

Thursday, April 25, 2019 -- Barometer Game

**Board 1**

North Deals

None Vul

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

EW 3N; EW 5♣; EW 2♥; Par -400

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

1. In the 1st or 2nd seat, don't preempt in a minor if you have 3-card or longer support for a major. Partner who has not passed yet, may have a strongish hand with 5 or more cards in your major. Then, a major suit game is even in the cards.
2. South should pass this 9-point hand that has several flaws even for a light opening bid in the 3rd seat.
3. East does not like hearts but she is not strong enough to bid 2 ♣. Those who play Drury convention are obviously barred from bidding 2 ♣ to show clubs. The best East can do is a weak jump shift into 3 ♣ or temporize with 1 NT Forcing. Partner may jump or otherwise show a strong hand over 1 NT.
4. Nope, West simply re-bids her hearts. Now, East can bid 3 ♣ to show 7-9 points and long clubs. It also says that she has one heart or none. Everybody should pass.

Please note that if South opens 1 ♦, NS may get too high. Even 3 ♦ if doubled, and it should be doubled by EW, will be a bottom board.

Since ♣ Q drops in two rounds, and the ♠ A is onside, East will have no trouble making 11 tricks, on any lead except a trump, by going after a spade ruff before drawing trumps.

If South leads a trump, East can establish hearts via two ruffs and has an entry to cash them later.

Alas, there was no way to bid 5 ♣ or 3 NT with those EW cards. In 3 NT, East enjoys the same fortunate lie of cards to make nine tricks.

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

♠ J 10 6 4 3	♠ K Q 5	♠ 9 2									
♥ A Q 8 5 3	♥ J 7 6	♥ 10 4 2									
♦ 8	♦ K J 9	♦ Q 7 5 4 3									
♣ 9 4	♣ Q 10 6 3	♣ K 8 7									
<table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>				N		W		E		S	
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ A 8 7 ♥ K 9 ♦ A 10 6 2 ♣ A J 5 2											

NS 5N; NS 5♣; S 3♠; NS 4♦; N 2♠; Par +660

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

1. South has a normal 15-17 1 NT opening. Sitting West, you may be tempted to show both majors to your partner via whatever convention you have at your disposal but it is not likely to achieve anything beneficial for your side and may in fact give the declarer useful information about how best to play the hand. One of the recommendations I give my students when using Michael's Cue-bid or Unusual 2 NT to show two-suited hand, is that there should be a good chance to buy the contract. Otherwise, you may give away useful information about your hand to the declarer.

Normal 4th best from your longest and strongest suit is the ♥ 5. Declarer will win the ♥ K and wonder how she can make nine tricks without losing the lead. The lead could easily be 4th best from a 5-card suit since ♥ 43 are still missing.

The only hope is to go to dummy and finesse in clubs, which has to win if there is any chance of making nine tricks. Win ♠ Q and run the ♣ Q unless it is covered. Luck is on your side today since the club suit comes in for four tricks. Now your tally is 10 tricks, three spades, one heart, two top diamonds and four clubs. Playing in a match point game, you should go for one or two more tricks from the only remaining suit, diamonds. You have a 2-way finesse for the ♦ Q. Instead of guessing who has that card, why not try to count the West hand. She has shown up with only two clubs and supposedly five hearts, which leaves her with six cards in spades and diamonds. Cash all three spades before touching diamonds. Voila! East discards a heart on the 3rd round of spades, which means West started with five spades, five hearts and two clubs leaving only one vacant space for a diamond.

Cash the ♦ K next to extract the only diamond from West and finesse East for the queen. If she doesn't cover your ♦ J on the second round, you emerge with four diamonds, making 6 NT!

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

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

NS 4N; N 5♦; NS 3♠; S 4♦; N 4♣; S 3♣; NS 1♥; Par +430

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	Rdbl <sup>2</sup>
Pass	2♦ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	2NT <sup>4</sup>
Pass	3NT <sup>5</sup>	All pass	

1. North might have opened a little light in the 3rd seat so East is within her rights to make a take-out double.
2. South should add some value for her two 10's and two 9's and re-double to promise 10 points. The re-double could be made with any hand, including support for diamonds or major suits, to be clarified later.
3. Since partner promised 10+ points with her re-double, North should show her 5-card suit.
4. Holding ♦ J95 in support of partner's long suit, it is time to invite 3NT.
5. Well, if partner's bidding is to be trusted, and it should be, North can bid 3NT. She does have 14 high card points and a 5-card suit to boot.

Aggressive bidding by NS no doubt but at least the declarer knows where most of the points are based East's Take-out Double.

