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Definition of Bridge - 1910

BRIDGE, a game of cards, developed out of the game of whist. The country of its origin is unknown. A similar game is said to have been played in Denmark in the middle of the 19th century. A game in all respects the same as bridge, except that in "no trumps" each trick counted ten instead of twelve, was played in England about 1884 under the name of Dutch whist. Some connect it with Turkey and Egypt under the name of "Khedive," or with a Russian game called "Yeralash." It was in Turkey that it first won a share of popular favour. Under the synonyms of "Biritch," "Bridge," or "Russian whist," it found its way to the London clubs about 1894, from which date its popularity rapidly increased.

Ordinary Bridge. - Bridge, in its ordinary form, differs from whist in the following respects: - Although there are four players, yet in each hand the partner of the dealer takes no part in the play of that particular hand. After the first lead his cards are placed on the table exposed, and are played by the dealer as at dummy whist; nevertheless the dealer's partner is interested in the result of the hand equally with the dealer. The trump suit is not determined by the last card dealt, but is selected by the dealer or his partner without consultation the former having the first option. It is further open to them to play without a trump suit. The value of tricks and honours varies with the suit declared as trumps. Honours are reckoned differently from whist, and on a scale which is somewhat involved. The score for honours does not count towards winning or losing the rubber, but is added afterwards to the trick score in order to determine the value of the rubber. There are also scores for holding no trumps ("chicane"), and for winning all the tricks or all but one ("slam").

The score has to be kept on paper. It is usual for the scoring block to have two vertical columns divided halfway by a horizontal line. The left column is for the scorers's side, and the right for the opponents'. Honours are scored above the horizontal line, and tricks below. The drawback to this arrangement is that, since the scores for each hand are not kept separately, it is generally impossible to trace an error in the score without going through the whole series of hands. A better plan, it seems, is to have four columns ruled, the inner two being assigned to tricks, the outer ones to honours. By this method a line can be reserved for each hand, and any discrepancy in the scores at once rectified.

The Portland Club, London, drew up a code of laws in 1895, and this code, with a few amendments, was in July 1895 adopted by a joint committee of the Turf and Portland Clubs. A revised code came into force in January 1905, the provisions of which are here summarized.

Each trick above 6 counts 2 points in a Spade declaration, 4 in a Club, 6 in a Diamond, 8 in a Heart, 12 in a no-trump declaration. The game consists of 30 points made by tricks alone. When one side has won two games the rubber is ended. The winners are entitled to add 100 points to their score. Honours consist of Ace, King, Queen, Knave, Ten, in a suit declaration. If a player and his partner conjointly hold 3 (or "simple") honours they score twice the value of a trick; if 4 honours, 4 times; if 5 honours, 5 times. If a player in his own hand holds 4 honours he is entitled to score 4 honours in addition to the score for conjoint honours; thus, if one player holds 4 honours and his partner the other their total score is 9 by honours. Similarly if a player holds 5 honours in his own hand he is entitled to score 10 by honours. If in a no-trump hand the partners conjointly hold 3 Aces, they score 30 for honours; if 4 Aces, 40 for honours. 4 Aces in 1 hand count 100. On the same footing as the score for honours are the following: chicane,

if a player holds no trump, in amount equal to simple honours; grand slam, if one side wins all the tricks, 40 points; little grand slam, if one side wins all the tricks, 40 points; little slam, if they win 12 tricks, 20 points. At the end of the ruff the total scores, whether made by tricks, honours, chicane, slam, or rubber points, are added together, and the difference between the two totals is the number of points won.

At the opening of play, partners are arranged and the cards are shuffled, cut and dealt (the last card not being turned) as at whist; but the dealer cannot lose the deal by misdealing. After the deal is completed, the dealer makes the trump or no-trump (sans atout) declaration, or passed the choice to his partner without remark. If the dealer's partner makes the declaration out of his turn, the adversary on the dealer's left may, without consultation, claim a fresh deal. If an adversary makes a declaration the dealer may claim a fresh deal or disregard the declaration. Then after the declaration, either adversary may double, the leader having the first option. The effect of doubling is that each trick is worth twice as many points as before; but the scores for honours, chicane and slam are unaltered. If a declaration is doubled, the dealer and his partner have the right of redoubling, thus making each trick worth four times as much as at first. The declarer has the first option. The other side can again redouble, and so on; but the value of a trick is limited to 100 points. In the play of the hand the laws may expose his cards and lead out of turn without penalty; after the second hand has played, however, he can only correct this lead out of turn with the permission of the adversaries. dummy cannot revoke. The dealer's partner may take no part in the play of the hand beyond guarding the dealer against revoking.

