

Barometer Game - Sat, April 20, 2019

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 2♠; N 1N; W 1♥; EW 1♦; Par +110

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

1. Perfectly fine to open 1 ♦ in the 3rd seat. You can open a little light, 2-3 points shy of Rule of 22 that includes quick tricks as well as points and total number of cards in two longest suits.
2. Despite a light opening bid, passing 1 ♥ is not an option for South.
3. North is a passed hand and does not need to jump to 3 ♠ to show 10 points and a 4-4 fit. She takes into account the fact that partner may have opened light in the 3rd seat.

Despite holding what should be one natural trump trick, West should lead her singleton. Besides, a minor suit lead may only help the declarer who has denied support for hearts.

Declarer should win the ♥ A and play a club to her ♣ Q (not the ♣ 10 because dummy only has a doubleton). After winning the ♣ K, West should cash the ♦ A. She is never going to win two diamond tricks and there is a chance, however small, that both ♦ K8 could go away on declarer's ♣ AJ10 (after she cashes ♠ A of course).

Defense has won two tricks so far and has a sure trump trick. In addition, East cannot be prevented from winning a heart and ♦ Q later. 2 ♠ making two should be the normal result.

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

	♠ 10 9 8 3		
	♥ A K 10 7 4 2		
	♦ 8		
	♣ 4 3		
♠ A K Q 5	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 7 6	
♥ 8 6 3		♥ Q 9	
♦ A 3		♦ K 9 7 6	
♣ A J 10 7		♣ K Q 8 6 2	
	♠ J 4 2		
	♥ J 5		
	♦ Q J 10 5 4 2		
	♣ 9 5		

EW 5♣; EW 3♠; EW 1N; EW 1♦; Par -400

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass ¹
1 ♣ ²	2 ♥ ³	3 ♣ ⁴	Pass
3 ♠ ⁵	Pass	5 ♣ ⁶	All pass

1. South does not have a vulnerable Weak-2 ♦. Preempts in the 1st and 2nd seat should meet the Rule of 2&3 because partner may have to rely on the number of tricks you promise with that suit as trumps. She is not a passed hand and may have to decide what to do holding a strong hand.
2. Too strong to open 1 NT
3. Holding 10 cards in two suits and six decent hearts, it is perfectly fine to jump to 2 ♥ instead of overcalling 1 ♥. Although North also has four spades, a take-out double of 1 ♣ opening bid would show a stronger hand.
4. 3-level support for partner's 1 ♣ opening over a 2-level preempt by the opponents promises about 8-10 points and 5+ clubs. If East was stronger, she should cue-bid hearts before deciding which game to land on.
5. New higher suit at the 3-level says, "Partner, based on the values your 3 ♣ bid promised, I think we have game somewhere".
6. Since East has two losing hearts, 3 NT is out. The only reasonable game is 5 ♣. Bidding 4 ♣ would imply less strength and/or shape. West also has no reason to bid slam since partner seems to have given up on that possibility.

North has the obvious lead of ♥ A followed by the king. South gives count showing a doubleton, so North continues with a 3rd heart not fearing a ruff & sluff.

West should be careful to ruff the 3rd heart with the ♣ K or ♣ Q (otherwise, she will be down one before she begins!). Then, she can draw trump and ruff a spade in dummy, making 5 ♣.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

NS 5♥; NS 4N; NS 5♦; EW 3♣; NS 1♠; Par +450

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

1. North intends to jump in hearts at her next turn.
2. South could bid 2♦ since she passed first but if you play the Drury convention, that bid is out. Besides, one should not hide a major over bidding a minor unless the hand is strong (the strength of an opening bid).
3. Bare minimum for a jump to 3♥ but acceptable with a good suit and a side suit ace and a king.
4. South has an easy raise to 4♥. Electing to play 3NT instead is much worse.

The opening lead should be a diamond, which is preferable to banging down ♣ A. If you do, it may only catch air, as they say in bridge books.

The lead gives up a diamond trick but then the declarer might have finessed you out of your ♦ Q1052 anyway.

