

Rubber Bridge

Let's go back to where it all started – rubber bridge, often played for money. Things are totally different here from duplicate as your action on one deal affects subsequent deals. For example, making a non-vulnerable game makes you vulnerable for the rest of the rubber.

Rubber bridge scoring

Traditionally, rubber bridge involves partscores. Say you bid 2♥ and make +1. Then you get a score of 60 'below the line' and 30 'above'. The score below the line is all important. If you subsequently bid a contract with a score that brings this total to 100 or more, then you become vulnerable. There are no part-score bonuses.

Now this is undoubtedly the most exciting form of rubber bridge, but these days many players prefer to have to bid games in one go (thus bidding tactics are more in line with duplicate). Playing this variant all partscores are scored above the line and receive a 50 point bonus each.

Whichever variant you play, the game is over once either side wins two games (or accumulates two totals of over 100 below the line). When the rubber is over, a bonus is added to the side with two 'games': -

If 2-0, the bonus is 700

If 2-1, the bonus is 500

Rubber Bridge Tactics

I'll just give a few tips for when you play this 2nd style of rubber bridge: -

My advice is: - Don't concede large penalties. Be wary of sacrificing, if you are going to lose the rubber, make it a small one. Do not bid 50% small slams, certainly if both vulnerable (if you go down and the opponents win the next game, then they win the rubber!). Grand slams should be 90+ %. Overtricks are unimportant. Bid reasonable games; 40% non-vul is OK at rubber as the gain for getting vulnerable is very significant. Unlike duplicate, it is rarely correct to sacrifice with favourable vulnerability – the opponents are still 3-1 favourites to win the rubber. If vulnerability is equal, then consider the next sentence. If you are changing partners and your current partner is the worst player present, then get this rubber over with quickly (no borderline pre-empt or sacrifices).