

**Board 1**  
 North Deals  
 None Vul

♠ Q 9 8 5	♠ A J 7 4	♠ K 3
♥ 9 7 3	♥ J 6 2	♥ A 10 8 5 4
♦ 10 5	♦ A K J 8	♦ 9 6 4 2
♣ K 9 4 2	♣ Q 5	♣ A 6
	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;">       N        W     E        S     </div>	
	♠ 10 6 2	
	♥ K Q	
	♦ Q 7 3	
	♣ J 10 8 7 3	

NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♥; Par +120

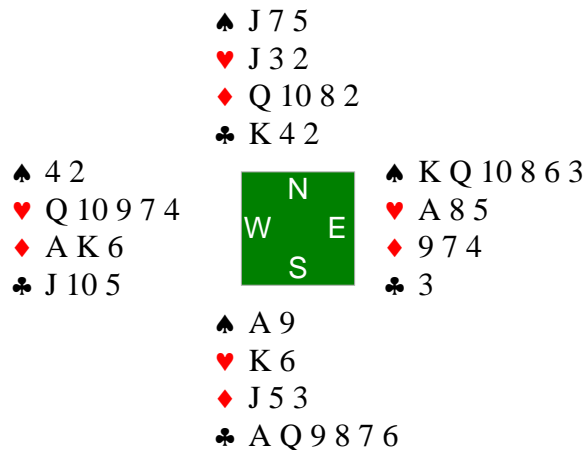
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	All pass <sup>1</sup>	

1. One of the simplest auctions ever in our Barometer Games!

Standard lead is the ♥ 5 from East, South winning the ♥ Q. Most players should make 2 NT by playing on clubs but those who play on spades will see their score is only +90.

Since the defense must establish heart by giving up two heart tricks; declarer can gain tempo by playing a club right away and another when in with ♥ K. The best defense can do is to cash out three hearts along with the ♣ AK it has already won. Attacking spades will not yield another defensive trick because declarer by that time has eight tricks, four diamonds, two hearts, ♠ A and a club. Minus 120 for EW should be the normal result.

**Board 2**  
 East Deals  
 N-S Vul



EW 3♠; E 3♥; W 2♥; NS 3♣; NS 1N; NS 1♦; Par -140

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
3 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	All pass <sup>4</sup>	2 ♠ <sup>1</sup>	3 ♣ <sup>2</sup>

1. Despite having good 3-card support for hearts, East hand calls for a Weak-2 preempt in spades. If her spades were ♠ AJxxxx along with three hearts to an honor, say ♥ A85, then PASS would have been strongly recommended. Opposite such a hand, partner may hold stiff spade, 5-6 hearts and about 13 points. Then, 4♥ will make. A preempt by East would then work against her own partner, not the opponents.
2. South is not strong enough to overcall 2NT but has the values to overcall 3♣.
3. You may have heard that to raise a 2-level preempt to three, you should have three trumps. Not so, instead of trumps, you can have 2-3 tricks. When vulnerable, you can trust that partner's suit has quality.
4. North does not have the necessary strength to raise 3♣ to 4♣, neither does South so it should go all pass. Some hearty souls may venture into a two-way shot at 4♣ due to favorable vulnerability but how can EW be sure that 3♠ is making? If 3♠ is going down, it would be foolish to bid 4♣ and go down yourself.

Those North players who gamble a 4♣ bid with their 3-3-4-3 seven count are rewarded here but only because 3♠ is making and North had the ♠ J. East has to take 1st or 2nd round finesse for the ♠ J to make nine tricks. Five trump tricks, ♦ AK, ♥ A and ♥ Q add up to 9 tricks.

In 3♠, East should lose a trick each suit, winning nine tricks for a score of +140.