Declarer should play a spade to the ♠ A and lead a trump. When the ♥ K shows up from West, the path is clear to make 11 tricks. If you are not sure about why you should leave the ♥ 10 alone, which East will win and cash ♣ A, the technique described below is worth your study.

The diamond lead looked like it was low from four. If that is the case, you should run the remaining diamonds and discard both your club losers as East ruffs the last diamond. It is the trick she is always going to win but running the diamond winners allows you to dump both club losers before East gets her trump trick. You essentially used the diamond suit to draw the last trump. 4♥ should make five.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

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

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

EW 7♠; EW 6N; EW 6♦; EW 4♥; EW 4♣; Par -2210

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

1. At equal vulnerability, North has enough to preempt 2 ♥ over 1 ♣ by her right hand opponent.
2. A new suit at the 3-level, vulnerable, is forcing to game. East is too strong, and with a 6-card suit, to simply bid 3 NT. The bid denies a 4-card major (no Negative Double).
3. West can do nothing more than 3 NT.
4. East was too strong to bid 3 NT over 2 ♥ but now she can invite slam in notrump or diamonds via Quantitative 4 NT.
5. West would need 14 points and support or an honor to accept the slam invitation.

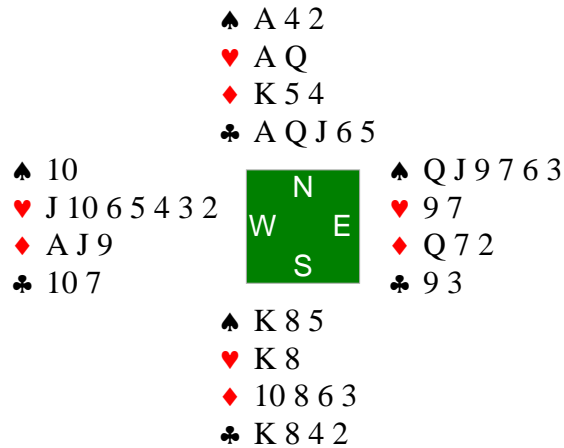
The hand record says a grand slam in spades can be made but there is no reasonable bidding sequence that will get you there. Besides, it is a very low percentage slam that requires several good things to happen (find the ♠ Q, spades have to be 3-3, a doubleton diamond ♦ K with North to start with).

In 4 NT by East, North will lead a heart hoping to find partner with an honor or two in that suit. Nope, South is almost broke (as expected since EW explored slam possibilities).

West will win ♥ J and should play low diamond towards the jack. It loses but then she has the rest of the tricks, five diamonds, three hearts and two tricks in each black suit, making six.

6 NT needed the winning heart finesse (or the spade finesse) and diamonds to be 3-2. The overall probability of success is around 34%.

Board 5
 North Deals
 N-S Vul



NS 4N; NS 5♦; NS 5♣; NS 1♠; EW 1♥; Par +630

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

All pass

1. South does not have a 4-card or longer major or a 6-card minor with shortness to suggest a safer contract than 3 NT.

East has no reason to lead anything but the ♠ Q because she has the ♠ 9. Otherwise, the 4th best would have been the correct lead.

Since ♦ A is onside, North should eventually lead low diamond toward the king and make 10 tricks. She should only try this after playing out the club suit (discarding a diamond) but before cashing both the ♥ AK or the ♠ AK.

The contract should not be in any danger because a diamond was not led initially. So, the worst thing that could happen is that the ♦ A is with East and defense wins four diamond tricks.

