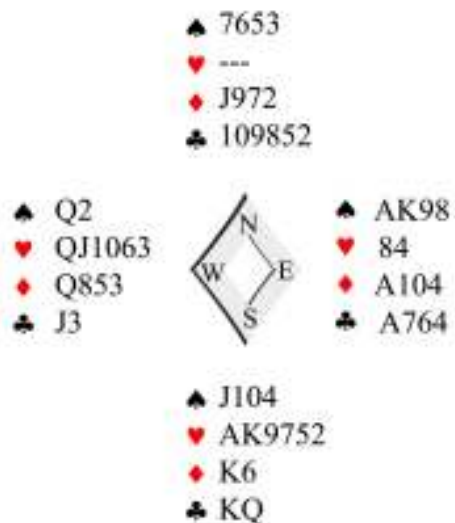


80. Penalty Doubles

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A.	W	N	E	S
			1NT	2♥
	Dbl	All Pass		

B.	W	N	E	S
			1NT	2♥
	P	P	Dbl	P
	P	P		

--East West Vulnerable--

Penalty Doubles

Takeout doubles are usually doubles at the one or two-level, higher if opponents pre-empt, while the following doubles are for penalty:

1. Doubles made by doubling over (West's double in A) and not doubling under (East's double in B);
2. A double made by your partner when you have already told him your hand (1NT or a pre-empt does this);
3. A double after one's partner has already answered (by a bid not a pass) a takeout double;
4. A double made when the partnership knows they have the balance of power;
5. A double made after the partnership has agreed on a suit;

6. Any takeout double may be passed not for lack of a better bid but for penalty (conversion).
7. Any double made after a takeout double has been converted to penalty (passed); and
8. any double after the partnership makes a redouble.

This week's column is an example of 1 and 2.

The bidding:

East opens one notrump with a balanced 15 points. South has a very reasonable two heart overcall. Had South passed, West would transfer to hearts and pass. However, since South bid two hearts, West can double for penalty. West knows East's hand and has hearts behind South, so his double is for penalty. This is the bidding in case A.

In case B, West inexplicably decides to pass and East doubles. In A, West's double is for penalty, but in B, East's double is for takeout. East's double is under South's hearts while West is sitting over South's hearts.

Would East double for penalty if he had hearts knowing he could be finessed by a South sitting over him? No. East is doubling to show four spades. He still has 15 to 17 points but has an unwillingness to let the opponents play two hearts undoubled. In B, East is not sure what West has until West passes the takeout double.

The contract: Two hearts doubled by South

The opening lead: The queen of spades

A doubleton honour is usually a terrible lead (without partner having bid the suit), but given the bidding, it is a good lead. East likely has no heart honours, and it is very unlikely he opened one notrump with two honourless suits, especially the majors.

The play:

The defense take the first three spades. West sluffs a club. East plays his club ace and gives West a ruff. West exits a diamond won by East's ace. West gets another club ruff and exits the queen of hearts. West will get three trump. The defense will get 8 tricks for down three.

The result: Two hearts doubled down three for -500.

Note: Eight points opposite 15 points is not enough for game so 500 for East and West is a very good score. However, 1NT makes plus two because of the blockage in clubs. North has no entries to cash the setting club tricks.