

INTRODUCING THE USES OF THE REDOUBLE

by *Eddie Kantar*

In the modern game, 'redouble' has many possible meanings. It is important to know when to use the redouble as well as to know what partner means when he or she utters the magic word. Here are the four most common usages of the redouble. You are South in these example sequences:

Sequence 1

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♣	Double	Pass	Pass*
Redouble			
*Pass	penalty pass		

When the player to your right passes partner's takeout double, indicating a long strong holding in your suit, "Redouble," by you is an SOS bid. It is a plea for rescue.

You may have:

♠ A J 4
♥ K Q 5
♦ K 9 4
♣ 9 7 5 4

You do not relish playing 1♣ doubled knowing of massive clubs with East. Your redouble asks partner to bid his longest suit.

Sequence 2

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♣	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble?			

When the takeout double is to your **right, not your left**, the meaning of 'redouble' changes. Completely! It now describes a powerful hand with 18-20 HCP plus a five or six card suit. It encourages partner to compete with support for your suit or to bid a five or six card suit of his own, hopefully headed by an honor.

You may have:

♠ A J 4
♥ K Q 5
♦ 9 8
♣ A K J 9 6

If you have 18-19 HCP, and no five card suit, rebid 1NT:

♠ A Q 8
♥ A Q 7
♦ K Q 4
♣ Q 6 4 3

Sequence 3

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	Double	Redouble?	

Here 'redouble' tells partner that the hand belongs to your side. You should have 11+ HCP (rarely 10). You promise another bid if LHO bids and partner passes. Your side should wind up playing the hand or the opponents play it doubled!

Note: Holding four or more cards in partner's major suit opening bid with opening bid values, respond 3NT, artificial. It is more informative than a redouble. Along these lines, a 2NT response by you in this sequence shows a limit raise in hearts, a jump to 3♥ is preemptive. The 2NT response is called 'Jordan' and enjoys worldwide popularity.

Sequence 4

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	3♦	3♥	Pass
4♦	Double	Redouble?	

When partner makes a slam try cuebid (4♦), presumably showing the ace, and this is doubled, redouble by you shows **second** round diamond control--the king or a singleton. Your hand:

♠ 8 7 4 2
♥ K J 8
♦ 7
♣ A 10 8 6 3

Practice Hand #1

North

♠ 9 7
♥ A 10 4
♦ K Q J 4
♣ J 9 4 3

West

♠ A K J 8
♥ 8
♦ 10 7 5 3
♣ A Q 8 6

Game EW Dealer S

East

♠ Q 10 3 2
♥ 9 6 2
♦ 9 8 6 2
♣ 10 2

South

♠ 6 5 4
♥ K Q J 7 5 3
♦ A
♣ K 7 5

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Double	Redouble	1♠
Pass	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Opening lead: ♠K

Bidding Commentary: North's redouble shows 11+ HCP (seldom 10) and East is allowed to show a four-card suit at the one level. West knows that East can't have much given the North-South bidding. (The redoubling side usually has 24 HCP between them, minimum.) South's pass indicates

a full opening bid (more on this later) and West's raise shows four card support with 16+18 support points. As South, after hearing support for a six-card suit, tack on 3 extra points if the hand has no singleton, 4 if it has a singleton, and a whopping 5 extra if it has a singleton and a doubleton. Don't look now, but your hand is now worth 17 points.

Lead Commentary: Holding the ace-king in any suit partner has bid, the king, not the ace is the proper lead. The lead of an ace in a suit partner has bid, or in a **supported** suit, **denies** the king. The reason is that in these situations the ace is often led without the king.

Defensive Commentary: East plays the ♠10 at trick one, the equal honor signal showing the queen. West, who wants a club shift, leads a low spade at trick two to East's queen. East shifts to the ♣10 which West can read as shortness because the ♣9 is in the dummy. Whenever partner leads an honor card and the next lower card is visible, assume shortness. West takes two clubs and gives East a club ruff. Down two; the only defense.

Practice Hand #2

	North ♠ K 10 8 ♥ A Q J 8 7 ♦ K 9 8 6 ♣ 2		
West ♠ 6 4 ♥ 10 9 6 5 4 ♦ 5 ♣ 10 9 8 6 5	Game EW Dealer N	East ♠ A Q 3 2 ♥ 2 ♦ A J 4 3 2 ♣ Q 7 4	
	South ♠ J 9 7 5 ♥ K 3 ♦ Q 10 6 ♣ A K J 3		

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	Double	Redouble	2♣
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Opening lead: ♣2

Bidding Commentary: East has a routine takeout double with shortness in the opener's suit. South's redouble shows 11+ points and **promises** another bid if West bids and North passes. West's two-level runout suggests a five-card suit and North passes to see what South has to say. South doubles. **After an opening bid, a takeout double, and a redouble, any subsequent double by the opener or the responder is a penalty double.** North, assuming that South has fewer than three hearts, accepts South's decision and passes as does East. If East gets cold feet and runs to 2♦, North doubles. Don't ask.

