

Playing Teams

Understanding the different methods of scoring teams and pairs events is important because they affect the approach to be adopted. In a teams match your team of four plays against another team of four and the scores on each board are compared. In a pairs event your scores are compared with all the other pairs in the field sitting in your direction. In a pairs event the scores are ranked, and a score marginally better than other pairs will result in an excellent result. In a teams event the margin between the results is all-important.

Scoring Examples

Making 10 tricks in 3NT in a pairs event when the rest of the field is making only 9 tricks is a triumph. If in a teams event you score +430 when your teammates hold the opponents to 9 tricks for -400 the net score on the board is +30. Let's say that on the next board you bid 3 spades and make 10 tricks for +170 while your opponents bid 4 spades and make 10 tricks for -620. The net score on the board is -450; you are now well behind in the match.

Tactics

Overtricks are relatively unimportant. Take them if they are there, but making your contract is the prime consideration.

In pairs, minors are the poor relation. Not so in teams - in teams aim to play in the safest contract.

Bid your games. If the opponents bid and make a game when you are in a partscore you will lose plenty.

As declarer, play safe to ensure your contract.

As declarer, take risks if that is the only way to make your contract.

As a defender, take your tricks if you can defeat the contract.

As a defender, take risks if that is the only way to defeat the contract.