



Mechanics for Duplicate Clubs with Small Games

MECHANICS FOR DUPLICATE CLUBS WITH SMALL GAMES

Duplicate Play

The mechanics of duplicate are slightly different from rubber or party bridge to permit play of identical deals at several tables and thereby establish a comparison between the relative skills of the players. This is done by placing each deal in a board or tray containing four pockets, each pocket of proper size to hold the 13 cards dealt to one player.

Each deck is shuffled and dealt at the start of the game in the normal manner, and each player's hand of 13 cards is placed in the appropriate pocket. The decks are not shuffled again during the contest, but the original hands are kept intact so they may be passed from table to table, permitting the identical cards to be played by as many tables as desired.

When the play of a given deal starts, the cards are not mixed in tricks in the center of the table as would normally be done in rubber or party bridge. Each player retains possession of his own 13 cards by placing them in an orderly row on his edge of the table in the order played. It is customary to indicate tricks won by pointing the cards lengthwise toward partner and tricks lost by pointing cards lengthwise toward the opponents. At the completion of the deal, it is easy to count the tricks won and lost by each side, but if there is any question, play should be reviewed until agreement is reached. The cards are then placed back in the appropriate pocket of the board, and the deal is ready for play at the next table.

Each board is marked with an identifying number, an arrow to show the direction in which it should be placed on the table, and one player is designated as dealer (that is, the first bidder). Each board indicates whether no one, or one side, or both sides are vulnerable on that board. Each board is played and scored as a separate unit – rubbers are not scored. There is no carryover of partscores from one deal to the next and honors do not count.

Equipment

The principal item of equipment for a duplicate game is a set of duplicate boards, each board equipped with a deck of cards. A complete set consists of 36 boards, but a newly-formed group will find it convenient to play only 20 to 22 boards per session at the start. The group may wish to increase the number later as it gains experience.

Only two scoring forms are required – a pad of traveling scores and a pad of recap sheets, which are described in the paragraphs on “Scoring” below. Numbered table cards may be purchased or may be improvised by writing numbers on plain cards.

No further materials or supplies are necessary to conduct duplicate games under the Mitchell movement described below. The information given herein will enable any director to conduct Mitchell duplicate games without further instructions or equipment. When a club is ready for more complex forms of play, self-explanatory guide cards for other movements may be purchased.

The Mitchell Movement

The Mitchell movement is by far the simplest form of duplicate play and is the one recommended for all newly-formed clubs and inexperienced directors. It is arranged for pairs – that is, each player retains the same partner throughout the game, but each pair meets a different pair of opponents and a different set of boards at each round.

For convenience, one end of the room is designated North, and the tables are numbered consecutively beginning at the North end. (It is unimportant whether it is really the compass North or not.) If the room is large and there are many tables, the tables may be arranged in an “L” or “U” formation with the highest number conveniently near Table 1. At a signal from the director, all players take seats and are designated as either North - South or East - West according to the direction in which they sit. Each pair takes a pair number corresponding to its starting table and direction: as N-S 1, E-W 1, N-S 2, E-W 2, etc.

N-S pairs remain at their starting position for the entire session. Each E-W pair plays one round at its original position, and then moves to the next higher table at each succeeding round; that is, from Table 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4, etc., and from the highest numbered table to Table 1. When all pairs have played the correct designated number of rounds, the game is complete.

Odd Number of Tables

The progression of boards is simplest for an odd number of tables, and that procedure will be described first. The game may be played with as few as three tables, but for purpose of illustration, a seven-table game will be described. A seven-table game could conveniently play 21 boards (seven rounds of three boards each). The director places boards 1, 2, and 3 on Table 1, boards 4, 5, and 6 on Table 2, etc., and boards 19, 20, and 21 on Table 7.

When the original three boards have been played at each table, the director gives a signal and each E-W pair moves to the next-higher table as indicated above. Each North player moves the set of boards he has just played to the next-lower table; that is, from 7 to 6, 6 to 5, etc., and from Table 1 to the highest-numbered table. After seven rounds have been played, each E-W pair will have played one round against each N-S pair, and vice versa; and every pair (whether N-S or E-W) will have played each set of boards once, thereby completing the movement.

For a nine-table game, it would be preferable to play only two boards per round, nine sets, for total of 18 boards. A five-table game could conveniently play four boards per round, a total of 20.

Even Number of Tables

For an even number of tables, the E-W pairs progress exactly as with odd numbers, but there is an irregularity in the progression of boards. For convenience, the highest-numbered table should be placed beside Table 1, for the same set of boards will be played simultaneously at these two tables. The boards in the set will be relayed between the tables as convenient. The highest-numbered table receives no boards of its own, but always plays the set of boards then in play at Table 1. In addition, a bye-stand, on which one set of boards remains idle at each round, must be placed at the mid-point of the game.

