

State-Wide Pairs Scoring

Why do positions and percentage scores in a club session change, sometimes quite dramatically, when the event is scored across the state? How can a pair who won the club session drop to third place in the SWP club results, and be overtaken by a pair who initially finished fifth? Why does this happen and how can I check the results? If you have any of these questions, read on.

The clubs that play in the State Wide pairs range in size from 3 to 13 tables. A 7-table session is typical and to score a top (100% on a board) in such a club you only have to beat 6 other scores. In contrast, over 400 pairs play in the SWP, so to score a state-wide top you need to beat more than 200 other scores. Clearly this is much harder to do. For example, bidding and making 6S for +980 may score 100% in your club, but might only score 70% in the SWP as other pairs in different clubs bid 6NT or take all the tricks in 6S so there were a lot of 990, 1010 and 1020 scores that beat your 980. Most good scores in the club session are not as good when scored across the state. Similarly, bad scores tend to improve when scored state-wide.

Every pair is affected differently. The biggest effects tend to be seen in small clubs. In a 3-table section, scores of 100%, 50% and 0% on a board are common. When scored across the state, that 100% may be below average.

The only way to check is to do a board-by-board direct comparison of your two personalised score cards. The link to the SWP scoring website and hence your SWP scorecard is on the SWP results page. For most clubs you can obtain your club scorecard from the results published on the web. If your club does not have a website, you'll need to ask the session's Director to print it for you.

The comparison below shows real life anonymised data from the 2022 State Wide Pairs. The scores are colour coded as follows:

Club scores: green is 50% or better; red is below average

SWP scores: black is better than the club score; red is worse than the club score

Board	Opponents	Contract	Lead	Tricks	Score	% in club	% in SWP
Board 4	Pair 2	5♣/N	♥2	11	600	95	93.8
Board 5	Pair 2	3♣/W	♠K	8	50	80	60.2
Board 6	Pair 2	3♥/S	♦6	7	-100	70	18.1
Board 7	Pair 1	4♥/S	♣J	11	650	70	67.0
Board 8	Pair 1	3♠/E	♣A	8	50	70	46.9
Board 9	Pair 1	4♥/W	♠A	8	200	65	65.3
Board 10	Pair 12	3♠/E	♥A	8	100	95	86.5
Board 11	Pair 12	5♣X/N	♥4	10	-100	60	72.8
Board 12	Pair 12	2♦/E	♣8	6	100	75	71.6
Board 13	Pair 11	3NT/N	♠K	9	600	40	47.9
Board 14	Pair 11	2♥/W	♦A	10	-170	35	28.0
Board 15	Pair 11	5♠/S	♦A	9	-200	15	8.8
Board 16	Pair 10	4♠/W	♣5	12	-680	55	44.0
Board 17	Pair 10	3NT/S	♥6	10	430	95	81.6
Board 18	Pair 10	3♥X/E	♠K	7	300	100	99.0
Board 19	Pair 9	2NT/W	♣9	6	200	80	95.1
Board 20	Pair 9	2♠/E	♥8	8	-110	20	15.7
Board 21	Pair 9	2♥/E	♣T	8	-110	80	77.6

Board 22	Pair 7	3NT/W	♣5	12	-690	35	18.9
Board 23	Pair 7	6♣/S	♠3	11	-100	5	3.9
Board 24	Pair 7	4♥/S	♦A	11	450	75	84.0
Board 25	Pair 6	1♣/E	♠6	4	300	90	92.3
Board 26	Pair 6	1NT/W	♣4	6	100	75	57.0
Board 27	Pair 6	4♠/N	♥7	10	420	90	84.7
Board 28	Pair 5	5♣/S	♥A	7	-400	5	11.0
Board 29	Pair 5	3NT/W	♣4	8	100	45	42.2
Board 30	Pair 5	4♥X/E	♦J	8	300	100	100.0
Board 31	Pair 4	4♥/W	♦6	10	-420	5	13.4
Board 32	Pair 4	1NT/S	♠2	7	90	50	57.3
Board 33	Pair 4	5♦/N	♣9	11	400	100	90.2
Board 34	Pair 3	4♥/E	♠Q	12	-480	40	17.1
Board 35	Pair 3	3NT/E	♣3	9	-600	60	41.4
Board 36	Pair 3	1NT/E	♣2	5	200	80	85.0
					Average	62.26	56.92

Compare the club %score with the SWP %score on **every** board. In this real-life example, the SWP %score was worse than the club %score on 23 of the 33 boards played. The overall effect was that the pair scored about 5% less in the SWP than they did in their local club. Note particularly Board 6, on which the club score of 70% dropped to just 18% in the SWP. Most changes are much less dramatic than this. Some pairs get a lower SWP %score than club %score, for other pairs their SWP score is higher. As a result, it is not unusual in the SWP for a pair who came first in a club session to be overtaken by a pair who came second, third or fourth.

There are other reasons (listed below) that can affect a pair's score. Thankfully they are quite rare.

1. A board is fouled. Some contracts and results are just so far removed from reality that it is obvious that the board played does not correspond to the hand record. When this is detected, the score is deleted. Deleted boards are apparent when doing the scorecard comparison. The club scorecard will have a result for the relevant board, but there will be no corresponding result for that board in the SWP scorecard.

2. The players record the declarer wrongly and a score which should have been awarded to EW is given to NS instead. This should be picked up at the club level, but unfortunately this is not always the case. Such a change could potentially convert a top in the club session to a bottom in the SWP. We investigate every such case thoroughly before making a change. How do you know if this occurred? The club and SWP scorecards will show different declarers and different scores on the same board.

Finally, it is important to remember that the club session and the SWP are two completely different events - the boards played are the only thing they have in common. Many clubs play Mitchell movements with separate NS and EW winners, so you are only competing against half the field in your club. The SWP is a single field event in which you are competing against every other pair in all the participating clubs.