

84. Penalty Double With A Balance of Power

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	♠ 86 ♥ 986 ♦ KQ76 ♣ 9654		
♠ QJ1075 ♥ AJ4 ♦ 98 ♣ AQ2			♠ A92 ♥ 53 ♦ J5432 ♣ J108
	♠ K43 ♥ KQ1072 ♦ A10 ♣ K73		
	W N E S		
	1♠ 2♥ 2♠ 3♥		
	Dbl All Pass		
--None Vulnerable--			

Penalty Doubles

Doubles that are takeout are usually doubles at the one or two-level, higher if opponents preempt, while the following doubles are for penalty;

1. those made by doubling over and not doubling under;
2. a double made by your partner when you have already told him your hand (1NT or a preempt 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);
8. any double after the partnership makes a redouble.

This week's column is an example of 4 and 5.

The bidding:

This is a perfect example of when one can open one notrump with a five card major. South has 15 HCP's, five hearts, three in the other major, all suits stopped and no suitable rebid. However, South elected to open one heart. West has an easy one spade overcall which would not have been the case had South opened one notrump. North, with six points, raises partner to two. East supports partner. South, knowing that they don't have game but recognizing that three hearts down two is better than minus 110 or minus 140, bids three. West believes they have the balance of power, especially with the way the hearts are positioned.

The contract: Three hearts doubled by South

The opening lead: The queen of spades

West cannot lead a trump or a club without costing a trick. A diamond lead may set up diamonds for the declarer. The spade lead is the best.

The play:

East wins the opening lead and shifts to the jack of clubs. South ducks and loses three club tricks. West exits a spade after his last club. South loses a spade, two hearts, no diamonds and three clubs

The result: Three hearts doubled down two for -300.

Note:

-This is an example of a matchpoint swindle. If East and West play spades they get 110 or 140, while if they allow North South to play three hearts undoubled, they will get a lower score of 100. Therefore, they must double and collect 300 points.

-East-West and North-South both have 20 points each, but East-West have the balance of power because their 20 points are situated more favourably than North-South's points.

-This is an example how the points are split evenly but the balance of power is not.