for a direct 3♥.
- You can double, because you have the hand to handle it.
- If partner bids hearts, give game a try
- If partner bids diamonds, bid 3♥.
- If partner bids spades pass.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ A 10

♥ Q 9 7 5

♦ A J 10 7

♣ A 3

north east south west

1♠ 3♣ dble

- This is another difficult hand.
- You have 9 points, the two unbid suits, and a good enough hand to handle anything at the 3 level.
- You'll pass whatever partner bids.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ K 10 7 4 2

♥ A 7 5

♦ A K J 3

♣ 3

north east south west

1♣ 3♥ 3nt

- You have enough to bid 3 spades, but no trump might be the best contract even if partner has support for spades.
- Again, these are borderline hands.
- I'm suggesting what I think might be best.
- No guarantees. .

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ K J 10 7

♥ A

♦ K Q J 3

♣ Q J 7 3

north east south west

1♣ 3♥ dble

- You have a massive hand.
- Slam is a good possibility, but you have to find out what partner has.

You Won't Always be Dealt the Perfect Hand for a Negative Double

Responder's Hand

♠ A K 10 7

♥ 2

♦ J 3

♣ K J 9 8 6 3

north east south west

1♣ 3♥ dble

- This is far from ideal, but, you have to do something.
- If you bid partner's clubs, you eliminate the possibility of playing in spades.
- If you double and partner bids diamonds, you will bid game in clubs.

What if They Overcall at the 4 Level?

- Four level is beyond the level many people play negative doubles.
- A double after a 4-level overcall is penalty oriented, but partner may bid if he deems it best.
- That means when you double, you must be prepared for partner to bid or pass.
- You must have transferrable values – values that will work whatever partner elects to do.

Imagine This Auction

Responder's Hand

♠ Q J 6

♥ 9 8 6 4

♦ Q 10 8 5

♣ 6 3

north east south west

1♣ 4♦ pass

- If you double and partner passes, you are almost sure to beat 4♦.
- If partner bids on, your hand will be a big disappointment.
- You must pass.
- Partner still has a bid coming. If she doubles, you can happily pass.

Imagine This Auction

Responder's Hand

♠ K Q 6

♥ A J 10 4

♦ Q 8 5

♣ A 10 5

north east south west

1♣ 4♦ dble

- Double with this hand, but you would rather partner pass.
- If partner chooses to bid on, your hand is more than adequate.

Imagine This Auction

Responder's Hand

♠ K Q 6

♥ A J 10 4

♦ Q 8 5

♣ A 10 2

north east south west

1♣ 4♦ dble

- Double with this hand, but you would rather partner pass and play defense.
- But, if partner chooses to bid on, your hand will not disappoint.

Imagine This Auction

Responder's Hand

♠ K Q 6 2

♥ A J 10 4

♦ 5

♣ A Q 10 3

north east south west

1♣ 4♦ dble

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- Double with this hand, but you would rather partner bids on, especially if partner has a 4-card major.
- But, if partner chooses to play defense, your hand will not disappoint.

Final Thoughts

- Whenever you make a negative double, you must have some idea of where the hand is going to go.
- Give a thought to partner's likely bids and what you will do when he makes one of them.
- Doubles at a high level (4 level or higher) should be made with transferrable values. Values that work on offense and defense.
- When you open and partner doubles a 4 or 5 level overcall, think carefully about your hand, but you should pass most of the time.
- You will bid on only with a highly distributional hand.