West will probably lead a heart based on partner's double, South will duck to East's ♥ K. Another heart is won by ♥ Q. With lack of sure entries to the North hand, declarer should simple cash ♦ A and is rewarded with only one diamond loser because East has the singleton ♦ K. One more diamond knocks off ♦ Q giving North four diamonds, ♣ AK and two heart tricks so far.

Sine ♠ A and ♣ Q are marked in the East hand, the declarer will emerge with four diamonds, two hearts, three clubs and a spade, eventually, for a total of 10 tricks and a top board.

### Board 4

West Deals  
Both Vul

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

E 4N; EW 4♠; NS 4♦; W 2N; NS 3♣; EW 1♥; Par -200; NS 5♦×-1

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	4 ♠ <sup>1</sup>	All pass

1. East certainly has enough strength and spade support to bid 4 ♠. However, if you play Jacoby 2 NT or Splinters, you have those two choices also. My recommendation is Jacoby 2 NT. If West were to show singleton or void in hearts, a spade slam might be possible. So, an asking bid like Jacoby 2 NT is better on this hand than a showing bid like a Splinter in diamonds.


The good news is that the lead of the other major (a reasonable choice), hearts, or the ♣ 10 both allow eleven tricks to be made in 4 ♠, which should be a great result for EW.

On the lead of the ♥ 10, South should not rise with her ♥ A; otherwise, West will win ♥ KQ separately. West will draw two rounds of trump and play a diamond to the king. After winning that trick, South is essentially end-played. If she returns a diamond, West enjoys a free finesse, as it is called in bridge. She can play ♦ 10 to see if it wins. When it does win here, two hearts are discarded from dummy. As a result, West cannot lose two heart tricks. 4 ♠ makes five. If South plays ♣ A after winning the ♦ A, declarer ruffs and later gets a discard on the ♣ K.

On a club lead, West can cover ♣ 10 with the ♣ J and ruff that trick. After drawing trumps and playing a diamond to the king, South is similarly end-played. All roads to lead to giving the declarer an extra trick; 4 ♠ will make five.

It takes an unlikely diamond lead from North and a trump return at trick two that forces South to play hearts herself and therefore, must lose two heart tricks along with the ♦ A.

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

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

EW 5♥; EW 3♠; EW 1N; NS 2♦; EW 2♣; Par -450

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

1. In the 3rd seat, you can be 2-3 points shy of a full opening bid (Rule of 19 instead of 22, taking into account quick tricks).
2. West has a choice of overcalling 1♥ on a bad suit or doubling with only 10 high card points. Double seems best.
3. North re-doubles to show 10+ points, then support diamonds.
4. Normal response to a take-out double and re-double shows some values and a reason to bid. 1♥, does not deny four spades.
5. South does not know what North has for her re-double so there is no point in hiding the major.
6. West should bid 2♥ over 1♠ by South and then 3♥ over 3♦ by North. NS should pass 3♥ since the vulnerability is unfavorable.

The hand record says 5♥ can be made but it takes several finesses to succeed:

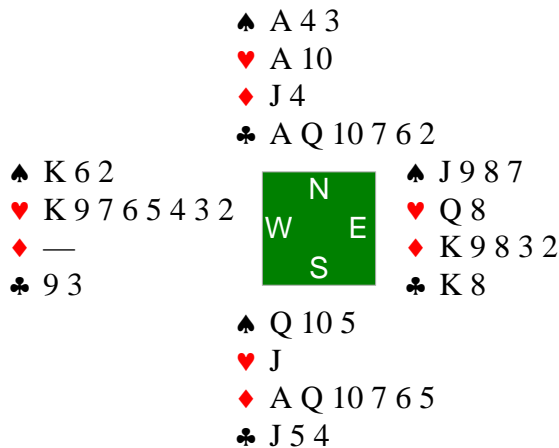
- Two consecutive heart finesses for ♥ K and ♥ 10
- Finesse for the ♠ Q
- Finesse for the ♣ Q

The normal result should be 3♥ making five.

**Board 6**

East Deals

E-W Vul



S 6♣; NS 5N; N 5♣; EW 3♥; NS 4♦; NS 2♠; Par +800; EW 6♥×-3

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

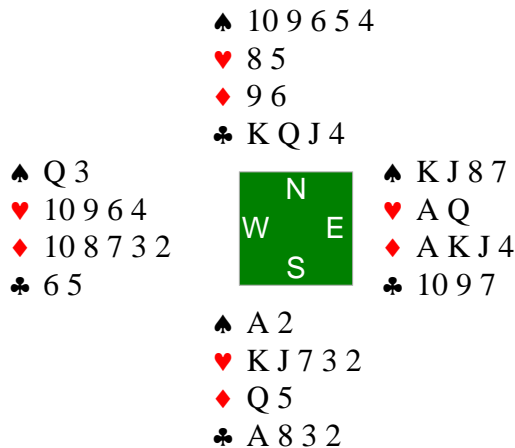
1. Don't preempt in a minor with 3-4 cards in a major especially with shortness somewhere. It works against partner instead of the opponents. If partner happens to have an opening hand with 5-6 cards in your major and singleton in you minor, your side will miss the major suit game.
2. Opposite a passed hand, a high level preempt in a major tends to favor your side more than the opponents.
3. North can surmise from the bidding that partner has a few points with only one or two hearts so she should have support for clubs.
4. Pass is reasonable here but some players holding the South hand may be tempted to bid 6♣ but it looks like a desperate move that carries a lot of risk.