Lead Commentary: As North, when partner makes a penalty double of a **low** level contract, a trump is usually best. The reason being that doubles of low level contracts show **strong** trumps.

Defensive Commentary: As South, take the first three club tricks and shift to the king and a heart. Your side now races off four heart tricks and when partner leads a fifth heart you trump. Guess what? Your side has taken the first eight tricks and collects a whopping 800 points and they have done nothing wrong, but your side has done everything right!

Practice Hand #3

	North ♠ 5 3 ♥ J 2 ♦ A J 10 9 4 3 ♣ A Q 5	
West ♠ 9 8 7 6 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ 8 7 ♣ J 9 8 6	Love All Dealer E	East ♠ A J 10 4 ♥ A Q 10 9 ♦ Q 6 5 ♣ 10 7
	South ♠ K Q 2 ♥ K 7 6 5 ♦ K 2 ♣ K 7 3 2	

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♦	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble	Pass	1♠	Pass
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Opening lead: ♠9

Bidding Commentary: As East, after North's penalty pass of South's takeout double. Indicating diamonds from here to China, your redouble is for rescue. Partner must bid something, hopefully something at the one level, if possible. As West, bid 1♠ in something resembling a normal voice. North's pass after the 1♠ bid is forcing. South bids 1NT to describe a minimum double with spades stopped. North raises 3NT, a sensible action.

Lead Commentary: As West, in response to partner's SOS redouble, inferring some spade support, lead a spade.

Defensive Commentary: As East, you can read the lead as a top card meaning that South has both the king and the queen. Your best bet is to win the ♠A and lead the ♥A and ♥Q (or the queen) establishing the setting tricks in hearts once the king is driven out—if you can just get in again, hopefully with the ♦Q.

Play Commentary: As South, after winning the ♥K (if East plays the ace and queen, win the third heart) you can see

26 HCP between your hand and dummy, leaving East-West with 14. East, the opening bidder, is a strong favorite to be looking at the $\heartsuit Q$. Accordingly, cross to a club honor and run the $\heartsuit J$ which East should not cover. As it happens, East has the expected $\heartsuit Q$, diamonds break 3-2, and you have the rest of the tricks. Had West the $\heartsuit Q$, winning the third heart prevents West from leading a heart.

Practice Hand #4

	North \spadesuit A 10 9 7 \heartsuit 8 3 2 \diamondsuit 8 4 2 \clubsuit Q 10 8		
West \spadesuit K 6 3 \heartsuit A J 5 \diamondsuit Q J 6 5 \clubsuit 9 7 2	Game EW Dealer S	East \spadesuit 8 5 4 \heartsuit K Q 10 7 6 \diamondsuit K 3 \clubsuit A J 4	
	South \spadesuit Q J 2 \heartsuit 9 4 \diamondsuit A 10 9 8 \clubsuit K 6 5 3		

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 \heartsuit
Double	Redouble	1 \spadesuit	Pass
Pass	2 \heartsuit	All Pass	

Opening lead: $\spadesuit Q$

Bidding Commentary: South has a reasonable passed hand takeout double, somewhat flawed lacking four spades. West's **passed hand** redouble is limited to 10-11 HCP; with more West would have opened the bidding. North has an automatic 1 \spadesuit response and both East and South have nothing more to say. As East, do not bid over 1 \spadesuit unless you have a **minimum unbalanced** hand. Partner must bid again if you pass. West competes with 2 \heartsuit showing a minimum redouble with **three hearts** and you should be thrilled to pass again.

Defensive Commentary: After the normal lead of the $\spadesuit Q$, it is likely that declarer will play low from dummy. If so, North signals with the $\spadesuit 10$, the **higher** equal to show interest. If that happens, South continues with the $\spadesuit J$ (the higher of **two** remaining cards) and North winds up taking the third spade trick.

Further Defensive Commentary: As North, peering at this dummy, it is clear that clubs is the suit to attack, but which club? When the dummy has the 9 \times (\times)(\times) and you have the Q108(\times) or K108(\times), attack with the $\clubsuit 10$, called a 'surrounding play'. Why? Because you have the 9 surrounded with the (10 8) **plus a higher non-touching honor**, the definition of a surrounding play. It also applies when dummy to your right has 10 \times (\times)(\times) and you have the

KJ9(\times) or the AJ9(\times). You have 10 surrounded plus a higher non-touching honor, so start with the jack.

