



It's Your Call

Director: Dave Smith
Scores: Allan Falk

Problems 1–4 from the District 8 Advocate; 5 from Nan Wang, Nanjing, China.

1. IMPs. North–South vulnerable.

♠9652 ♥75 ♦K102 ♣K984

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dbl	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	2♠	?

Call	Votes	Award
→ Dbl	7	100
3♥	4	90
4♥	1	60
3♠	3	50
Pass	3	10
2NT	0	0
3♣	0	0
3NT	0	0

Double is a flexible tool

Partner doubled and bid his own suit, showing a strong hand. You have modest useful values, but no convenient bid. Three panelists pass.

“Pass,” says Sanborn. “I have about what partner expects of me, so why should I make a poor bid? I have no support, no five-card suit, no second four-card suit and no stopper in the opponents’ suit.”

The Coopers agree. “If partner bids again, we might get excited,” they

say. “Otherwise, we are happy to defend. At matchpoints, we might make a card-showing double.”

Seven experts choose double. What does that mean?

Double, says Cohen. Little by little, the world is starting to realize that doubles below 2NT — especially when they bid and raise one suit — are not penalty doubles. They show values, but nothing convenient to bid. A good general rule is that unless it is clearly penalty, all doubles below 2NT are *not* penalty. If this is not part of the IYC bidding system, too bad — give me a zero.”

Actually, Cohen gets two zeros with a one in front of them: Double scores 100.

“It makes sense to play double as if they had raised directly — I have values and no clear bid,” agree the Stansbys.

“Because low-level doubles are takeout, this describes our hand perfectly,” echo the Sutherlins.

“Double showing values and no clear direction,” agrees Rigal. “With two kings, I’m much better than I might be.”

“I am unlikely to have a spade stack,” says Lawrence, “but I can have mixed values. If partner passes, 2♠ doubled rates to be down two

tricks.”

Four panelists raised hearts on to card support.

“3♥,” says Walker. “I would expect a very good hand for a red-vs.-not-2♥ overcall, so this auction should promise a near-mountain.”

“I have values, so I need to bid something,” agrees Meckstroth.

“I must act with two potential tricks,” says Boehm. “I don’t care for double which I think implies some spade strength whereas my honors are elsewhere.”

“4♥,” says Baze. “Two kings and two trumps are enough to bid game. If one of the kings were a queen, I would bid only 3♥.”

Three experts cuebid 3♠.

“3♠,” says Robinson. “We belong in game, but I’m not sure which game. If partner has six hearts, we belong in 4♥. If partner has only five hearts and club support, we belong in clubs.”

Freeman and Kennedy agree with 3♠ and express similar reasons.

Seven panelists double. They feel that is the most flexible call. Eight panelists look for game instead of risking minus 470 (when North does not read the double correctly). Because 15 experts move toward game, scorer Falk has downgraded the pass.

2. Matchpoints. Both vulnerable.

♠AK6 ♥5 ♦AKQ1074 ♣K73

West	North	East	South
2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♠	?

(1) Michaels cuebid (majors).

Call	Votes	Award
3♠	6	100
3NT	4	90
Dbl	4	70
3♦	0	30
Pass	1	10
2NT	3	10
4♦	0	0
5♦	0	0

Bid 3NT or ask for a stopper?

Six experts cuebid 3♠. What does that mean?

“3♠ shows partner where I have a stopper and asks him to bid 3NT with hearts stopped,” says Meyers.