

## Sacrifice Bids are overrated

This statement is attributable to top player, David Anderson. Three things can go wrong when you sacrifice: -

- (a) The penalty may be too great and cost more than their game contract
- (b) They may not be going to make their game contract anyway
- (c) They may bid one more and make it for a greater bonus

All too often, players wheel out a gadget because they have one available. e.g.

(4S) – 4NT – (P) – 5C

All Pass

5C goes off two tricks quietly. Unfortunately, 4S also goes two off. Both sides are out of their depth, and we should resist playing this way.

It is best to sacrifice only when our fit is huge. Then, we know that we were only getting at most one trick in that suit. Sacrifices should be a co-operative process – both players showing a lot of cards in our suit

### A few tips about making a sacrifice:

We have all heard the expression “the 5 level belongs to the opponents” but we also know there are times when it is correct to sacrifice (As mentioned by Ken above)

Sacrificing means bidding over the opponents, expecting to fail. You hope that either you will be cheaper than the opposing making game contract; or your opponents bid one more and go down.

Players generally over-sacrifice, often committing the crime of taking two bites of the cherry. Sacrificing does not generally pay because you are left to play (doubled, of course)

Top players hate to make late sacrifices: the opponents have no sensible option other than to double. Advance sacrifices are much better – because now there is a good chance the opponents will bid on (eg 5 ♠ over 5 ♦). And now your sacrifice bid can never lose. It will break even if 5 ♠ makes; and gain handsomely when 5 ♠ is one down.

So what are the guidelines for making good saves?

Here are three auctions. Give a mark out of ten for the tactical nous of West's 5 ♦ bid in the following auctions:

### Auction one

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♥
3 ♦	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

**Zero.** You have taken the dreaded two bites of the cherry. If you intended bidding to 5 ♦, you should have bid it first time.

### Auction two

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		4 ♦	Pass
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
5 ♦			

**Three.** Understandable (you hoped 4 might buy the contract), but you're now regretting that you didn't raise to 5 immediately, cutting out North's 4♠ bid.

### Auction three

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠
5 ♦			

**Ten.** Classic advance sacrifice, hoping North, with as yet undisclosed spade support will go 5♠. Now your 5 ♦ bid can't lose.

**Remember: never make your sacrifice when it is the last guess!**