

ROYAL SPADES IN BRIDGE

New Plan to Solve the Problem of the Spade Make.

CHANCE TO DOUBLE ITS VALUE

Dealer or Partner May Make the Black Trump Worth a Trick and Force It to Be Played.

Among the recent innovations in bridge which have apparently come to stay is the recently invented royal spade. Exactly who first suggested this variation or who hit upon the name it is difficult to say, as several widely separated individuals claim the honor.

A royal spade is a spade declaration that must be played regardless of the score, and that every trick over the book is worth ten points, instead of two, so that it takes rank between a heart and a no-trump and becomes the most valuable of all the suit declarations, instead of the lowest.

The royal spade is the result of a reaction against a custom which was always condemned by thinking players and which never had any legitimate excuse except to enable those who played bridge more for money than for amusement to avoid any waste of time.

Two or three years ago one of these quick players suggested that as spades were worth so little it would be a good idea not to play spades unless the value of the tricks was boosted a bit by doubling.

If the make was not doubled the adversaries who refused to double should be obliged to concede the odd trick to the dealer without playing the hand, the honors to be scored as held and shown and the next deal hurried up with all possible speed.

This elementary suggestion did not work very well and there were many instances in which it was found that there were many occasions upon which the dealer and his partner could have won the game very nicely with a spade make when they were pretty well advanced in the score.

There were also occasions upon which the adversaries did not win the game although they would have liked very much to have added two or four points to their score.

This brought about the rule that if either side were 20 up or better the spade declaration should be played, even if it were not doubled. Every one thought this settled the whole difficulty, but experience proved that ten points to go, requiring five by cards, was rather too much to expect from such weak hands as spades are usually declared on, and that all the advantage of the position was with the stronger hands that were opposed to the declaration and could slaughter it.

In order to give the dealer a chance the limit was advanced to twenty-four points instead of twenty.

They found that this increased, instead of diminishing, the advantage of the adversary, because it was always their next deal and they had a long way the best of it when they were ahead in the score, having reached the required limit, while the dealer's side had not, but had made it spades through sheer inability to call anything else.

Being twenty-four up, for instance, against the dealer's twelve, it was very safe to play the spade declaration on the chance that the dealer could not make more than one or two by cards, which would still leave him two tricks away from game in anything that might be declared afterward.

If the dealer failed to make the odd, the adversary twenty-four up, would be changed to twenty-six, at least, and any odd declaration would take them out on the next deal.

To remedy this defect and also to make the game a little more sporty, the Whist club adopted the rule that an undoubted spade should not be played unless the dealer's side was twenty-four or better, and that no notice should be taken of the non-dealer's score.

This rule put an end to a process which is known to the gambling fraternity as "sweating out." Before it was in force the play of an undoubted spade, it frequently happened that the dealer would be about sixteen up and his adversaries twenty-six or twenty-eight. Nothing could be nicer than for those opposed to the odd trick declaration at such a score to sit tight and try to get the odd trick out of it by any sort of risk. There was nothing to lose, as the dealer could not possibly go game, while everything was to be gained by getting the first deal on the next game.

The rule, which is still in force and has been everywhere adopted, compels the non-dealer, when they have the advantage in the score, to double if they want to play the hand.

The next step in the evolution of the spade declaration was with a view to the further saving of time. This was to fix the dealer's score for honors as well as for tricks when the spade declaration was not played. The modern practice is to take two and four, so that even if the dealer holds five honors in one hand in spades odd he could have made a grand slam he cannot score more than the odd trick and simple honors if the hand is not played.

From this rule there is no variation. Every bridge player knows that there are certain stages of the score which it is very desirable to reach and the aim of every first-class player is always to reach one of those stages when he cannot quite go game.

One of the important stopping places is the score 24, because the odd trick in anything but a black make will win the game next time. Even a black make may take the players out from 24, but in all clubs or three in spades is not at all improbable when such suits are named at that particular score. So well is this understood by good players that when dummy is asked to make it at 24 or better he is supposed to select his best suit, no matter what it is. Under such circumstances a black make is a very common selection, although at any other score it would be ridiculed.