**Board 3**  
 South Deals  
 E-W Vul

♠ 6 2	♠ Q 8 3	♠ 10 9
♥ Q J 8	♥ 6	♥ 10 4 3 2
♦ Q 10 9 3	♦ J 7 6 2	♦ A 8 4
♣ A 7 5 2	♣ J 9 8 4 3	♣ K Q 10 6

♠ A K J 7 5 4
♥ A K 9 7 5
♦ K 5
♣ —

NS 6♠; NS 2N; NS 2♥; NS 1♦; N 1♣; Par +980

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 ♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2 ♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	4 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	5 ♥ <sup>4</sup>
Pass	5 ♠ <sup>5</sup>	All pass	

1. This type of hand with strong majors calls for a game-forcing, strong 2 ♣ opening. Support for one of your majors from partner should give you a decent play for game.
2. Playing Controls, North promises no more than one control, which includes a bad hand.
3. Fast Arrival says, I have nothing to help you except spade support.
4. Slam try.
5. North really does not have anything to suggest that slam will be making opposite a 3-loser hand since her hand doesn't seem to eliminate two of partner's losers.

Double dummy, 6 ♠ makes because ♦ A is onside and two heart ruffs bring in the 5-card heart suit. But all in all, it is not the best of slams (a little more than 50%). One would bid it in a team game where 9 or 13 IMPs may be at stake or your team is down at the half and is looking for one or two IMP swings.

**Board 4**

West Deals  
Both Vul

	♠ 9 6 2	
	♥ K Q 4 3 2	
	♦ Q 3 2	
	♣ J 6	
♠ A Q J 10 7 5 3		♠ 8
♥ 10 9		♥ A
♦ 7 5		♦ A K 10 9 8 6 4
♣ A 5		♣ 9 8 4 2
	♠ K 4	
	♥ J 8 7 6 5	
	♦ J	
	♣ K Q 10 7 3	

EW 7N; EW 7♠; EW 6♦; NS 2♥; EW 2♣; Par -2220


West	North	East	South
1 ♠ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2 ♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
2 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	3 ♣ <sup>4</sup>	Pass
3 ♠ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	4 ♥ <sup>5</sup>	Pass
5 ♣ <sup>6</sup>	Pass	5 ♦ <sup>7</sup>	Pass
5 ♠ <sup>8</sup>	Pass	6 ♠	All pass

1. Meets all the rules for opening the bidding 1 ♠.
2. Whether you play 2-over-1 or not, 2 ♦ will be the obvious call.
3. Shows 6 or more spades
4. Looking for 3-card diamond support and forcing. Nope, West does not have it. In the context of the bidding, 3 ♠ shows a stronger hand than jumping to 4 ♠ (Fast Arrival). West, after all, does have a 6-loser hand with 7 spades.
5. Control showing bid looking for club control from partner.
6. Yes, partner has ♣ A.
7. 5 ♦ here shows ♦ A and probably king as well.
8. 5 ♠ denies anything else that West can show. East settles in the higher scoring slam relying on partner to have a semi-solid spade suit that can be played for only one loser.

Please note that 6 NT is lot worse than 6 ♠. It requires several lucky breaks. Still, 4 ♠ may turn out to be the most normal contract. In 6 ♠ on a trump lead, diamonds can be established for a heart and a club discard from West with ♥ A still in dummy for an entry to cash all the diamonds. If North leads a heart, unbid suit, West needs some lucky breaks. The play is more difficult but not impossible. West should cash ♦ A first before taking the spade finesse and hope.

When ♠ A drops the ♠ K from South, West needs another lucky break, the diamond finesse. It also works allowing her to cash all the diamonds and make 7 ♠. Of course, West should not be allowed to complain about bad luck for the next six months!

**Board 5**  
 North Deals  
 N-S Vul

♠ Q 10 5 4 ♥ J 6 4 3 2 ♦ J 4 ♣ 6 5		♠ A J 7 ♥ Q 10 ♦ 6 5 2 ♣ A K J 10 7	♠ 9 8 6 3 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ K Q ♣ Q 9 8 3
♠ K 2 ♥ K 9 8 ♦ A 10 9 8 7 3 ♣ 4 2			

NS 5N; NS 5♦; NS 4♣; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; Par +660

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	3 NT <sup>1</sup>

All pass

1. Another straightforward auction! It happens when random hands are dealt.

There is no good lead that East can make; everything makes life easy for the declarer. One thing East can be sure of; partner is almost broke.