Advice to Players. - In the choice of a suit two objects are to be aimed at first: first, to select the suit in which the combined forces have the best chance of making tricks; secondly, to select the trump so that the value of the suit agrees with the character of the hand, i.e. a suit of high value when the hands are strong and of low value when very weak. As the deal is a great advantage it generally happens that a high value is to be aimed at, but occasionally a low value is desirable. The task of selection should fall to the hand which has the most distinctive features, that is, either the longest suit or unusual strength or weakness. No consultations being allowed, the dealer must assume only an average amount of variation from the normal in his partner's hand. If his own hand has distinctive features beyond the average, he should name the trump suit himself, otherwise pass it to his partner. It may here be stated what is the average in these respects.

As regards the length of a suit, a player's long suit is rather more likely to be fewer than five than over five. If the dealer has in his hand a suit of five cards including two honours, it is probable that he has a better suit to make trumps than dummy; if the suit is in Hearts, and the dealer has a fair hand, he ought to name the trump. As regards strength, the average hand would contain Ace, King, Queen, Knave and Ten, or equivalent strength. Hands stronger or weaker than this by the value of a King or less may be described as featureless. If the dealer's hand is a King over the average, it is more likely than not that his partner will either hold a stronger hand, or will hold such a weak hand as will counteract the player's strength. The dealer would not generally with such a hand declare no trump, especially as by making a no-trump declaration the dealer forfeits the advantage of holding the long trumps.

Declarations by Dealer. - In calculating the strength of a hand a Knave is worth two Tens, a Queen is worth two Knaves, a King is worth a Queen and Knave together, and an Ace is worth a King and Queen together. A King unguarded is worth less than a Queen guarded; a Queen is not fully guarded unless accompanied by three more cards; if guarded by one small card it is worth a Knave guarded. An Ace also loses in value by being sole.

A hand to be strong enough for a no-trump declarations should be a King and Ten above the average with all the honours guarded and all the suits protected. It must be a King and Knave

or two Queens above the average if there is protection in three suits. It must be an Ace or a King and Queen above the average if only two suits are protected. An established black suit of six or more cards with a guarded King as card of entry is good enough for no trumps. With three Aces no trumps can be declared. Without an Ace, four Kings, two Queens and a Knave are required in order to justify the declaration. When the dealer has a choice of declarations, a sound Heart make is to be preferred to a doubtful no-trump. Four honours in Hearts are to be preferred to any but a very strong no-trump declaration; but four Aces counting 100 points constitute a no-trump declaration without exception.

Six Hearts should be made trumps and five with two honours unless the hand is very weak, five Hearts with one honour or four Hearts with three honours should be declared if the hand is nearly strong enough for no trumps, also if the hand is very irregular with one suit missing or five of a black suit. Six Diamonds with one honour, five with three honours or four all honours should be declared; weaker Diamonds should be declared if the suits are irregular, especially if blank in hearts. Six clubs with three honours or five with four honours should be declared. Spades are practically only declared with a weak hand; with only a King in the hand a suit of five spades should be declared as a defensive measure. With nothing above a Ten a suit of two or three Spades can be declared, though even with the weakest hands a suit of five Clubs or of six red cards will probably prove less expensive.

Declarations by Dummy. - From the fact that the call has been passed, the dealer's partner must credit the dealer with less than average strength as regards the rank of his cards, and probably a slightly increased number of black cards; he must therefore be more backward in making a high declaration whenever he can make a sound declaration of less value. On the other hand, he has not the option of passing the declaration, and may be driven to declare on less strength because the only alternative is a short suit of Spades. For example, with the hand: Hearts, Ace, Knave 2; Diamonds, Queen, 9,7.6.3; Clubs, King, 10, 4; Spades, 9, 2, the chances are in the dealer's favour with five trumps, but decidedly against with only two, and the Diamond declaration is to be preferred to the Spade. Still, a hand may be so weak that Spades should be declared with two or less, but five Clubs or six Diamonds would be preferable with the weakest of hands.

