

Swiss Teams

Introduction & Strategy

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Also known as Team of Four

The team game is the last Saturday in March. Creston will be the same time as us since Daylight savings starts March 9. Get your team together.

For the people new to a team game, this is how it works.

You have a team of four people and you play one team at a time. Let's say you are team 1. In the first round, you play team 2.

Find Your Table

Your team sits down at the two tables designated for teams 1 and 2. One pair of team 1 plays North and South at one table against East West of team 2. The other pair of team 1 plays East and West at the other table against North and South also of team 2.

Shuffle The Boards

You play a fixed number of boards each round (between 6 and 9). You share the boards just between your two tables.

You start the round by shuffling the boards that are at the table. You have half the boards.

Play the Boards

You play them and get the other half from the other table when you are finished the first half. You yell "Caddy please" to get the other boards. The other table will then send their finished boards.

Compare and Cry

Once all the boards have been played by both tables. You compare the scores.

Example

You are East at table 2.

On board 1, you and your partner played 2♠ making four for +170. Your teammates defended 4♠ making four for -420 at the other table. You lose 250 points. You look at the International Matchpoint (IMPs) Chart on your convention card and see 250 points is 6 Imps.

You lose 6 imps on board 1. -6 imps

Had the game been a vulnerable game, you would have lost 10 imps, almost twice as many.

On board 2, you and your partner defend 2♥ making three for -140. At the other table your teammates are in 4♥ down 1 for -100. Your team loses 240 points for -6 imps. Had your North-South teammates at table one been not vulnerable, you would have lost -5 imps.

-6 imps

On board 3, you and your partner are in 3NT making 4 for +630. At the other table, your teammates defend 4♥ making four for -620. Your team wins 10 points for 0 imps, a push.

+0 imps

On board 4, you and your partner are in 6♠x= for +1660. The opponents are in 6♠= for +1430. You gain +6 imps.

+6 imps

On board 5, you and your partner are in 5♥ making five for +450. The opponents at the other table are in 6♥x-1 for -100. You gain 550 points for +11 imps. If 6♥ was undoubled, you still make 11+ imps.

+11 imps

On board 6, you and your partner were in 6NT for +1440 which makes because an opponent threw a wrong card. 6♠ is cold and makes at the other table for -1430. You gain 10 points and 0 imps.

+0 imps

On board 7, you and your partner are in 3♦W down 2 for -200. The other table played in 2♥N= for +110. You lose 90 points and 3 imps.

-3 imps

You compare all the boards and total the imps. You win the first match 17 to 15 imps (a winning tie). You get 11 victory points and the other team gets 9 victory points.

The director at the beginning of the match will tell you if the Match is win/loss or victory points.

Win/Loss

If you beat the other team by three imps or more, you win the match. If you beat the other team by one or two imps, that is a winning tie (3/4 win). If you tie that is a one half win (1/2 win). If you lose by one or two imps that is a losing tie (1/4 win). If you lose by three imps or more, that is a loss (0 win). The team with the most wins, wins the event. If two teams have the same number of wins, there is a tie and no tiebreaker.

Victory Points

The director will also tell you whether it is the 20 victory point scale or the 30 victory point scale. The 30 victory point scale is closer to the win/loss system than the 20 victory point scale. Using the 30 victory point scale you get a higher relative score for a win and a lower relative score for a loss compared to the team you played. We usually play the 20 point victory-point scale and not win/loss.

You look at the imps to victory point chart on your convention card to find how many victory points you have received. Another chart! At the end of the day, the team with the most victory points wins.

For the second match you play a team that won 12 victory points and you win by 23 imps for 18 victory points. You now have 39 victory points for the first two matches and for the third match you play a team with the same number (or as close as possible) victory points as you. If you keep winning, you play the teams that are also winning and if you keep losing, you play the teams that are also losing. You never play the same team twice and the computer makes the matches between teams with similar records as best as possible.

Confusing?

It may be at first, but the director and other players will be happy to help.

Timing of the event

I estimate 6:00pm Creston time with the 10:00 am start (as a safe guess) but any time after 5:00pm depending on the lunch break and the speed of play. We had a similar event in Moses Lake recently (10:00am start) and I got away at 5:35pm and I waited for the scoring to be finished.

Swiss team Strategy

The strategy is closer to the strategy of rubber bridge than it is to matchpoints (pair events).

You do not open lousy 11-counts. You make excellent overcalls and pass with iffy overcalls and hope partner can balance. At matchpoints, a bad overcall will cause the loss of one board but at teams it may be the loss of the entire match.

You are concerned with game bonuses and slam bonuses. You are not so worried about overtricks just making your contract. In close matches, overtricks do matter a little, but never risk the contract for an overtrick.

3NT making 4 and 4♥ making 4 gives you no imp advantage (a push). You always pick what appears to be the safer contract.

Sacrifices are done less often than at pair events especially if there is a chance you will give them 800 or if there is a chance game is not even there. Phantom sacrifices are very expensive. One year at the Cranbrook sectional, I played with a pair of ladies that tried to be declarer at as many contracts as they could. The opponents let them at the expense of telephone numbers (1-800 is not a free phone call at bridge). Giving up 800 when game is not even there usually means the match is lost.

You push to bid vulnerable games because the bonus is higher. You will find everybody pushes for vulnerable games. However, both players do not push. It is only the player that gets invited that pushes. Balancing can be very effective but be careful when vulnerable. If your partners are in 2♥ making two and your opponents are in 3♥ down 1 for +50, you get 4 imps.

You have teammates. Do not worry if you are in 3NT going down. It may be the same result at the other table and a push (no imps gained or lost).

Do not miss a slam at either vulnerability. If the opponents are in game making 7, it makes little difference if you are in small slam or grand, but if the opponents are in 6, it makes a huge difference if you bid and make a grand.

Never double for a one trick set. If the contract is going down two or three or the opponents sacrifice, you make sure you double. If you are in 6 down one and the opponents are in game making 5, that is a loss of 13 imps vulnerable. If you are in 6 down one doubled and the opponents are in game making 5, that is also a loss of 13 imps vulnerable. No advantage gained by doubling except as a lead-direction. However if they are in 6 doubled making and you are in 6 making, you lose 6 imps instead of getting 0 imps for a slam both ways. Doubling only reaps a reward when it is a two or more trick set.

Except for stretching to bid vulnerable games, just play good bridge. It is rewarded differently at imps than at matchpoints but it is still rewarded.

Hope this helps...Warren