The ♠ 9 lead is the safest; it does not give up any trick that the declarer cannot win by herself.

The play should also be straightforward provided North goes after the longest suit, diamonds. Club finesse can wait.

Since diamonds break 2-2, North does not need to rely on the club break. She can simply give up a trick to the ♥ A and claim five diamonds, one heart, three spades and two clubs for a total of 11 tricks; 3 NT making five.

**Board 6**  
 East Deals  
 E-W Vul

♠ J 8 4 3 2	♠ K Q 9 7 6 5	♠ 10
♥ 3	♥ J 4	♥ K Q 10 9 6 5 2
♦ K 4 3 2	♦ J 6 5	♦ Q 10 9
♣ A J 4	♣ 7 6	♣ 8 3
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;">             N              W     E              S           </div>	
	♠ A	
	♥ A 8 7	
	♦ A 8 7	
	♣ K Q 10 9 5 2	

EW 3♥; NS 2♠; NS 1♣; Par -100; NS 3♠×-1  

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		3♥	4♣ <sup>1</sup>

Db1<sup>2</sup>            All pass

1. Poor South; despite holding a 17-point, 5-1/2 loser hand, she cannot stay out of trouble since her partner does not have any useful cards or tricks for her.
2. Please note a double by partner after you open a preempt is 100% penalty double. Negative Doubles are NOT on. Partner who has preempted, cannot possibly have a more profitable 4-4 or 5-3 fit in another suit.

Luckily, NS are vulnerable because 4♣ doubled is going down two for a score of minus 300 instead of minus 140 for 3♥ making. Such is life. South cannot be faulted for overcalling her good 6-card suit and prime cards in all other suits.

Overcalling 3NT is an option but not recommended; that contract will also be doubled and in fact, the defense can defeat it by four or five tricks for a score of minus 800 or minus 1100 for NS! As I have always said, a trump contract plays better than notrump any day.

**Board 7**  
 South Deals  
 Both Vul

♠ 6	♠ 10 8 5	♠ K Q 9 4 2
♥ A 10 8	♥ 6 4	♥ Q J 7 5 2
♦ K J 3	♦ A Q 9 8 7	♦ 5 4
♣ A K 8 4 3 2	♣ Q J 6	♣ 5

♠ A J 7 3	<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W    E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W    E	S	♠ K Q 9 4 2
N					
W    E					
S					
♥ K 9 3		♥ Q J 7 5 2			
♦ 10 6 2		♦ 5 4			
♣ 10 9 7		♣ 5			

EW 4♥; EW 2♠; S 1N; EW 1♣; Par -620

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
1 ♣	1 ♦	1 ♠ <sup>1</sup>	2 ♦
Pass <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2 ♥ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
3 ♥ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	4 ♥ <sup>5</sup>	All pass

1. Do not make a Negative Double if a natural bidding sequence is available. East can simply bid spades first and then hearts without implying more than 8-9 points.
2. West should pass South's 2 ♦ call because clubs are poor quality and ♦ KJ is on the wrong side of the diamond suit.
3. East bids hearts now without promising more than 9 points. With ten, she would jump to 3 ♥ at this juncture. With 12 or more, she would insist on a major suit game by jumping to 4 ♥, pass or correct.
4. West can now show extra values (at least 15 high card points) opposite a 6-9 point normal response.
5. East has the losing trick count to bid game opposite heart support and 15+ points.

♦ KJ3 turn out to be totally useless since North overcalled 1 ♦ on her left hand side but the heart finesse is ON. Life is fair after all. East does not lose any trump tricks but there is unavoidable three loses in diamonds and spades. 4 ♥ making four should be the normal result.

