

How 4-Person "Swiss Team" Duplicate Bridge Competitions are Scored in IMPs

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In all duplicate bridge competitions, **Board Bridge Scores** are the building blocks for ultimately scoring the competition. Most bridge players are very familiar with Board Bridge Scores. For example, most players are aware that a successful **1NT** contract making exactly 1 Trick, Vulnerable or not Vulnerable, earns a Board Bridge Score of +90. A **4H** contract Vulnerable making 4 earns +620, while a **4H** contract Vulnerable making 5 earns a Board Bridge Score of +650. Setting Opponents 1 Trick if they are not Vulnerable, and not Doubled, earns +50, while, if Opponents are Vulnerable, and not Doubled, earns +100. Setting Opponents 3 Tricks Vulnerable, and Doubled, earns a Board Bridge Score of +800.

In Duplicate Bridge Pair competitions, Board Bridge Scores are converted into **Board Matchpoint Scores**. The Board Matchpoint Scores are then summed across Boards, and the resulting Total Matchpoint Scores are the basis for rank ordering the Pairs with respect to their final results.

Duplicate "Swiss Teams", on the other hand, consist of 4-person, rather than 2-person teams. In Swiss, one pair on a given Swiss Team always sits N/S on all Boards in the competition, and the other pair on the same team always sits E/W on all Boards. However, Board Matchpoint Scores are not computed in Swiss Team competitions. Instead, in Swiss Board Bridge Scores are computed into **International Matchpoint Scores**, or **IMPs**.

The Swiss Movement

Let's presume that a given Swiss competition involves 6 Swiss

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Teams. Let's say that Swiss Team #1, Team **Blue**, consists of Frances and Diane always sitting N/S, and Tom and Holland always sitting E/W. Let's say that Swiss Team #2, Team **Red**, consists of Mel and Michael always sitting N/S, and Linda and Elyse always sitting E/W.

The Director may decide that the competition will involve 4 Rounds with 8 Boards played in each Round, and that in Round #1 Team **Blue** will play Team **Red**. So, in Round #1, the **Blue** E/W Pair (Tom and Holland) will move to a Table to play against the **Red** N/S Pair (Mel and Michael), while **Red** E/W Pair (Linda and Elyse) will move to a Table to play against **Blue** N/S Pair (Frances and Diane).

The Director will place 4 Boards (e.g., Boards #1-#4) at one Table (#1), and 4 Boards (e.g., Boards #5-#8) at the other Table (#2). The 4 Pairs at each Table will then shuffle their Boards, and then play the Boards, and each Pair at a given Table will record their respective Bridge Board Scores on each Board.

Once the Pairs at both Tables are done playing their 4 Boards, and recording their respective Bridge Board Scores, the players will yell out, "Caddy, please," and a minion will then come transfer Boards #1-#4 from Table #1 to Table #2, and transfer Boards #5-#8 at Table #2 to Table #1, whereafter the Tables will then play these Boards. A caddy is usually used in Swiss Team competitions to avoid players overhearing results on Boards they have not yet seen or played. After all the Boards in Round #1 have been played, the E/W pairs will then return to their Home Table where their N/S Pair Partners are sitting.

Scoring in IMPs

Usually North serves as the Captain for each Swiss Team. The Swiss Teams will review their scores and compute IMP results on each Board. But all players should carefully follow the computations, to make sure that no mistakes are being made. *Don't trust North, who has been known to make frequent computational errors!*

On each and every board the difference is computed between the Board Bridge Scores for the Team's Pair sitting N/S versus the Team's Pair sitting E/W. For example, on Board #1 if Team **Blue** had a Board Bridge Score of 620 for making 4 on a **4S** contract, while the Team Blue E/W Pair had a Board Bridge Score of -650,

because their N/S Opponents made 1 Overtrick, the Swiss Team **Blue**'s score difference on Board #1 would be **-30**.

If on Board #2 Team **Blue** N/S had a Board Bridge Score of +980 for exactly making a Small Slam **6H** contract not Vulnerable, but Team **Blue** E/W set their not Vulnerable Opponents **6H** bid not Doubled by 1 Trick, making +50, the Team **Blue** difference on Board #2 would be +980 + +50 = **+1030** (a huge win for Team **Blue**, to be sure!).

Now Team **Blue** will have computed 8 Board difference scores. These are now each converted into **International MatchPoints (IMPs)** using an IMP chart. Here is the IMP chart for different ranges of Board score differences. Positive score difference yield positive IMP scores, while negative score differences yield negative IMP scores.

Board Score	IMPs	Board Score	IMPs
0-10	0	750-890	13
20-40	1	900-1090	14
50-80	2	1100-1290	15
90-120	3	1300-1490	16
130-160	4	1500-1740	17
170-210	5	1750-1990	18
220-260	6	2000-2240	19
270-310	7	2250-2490	20
320-360	8	2500-2990	21
370-420	9	3000-3490	22
430-490	10	3500-3990	23
500-590	11	4000+	24
600-740	12		

At this point, having computed their 8 Board IMP Scores, the Team **Blue** Captain, with the close attention and assistance of the other Team members, computes the Team's Total IMP Score across all 8 Boards by adding up all 8 IMP scores. Let's say that these results were as follows for Swiss Team **Blue**:

<u>Board</u>	<u>IMP Score</u>
#1	-1
#2	+14
#3	0
#4	-1
#5	-2
#6	+2
#7	+4
#8	+2
TOTAL	+18

Because Team **Blue** on Round #1 had a positive IMP Total, Team **Blue** beat Swiss Team **Red**. Indeed, they did so by what would be a large margin.

Once Swiss Team **Blue** and Swiss Team **Red** have both computed their Total IMP Scores, which should exactly match, the 2 Swiss Team Captains meet to confirm this agreement, or to resolve any scoring differences. If the 2 Captains agree with the scores, 1 of the 2 Swiss Team Captains will take the 2 score cards to the Director, so that the scores can be manually entered into the computer, and the pairings for the next Round can be determined. *Bridgemates are not used in Swiss Team competitions!*

Subsequent Swiss Team Rounds

In competitions where there are few Swiss Teams, such as 3 or 4, every Swiss Team will play every other. In larger competitions, the pairings in the first Round are random. In subsequent Rounds, in larger competitions the Director for the 2nd Round will usually "power match" the Teams, such that the top 2 Swiss Teams play each other in Round #2, the third and fourth Teams play each other in Round #2, and so forth.

Principles of Swiss

In Swiss Teams competitions, a single Board within a Round can **make**, or **break**, your day. In duplicate Pairs competitions, a "bottom Board is a bottom Board" regardless of by how much you are slaughtered on that Board. Not so in Swiss Teams, **where your Total IMP Score takes into account the magnitude of how well you did on every Board!** This leads to the following Swiss Team competition principles:

1. Do not miss a Slam contract, because that can create a massive Total IMP Score difference.
2. Do not miss a Game contract, because that can create a very large Total IMP Score difference.
3. Do not Double, unless you are very, very sure your Double will pay off. On the other hand, if you are sure a Double will pay off (e.g., you hold a large trump stack), do not miss the Double.

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