

Roth Hand Evaluation

The following is an analysis of the Roth Hand Evaluation and is a summary thereof. The methods are an adaptation from the book **Modern Bridge Bidding Complete: Introducing the Roth Point Count** by Mr. Alvin Roth and Mr. Jeff Rubens, printed and copyrighted in 1968.

This somewhat conservative way of evaluating hands avoids over-evaluation when both partners have similar hands. The employed methods of adding value when a fit is discovered allow for aggressive bidding based on sound values.

Opening Bids

1. The Basis is Goren's method (Ace=4, King=3, etc)
2. Take total high card points (HCP) regardless of singletons, etc.
3. If you are going to bid a suit, deduct 1 point for each singleton King, Queen, or Jack, and for doubleton Queens or Jacks without an Ace.
4. Add 1 point for each doubleton if bidding a suit. (Distribution point).
5. Add 2 points for each singleton. (Distribution point).
6. Add 3 points for each void. (Distribution point).
7. Add 1 point if holding all four Aces.
8. Add 1 point if holding a 6-card Major suit (Length point).
9. Add 1 point if holding a 6-card Minor suit with 2 of top three honors.
10. Add 2 points if holding a 7-card suit (as above) (length points).

The following is Roth's methods for determining an opening bid. Some partnerships prefer to open one or even two points lighter. The modern method of adding total HCP to the length of one's two longest suits works out to about 13 Roth points.

1. If the total is 13, do not open with a one-bid unless the hand contains a four-card spade suit. Add one point for opening purposes only, when in 1st or 2nd chair. See the next step.
2. If the total is 14 or more, open with 10 HCP or more, unless you have exactly 14 points with no aces. Do not open such a hand.

Hand Evaluation Adjustment When Partner Bids

Start with total Roth Points. Then make the following adjustments:

1. If partner bids in one of your short suits (2 or less) do not count distribution points except if you have a Roth Reliable Suit (see below).
2. If partner bids in one of your 3-card suits, keep the same Roth count.
3. If you intend to bid No Trump, do not count distribution points, and count length points only in suits with 2/top 3 honors or better.
4. If partner bids one of your long suits, add 1 point if the hand contains any doubleton and you intend to raise (note: long suits = 4 or more).
5. EACH singleton or void is worth 1 more distribution point when you have 4-card support and intend to raise.
6. EACH singleton or void is worth 2 more points if you have 5+ card support and intend to raise.
7. DO NOT COUNT LENGTH POINTS in a side suit, except Roth Reliable Suits (see below) if you intend to raise.
8. ADD for GOOD TRUMP. With a known 8-card fit, add one for each card over 4 in the agreed suit headed by two of the top 3 honors. (Only one of the partnership should be adding for extra length in those situations where both partners have more than 4).
9. Roth Reliable Suit [KQT9xx (+) or KQxxxx (+)]; with such a good suit, KEEP all your Roth points. See also self-sufficient suits (below)
10. SELF-sufficient suits will have at most 1 loser, normally. With such a suit, DOUBLE your LENGTH points, and KEEP your distribution points.