Board 6
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

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

♠ J 4 3	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q 7 2
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 8 3		♥ A K 9 6 4			
♦ J 8 7 5 4		♦ 6			
♣ A 10 4		♣ K Q 8 6			

EW 4♥; W 5♣; E 4♣; EW 1N; NS 2♦; Par -500; NS 5♦×-3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥ ¹	Dbl ²	3 ♣ ³	Pass ⁴
3 ♦ ⁵	Pass	4 ♥ ⁶	All pass

1. West is just shy of a 4-card Limit Raise for hearts so a simple raise is in order.
2. North should double 2 ♥, promising four spades and a 5-card minor, either clubs or diamonds.
3. East has enough shape to make a game try. A natural 3 ♣ in her second suit is best.
4. Only an aggressive player in the South seat will bid 3 ♦ here not being sure at all that North does not have clubs.
5. West likes partner's game try in clubs so she should either bid 3 ♦ to pass the buck, or bid 3 ♠ to accept the game try (3 ♠ forces 4 ♥).
6. Even if West does not force game via 3 ♠ but bids 3 ♦, East should accept the invitation and jump to 4 ♥.

There is not much to the play in 4 ♥ since hearts are 2-2 (no loser in that suit), a diamond can be ruffed by East and after that the only losers will be ♣ A and two spade losers since both West and East have three spades each. The ♠ A is marked in the North hand based on her double of 2 ♥.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

S 5N; S 5♥; N 4N; NS 4♠; N 4♥; NS 4♣; NS 1♦; Par +660

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

1. Transfer to hearts.
2. Nobody in the East seat should double 2♦ with such a bad suit because one of the reasons for doubling an artificial bid like 2♦ is lead directing. You don't want partner lead an ace or a king when your suit is headed by the Jack! It would have been a good double if East's diamonds were, for example, ♦AKxxx or ♦KQJxx or such.
3. North has enough high card points and only five hearts to jump to 3 NT asking partner to pass or correct (to 4♥).

Again, a fairly straightforward declarer play example. Even though the heart finesse is working, South must lose a trick to the ♥K and also to the ♣A and ♠Q, making 4 NT.

The hand record says played from South, 11 tricks are possible but that requires an end-play against West after playing five rounds of hearts but having played towards the ♣KJ4 in the meantime. That is a topic for another day.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 5♠; EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 5♣; EW 3♦; Par -450

West	North	East	South
1 NT	Pass	2♥ ¹	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣ ²	Pass
3♠ ³	Pass	4♠ ⁴	All pass

1. Standard Jacoby Transfer to spades
2. East shows 5 spades, 4+ clubs, Game forcing and promises a singleton or void somewhere. Without a short suit, jump to 3 NT would have been in order.
3. After Jacoby transfer, the balanced 1 NT hand should bid 3♠ when she does not have ruffing values or the maximum (17 high card points). A jump to 4♠ shows a strong preference to play a spade contract, meaning ruffing values, or at least the maximum 1 NT with aces and kings.
4. If partner does not have the maximum 1 NT or ruffing values in a spade contract, East sees no future in exploring slam.

Please note that East was very close to exploring the slam potential of this hand if only West had ruffing values and the maximum.

Even on this layout with an 8-card fit and 15 points opposite 15 points, 6♠ would have made if EW had the ♠ 10 instead of North and a winning spade finesse.

As it often happens, there is not much to the play. West must lose ♣ A and ♠ 10 even after taking the spade finesse provided North covers ♠ J whenever it is led.

The normal lead from North is the ♥ 10, which is a lot safer than leading away from ♦ Q, which might give up a trick to ♦ J if partner does not have that card or any other diamond honor.

Board 9
 North Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ Q J 10 8 5 3 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ 10 4 2 ♣ A	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A 4 ♥ 9 4 3 2 ♦ A Q J 6 ♣ 7 6 3 ♠ K 9 ♥ Q 10 8 5 ♦ 7 5 ♣ K J 9 4 2
♠ 7 6 2 ♥ K J ♦ K 9 8 3 ♣ Q 10 8 5		

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass ¹	Pass	1♦ ²
1♠	2♠ ³	Dbl ⁴	Pass ⁵
3♠ ⁶	All pass		

1. I would pass North hand. It does not meet Rule of 22 that includes quick tricks as well as points and total number of cards in two longest suits.
2. However, I would open South hand in the 3rd seat, especially when not vulnerable.
3. North cue-bids to show about 11 points and diamond support.
4. East should not go meekly. She does have 9 points with honor doubleton in partner's suit and a doubleton in opponent's suit. A responsive double is in order. Pass would show a weaker hand.
5. South opened light and East doubled 2♠; she is off the hook. She should pass because her partner has a bid coming and will be able to clarify the meaning of the 2♠ cue-bid.
6. If partner has values and something in spades, West with a 6-card suit, can raise the ante!

