



By: Don Rogers

Warning Doubles

Warning doubles come into play when you are in a high-level competitive auction and it is clear that the hand belongs to your side. The warning double says to partner “I have fast losers in their suit. Unless you can control their suit, we must settle for penalizing their sacrifice.” For example:

Pard You
1H - P - 2C - 2S
3H - P - 4H - 4S
5H - 5S - ?

and you hold: A-xx H- KJx D- KJx C-AQxxx

double, telling partner that from your side 6H looks unmakeable because you have two fast spade losers. If partner has first or second round control of spades, he/she can proceed to 6H if they have the values for it.

But on the same auction if you hold: A-x H-KJx D-KJx C-AQxxxx , you should pass! By inference this says you have at least second round control of spades, but you are unsure about 6H. A pass in this kind of situation is often called a “forcing pass”, because partner must either bid on or double for penalties. (It clearly would make no sense to let the opponents play 5S unmolested.) Your pass leaves the decision to partner, but partner may not pass.