

LET 'EM DOUBLE

BY ED HERSTEIN, ANN ARBOR, MI

Most partnerships alter the meanings of notrump opener's actions after the opponents double a Jacoby transfer, completing the transfer only with at least three cards in responder's indicated major. With a doubleton-fit, opener, to express his degree of interest in playing in the doubled contract, either passes or redoubles. Such a redouble can be put to better use.

When a Two-Level Transfer is Doubled

When a two-level transfer is doubled, opener should (a) superaccept if he would have done so absent the double; otherwise, (b) pass with a doubleton in responder's indicated major; or (c) complete the transfer with three- or four-card support, *in a hand lacking the strength to accept a game-invitation*; or (d) redouble with three- or four-card support and extra values. After a redouble, responder can place the contract by bidding his major; or, he can rebid the suit he bid originally as a transfer in order to reach game or slam from opener's side.

This treatment enables responder to stop at the two level opposite a minimum or to bid game directly opposite extras. In either case, the opponents cannot be certain of responder's strength. Furthermore, responder's rebids that would otherwise have been game-tries can now be used as slam-tries. Should the opponents compete, responder will be well-placed to decide whether to go on; opener, having described his hand, won't come under pressure. And it may be helpful for

responder to choose which partner should be the declarer.

After Stayman is Doubled

A similar approach can be used after a double of a two-club Stayman response. Opener should (a) pass to deny any four- or five-card major; or (b) redouble with four hearts and extras; or (c) bid two diamonds with four spades and extras; or (d) bid two hearts or two spades with a four-card major and minimum values. If responder locates a fit and extra values, he can choose to play the hand from his side or to make opener the declarer by bidding the suit under the promised major as a transfer. Otherwise, the auction continues as usual.

When a fit has been found, the same advantages occur as in the doubled transfer sequences. Absent a fit, responder will sometimes be able to reach two of a minor when opener holds a misfitting four-card major.

When opener passes the double of either Stayman or a Jacoby transfer, responder continues as he would using standard methods *with one exception*: He can redouble to indicate that he would have sat for a natural redouble by opener. If opener is not interested in playing in the redoubled bid, he describes his hand further. (There is a small loss of flexibility compared with standard methods in that responder cannot indicate great eagerness to play in the redoubled contract, but the proposed approach is unambiguous and caters to more-frequent situations.)

Let 'em double!