THE BRIDGE WHIST TABLE.

RESULTS OF THE PROBLEM MATCHES PRINTED IN "THE SUN."

Advantage of the Dealer Effect of Passing or Making Bids So Younger Hoyt Told to the Score Keeper That Was Further Mistaken in the Factor of the Game.

The problem matches which were published in THE SUN on Jan. 20 and 27 it was contended that the score was lopsided, that in many cases and the question was, Should the dealer try to make it no-trump or pass it on the chance of hands being passed out? Some persons appear to be opposed to the contention and say that there are many those hands several which should be played in heart or diamond makes. These are few and the result of putting them in no-trumpery will be considered.

For the present all those hands are to be considered as belonging to the same class of those especially in question.

Bridge is a game of mathematical nature and has a high standard and the question is whether or not it is safe to be guided by a standard in making an opening bid. Bridge is a game for life to be able to state the accumulated experience of a large number of players. It seems to those who are interested in bridge and literature that the opinion of skilled players and must be considered in our results either in the same way as the rule of scarte were arrived at, or be the careful analysis of a large number of deals from actual play. Bridge is being at the best only generalities and not absolute examples. THE SUN has thought it better to depend on the results of the examination of a large number of deals and has undertaken to examine 1,000 such deals taking them 1,000 at a time in order to see if some certain results would work out in actual play.

In examining the play which would probably take place with certain distributions of the cards it is necessary for the analyst to assume that the adversaries are perfect, that the play is never at fault and that the general principles of the game are followed. With this it will very well for analysis, it is true that the actual play at the bridge table there had judgment and carelessness in playing a hand and failing to watch the discards. I remember that the seven is the best card to lead against a grand slam.

Nevertheless these errors are the most exceptional and are usually more compensated for by the errors of the players against the dealer. I know there is a penalty for the dealer or the persons leading out of the wrong hand. I feel persons think the dealer's side has all the advantage of the mistakes made by the adversaries. In playing against no-trumpers the position is never so clear to them as it is to the dealer, who knows absolutely when high cards are held up, and what is against him, while his adversaries are thrown off by a moment's false cards and underplays. Should the percentage be added to the gains which are to be made on no-trump hands by play against the best possible defense, it would greatly add to the weight of the arguments which are about to be advanced.

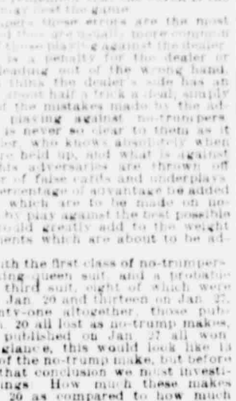
To begin with the first class of no-trumpers, one ace, a king, queen and a probable stopper in third suit, eight of which were published on Jan. 20 and thirteen on Jan. 27, making twenty-one altogether, those published on Jan. 20 all lost as no-trumpers, while those published on Jan. 27 all won. At the first glance, this would look like 13 to 8 in favor of the no-trump make, but before we jump to that conclusion we must investigate two things. How much these makes lost on Jan. 20 as compared to how much they won on Jan. 27, making them all no-trumpers, and how much they would have lost and won if they had all been passed?

Opinions as to making or passing were asked for, and it is not surprising to find how few persons would make this class of hands no-trumpers originally. Not a single correspondent of THE SUN would make it no-trump on either 753 or 787. Every one would make it no-trump on 834, several would make 822 a diamond and one or two would make 508 a heart.

Leaving out of consideration until a future article the question of declaring a heart or a diamond on any of these hands, and confining our attention to no-trumpers, and to the first class of hands only, one ace, a king, queen suit and a probable stopper in a third suit here are the results of our correspondents and the results of the actual play.

No. 834, which every one would make a no-trumper, loses the odd trick and thirty aces. If it is not a no-trumper it must be passed, as the hand offers no other choice. On the pass it is made a spade winning the odd trick and losing simply honors.

No. 822 was picked out as a no-trumper by only one person, every one else making it a diamond. The no-trumper loses the odd trick, but wins 30 aces. The diamond makes a little slam and simple honors, 240 to 32, or 68 in all, but it is losing game for all that, because if we follow out our principle of either making these hands no-trumpers or passing them altogether, this will be made a heart by the dummy, making a grand slam and four honors, 56 and 72, or 128 altogether so that the original diamond make loses 60 points of the possibilities of the hand. Here is the deal:



No. 508 some persons would make a heart originally, on account of the honor score. This wins two by cards and simple honors if well played. As a no-trumper it loses four by cards, aces easy.

Here are the results of the eight deals published on Jan. 20, the first column, after the number of the hand, being the points and honors lost if the original declaration is no trump. The other columns show the result of a passed make in each case.

	No Trump. Lost.			Passed. Won.	Lost.	
733	36	30	Club			—
834	12	30	Spade	2	4	
882	12	+30	Heart	56	72	
508	48		Spade	4	4	
787	12	30	Club	16	32	
824	12		Spade	4	4	1
753	60		Heart	48	32	
787	12		Spade	8	4	
Totals	204	60		124	180	8

The total of the no-trumpers shows a loss of 264, the 30 plus on No. 882 being deducted from the 90 lost in the honor column. The total of the passed makes shows a gain of 296, a difference of 560 points against the no-trump make on these eight deals.

Now let us look at the deals published on Jan. 27, of which there are thirteen.

	No Trump. Lost.			Passed. Won.	Lost.	
93	24		Spade	2	4	
171	72	30	Spade	10	18	
242	72	60	Diamond	24	24	
145	36		Spade	8	2	
452	36	30	Club	16	32	
521	48		Spade	8		8
524	24		Club	8	16	
850	48		Club	24	30	
104	60	30	Club	24	36	
744	24		Spade	4		8
771	87	30	Diamond	6		24
784	36		Diamond	24	24	
833	60	30	Spade	6	8	
Totals	576	210		152	188	2 40

If everything is made no-trump, these thirteen deals win 366; if they are all passed they win 298, a difference of 508 against passing. In the first eight deals there was a difference of 560 against making them. Taking the whole twenty-one deals together, if everything is made no trump, the hands win 930 and lose 264, a difference of 542 points when in twenty-one deals. If everything is passed, these twenty-one hands win 296 and lose 208, a total of 504, which is 52 points in favor of passing all of them, apparently.

Now, separate the trick score from the honor score and we find the following results.

	All No-trumpers.	All Passed.
Jan. 27	Wins, 576—230	Wins, 152—188
Jan. 20	Loses, 204—60	Wins, 124—180
Totals	372—170	266—328

This shows that the trick score, which is the important thing in winning the games, has 100 points the better of it if everything is made no-trump, instead of 52 the worse of it, which is the result of taking honors and trick scores together.

But the really vital point of the argument has still to come. What we play for in bridge is the game, and the game is 30 points. Should the preceding deals be examined it will be seen that if the make is passed in every case there are only two deals out of twenty-one in which the dealer's side will win the game on hand. These are Nos. 521 and 787.

Strange to say, they are both among the hands which have as no-trumpers lost the game. Strange that the playing of these two hands of Jan. 27 would make the dealer's side win the game if he passed it. In the whole series of twenty-one deals to get a game there would have to be two of these hands, and there is only one, and that when the make passed is almost impossible. What brings about the apparently perfect equilibrium of the adversaries seems perfect equal than a points and winning against it all only three times in twenty.

When the spades are all on one square the dealer's side wins the game on the hand by the trick and honors and gets a game on the hand by the trick and honors. But if the hand is equally divided between the two sides and the hand is equally divided between the two sides and the hand is equally divided between the two sides and