Declarations to the Score. - When one's score is over twenty, Club declarations should be made more frequently by the dealer. Spades should be declared with six at the score of twenty-six and with five at twenty-eight. When much behind in the score a risky no-trumper such as one with an established suit of seven or eight cards without a card of entry, may be declared.

Declaring to the score is often overdone; an ordinary weak no-trump declaration carries with it small chances of three by tricks unless dummy holds a no-trump hand.

Doubling. - Practically the leader only doubles a no-trump declaration when he holds what is probably an established suit of seven cards or a suit which can be established with the loss of one trick and he has good cards of reentry. Seven cards of a suit including the Ace, King and Queen make a sound double without any other card of value in the hand, or six cards including King, Queen and Knave with two Aces in other suits.

Doubling by the third hand is universally understood to mean that the player has a very strong suit which he can establish. In response to the double his partner, according to different conventions, leads either a Heart or his own shortest suit as the one most likely to be the third player's strongest. Under the short suit convention, if the doubler holds six of a suit headed by the Ace, King and Queen, it is about an even chance that his suit will be selected; he should not double with less strength. Under the Heart convention it is not necessary to have such great strength; with a strong suit of six Hearts and good cards of reentry, enough tricks will be saved

to compensate for the doubled value. A player should ascertain the convention followed before beginning to play.

Before doubling a suit declaration a player should feel almost certain that he is as strong as the declarer. The minimum strength to justify the declaration is generally five trumps, but it may have been made on six. If, then, a player holds six trumps with an average hand as regards the rank of his cards, or five trumps with a hand of no-trump strength, it is highly probable that he is as strong as the declarer. It must be further taken into account that the act of doubling gives much valuable information to the dealer, who would otherwise play with the expectation of finding the trumps evenly distributed; this is counterbalanced when the doubler is on the left of the declaring hand by the intimation given to his partner to lead trumps through the strong hand. In this position, then, the player should double with the strength stated above. When on the declarer's right, the player should hold much greater strength unless his hand is free from tenaces. When a Spade declaration has been made by dummy, one trump less is necessary and the doubler need not be on the declarer's left. A Spade declaration by the dealer can be doubled with even less strength. A declaration can be rather more freely doubled when a single trick undoubled will take the dealer out, but even in this position the player must be cautious of informing the dealer that there is a strong hand against him.

Redoubling. - When a declaration has been doubled, the declarer knows the minimum that he will find against him; he must be prepared to find occasionally strength against him considerably exceeding this minimum. Except in the case of a Spade declaration, cases in which redoubling is justifiable are very rare.

The Play of the Hand. - In a no-trump declaration the main object is to bring in a long suit. In selecting the suit to establish, the following are favourable conditions: - One hand should hold at least five cards of the suit. The two hands, unless with a sequence of high cards, should hold between them eight cards of the suit, so as to render it probable that the suit will be established in three rounds. The hand which contains the strong suit should be sufficiently strong in cards of reentry. The suit should not be so full of possible tenaces as to make it disadvantageous to open it. As regards the play of the cards in a suit, it is not the object to make tricks early, but to make all possible tricks. Deep finesses should be made when there is no other way of stealing a trick. Tricks may be given away, if by so doing a favourable opening can be made for a finesse. When, however, it is doubtful with which hand the finesse should be made, it is better to leave it as late as possible, since the card to be finessed against may fall, or an adversary may fail, thus disclosing the suit. It is in general unsound to finesse against a card that must be unguarded. From a hand short in cards of reentry, winning cards should not be led out so as to exhaust the suit from the partner's hand. Even a trick should sometimes be given away. For instance, if one hand holds seven cards headed by ace, king, and the other hand holds only two of the suit, although there is a fair chance of making seven tricks in the suit, it would often be right to give the first trick to the adversaries. When one of the adversaries has shown a long suit, it is frequently possible to prevent its being brought in by a device, such as holding up a winning card, until the suit is exhausted from his partner's hand, or playing in other suits so as to give the player the lead whilst his partner has a card of his suit to return, and to give the latter the lead when he has no card to return. The dealer should give as little information as possible as to what he holds in his own hand, playing frequent false cards. Usually he should play the higher or highest of a sequence; still, there are positions in which playing the higher gives more information than the lower; a strict adherence to a rule in itself assists the adversaries.