For example, let us consider a six-table game in which 18 boards will be played. The boards are divided into six sets of three each; 1-2-3 go on Table 1, 4-5-6 on Table 2, 7-8-9 on Table 3, 10-11-12 on the bye-stand (where they remain idle the first round), 13-14-15 on Table 4, 16-17-18 on Table 5. No boards at all are originally placed on Table 6, which borrows one board at a time from Table 1 until it has played the entire 1-2-3 set.

When the first round is complete, each set of boards is moved to the next lower table, except that Boards 13-14-15 are moved from Table 4 to the bye-stand, and boards 10-11-12 are moved from the bye-stand to Table 3. Each set of boards, after being played at Table 4, rests idle on the bye-stand for one round and then goes to Table 3 for the following round. The boards which have been relayed between Tables 1 and 6 go next to Table 5.

It is important that the bye-stand be placed at the exact midpoint of the section; that is, with six tables, it goes between 3 and 4; with eight tables, it goes between 4 and 5; with 10 tables, it goes between 5 and 6, etc.

If this is done correctly, each N-S pair will play one round against each E-W pair, and vice versa; and every pair will meet each set of boards once and only once. A beginning director would be well advised to make up a series of diagrams showing the location of each E-W pair and each set of boards for each round. This will not only familiarize him with the progression, but will ensure against possible errors.

Half Tables

It is possible to conduct a Mitchell game with an odd number of pairs, that is, with one incomplete table. In such a case, no N-S pair is seated at the highest-numbered table, and those chairs remain vacant throughout the session. Each E-W pair has a “bye” or “sit-out” round when the normal progression brings it to that table.

For purpose of odd or even progression, the half-table must be considered as a full table. Example: For a $6\frac{1}{2}$ - table game, the boards would be distributed exactly as in a seven-table, and the E-W pairs would move accordingly. The only difference is that because the N-S pair at Table 7 is missing, both the boards and E-W players remain idle at that table for one round and then progress normally for the following round.

This is especially important when the number of tables is even, thereby requiring a bye-stand. For a $7\frac{1}{2}$ - table game, boards would be distributed exactly as for an eight-table game with a bye-stand between Tables 4 and 5. In this case, however, since there is no play at Table 8, the relay between Tables 1 and 8 is unnecessary. The number of rounds must equal the number of tables. Example: eight tables = eight rounds; six tables = six rounds.

Scoring

The principle of duplicate scoring is to compare the scores made by several contestants with identical cards. To permit easy comparison, all scores made on a given board are tabulated on one form, known as a traveling score, Form 234, sample attached.

Before play starts, one copy of the traveling score is folded in such a manner that the printed side does not show and is placed in the North pocket of each board. The traveling score should show the board number in the upper right corner of the printed side and, also on the back where it will be

clearly visible without unfolding. When play of the board at a given table has been completed (and not before), the North player unfolds the traveling score and enters the result on the line corresponding to his own pair number.

North should enter the contract, by whom played, number of tricks made or down, N-S's plus or minus score, and the E-W pair number. The matchpoint column on the extreme right is not filled in at this time. North must be meticulously careful to enter the score correctly because any error or omission may require much rechecking later and will delay tabulation of the results. North then submits the traveling score to the East or West player for examination, and when both are satisfied that the entry is correct and complete, the traveling score is folded and replaced in the North pocket of the board. It accompanies the board throughout the game, and each new result is entered on it round by round.

When the game is over, entries are made in the matchpoint column by the director or one of his assistants. The principle of matchpoint scoring is this: considering only scores made by other pairs on the same board in the same direction, each score is awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for each score identical with it and 1 matchpoint for each lower score. The attached example shows a traveling score completely filled out for a seven-table game.

The best of the seven N-S scores was made by N-S 3, four spades making five for a total of 450. There are six lower N-S scores on the board, so N-S 3 receives 6 matchpoints. The second N-S score is three spades making four for a total of 170. There are five lower scores, so 170 earns 5 matchpoints.

Next, we find two 130 scores. Each of these receives $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for the other 130 with which it is tied, and 1 point for each of the three lower scores or a total of $3\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoints each. Others are rated accordingly until the lowest score obviously gets 0 matchpoints.

To check the accuracy of the matchpointing, the points are added up and compared against a predetermined check-total. The check-total is always the sum of the digits from one to the highest possible score on that board. In a seven-table game, it would be the sum of all the digits from 1 to 6, or 21, and it is noted that the N-S matchpoints in the example do add to 21. The check-total is not changed by the presence of half matchpoints in the column for there must always be an even number of halves.

Matchpoints for the E-W pairs are tabulated on the lower half of the traveling score. Each E-W score is the complement of the score made by the N-S opponents. Corresponding N-S and E-W scores must add up to the maximum possible on that board (commonly called "top"). Top on a board is always one fewer than the total number of scores – that is, in a seven-table game, top is 6.

