

RUBBER BRIDGE - Rules, Scoring and Guidelinesupdated using the 2010 NZ Bridge manual (supercedes all previous sets of rules)

This document, together with two packs of cards, a score pad and a scoring table/check list of deals, is all you will need to play in our club Rubber bridge competition. The information below explains the game to those who have only played duplicate bridge but also sets out the latest rules for the more experienced rubber bridge players.

Unlike duplicate bridge, Lady Luck plays a huge part. This fact, together with the different bidding tactics involved, makes Rubber bridge a fun and exciting game which anyone can win.

Systems

The objective of NZ Bridge is to allow bidding methods that could be used by ANY two players forming a partnership for the first time. Rubber bridge contestants are expected to follow the intention and spirit of this objective. The following rules apply:

- Natural systems must be used (standard Acol, standard 5 card majors and simple Precision)
- Opening two bids must be either strong or, if weak, then they must be single suited. Thus, not allowed are multi 2D, Tartan twos or any other opening two bid which shows more than one suit.
- Any conventional agreement which is game forcing is permitted.
- Stayman, Baron and transfers may be used opposite NT bids
- There is no restriction on the use of doubles
- There is no restriction on defensive measures once an opponent has opened the bidding. Thus the unusual NT and Michaels cue bids are allowed as are the various conventions used over a 1NT opening.
- Gerber and Blackwood may be used, including modified forms

Scoring

Knowing how the scoring works is central to the tactics and excitement of Rubber Bridge. The information below is summarised in the Rubber Bridge Scoring Table so you don't need to memorise it. But the following explains the scoring:

Suit scoring values are the same as in duplicate bridge:

- Minors score 20 per trick
- Majors score 30 per trick
- No Trumps score 40 for the first trick and 30 each succeeding trick

To make a "Game" you need to **score 100**. Therefore:

- To make game in a minor you need to bid and make 5 $5 \times 20 = 100$
- To make game in a major you need to bid and make 4 $4 \times 30 = 120$
- To make game in No Trumps you need to bid and make 3 $40 + 2 \times 30 = 100$

The first pair to win **two games** wins a "Rubber". The win of a Rubber earns a large bonus:

- **700** if you win two straight games
- **500** if you win two out of three games

Before going into the various other bonuses and penalties (which are very similar to those in duplicate bridge) we need to look at the scoresheet itself:

Rubber Bridge Score pad					
Individual Scores					
Players		Ian	Bob	Dave	Alan
1 st Rubber		90	90	920	920
2 nd Rubber					
3 rd Rubber					
WE	THEY	WE	THEY	WE	THEY
30	700				
60	100				
	120				
90	920				

Every hand will produce a score of some kind, whether part score, game score, slam score or penalty score from taking your opponents light. All scores below the line indicate the score for the contract bid and made and go towards achieving game. All scores above the line indicate overtricks, bonuses or penalty scores and do not contribute towards achieving game.

In the example scoring shown, on the first hand 2H is bid by Bob, making 3 hearts. *Note that the overtrick goes above the line. So Ian & Bob need another 40 to make game (2C, 2D or 1NT will do it).*

Dave & Alan then bid and make 3NT They now have a game so a line is drawn as shown and each pair starts from scratch in trying to make the next game score of 100.

Next hand, Dave and Alan bid 4S which they make. This gives them the Rubber, scored as shown.

The next hand played begins a new rubber.

Further bonuses can be scored for **slams** and for holding **“honours”**:

- Small slams earn a bonus of 500 if not vulnerable, 750 if vulnerable (see below for how you know if you are vulnerable or not)
- Grand slams earn a bonus of 1000 if not vulnerable, 1500 if vulnerable
- If a suit is bid and one hand holds 4 honours out of the possible 5 (AKQJT) this earns an honour bonus of 100
- If a suit is bid and one hand hold all 5 honours this earns 150
- If NT is bid and one hand holds all 4 Aces this earns 150

Honours must be claimed before either side has made a call on the next deal. (Honours are the only aspect of Rubber Bridge that duplicate players won't recognise. NZ Bridge has specifically included this old fashioned aspect of the game even though the 2007 international Laws Revision does not mention them).

Penalties for going light and bonuses for making doubled contracts:

For these "**vulnerability**" is relevant. When a new Rubber starts, both sides are deemed to be "not vulnerable" but as soon as one pair wins a game, they become "vulnerable" for the remainder of the rubber. Vulnerability does not affect trick points, nor does it affect game points. What it does mean is that if you go light the penalties are exactly the same as in duplicate bridge, namely:

- Not doubled: Penalty is 50 per undertrick not vul, 100 per trick vul
- Doubled and not vul: Penalty is 100 for the first undertrick, 200 for the second and third undertricks then 300 thereafter
- Doubled and vulnerable: Penalty is 200 for the first undertrick, 200 for the second and third undertricks then 300 thereafter

Bonuses for making doubled contracts can be seen from the scoring table (they are the same as in duplicate bridge).

Guidelines and tactics

Rubber Bridge is a far more tactical game than duplicate. It is very important to keep track of the scores below the line so you know how far you need to bid to reach a game and whether it will pay to push your opponents to keep them from achieving game. There are times to push and times not to push:

- **Don't push to game unless you have to**, even if you know its there. Eg, if you only need 1NT to complete the rubber do not push on. There are two exceptions to this:
- (a) You will often be forced to bid higher by the opponents who will be trying to keep you from getting a rubber.
- (b) If you think that you have a slam then push on. This unnecessary bidding on should indicate to partner that you have interest in slam.
- **Don't push the opposition when you are vul** and ahead just for the sake of keeping them out of a part score. Even if they are likely to get a game you should think carefully. Doubled sacrifices when vulnerable can be very expensive.
- **Do push when not vul** and you can afford to give something away to prevent the opponents getting a rubber, especially a 700 rubber.

Here are some hints concerning the play:

- Play safe to make your contract; overtricks are nowhere near as important as they are in duplicate bridge.
- In difficult contracts take risks to make it. An extra undertrick is relatively unimportant if not doubled.

- In defense, take risks to defeat the contract. If you give them an overtrick it is relatively unimportant.

Format of Rotorua Club Rubber Bridge competition

When entries have closed a random Draw will be done and dates will be set by which each match has to be played. These dates will be shown on the Draw.

The competition is on a knock-out basis with all first match losers going into a Draw for the plate event.

Opposing pairs will choose their own venue and date. The clubrooms are available during normal playing times.

All matches will consist of 30 deals. Cut for dealer after which Dealer rotates clockwise. The pair with the highest total score at completion is the winner.

A passed in hand constitutes a deal.

Note that the bonus for winning an unfinished rubber is 300 if you have a game but only 50 if you only have a part score.

It is a good idea to keep track of the accumulated total. Summary sheets of the 30 deals are available to do this. Take one with you to each match.

In the event of a tie a further two deals will be played – then a further two etc until a winner is found.

The entry fee of \$10 per pair will be distributed as prizes: Winners 50%, Runners-up 25%, Plate winners 25%.

Ethics

No table talk is allowed. Each player is responsible to keep score. Both of you must know your side's score because you may not draw attention of partner to the score, nor tell them what it is.

Scores may be compared and brought up to date at the end of each hand **but** no comments should be made as to future tactics in bidding to take account of the score.