

TEAMS TACTICS

Emphasizes the three most important aspects of the game

- 1) Sound bidding
- 2) Safe play
- 3) Accurate defence

Avoid obvious mistakes.

Makeable games and slams must be bid.

Accurate bidding and good judgement is important. Overcall with good suits.

Make the contract and then think about overtricks. Try to think of safety plays.

Aim for the safest contract. It is important to get a plus score. Do not risk a minus for a better score.

In suit slams you need aces and voids. If you are missing the ace of trump then you run the risk of getting a singleton lead followed by a ruff. A NT slam will be safer.

Poor trump texture together with balanced shape suggest that the safest spot is NT.

At teams you should compete less when the result is unpredictable.

If two equal teams are matched up the swings will mostly come from the part score zone.

Overcall aggressively with a good suit. Can overcall on a very good 4 card suit at the 1 level.

Law of total tricks. Bid to the same number of tricks as your side has trumps.

If you have a misfit, quit. Get out of the bidding as low as possible.

Never double part scores higher than two D unless you are certain of defeating them.

At the game level you should compete much more aggressively. In auctions where both sides are bidding, and you are uncertain of defeating their game then it pays to bid one more. Do not bid one more if you are certain that neither contract can make. Good judgment is essential.

Go on bidding with good long suits but not a lot of aces. Choose to defend with a more balanced hand with several aces. Values in your own suits mean that you should play the hand. Values in the opponents suits favour defence. The total trick count will be reduced.

When not sure what to do then leave it to partner.

The player with the length in the opponents trump suit should make the final decision.

The partner with the less defined hand should make the final decision.

If either partner has bid NT then the other usually has a good idea of the value of their hand.

PENALTY DOUBLES

Double their games if you expect to get them off. If you have 4 of their trumps and 2 trump tricks X.

Do not X part scores that will give them a game score unless you are certain of a 2 trick defeat.

If three suits have been bid then a double is for penalties.

Doubtful sacrifices at teams are really against the odds and can lose the match.

Advanced sacrifices are the only type of sacrifice worth taking at teams. If you can bid to a high level before the opponents have an opportunity to discover their strength and fit it can be good.

Preempts at teams should be disciplined. Stick to the rule of two and three. Almost all your values should be in your suit and the suit should have good texture. In third seat the requirements can be relaxed because you want to make it difficult for the fourth player.

If you are faced with bidding over a pre-empt you sometimes need to make doubtful bids. Partner needs to be aware of this and allow some space. Do not become too aggressive. Overcaller will expect two tricks from partner.

Hand Evaluation.

Point count is only one measure of a hands worth.

Intermediate cards in your suit improve the value.

High cards in long suits improve the value of the hand.

Balanced shape downgrades the hand. Upgrade if lots of As and Ks. Downgrade if mostly Qs and Js.

A nine card fit and 23HCP means you've got a good chance for 10 tricks.

The fifth level belongs to them. Only bid on with extreme distribution and a good fit with all values in your suits.

Defence

To do well at teams you need to be a very good defender. You need to defeat those 45% games whenever possible. 50% of the time you will be defending and only 25% playing the hand.

1. Making a good lead most of the time
2. Not giving away cheap tricks.
3. Having a good system of signals and discards.
4. Keeping track of partner's probable points.
5. Counting all suits.

There are two key concepts associated with defence

ACTIVE versus PASSIVE defence.

Leading a trump is passive. It usually does not give away a trick.

If declarer has a long suit to set up you need to be active and take your own tricks quickly. Listen to the bidding to decide which program to adopt.

Lead trumps to cut down ruffing power if a crossruff is likely.

Forcing defence. - If you have 4 or more trumps sometimes declarer will lose control if you make him ruff. Lead longest suit.

To defend well COUNTING is important.

1. Counting declarer's shape and points
2. Counting partner's shape and points
3. Counting declarer's tricks and counting defender's possible tricks.

At Teams you should take more risks in defence than at pairs. Overtricks do not matter so much. You should be fairly aggressive if there's a chance of defeating the contract.

After the match the team should discuss the mistakes in a calm and friendly atmosphere. The aim is to be constructive and for everyone to learn from the teams mistakes.

It is helpful if each player can admit her own mistakes. We all make them. Do not become defensive if someone else suggests how something could have been better.