If the dealer's side happens to be 20 or 22 up and neither partner has anything better than a spade make there is nothing for it but to declare spades, although the importance of such a make is evident to both of them. There are many hands in which the distribution of the trumps and plain suits is such that the combination is good for two or three by cards against the best possible defense. But if the suit that must be selected for the trump happens to be spades instead of hearts or diamonds or clubs the dealer and his partner are not allowed to play the hand and get those two or three by cards unless their adversaries make a blunder and double.

As players are not usually foolish enough to double when they have nothing unusual, it stands to reason that the moment the dealer's side makes a declaration which may easily win two or three by cards, advancing their score from 20 to 22 to the advantageous position of 24 or 26, the adversary will refuse to permit the hand to be played.

If the principles that now govern all spade makes were adopted for all other declarations, bridge would be a very stupid game, as a moment's reflection will show. Suppose that to be the case: The dealer

say "Hearts". The adversaries have nothing at all and realize that if they play, the hand dummy will probably lay down the makings of a no-trump as an answer to the dealer's heart make, and the combination will go game in a walk, although they are nothing up, while the adversaries have managed to reach 24. Of course the players who are 24 up decline to play the hand by refusing to double—tell the dealer to take eight and sixteen. On their own deal the players who are 24 up go out. Does this strike you as a fair game or one that would be attractive as a variation of bridge?

Look at the other side. The dealer makes it hearts and either adversary finds that he can be reasonably certain of winning six tricks against the declaration, perhaps seven, even if his partner had not a trick in his hand. He doubles and the hand must be played, as the dealer has no chance to surrender and say: "Take eight and sixteen and give me the deal."

Suppose that the hand goes even better than the doubler thought, and that the dealer loses two or three by cards. The adversaries score them all, and at double value, winning the game on the deal. Contrast these two cases in which hearts are simply put under the same rule as that which now governs spades.

Once established such a condition of affairs and the dealer's advantage at the game of bridge disappears. The adversary would have the final decision as to the play of every hand and the whole game would be completely spoiled, and it is precisely the spoiling of one-fifth of the game, the spade declarations, that has prompted the introduction of the royal spade.

"Why should a player be prevented from getting out of his cards what they are worth?" asks the man on the street, "simply because the suit he selects for the trump happens to be black and not red?" That is the whole thing in a nutshell. Why should the dealer be allowed to declare hearts on six of them to three honors and to score four by cards, game and rubber on the play, while another person, holding ten spades to five honors and cards enough in his partner's hand to make a grand slam, is compelled to accept the odd trick and simple honors because the adversaries will not concede the suit to him?

The remedy seems to be the royal spade. Under the new rule, wherever it is adopted, if the dealer has a wretched hand and wishes to protect himself from a rash partner, he can declare an original spade, and if the adversaries want to play the hand, they can double. If they do not double the dealer will take his two and four. If, on the other hand, the dealer has a hand on which he would gladly declare spades for trumps and play them against anybody, but for the fact that spades are worth so little and that there are so many chances that his partner may have a better make, he can declare a royal spade, which is as good as anything his partner can do, and which means that each trick above the book will be worth ten points, and that the hand shall be played, whether the adversaries double or not. If they double, each trick will be worth twenty.

When the dealer declares a plain ordinary everyday spade, his partner has no power to raise it to a royal spade, but if the dealer passes the make and dummy has a good spade hand, good for nothing else, he can declare a plain spade or a royal spade, according to his judgment. If his hand is pretty strong he may be sure that if he makes it spades the adversaries will decline to double and the hand will not be played. Under the old rule, this consideration often tempted dummy to make rash no-trumps, or weak red declarations, just to avoid wasting the deal, and such makes were a very frequent cause of heavy loss.