Here, if the 8 is led, East plays low and South wins the king, but East remains with the AJ hovering over the queen and the defense gets one trick. If the 10 is led and East covers with the jack, South wins and returns a club, North having the Q8 sitting over the 97. The defenders establish two club tricks to go along with three spades and the $\heartsuit A$. Down one.

Practice Hand #5

	North \spadesuit K Q J 10 6 5 \heartsuit A 3 \diamondsuit J 4 \clubsuit J 4 2		
West \spadesuit 7 \heartsuit 10 9 6 2 \diamondsuit 9 7 6 5 2 \clubsuit K 8 5	Love All Dealer W	East \spadesuit 4 3 \heartsuit Q J 8 7 \diamondsuit K Q 10 8 \clubsuit A 10 9	
	South \spadesuit A 9 8 2 \heartsuit K 7 5 \diamondsuit A 3 \clubsuit Q 7 6 3		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1 \spadesuit	Double	3NT
Pass	4 \spadesuit	All Pass	

Opening lead: $\heartsuit K$

Bidding Commentary: As South, this is one of the rare time that you do not redouble with 11+ HCP. If you have four or more card support with opening bid values, a jump to 3NT tells your story in one bid. Partner, with a minimum, corrects to 4 \spadesuit . If partner has slam on the brain, partner cuebids.

Lead Commentary: Routine with this strong honor sequence holding.

Play Commentary: As North, you are in danger of losing 4 tricks, three clubs and a diamond. You should assume the club honors are divided as East would probably have led a high club holding the ace-king. However, you have an answer, a sure fire answer. Win the $\heartsuit A$, draw trumps, play the ace-king and trump a heart stripping that suit, and exit a diamond, your equal length side suit. East is on play with the $\heartsuit Q$, and if East leads a club or gives you a ruff and sluff, you lose but two club tricks.

Tip: As declarer when an opponent gives you a ruff and sluff, trump in the hand that is longer in your loser suit, clubs. Translation: trump the club in dummy, and discard a club from your hand, the hand that is shorter in clubs, the way to handle a ruff and a sluff.

Practice Hand #6

	North ♠ J 9 8 6 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ Q 10 9 7 5 ♣ 2		
West ♠ 4 3 ♥ A Q 8 6 4 ♦ J ♣ K Q 10 9 8	Game All Dealer E	East ♠ 7 5 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A K 8 4 3 ♣ A J 7 6	
	South ♠ A K Q 10 ♥ K J 10 9 ♦ 6 2 ♣ 5 4 3		

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♦	Double	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	5♣?	All Pass

Opening lead: ♠A

Bidding Commentary: As West this is the other time (see last hand) when it is better **not** to redouble with 11+ HCP. It is when you have a two-suited and can bid one of your suits at the one level. It is more important to bid both suits early as competition may make it difficult to show both suits at a convenient level. As East, treat the 1♥ response as if South had passed; in other words, ignore the double and bid naturally. As North, once West bids 1♥, you are off the hook and bidding 1♠ shows some values, 4/5-8 HCP. East bids 2♣, natural. As West, if your partnership now plays a jump to 4♣ as forcing, that would be ideal as it gives your partner a chance to cuebid or use Blackwood if desired. If there is doubt as to whether 4♣ is forcing, jump to 5♣ to avoid an 'accident'.

Defensive Commentary: South does best to cash two spades and shift to a trump.

Play Commentary: As East, with high trumps and short suits on both sides, think 'crossruff'. Start by counting your top tricks. You have the club that you have already taken plus the ♥A and the ♦AK for four. Next, count the trump tricks available. You have four trumps in dummy facing three in your hand all of which can be made separately. Bottom line: you start with four top tricks and can make seven more by crossruffing. You don't need the heart finesse. However, before embarking on a crossruff, cash your side suit winners first; the ♦AK before trumping diamonds. If you don't, you may not be able to cash your second diamond later as the opponents still have trumps and bad things can happen. Terrible things can happen.

Practice Hand #7

	North ♠ A Q 5 4 ♥ 6 4 ♦ 9 8 7 6 ♣ A J 8		
West ♠ J 9 8 6 ♥ A J ♦ A 10 5 2 ♣ K 4 3	Game EW Dealer S	East ♠ K 10 3 ♥ 10 9 7 5 ♦ - ♣ Q 10 9 7 6 5	
	South ♠ 7 2 ♥ K Q 8 4 2 ♦ K Q J 4 3 ♣ 2		

South	West	North	East
1♥	Double	Redouble	2♣
2♦	Pass	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	3♦	All Pass

Opening lead: ♣3

Bidding Commentary: As South, your 2♦ bid is the key bid in the auction. When you bid a lower ranking suit or rebid your own suit before partner has a chance to bid, you are describing a very minimum unbalanced opening bid. In the case of a second suit, you are showing 5-5 with 10-12 HCP. When you do this, system is off, Partner is not forced to bid again and they are allowed to play contracts undoubled. With a stronger 5-5 hand, pass and then bid diamonds. Your pass over 2♣ shows an opening bid you are proud of. East has enough to compete to 3♣ and now North **competes** to 3♦ ending the bidding.