With a suit declaration, if there is no chance of letting the weak hand make a trump by ruffing, it will generally be the dealer's aim to discard the losing cards in the declaring hand either to high cards or to the cards of an established suit in the other hand, sometimes after the adverse trumps have been taken out, but often before, there being no time for drawing trumps. With no card of any value in a suit in one hand, the lead should come from that hand, but it is better,

if possible, to let the adversaries open the suit. It is generally useless to lead a moderately high card from the weaker hand in order to finesse it, when holding no cards in sequence with it in either hand. Sometimes (especially in no-trumps) it is the better play to make the weak hand third player. For instance, with King, 8, 7, 5, 2 in one hand, Knave, 4 in the other, the best way of opening is from the hand that holds five cards.

In a no-trump declaration the opponents of the dealer should endeavour to find the longest suit in the two hands, or the one most easily established. With this object the leader should open his best suit. If his partner next obtains the lead he ought to return the suit, unless he himself has a suit which he considers better, having due regard to the fact that the first suit is already partially established. The opponents should employ the same tactics as the dealer to prevent the latter from bringing in a long suit; they can use them with special effect when the long suit is in the exposed hand.

Against no-trumps the leader should not play his winning cards unless he has a good chance of clearing the suit without help from his partner; in most cases it is advisable to give away the first trick, especially if he has no card of reentry, in order that his partner on gaining the lead may have a card of the suit to return; but holding Ace, King and Queen, or Ace, King with seven in the suit, or Ace, King, Knave, Ten with six, the player may lead out his best. With three honours any two of which are in sequence (not to the Ace) the player should lead the higher of the sequence. He should lead his highest card from Queen, Knave, Ten; from Queen, Knave, Nine; from Knave, Ten, Nine; Knave, Ten, Eight, and Ten, Nine, Eight. In other cases the player should lead a small card; according to the usual convention, the fourth best. His partner, and also the dealer, can credit him with three cards higher than the card led, and can often place the cards of the suit: for instance, the seven is led, dummy holds Queen and Eight, playing the Queen, the third player holds the Nine and smaller cards; the unseen cards higher than the Seven are Ace, King, Knave and Ten of which the leader must hold three; he cannot hold both Knave and Ten or he would have led the Knave; he must therefore hold the Ace, King and either Knave or Ten. The "Eleven" rule is as follows: the number of pips in the card led subtracted from eleven ($11-7 = 4$ in the case stated) gives the number of cards higher than the one led not in the leader's hand; the three cards seen (Queen, Nine and Eight) leave one for the dealer to hold. The mental process is no shorter than assigning three out of the unseen cards to the leader, and by not noting the unseen cards much valuable information may be missed, as in the illustrative case given.

With a suit declared the best opening lead is a singleton, failing which a lead from a strong sequence. A lead from a tenace or a guarded King or Queen is to be avoided. Two small cards may be led from, though the lead is objected to by some. A suit of three small cards of no great strength should not be opened. In cases of doubt preference should be given to hearts and to a less extent to diamonds.

To lead up to dummy's weak suits is a valuable rule. The converse, to lead through strength, must be used with caution, and does not apply to no-trump declarations. It is not advisable to adopt any of the recent whist methods of giving information. It is clear that, if the adversaries signal, the dealer's hand alone is a secret, and he, in addition to his natural advantage, has the further advantage of better information than either of the adversaries. The following signals are, however, used, and are of great trick-making value: playing an unnecessarily high card, whether to one's partner's suit or in discarding in a no-trump declaration, indicates strength in the suit; in a suit declaration a similar method of play indicates two only of the suit and a desire to ruff, - it is best used in the case of a King led by one's partner.

The highest of a sequence led through dummy will frequently tell the third player that he has a good finesse. The lowest of a sequence led through the dealer will sometimes explain the position to the third player, at the same time keeping the dealer in the dark.

