



Butler secrets at a glance

In Matchpoint Pairs, what matters is **WHETHER** you get a better score than other players.

With Butler, what matters is **HOW MUCH** you beat them by.

Big differences in score are worth a lot.

Small differences in score aren't worth bothering about.

So in the bidding:

DON'T bother to convert a good suit contract into NT: the extra 10 points are worthless.

DON'T bother to convert a good minor suit contract into a major, to get the extra few points – again, it isn't worth it.

DO go for slightly dodgy games if you're vulnerable.

DO bid small slams and non-vulnerable games if they're 'on a finesse'. But **DON'T** bid them if the chance is less than 50%.

And **DON'T** make rash sacrifices (especially when vulnerable).

When declaring:

The important thing is to **MAKE YOUR CONTRACT**. Overtricks are nice, but **DON'T** risk your contract simply to get a slightly better score.

When defending:

The important thing is to **GET THE CONTRACT DOWN**. One off is enough!

On the other hand, if they're **DOUBLED**, you could be in for a great score, so the more they're off the merrier!

Example scores

These would be tops in Matchpoint Pairs, but aren't worth the trouble at Butler/Teams:

You get 630 in 3NT, with everyone else getting 620 for 4S Worth 0 IMPs

You get 450 in 4H, with everyone else getting 420 Worth 1 IMP

You get 140 in 3S, with everyone else getting 130 in 3D Worth 0 IMPs

These are the kind of results you're after at Butler/Teams:

You get 620 in 4S, with everyone else getting 170 in 3S Worth 10 IMPs

You get 980 in 6S, with everyone else getting 480 in 4S Worth 11 IMPs

You get -620 defending 4H; others get -800 sacrificing in 5CX Worth 5 IMPs

- and if you happen to get them one off for +100, that's ... Worth 14 IMPs

One BIG swing is worth lots of 'tiny tops'.

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