Given the privilege of declaring a royal spade and dummy need take no such chances. If he is reasonably confident of winning the odd trick with spades for trumps, he can declare a royal spade on the matted make and if the hand goes well he will score ten a trick whether the adversaries like it or not.

According to the laws of bridge, honors are reckoned on the basis of trick values, and it is stated that three honors between partners shall be worth as much as two tricks, four honors as much as four tricks, five honors as much as five tricks and that if there are four or five in one hand these values shall be doubled, so that four honors in one hand are worth as much as eight tricks.

Applying this rule to the spade suit, in any common spade declaration the tricks will be worth 2 and simple honors 4 points; but in a royal spade, as the tricks are worth 10 points, simple honors will be worth 20, four honors 40, and four in one hand 80. This shows that five honors in one hand in a royal spade will be worth as much as four aces in one hand at no-trumps.

While opinions still differ as to the interest of the new game, the dissenting voices seem to come entirely from those who have not tried it. It may be very wrong to prophesy unless you know, but many of the best bridge players in the country are doing that very thing and are insisting that there are some things which are self-evident and one of those things is that the royal spade was a necessity, called for by the anomalous position of the spade make.

ITALIAN RACER AT BRIGHTON Will Make His First Appearance on Mile Track.

NEW YORK, Feb. 19.—The opening twenty-four-hour race meet of the Motor Racing association at the Brighton Beach Motorrome will be signalled by the first appearance of Felice Nazzaro, the great Italian driver, as a competitor in a race held on a one mile track. Nazzaro made his first appearance in this country as a member of the Fiat team in the 1906 Vanderbilt race and in the Automobile Club of America's Grand Prize gold cup race at Savannah in November, 1906. In 1907 Nazzaro won the three great European road races of the year with a Fiat—the Grand Prix in France, the Kaiser's cup in Germany and the Targa Florio in Italy.

While Nazzaro's appearance on the Brighton Beach Motorrome will be his debut on a one mile track originally built for horse racing, it will not be his first essay at track racing, as he has won a number of races on the big Brooklands track in England. Nazzaro has been chief of the testers at the Fiat plant in Turin and is coming to this country to act in a similar capacity at the American Fiat factory near completion at Poughkeepsie. He was due to be here in July, but E. R. Hollander of the American Fiat company called for Nazzaro to be here in time for the opening meet at Brighton Beach in May.

In addition to the Fiat entry for the first twenty-four-hour race at Brighton the Rainier car that won the \$10,000 Atlanta gold trophy at the opening of the Atlanta automobile speedway last November, has been entered. Louis A. Disbrow, who drove the Rainier at Atlanta, will be one of the drivers, and Wallace H. Owen will probably be the other. The Lozier, Simplex and Renault cars, all winners of twenty-four-hour races last year, are also expected as competitors in the twenty-four-hour race in May.

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RULES COMMITTEE AT HELM

Experts Think Foot Ball Rules Are Being Wisely Revised.

CURTISS AND KERRAN AGREE

Both Say Right Course Has Been Adopted and that It Should Be Followed Out to the Finish.

NEW YORK, Feb. 18.—Both Julian W. Curtiss, the well known Yale coach, and Robert P. Kerran, who in his undergraduate days at Harvard was selected as an All-America fullback, said yesterday that, in their opinions, the Intercollegiate Foot Ball rules committee could not better proceed to a determination of what changes should be made in the code than in pursuing the course it had adopted at its recent session.

Mr. Curtiss and Mr. Kerran felt certain that the public could safely entrust a proper revision of the rules and the future of the sport to the fourteen members of the committee, and that it need have no fear that the vitality of the game would be impaired or the safety and pleasure of its participants jeopardized. Each put his finger on the present forward pass as the crux of the situation, Mr. Kerran characterizing this play as the "vermiform appendix" of foot ball, a totally useless and highly dangerous play.