**Board 8**

West Deals

None Vul

	♠ 6 3		
	♥ 10 4		
	♦ A 10 9 5 4		
	♣ K 7 6 2		
♠ A 10 8 4 2		♠ Q 9 7	
♥ Q J 7 6 3		♥ K 9 8	
♦ 8 7		♦ Q J 3 2	
♣ 3		♣ A Q 4	
	♠ K J 5		
	♥ A 5 2		
	♦ K 6		
	♣ J 10 9 8 5		

EW 3♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♦; Par -100; NS 4♣×-1

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦ <sup>1</sup>	2♣ <sup>1</sup>
Dbl <sup>2</sup>	3♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass <sup>4</sup>	Pass
Dbl <sup>5</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>6</sup>	Pass
Pass	4♣ <sup>7</sup>	Dbl	All pass

1. South has 12 points and a 5-card suit for her 2♣ overcall. Sure, you would like to have a better suit but at least it has texture!
2. West makes a Negative Double
3. North does not have 10 points but still should make a nuisance bid of 3♣. Why give EW a free reign in their bidding? A good match point strategy, I would say.
4. With a balanced hand, East should not bid a 3-card major at this point. The bidding is not going to die if she passes.
5. Holding both majors, West should double again, requesting partner to pick a major, even a 3-card major.
6. East should pick spades over hearts, making Qxx as trumps is better than Kxx. Trust me.
7. Nobody is vulnerable, North has doubleton in both majors, so another nuisance bid of 4♣ cannot be faulted. It looks like 3♠ should make so down one in 4♣ should be good for NS. Of course, East will double since her partner did show 7-9 points.

As North expected, 4♣ doubled should only go down one giving her a top score of minus 100 instead of minus 140. Her competitive bidding pays off nicely provided her partner's declarer play is up to the task. A trump lead is called for but if EW play three rounds of trump, South needs to finesse diamonds through East by running the ♦ 10 before cashing the ♦ A.

If West lead ♠ A instead (East did bid 3♠), South will make her doubled contract. She discards a heart on the ♠ KJ, and ruffs both her losing hearts in dummy before giving up two club tricks. That will be a top score of +530 for NS, declarer losing only two trumps and a spade!



**Board 9**  
 North Deals  
 E-W Vul

♠ A K 2	♠ 10 6	♠ Q 9 3
♥ K J 10 9 4 2	♥ A 6 5	♥ Q 8 3
♦ K Q 6	♦ J 9 7	♦ 5 4 3 2
♣ 6	♣ A Q 9 8 7	♣ J 4 2

♠ J 8 7 5 4	N	♠ J 8 7 5 4
♥ 7	W	♥ 7
♦ A 10 8	S	♦ A 10 8
♣ K 10 5 3	E	♣ K 10 5 3

EW 4♥; S 4♣; NS 2♠; N 3♣; NS 1N; EW 1♦; Par -100: S 5♣×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Rdbl <sup>1</sup>	2♣	2♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
Pass	3♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	Pass
3♥ <sup>4</sup>	All pass		

1. The bidding should go pass, pass, pass to West who will open 1♥. That also goes pass, pass to South this time who will re-open with a take-out double. However, West should redouble to show a strong hand.
2. Having passed 1♥ earlier, East can now show 4-5 points and three hearts.
3. North has enough strength to bid 3♣ in a competitive auction.
4. So does West who competes to 3♥.

The fact that 4♥ happens to make is not here nor there, in the sense that it requires both queens in the East hand to be "working", ♦ A with South and ♥ A with North. All this allows West to enjoy two entries to East hand for leading a diamond twice towards her ♦ KQ6, holding it to one loser and a total of 10 tricks.