Most players in the East seat will look no further than the ♥ Q for their opening lead. North will win ♥ A and ruff a heart in dummy in order to take the club finesse. It loses to the ♣ K. From that point forward, there is no way to make an overtrick. A diamond lead may in fact defeat 5♣.

East can safely return a club. North will take the diamond finesse but that only gives her one spade discard so 5♣ making five should be a normal result. The same number of tricks are available in notrump but over 4♥ by West, there is no logical method to get to a notrump game.

Looking at all four hands, 6♣ can be made. After ruffing a heart, North does not take the club finesse expecting it to lose anyway. Instead, North plays ♣ A and another club, end-playing East who only has spades and diamonds left. A spade return gives up an extra spade trick, and the diamond returns runs to the ♦ J. Another diamond finesse follows, which gives the declarer two spade discards on the ♦ AQ.

**Board 7**  
 South Deals  
 Both Vul



EW 3♦; NS 3♣; NS 1♠; NS 1♥; Par -110

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

1. East would hate to pass her 18-point hand but it seems she can do no better than bid a heavy 1 NT. When the opponents have opened the bidding and responder does not pass, East knows that there are only 0-3 points left in the deck for partner. Do not double and bid NT later. That option is applicable only in the direct seat.
2. When North passes South's 2 ♣, East again would hate to pass. At match point, one would never let the opponents play 2 ♣ unless you have a lot of clubs. Also, if the opponents have found a fit, your side should also have a fit somewhere.
3. South does not have values to bid 3 ♣ here. Either the high card points are concentrated in the two long suits or the hand has more shape (5-5 in ♥/♣) to bid 3 ♣ or 2 ♥.
4. But North can try to push them to the 3-level by raising the ante.
5. East is not to be silenced for the third time and bids 3 ♦ as a two-way shot: Either 3 ♦ makes or goes down only one.

In 3 ♦ by West, North will lead the obvious ♣ K, which is a better lead than partner's hearts because East bid 1 NT. The 3rd round of clubs is ruffed in the closed hand and trumps are drawn in two rounds. West should not take the finesse in diamonds, not because of the bridge adage, "Eight ever, nine never" but because North has shown up with six points in clubs. East must have all the remaining high cards. West then plays a low spade towards her queen, which probably wins when South ducks. The bidding has shown that South has 2-2 in spades and diamonds so West can lead the ♠ 3 and duck, essentially end-playing South into leading a heart into ♥ AQ or give up a ruff&sluff. Ducking the ♠ A was not such a good idea after all!

**Board 8**

West Deals  
None Vul

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

NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 4♦; NS 4♣; NS 1♥; Par +400

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

1. South has enough high card points to blast into 3 NT but holding four spades and singleton heart, South correctly tries to find a 4-4 spade fit.
2. Partner may have both majors and 3 NT promises four spades and denies four hearts. It would be up to North to correct 3 NT to 4 ♠ if she had four spades.

Nobody can blame NS for getting into a 3 NT contract with 15 points opposite 12 but the play is tricky. The best lead by East is ♣ 9 giving nothing away. It is a standard lead against notrump.

Against a trump contract, low from three small, is correct. If you lead the ♣ 9, partner will take you for a doubleton club, and try to give you a ruff.

Leading ♦ 5 away from the queen carries considerable risk and a major suit lead is out of question since North showed four hearts and South promised four spades.

Declarer finesses the club lead to West's ♣ J who shifts to ♥ K. North should not duck. After winning the ♥ A, North must play ♦ AK and then the ♦ 3. Luck is with North since diamonds are 3-3 with ♦ Q under the ♦ J.

Three diamonds, at least three spades, a heart and two clubs (or two hearts and one club) adds up to a lucky nine tricks despite a total of 27 high card points. If spades were to break 3-3, 3 NT will make four.



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

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

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

N 4N; EW 4♠; S 3N; NS 3♣; NS 1♥; Par +200; EW 5♠×-1

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

1. The suit is not great but East does have 12 high card points.
2. South is too strong for a Weak Jump Shift into 3♣ and not enough high card points to bid 2♣. Such is life! However, an almost solid 7-card suit leans heavily towards a free-bid of 2♣.
3. West has a clear-cut preemptive jump to 3♠.
4. With two stoppers, North is within her rights to try 3NT.
5. Do you know what they call 8-cards suits in bridge? "Trumps"!!!