"The rules committee is pursuing a very wise course," said Mr. Curtiss, "in proceeding slowly toward the desired end, and weighing every single point with the greatest attention, both to detail and general results. You will recall that I said two months ago that the manner in which the committee would approach its subject would prove its sincerity of purpose and ability to reform the game. My examination of the statistics of those injuries, I realize, of course, that setting upon the present forward pass as the crux of the situation and asking its abolition may be contrary to the judgment and opinions of men who know far more about the game than I do."

"At the same time that I said what I did about the committee I made the remark, you will remember, that the existing forward pass was the direct cause of almost every injury of 1909. I believe that now more than ever, after having examined carefully the statistics of those injuries, I realize, of course, that setting upon the present forward pass as the crux of the situation and asking its abolition may be contrary to the judgment and opinions of men who know far more about the game than I do."

"Still, I believe that going away entirely with the forward pass that may cross the line of scrimmage—regardless of whether or not a forward pass is permitted behind the line to a player who is back of it when the ball is snapped—will do more to stop injury and benefit the game than any change that can possibly be made. Because it is impossible to provide adequate protection to the forwards with the present forward pass permitted, even if not used; because it is a merely strategical play, without the reason of accuracy and certainty for its existence, because it does not improve the game at all, but, on the contrary, introduces the element of chance where before there was science—the forward pass, as at present permitted, should be unreservedly condemned and totally banned."

Kerran Knocks Forward Pass.

Mr. Kerran was equally opposed to the forward pass, and said that the game was more brutal with that play in it than had ever been before, with the brutalizing element to be laid, in his opinion, at the door of the existing forward pass and outside kick.

"The foot ball rules committee," he said, "is a board of surgeons, its patients—foot ball—has acute appendicitis, and the forward pass is the diseased vermiform appendix, totally useless and highly dangerous. But because the game needs a surgical operation, there is no need to cut off its head. The patient can easily be cured by a slow, certain operation, which goes to the root of the malady and eradicates it."

"I believe that if the fourteen surgeons who are now working on the patient will but return somewhat to the game we had in 1898 and 1899, with those modifications needed, because the defense is so much better played today than it was in those days, they will cure the disease. The present tandem should go at the same time that the plays which make the tandem most efficacious—the forward pass and the outside kick, that is—be abolished. If the secondary defense were not pulled away from the forwards nearly as successfully as it frequently used to be, they are. But even with the forward pass and outside kick removed, the tandem should not be allowed."

"An ideal and eminently proper solution, I think, would be to provide that three at least of the backs on the attack shall stand on a line parallel to the line of scrimmage and not less than four yards back of it. No attacking player should be allowed to touch the runner with the ball in any way, either before or after the scrimmage line is reached, although this might possibly be modified safely to permit of the touching him for a yard after the runner reaches the line of forwards."

"If the forward pass is permitted behind the attacking line of scrimmage, I am afraid that it will give birth to a lot of mass plays that will be harder to stop than even the present type, unless it is provided that each back shall stand as I have indicated. Nor should a forward be allowed to interchange with a back field player except for the purpose of kicking. The present neutral zone might well be abolished, too, and the new neutral zone between the catcher of a kick and the tacklers, that is now being advocated, adopted."

"All in all, I think the progress toward proper and adequate foot ball reform is now well on its way, and the public need have no fears, I think, but that the game, as it is finally evolved by the committee, ought to be given a year's actual trial by the big teams before the public attempts to come to a final conclusion."

WELSH AND DRISCOLL MATCHED Will Fight on St. Patrick's Day in Merry London.

NEW YORK, Feb. 19.—A match has been arranged in England, which will not only arouse considerable interest over in "Chummy Bull's" country, but will also stir up the fight fans on this side of the big pond.

The fighters who have been signed up for this great battle are Freddie Welsh, the English lightweight champion, and Jem Driscoll, who is regarded as the featherweight champion of England. The articles for the men to meet in a twenty-round bout on March 11 for the lightweight championship of England and the largest purse offered of which the winner will receive 75 per cent. There is also a side bet of \$2,000.