**Board 10**  
 East Deals  
 Both Vul

♠ 10 6 4	♠ A J 8 7	♠ K 3 2
♥ K Q	♥ A 10 7 5 3 2	♥ —
♦ Q 8 5	♦ K	♦ J 9 7 4 3
♣ J 6 5 3 2	♣ A 9	♣ Q 10 8 7 4

♠ Q 9 5
♥ J 9 8 6 4
♦ A 10 6 2
♣ K

N 5♠; NS 5♥; NS 4N; S 4♠; NS 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +650

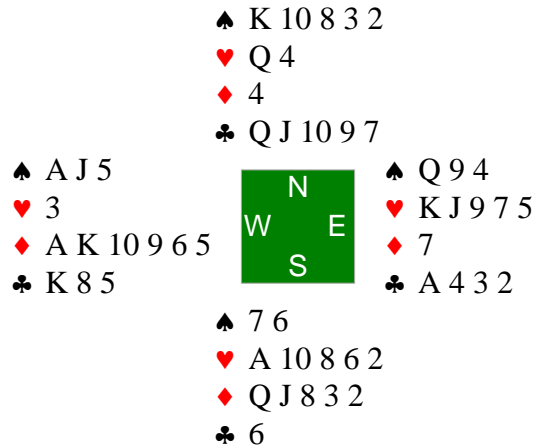
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
Pass		All pass	

1. Bidding is again straightforward in the sense that after North opens 1♥, South has a hand to force game in hearts, either via Drury response of 2♦ or a jump to 4♥.

Being vulnerable, EW dare not compete to 5♣; that contract when doubled will go for -1100!

So, NS will have an easy time playing 4♥ making 11 tricks for a score of +650. The only losers are ♠K and ♥K.

**Board 11**  
 South Deals  
 None Vul



EW 3N; EW 2♥; EW 3♦; EW 1♠; EW 1♣; Par -400

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
1♦	1♠	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	Pass
3♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
3NT	All pass		

1. With ♠ Q being a doubtful value, East should make Negative Double (not enough positive values to bid 2♥).
2. Sensible action by East allows West to jump in diamonds to show 15-17 points and six good looking diamonds.
3. East has enough to bid 3NT but looks for a second spade stopper by bidding 3♠. It asks partner if she has a spade honor. West does, so 3NT it is.

The normal lead is a heart but since East has ♥ KJ9xx, the defense can do no harm. West can take the first round finesse in diamonds (it is the correct play with this card combination), give up two diamond tricks later and make 3NT (one heart, two spades, two clubs and four diamond tricks).

**Board 12**  
West Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ A 10 8 6 3	♠ Q J 7 2	♠ K 9 5
♥ Q J 8 3	♥ 4 2	♥ 10 9 5
♦ 8	♦ J 9 7 6	♦ K Q 5 3
♣ 10 9 6	♣ A K J	♣ 8 5 4
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;">             N W     E S           </div>	
	♠ 4	
	♥ A K 7 6	
	♦ A 10 4 2	
	♣ Q 7 3 2	

NS 3N; NS 4♦; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; NS 3♣; Par +600

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	1♥ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣ <sup>3</sup>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All pass			

1. I don't recommend opening all 12-point hands but in this case, North at least has all 12 points in the three long suits. Opening 1♦ is reasonable.
2. Always bid a major before showing diamond support via Inverted Minors 2♦.
3. Fourth Suit Forcing to game (100%). Jumping to 3NT with ♣ Q732 is not attractive especially if North happens to have one or two small clubs. FSF bid of 2♣, allows North to show a stopper and suggest a 3NT contract.

Since North opened 1♦, East has a tough lead. Most passive lead is "Top of nothing" ♣ 8.

From a worthless suit against NT, top of a 3-card suit is the correct lead. Against a trump contract, if you must lead a worthless suit, lead small.

An alternative lead is the "other major", ♥ 10 being the right card to lead.

Regardless of the lead, declarer should not have any trouble making nine tricks since the missing diamonds are sitting right. Declarer takes two diamond finesses to win three diamonds, four clubs and ♥ AK, making 3NT.

Defense only wins one diamond, ♠ AK and one heart in the wash.