3♠ by West is a reasonable contract but it can be defeated because the club suit is blocked and for all of her nine points, East does not have a quick entry!

Even in the OPEN game, the best defense is not always found. Normal lead from North is the ♦ A since South opened 1♦. It allows her to look at dummy. She is not sure if West has three diamonds or two but still the best defense is to switch to ♠ A and continue with ♠ 4 taking out any chance of a diamond ruff in dummy.

Only eight tricks should be made with that defense since West cannot avoid losing three diamonds and one trick in each major for down one. With any other defense, EW will make nine tricks for an excellent score of +140.

Board 10
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

S 5N; S 5♥; N 4N; NS 4♠; N 4♥; S 5♦; N 4♦; S 2♣; N 1♣; Par +460
West North East South
 1 NT

All pass

The layout is very friendly for NS who can make 4 ♥ from North and 5 ♥ if South plays it! But there is no reasonable way to get to game on these NS cards.

Regardless, 1 NT making five should be above average match point score for South.

The lead will be a small diamond, which will run to South's ♦ 9 and she should play it right back. West will take her ♦ A and be at a loss as to the continuation.

South can win the return and finesse in hearts. It works giving South four heart tricks and three diamonds so far. Then South should run the ♠ J. That is also very friendly because she wins three spade tricks, not four, because East has ♠ K942 and a 4th 4th round stopper.

The tally has been ten tricks so far with one more club trick guaranteed to come her way. 3 NT should make 5 NT.

Board 11
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ J 9 7 6
♥ J 7 3
♦ 8 5 2
♣ Q 10 7

W 6♦; W 6♣; W 4N; W 4♥; E 3N; E 5♦; E 3♥; E 4♣; EW 2♠;
 Par -1370

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

1. Normal Strong 2♣ opening.
2. Waiting
3. Once West opens a strong 2♣ followed by 2NT, East cannot pass with three points. The total number of high card points is at least 25, if not higher.

Normal lead will be ♥ 2, which gives NS a good start. Leading ♥ 10 is not as good for several reasons. One, North needs partner to have an honor in hearts; otherwise, the lead is going to give up a trick regardless. Two, South may have doubleton honor. Three, South might interpret ♥ 10 as top of nothing against a NT contract. Four, North does not have a sequence with three touching cards, only two, the ♥ 109.

West has to do something with the 8-card fit in diamonds. Playing ♦ A and then the ♦ J is best because it will create a late entry to the ♦ 9 for a club finesse.

Bridge gods are smiling on West when North plays ♦ Q and then the ♦ K. Another heart is returned but West can enter dummy to take the 1st round finesse in clubs. It wins and the suit breaks 3-3 so West will make four club tricks, three diamonds, two hearts and a spade for a total of ten tricks, 3 NT making four.

Board 12
 West Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 3N; NS 4♣; NS 2♠; NS 3♦; NS 1♥; Par +600

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

1. East opens 1 ♣ in the 3rd seat, which is South's long suit. Therefore, South has no option but to pass and await developments. West also passes 1 ♣ but North has just enough values to make a balancing take-out double. In the balancing seat, North can assume her side has half the deck (~20 points) so she can "borrow" 3-4 points from partner and bid as if she is in the direct seat.
2. East has nothing more to say.
3. But South does (!) and should jump to 3 NT. As long as North has 10 points and both majors, 3 NT should make especially because South knows where most of the points are (with East).

Opening lead is probably a small diamond, which gives South two diamonds to go with six clubs and ♠ A. South wins ♦ Q with her ♦ K and plays one right back. East probably wins her ace and shifts to a spade.

There is absolutely no point in taking the spade finesse. Once East turns up with ♦ A, West must have have all the remaining points, the ♠ K and ♥ AK.

South wins six clubs, two diamonds and ♠ A for nine tricks.