When on dummy's left it is futile to finesse against a card not in dummy's hand. But with Ace and Knave, if dummy has either King or Queen, the Knave should usually be played, partly because the other high card may be in the leader's hand, partly because, if the finesse fails, the player may still hold a tenace over dummy. When a player is with any chance of success trying to establish his long suit, he should keep every card of it if possible, whether it is a suit already opened or a suit which he wishes his partner to lead; when, however, the main object of the hand is to establish one's partner's suit, it is not necessary for a player to keep his own long suit, and he should pay attention to guarding the other suits. In some circles a discard from a suit is always understood to indicate strength in the suit; this convention, while it makes the game easier for inferior players, frequently causes the player to throw away one of his most valuable cards.

Playing to the Score. - At the beginning of the hand the chances are so great against any particular result, that at the score of love-all the advantage of getting to any particular score has no appreciable effect of determining the choice of suit. In the play of the hand, the advantage of getting to certain points should be borne in mind. The principal points to be aimed at are 6, 18, and, in a less degree, 22. The reason is that the scores 24, 12 and 8, which will just take the dealer out from the respective points, can each be made in a variety of ways, and are the most common for the dealer to make. The 2 points that take the score from 4 to 6 are worth 4, or perhaps 5, average points; and the 2 points that take the score from 6 to 8 are worth 1 point. When approaching game it is an advantage to make a declaration that may just take the player out, and, in a smaller degree, one that will not exactly take the adversaries out. When the score is 24 to 22 against the dealer, Hearts and Clubs are half a trick better relatively to Diamonds than at the score of love-all. In the first and second games of the rubber the value of each point scored for honours is probably about a half of a point scored for tricks - in a close game rather less, in a one-sided game rather more. In the deciding game of the rubber, on account of the importance of winning the game, the value of each point scored for honours sinks to one-third of a point scored for tricks.

Other Forms of Bridge. - The following varieties of the game are also played:

Three-handed Bridge. - The three players cut; the one that cuts the lowest card deals, and takes dummy for one deal: each takes dummy in turn. Dummy's cards are dealt face downwards, and the dealer declares without seeing them. If the dealer declares trumps, both adversaries may look at their hands; doubling and redoubling proceeds as at ordinary bridge, but dummy's hand is not exposed till the first card has been led. If the dealer passes the declaration to dummy, his right-hand adversary, who must not have looked at his own hand, examines dummy's, and declares trumps, not, however, exposing the hand. The declaration is forced: with three or four Aces *sans atout* (no trumps) must be declared: in other cases the longest suit: if suits are equal in length, the strongest, i.e. the suit containing most pips, Ace counting eleven, King, Queen and Knave counting ten each. If suits are equal in both length and strength, the one in which the trick has the higher value must be trumps. On the dummy's declaration the third player can only double before seeing his own cards. When the first card has been led, dummy's hand is exposed, never before the lead. The game is 30: the player wins the rubber who is the first to win two games. Fifty points are scored for each game won, and fifty more for the rubber. Sometimes three games are played without reference to a rubber, fifty points being scored for a game won. No tricks score towards game except those which a player wins in his own deal; the value of tricks won in other deals is scored above the line with honours, slam and chicane. At the end of the rubber the totals are added up, and the points won or lost are adjusted thus. Suppose A is credited with 212, B with 290, and C with 312, then A owes 78 to B and 100 to C; B owes 22 to C.

Dummy Bridge. - The player who cuts the lowest card takes dummy. Dummy deals the first hand of all. The player who takes dummy always looks at his own hand first, when he deals for himself or for dummy; he can either declare trumps or "leave it" to dummy. Dummy's declaration is compulsory, as in three-handed bridge. When the dealer deals for dummy, the player on the dealer's *left* must not look at his cards till either the dealer has declared trumps or, the declaration having been left to dummy, his own partner has led a card. The latter can double, but his partner can only double without seeing his hand. The dealer can only redouble on his own hand. When the player of dummy deals for himself, the player on his *right* hand looks at dummy's hand if the declaration is passed, the positions and restrictions of his partner and himself being reversed. If the player of dummy declares from his own hand, the game proceeds as in ordinary bridge, except that dummy's hand is not looked at till permission to play has been given. When the player on dummy's right deals, dummy's partner may look at dummy's hand to decide if he will double, but he may not look at his own till a card has been led by dummy. In another form of dummy bridge two hands are exposed whenever dummy's adversaries deal, but the game is unsuited for many players, as in every other hand the game is one of double-dummy.