Play Commentary: As South, win the ♣A and lead a heart to the **king** (the **higher** equal when leading up to equal honors in the closed hand for deceptive purposes) and ace. If West wins and continues with the ♣K, ruff, cash the ♥Q and lead a low heart in line with setting up a long, relatively weak suit, **before** drawing trumps. The most the defenders can take is two diamonds, the ♥A and the ♠K.

1. After an opening bid, a takeout double, and a redouble, if the opener bids a second suit or rebids the original suit, **before the redoubler has a chance to bid**, opener shows a weak distributional hand.
2. As declarer, when leading up to one of several equal honors, play the higher or highest for deceptive purposes. This also applies when finessing or taking a trick.
3. In general, it is right for declarer holding a two-suiter to start setting up a relatively weak side suit before drawing trumps. (Hearts before diamonds)

Practice Hand #8

	North		
	♠ 8 7 6		
	♥ 7 6 5		
	♦ Q 9 2		
	♣ Q 4 3 2		
West		East	
♠ K 5 2	Game All Dealer S	♠ Q 7 4 3	
♥ Q 9 4 3		♥ K 10 2	
♦ 10 6 5		♦ 4 3	
♣ J 10 7		♣ A K 9 5	
	South		
	♠ A J 10		
	♥ A J 8		
	♦ A K J 8 7		
	♣ 8 6		

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♦	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble	1♥	2♦	All Pass

Opening lead: ♥2. East plays the ♥K.
Plan the play.

Bidding Commentary: As South, your redouble after a takeout double to your right is not an SOS redouble. On the contrary, it shows a strong hand in the 18-20 point range.

Had the bidding gone 1♦ by you, double by West, passed around to you indicating East has long, strong diamonds, 'redouble' by you is for rescue. Do not confuse the two.

Your redouble affords North the opportunity to compete with two diamonds knowing your side has at least half of the HCP and that you have at least five diamonds. With 18-19 balanced and fewer than five diamonds, bid 1NT over the double. After the 2♦ bid, neither East nor West really has anything sensible to add.

Defensive Commentary: East-West do best not to lead spades, though they may not know it. If they do, it makes it easier for South to lose but one spade trick.

Play Commentary: As South, it doesn't hurt to win the opening lead and exit a club. You are hoping for a spade shift from either player. However, if the defenders do this right and cash their hearts and then play a club and a club forcing you to ruff, you must attack spades. As you need two dummy entries to take two spade finesses, you do best to ruff the third club high and then cash the ace and lead a low diamond to the nine! Assuming this wins, a spade is led to the jack and king. West exits a trump to dummy's queen and now you can enter dummy with the ♦Q and repeat the spade finesse to make the contract. But what a struggle!

Practice Hand #9

	North		
	♠ 3		
	♥ K Q 4		
	♦ Q 4		
	♣ K Q J 10 5 3 2		
West		East	
♠ A Q J 10 8	Love All Dealer W	♠ K 10 9 5	
♥ A		♥ 10 9 6 5	
♦ K 6 2		♦ A 8 5 3	
♣ A 8 6 4		♣ 9	
	South		
	♠ 6 4 2		
	♥ J 8 7 3 2		
	♦ J 10 9 7		
	♣ 7		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	2♣	3♠	Pass
4♣	Double	Redouble	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Opening lead: ♣K

Bidding Commentary: East's 3♠ bid was meant as a limit raise. If 3♠ is played as preemptive, then East bids must cuebid 3♣ to show a limit raise or better. North's double of 4♣ is a suggestion for a possible sacrifice. There is no need for North to remind himself what to lead against a spade contract. As East, your redouble shows second round club control, either the king or a singleton, surely a singleton here. As West, knowing of the singleton club should encourage you to try for slam. Partner's 5♥ response to your Roman Keycard Blackwood ask of 4NT showed two key cards without the ♠Q. Surely these two keycards are the ♦A and the ♠K, enough for you to bid slam.

Defensive Commentary: A case could also be made for a trump lead as dummy is marked with a singleton club. As it happens, it doesn't matter.

Play Commentary: As West, you can afford to trump your three losing clubs with high trumps in dummy. It would be foolhardy to trump the first club low. One might say you get what you deserve if you do this. East overruffs and you are stuck with a diamond loser.