

SCORING and SACRIFICING in Duplicate Bridge by Maritha

Rule #1 of Sacrificing: Be 90% sure that the opponents are making their bid before sacrificing.

Rule #2 of Sacrificing: See Rule #1.

There are several numbers to bear in mind:

- 1) *Any part score* (below game) is usually **less than 200**.
- 2) *Nonvulnerable games* are **400** (3NT or 5 of minor) or **420** (major) [plus any overtricks].
- 3) *Vulnerable games* are **600** (3NT or 5 of minor) or **620** (major) [plus any overtricks].
- 4) *Nonvulnerable small slams* are **920, 980, or 990**.
- 5) *Vulnerable small slams* are **1370, 1430, or 1440**.
- 6) *Nonvulnerable grand slams* are **1440, 1510, or 1520**.
- 7) *Vulnerable grand slams* are **2140, 2210, or 2220**.
- 8) Down tricks, undoubled, nonvulnerable, are 50 each.
- 9) Down tricks, undoubled, vulnerable, are 100 each.
- 10) Down tricks, doubled, nonvulnerable, are 100, 300, 500, 800, 1100, etc. (300 each thereafter)
- 11) Down tricks, doubled, vulnerable, are 200, 500, 800, 1100, 1400, etc. (300 each thereafter)

A few basic principles:

Part Scores

If your opponents are playing in a part score, you cannot afford to go down one, doubled, if you are vulnerable (-200).

When the points are fairly evenly divided (a competitive auction), the “Law of Total Tricks” says that the pair with an 8-card fit cannot make more than 2. The pair with the 9-card fit can probably make 3.

You rarely get a good score for letting the opponents play at the 2 level.

Games & Sacrifices

At **favorable vulnerability** (they are red; you are white), you can afford to go **down 3** (doubled) if you are sure that they have a game. (Beware the phantom sacrifice!!!)

At **even vulnerability** (both white OR both red), you can afford to go **down 2** (doubled), if you are *sure* that they have a game.

At **unfavorable vulnerability** (you’re red; they are white), you can only afford to go **down 1** (doubled) in your sacrifice against their game.

Slams & Sacrifices

At **favorable vulnerability**, you can afford to go **down 5** (doubled) against a minor-suit small slam or **down 6** against a major-suit or NT small slam. (Beware the phantom sacrifice!!!) You can afford to go **down 6** (doubled) against their grand slam.

At **even vulnerability**, you can afford to go **down 4** (doubled) against a small slam, if you and they are nonvulnerable. You can afford to go **down 6** (doubled) against a grand slam, if you and they are nonvulnerable. You can afford to go **down 4** doubled against a minor small slam or **down 5** doubled against a major or NT small slam, if you are both vulnerable. You can afford to go **down 7** (doubled) against a grand slam, if you are both vulnerable.

At **unfavorable vulnerability**, you can only afford to go **down 3** (doubled) against their small slam or **down 5** (doubled) against their grand slam.

Warning: It is rarely right to redouble a contract at the bridge table. If the opponents double you, and you make your contract, you are usually getting a top score anyway, so you don’t need the redouble. If you redouble and go down, you lose extra points. Or, if you redouble and they run, you’ve just thrown away your chance to make a doubled contract. Thus, most redoubles have other meanings.