Misery Bridge. - This is a form of bridge adapted for two players. The non-dealer has the dummy, whilst the dealer is allowed to strengthen his hand by discarding four or fewer cards and taking an equal number from the fourth packet dealt; the rest of the cards in that packet are unused and remain unseen. A novel and interesting addition to the game is that the three of clubs (called "Cato") does not rank as a Club but can be played to any trick and win it. The dealer, in addition to his other calls, may declare "misery" when he has to make less than two tricks.

Draw- or Two-handed Bridge. - This is the best form of bridge for two players. Each player has a dummy, which is placed opposite to him; but the cards are so arranged that they cannot be seen by his opponent, a special stand being required for the purpose. The dealer makes the declaration or passes it to his dummy to make by the same rules as in three-handed or dummy bridge. The objection to this is that, since the opponent does not see the dealer's (dummy, he has no chance of checking an erroneous declaration. This could be avoided by not allowing the dealer the option of passing.

Auction Bridge. - This variety of the game for four players, which adds an element characteristic of poker, appears to have been suggested about 1004, but was really introduced at the Bath Club, London, in 1907, and then was gradually taken up by a wider circle. The laws were settled in August 1908 by a joint committee of the Bath and Portland clubs. The scoring (except as below), value of suits, and play are as at ordinary bridge, but the variety consists in the method of declaration, the declaration not being confined in auction bridge to the dealer or his partner, and the deal being a disadvantage rather than otherwise. The dealer, having examined his hand, must declare to win at least one "odd" trick, and then each player in turn, beginning with the one on the dealer's left, has the right to pass the previous declaration, or double, or redouble, or overcall by making a declaration of higher value, any number of times till all are satisfied, the actual play of the combined hands (or what in ordinary bridge would be dealer and dummy) resting eventually with the partners making the final declaration; the partner who made the first call (however small) in the suit finally constituting the trump (or no-trump) plays the hands, the other being dummy. A declaration of a greater number of tricks in a suit of lower value, which equals a previous call in value of points (e.g. two in spades as against one in Clubs) is "of higher value"; but doubling and redoubling only affect the score and not the declaration, so that a call of two diamonds overcalls one no-trump even though this has been doubled. The scoring in auction bridge has the additional element that when the eventual player of the two hands wins what was ultimately declared or more, his side score the full value below the line (as tricks), but if he fails the opponents score 50 points above the line (as honours) for each under-trick (i.e. trick short of the declaration), or 100 or 200 if doubled or redoubled,

nothing being scored by either side below the line; the loss on a declaration of one spade is limited, however, to a maximum of 100 points. A player whose declaration has been doubled and who fulfills his contract, scores a bonus of 50 points above the line and a further 50 points for each additional trick beyond his declaration; if there was a redouble and he wins, he scores double the bonus. The penalty for a revoke (unaffected by a double) is (1) in the case of the declarer, that his adversaries add 150 above the line; (2) in the case of one of his adversaries, that the declarer may either add 150 points above the line or may take three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own; in the latter case such tricks may assist him to fulfill his contract, but shall not entitle him to any bonus for a double or redouble. A revoking side may score nothing either above or below the line except for honours or chicane. As regards the essential feature of auction bridge, the competitive declaration, it is impossible here to discuss the intricacies involved. It entails, clearly, much reliance on a good partner, since the various rounds of bidding enable good players to draw inferences as to where the cards lie. The game opens the door to much larger scores than ordinary bridge, and since the end only comes from scores made below the line, there are obvious ways of prolonging it at the cost of scores above the line which involve much more of the gambling element. It by no means follows that the winner of the rubber is the winner by points, and many players prefer to go for points (*i.e.* above the line) extorted from their opponents rather than for fulfilling a declaration made by themselves.

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(W. H. W.*)