We note that E-W Pair 1 played against N-S Pair 1. N-S Pair 1 earned $3\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoints, so E-W Pair 1 earned $2\frac{1}{2}$. E-W Pair 3 played against N-S Pair 2; N-S Pair 2 earned 1 point, so E-W Pair 3 earned 5 points. This process is continued for each E-W pair, taking care to enter each E-W matchpoint score on the line corresponding to the pair number. Check-total for E-W is the same as for N-S, in this case 21 points.

When all of the traveling scores have been matchpointed, the matchpoints are copied onto a recapitulation sheet (recap sheet) Form 133. This form has a vertical column for each board number, and the matchpoints for each board are copied in the appropriate column – N-S pairs on the upper half of the sheet and E-W pairs on the lower half of the sheet.

When all of the scores have been copied to the recap sheets, the scores of each pair are added horizontally and the total placed in the column headed "Total Points". Then all N-S scores are added together and the total compared to a predetermined check-total for accuracy. We have already seen that the check-total in this game is 21 points per board; and since 21 boards were played, the grand check-total is 21 x 21, or 441. It is obviously the same for N-S and E-W. If our totals differ from that figure, it means that an error has been made in matchpointing or addition, or both, and the work must be rechecked until the error is located and corrected.

When all totals are correct, the score is said to be "in balance", and the pairs are ranked according to their matchpoint totals. N-S and E-W pairs are ranked separately since they did not play the same cards and there is no direct comparison between them. If prizes are awarded, separate prizes should be provided for each group. For ranking purposes, rankings are 40% x the total number of tables. Always round up to the next higher number. Example: 8 x 40% = 3.2 or 4 ranking per direction.

One Winner Movements

In championship events, it is usually desirable to have all pairs compared together as one group so a winning pair can be determined for the entire field. Many ingenious movements have been devised for that purpose, and some of them can be handled easily by any director who has had a little practice in scoring.

The true Howell movement will handle games up to seven tables and permits every pair to play one round against every other pair in the game. The Three-Quarter movement handles larger games from eight to 12 tables where it is not possible to meet all of the competing pairs in one session. In both games, the pairs change from N-S to E-W and vice versa at appropriate times so all pairs compare scores together and compete as one field.

Printed self-explanatory guide cards may be purchased for both Howell and Three-Quarter games at each round. It is necessary to have the correct guide cards for the exact number of tables in play. For example, the six-table cards cannot be used for a seven-table game. These movements provide an interesting change from the Mitchell game, and any club that conducts games regularly should have a complete set of Howell and Three-Quarter guide cards on hand.

OFFICIAL ACBL TRAVELING SCORE

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board
No.

1

N-S Pair No.	CON- TRACT	BY	Made	Down	SCORE		E-W Pair No.	Match- points
					N-S	E-W		
1	3D	N	4		130		1	3½
2	4S	S		1		50	3	1
3	4S	S	5		450		5	6
4	3H	E	3			140	7	0
5	3S	S	4		170		2	5
6	4H	E		2	100		4	2
7	4D	N	4		130		6	3½
8								
9								21
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								2½ 1
20								1 2
21								5 3
22								4 4
23								0 5
24								2½ 6
25								6 7
26								8
27								21 9
28								10
29								11
30								12
31								13
32								14
33								15
34								16
35								17
36								18

ACBL SHORT TRAVELING SCORE

(Mitchell or Howell)

North player keeps score.
Enter E-W Pair No.

Board
No.

1

N-S Pair No.	Contract	BY	Made	Down	SCORE		N-S Match Points	E-W Pair No.	E-W Match Points
					N-S	E-W			
1	3D	N	4		130		3½	1	2½
2	4S	S		1		50	1	3	5
3	4S	S	5		450		6	5	0
4	3H	E	3			140	0	7	6
5	3S	S	4		170		5	2	1
6	4H	E		2	100		2	4	4
7	4D	N	4		130		3½	6	2½
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									

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American Contract Bridge League
2990 Airways Boulevard
Memphis TN 38116-3847

Event _____

Average _____

PAIR NO.	NAMES	RANK	TOTAL POINTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1		4	61½	3½	0	5½	etc.			
2		7	54½	1	6	0	"			
3		①	74½	6	2	5½	"			
4		6	56½	0	2	3½	"			
5		2	71	5	4	3½	"			
6		5	58	2	2	1	"			
7		3	65	3½	5	2	"			
8										
9			441							
10										
11										
12										
13										
PAIR NO.	NAMES	RANK	TOTAL POINTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1		4	61	2½	6	½	etc.			
2		7	57½	1	2	2½	"			
3		3	64½	5	0	6	"			
4		①	70	4	4	5	"			
5		6	59½	0	4	½	"			
6		5	60	2½	1	4	"			
7		2	68½	6	4	2½	"			
8										
9										
10			441							
11										
12										
13										