If North doubles 4♠, she will regret it. There is no way to defeat it since the declarer can finesse North for the ♦ Q losing only two trumps and a club.

**Board 10**  
 East Deals  
 Both Vul

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

♠ K Q J 10 5
♥ K 10 7 3 2
♦ —
♣ A 6 4

NS 3♠; NS 4♦; NS 2N; NS 2♥; NS 1♣; Par +140

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

1. Who doesn't like 8-card suits? This is not a game going hand so using Standard Bidding, North bids 2 ♦ promising 10-12 points and diamonds. If you play 2-over-1 Game Force, the correct response is 1 NT Forcing.
2. Quite understandable to repeat the 8-card suit. Besides, North really does not have support for spades.
3. Re-bidding her second suit again to promise 5-5 or 6-5 in spades and hearts.
4. Now it is time to take a preference to spades. The hand is still not good enough to jump to 4 ♠ or bid 3 NT.

Some NS players will overbid their hands to an unmakeable game, which is a little unfortunate. On a good day, South will make 4 ♠ despite only a 5-2 fit, or make 3 NT, but not today.

**Board 11**  
 South Deals  
 None Vul

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

♠ A 8 6 5 3
♥ 10 8 7 2
♦ 7 3
♣ 6 5

NS 5♠; NS 3♥; NS 4♣; NS 1N; EW 2♦; Par +450

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

1. Normal 1-level overcall promises 8+ points and 5+ cards.
2. South does not have the values to bid 1 ♠ or make a Negative Double.
3. West has the high card points to bid 2 ♦ but it is best to make a preemptive jump to 3 ♦ (some might even bid 4 ♦). Granted, it does give information to the opponents about how many diamonds your side has but the value of jamming the bidding cannot be ignored.
4. This is a re-opening double by North. Higher the level, more strength it promises.
5. Bid the longer major first. Don't pass 3 ♦ X for penalty.
6. A bit aggressive but North does have a singleton diamond and the losing trick count is only 4-1/2, more than enough to justify being aggressive.

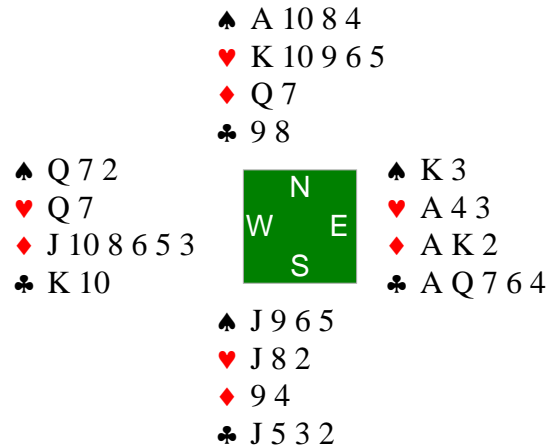
West will lead a diamond but then the only defensive trick should be ♥ A.

You may have heard the bridge adage about "Eight ever, nine never" but like most rules, it offers no guarantee! In fact, at the point in play when you have to decide whether to finesse or try for the drop of the ♠ Q, you almost always have more information to decide what to do.

East opened the bidding but West did not pass 1 ♦ and did not bid 1 ♥. She should have a few high card points but not 4-5 hearts. I would finesse the ♠ J on the second round, making 5 ♠.

Those who only make 4 ♠, should get below average match point score.

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



EW 6N; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; W 2♠; W 2♥; E 1♠; E 1♥; Par -990

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

1. Normal 2 NT opening bid with 20 high card points and a 5-card minor to boot.
2. West may suspect that 6♦ may be in the cards but there is no realistic way to try to figure that out. Besides, the total number of high card points will not be more than 29 so slam chances should be remote.

Against 3 NT by East, South has a tough lead. She knows that partner probably has 10-12 points and since West did not bid Stayman or Jacoby Transfer to a major, the lead that is called for is one of the majors. As a result, South will lead ♠ 5; North should stick in the ♠ 10. If East has that card, they are entitled to one spade trick whether she goes up with the ace or not.

Please note that if South were to lead ♣ 2, the ♣ 10 will win that trick giving East 12 tricks.

After winning the ♠ K, East should try diamonds, her longest suit. Clubs can wait. After finding out that diamonds run for six tricks, the correct technique is to cash ♥ A and then run all the remaining diamonds discarding all the remaining major suit cards. Only then should East play ♣ K and a club back to her hand. If South erroneously discards a club, East wins five club tricks and 3 NT make six for what should be a top board.