It is thought that the National Sporting club of London will get the bout.

Invents Touring Guide Post.

L. S. Hammett of Appleton, Wis., has invented a guide post for country roads. The post is of cast steel, with a shoe of cast iron. The arms are so arranged that separate letters may be placed in them to form names and distances, instead of being painted.

KEENE FITZPATRICK LEAVES MICHIGAN FOR PENNSYLVANIA

Has Been at Ann Arbor as Physical Director for the Last Sixteen Years.

PRINCETON, N. J., Feb. 18.—Despite his many details that he would not accept the position, Keene Fitzpatrick, professor of physical training at the University of Michigan, was recently appointed as trainer of Princeton's athletic teams.

Fitzpatrick will take up his duties here next autumn. He will act as coach of the track team in addition to training the foot ball, hockey, base ball and other squads. Fitzpatrick supplanted Charles H. Wilson as track coach. Wilson will have charge of the team this spring. Wilson, whose contract is for one year only, was made coach after the resignation of Al Copeland.

Fitzpatrick comes from the west with a big reputation. His record as the trainer and coach of Michigan's track team has been for years above the average. Last autumn he trained the Wolverines' successful foot ball team. Fitzpatrick has been Michigan's trainer since 1894, except during 1896 and 1897, when he held a similar position at Yale.

Fitzpatrick will succeed Val Flood, who has handled all Princeton teams since the death of Jim Robinson in 1904. Flood's resignation was accepted by the Athletic association at its same meeting which elected W. W. Roper director of athletics. Fitzpatrick's appointment was heartily favored by Roper.

SMALL BORE RIFLE TOURNEY Conditions for the Event in April Are Made Public.

NEW YORK, Feb. 15.—Conditions governing the international smallbore rifle tourney between teams representing the United States, Great Britain and Australia, which event is to be shot during the week ending April 2, have been made public. The scores of the matches will be reported by cable. The stipulations regarding the tournament are as follows:

Number on Team—Fifty. Distance—Seventy-five feet. Rifle—Any, not over .220 calibre. Sight—Any, including telescope. Target—Circular, inner ring, one-half inch in diameter, counting 10; nine concentric circles quarter-inch apart, counting from 9 to 1. Competitors may blacken as much of the center as they wish for a sighting bull.

Position—Any, providing no rest is used between the elbows and the muzzle of the rifle. Ammunition—Any. Prize—The Dewar trophy, to be held by the country winning it for one year, or until the next contest.

The scores in the match to be shot in strings of five on targets signed by the secretary of the Society of the Miniature Clubs of Great Britain. Tryouts will be held to determine the personnel of the United States team on the ranges of organizations affiliated with the National Rifle Association of America during the week of March 7-12.

The conditions to govern the tryouts to be the same as the match itself. A representative of the National Rifle association will be present when the scores are shot, who will certify to the targets and forward them to the secretary of the National Rifle association not later than Monday, March 14.

Successful competitors will be notified at once and supplied with practice targets. Targets for the tryouts will be furnished by the National Rifle association. Practice targets may be secured from the National Rifle association at 50 cents per hundred. National Rifle association clubs wishing to hold a competition among their members for places on the American team will communicate at once with the secretary of the National Rifle association in regard to the appointment of a judge and the issuing of targets for those members who have entered for the competition. The names of such members must be furnished.

Social Club at Race Meet.

NEW YORK, Feb. 18.—It may be that a social club will be formed before the meeting at Saratoga begins next summer, which shall take possession of Canfield's club house. The promoters of the scheme are to notify all members of social and hunt clubs that they shall be eligible to membership for the nominal sum of \$5. It is believed that a membership of 5,000 can be so gathered, many of whom will visit Saratoga some time or another during the meeting. The project will, if carried out according to contemplation, establish a sort of general assembly where the best cuisine services can be obtained.

Solved.

Harold—What is butterine?
"Butterine is the feminine of butter—a female goat, to be exact. A buterin is a different animal altogether."

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