

## A Column for Card Players and Question Box—

Conducted by Hoyle, Jr.

Address questions about any game to Hoyle, Jr., The Observer. Answers will be mailed promptly. No questions answered unless signed with name and address.

### AUCTION BRIDGE—No. 4.

Should there be a question between a minor make or a no-trump declaration, the latter is preferable, for while the risk is greater, the game is more in trick score, and the loss is no greater in penalties.

**Standard for Diamond.**  
1. Six diamonds, including one honor and one trick in another suit.  
2. Five diamonds, including three honors.

3. Five diamonds, including two honors and a trick in two other suits.  
4. Four diamonds, including four four honors.

Standard for diamond make will also cover the standard for club make.

In Auction the opening bid is a free one and should be made from strength more than length, and the information should be accurate. Later bids are according to information gained by the later bidding or conversation of the game. No Trump is always sought for, as any good card in partner's hand will assist. It shows a good holding of high cards. It requires fewer tricks to win the game. It cuts out the smaller bids, in other words the "Pikers."

Do not be afraid to bid one no-trump even though short in major suits. Opponents may bid the suit you are weak in. You may then change your bid, but you have informed your partner.

A bid of two in any suit means it is best to play the hand in that bid.

The state of the score should never be lost sight of for a moment, for that is the goal of every good player in any game, and especially so in Auction, where the 250 bonus for winning the rubber is a prime object.

### How to Estimate a Hand:

Dealer's Hand	Estimated Tricks	Estimated Losses
Spades—A, Ten, and two small cards	2	2
Hearts—K, Q, Ten, and three small cards	5	1
Diamonds—Q, and one small card	0	2
Clubs—One small card	0	1
Total	7	6

In the above hand you must: Count a loss for King and Queen of Spades.

Count a loss for Ace of Hearts. Count a loss for Ace of Clubs. Count a loss for Ace and King of Diamonds.

With hearts as trumps in this hand or any suit as trumps, count a loss for each missing Ace, King or Queen, as long as the hand can follow suit. Whatever is left in each suit count an estimated trick. Add to your estimated tricks the one you have the right to expect from your partner—and you have the value of your hand.

"He who hesitates is lost."

I have found this method of valuation to be almost infallible.

Having two suits to declare, usually take the weaker. The stronger suit will always be good—the weaker is strengthened by making it trumps.

When the hand has a "singleton," or a missing suit, the bidding should not be high, unless you hold six or more of the trump suit. You cannot afford to be forced, as it will weaken the trump holding.

The hand may be overbid one trick if it contains four honors in the suit, or if it is the rubber game. The honor score may more than equal the loss, and you can afford to risk the loss of 50 to 100 penalty score on the rubber game for an even chance to win it.

In no game does circumstance play so important a part as in Auction. Upon what has been bid depends what must be bid. A player may often bid the make at a low price, but beware of some good reason why opponents do not make at least one bid. They may be lying low to let your make stand. It is not good policy to double a one-trick bid, as the original bidder will then realize his danger and change the suit.

The third hand—dealer's partner—should be ever watchful, ready to help his partner, the dealer, raise any bid he may have made. Always bear in mind, however, that the dealer has counted on one trick in his partner's hand.

In other words, endeavor to combine the strength of the two hands. One hand may be utterly worthless, but with combination, many tricks may be won. While many card games are partnership affairs, none permit such perfect teamwork as Auction. Indeed, it is the unity and harmony of the two hands that make for success, and ex-

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emphify the old slogan, "United we stand; divided we fall."

Do not raise partner's bid on trump strength alone as he has trumped himself. Your best assistance is in extra tricks in outside suits.

Also, be careful not to raise partner's bid when you hold a singleton. The suit that your hand is short in may weaken your partner's trump suit; ruff the opponents' suit in which you have the singleton (or sneak).

When third hand and partner bid one no-trump, and you hold a hand without a trick or a "bust," if you have a five-card suit, take partner's cue the no-trump by bidding two in the long suit. If his hand is strong he may then go two no-trump without extra loss.

Questions and Answers.

Q. What is a ruff and a cross ruff?

A. Ruff is a condition in which one

player can trump a suit his partner leads (holding none of the suit led).

Cross-Ruff is a condition in which two partners alternately trump the other's lead (also called see-saw).

Q. What is a singleton?

A. The only card of a suit dealt to a hand, also called a "sneak."

Q. What is meant by game?

A. Thirty or more trick points constitute a game. All points in excess of thirty are counted by the side winning

them, but only one game can be won in a deal.

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