

MAXIMAL DOUBLE

This double is a type of Competitive Double and is sometimes referred to as an **Action Double**. This type of double is used in a competitive auction when the auction has become too crowded for any alternative approach to exchange information. The following illustrations should assist in clarifying this concept:

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♥ | 2 ♠ | 3 ♥ |
| ? | | | |

South finds himself in a predicament and would prefer an approach to this bidding sequence to show:

1. the desire to sign-off in 3 Spades.
2. the desire to invite game in Spades.

This approach has been solved by the partnership agreeing to use the Maximal Double:

1. By bidding 3 ♠, South shows the desire to sign-off.
2. With the employment of the Maximal Double, South employs the conventional bid to invite game.

Another example is:

| South | West | North | East |
|---------|--------|-------|------|
| 1 ♥ | Double | Pass | 2 ♦ |
| Double | Pass | 2 ♥ | |
| ♠ A95 | | | |
| ♥ KQJ87 | | | |
| ♦ A | | | |
| ♣ Q976 | | | |

After the Takeout Double of West, a pass by partner, and a 2 ♦ response by East, South can show additional strength / values with the Maximal double, but without additional length in Hearts. Per partnership agreement, North may then support

opener's suit with an absolute minimum of 2 cards and 4/5 points. The shown holding of South would be a typical holding.

In mainly competitive auctions, a distinction is generally made between certain auctions. In the above two illustrations the reader will notice that the competitive auctions show auctions, whereby the competition is bidding in a suit, which is one rank below the suit of North-South, or in other words, the competition of the opponents is not in the maximum suit, meaning that the suit of the opponents is one suit below the competitive suit of North-South.

If the suit of the opponents is not just one suit below the maximum suit, then other approaches can apply, and the Maximum Double is not necessary if the partnership agreement is that the available side suit can be bid and constitutes a general game try. For example:

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♦ | 2 ♠ | 3 ♦ |
| ? | | | |

In this auction, since Spades is not the maximum suit, then South has an alternative approach and this is entirely based upon the partnership agreement. North-South can agree to any or all of the following:

- 1. A bid of 3 ♥, since there is room for this bid, is generally reserved as invitational. This bid is considered to be conventional and forcing.**
- 2. A bid of 3 ♠ is generally agreed to mean a sign-off in the original suit.**
- 3. A double can then be considered to be for penalty. This is an optional partnership agreement.**

If you wish to include this feature, or any other feature, of the game of bridge in your partnership agreement, then please make certain that the concept is understood by both partners. Be aware whether or not the feature is alertable or not and whether an announcement should or must be made. Check with the governing body and/or the bridge district and/or the bridge unit prior to the game to establish the guidelines applied. Please include the particular feature on your convention card in order that your opponents are also aware of this feature during the bidding process, since this information must be made known to them according to the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. We do not always include the procedure regarding Alerts and/or Announcements, since these regulations are changed and revised during time by the

governing body. It is our intention only to present the information as concisely and as accurately as possible.