

## Hans Hagen & Taco Hoekwater

$\$$ : empty formula or unmatched display?

When you try the following under  $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ 's normal catcode regime, you will get an error:

```
$$ $21-09$
```

The message is:

```
! Display math should end with $$.  
<to be read again>  
2  
1.7 $$ $2  
1-09$
```

But how about this then:

```
\halign{###\cr $$ & $21-09$\cr}
```

It magically works! The actual effect is similar to

```
\hbox{$$} (or) \hbox{${}$$$}
```

In words of *The  $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ book* (chapter 25, page 287):

*One consequence of these rules is that ‘ $\$$ ’ in restricted horizontal mode simply yields an *empty math formula*.*