


Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

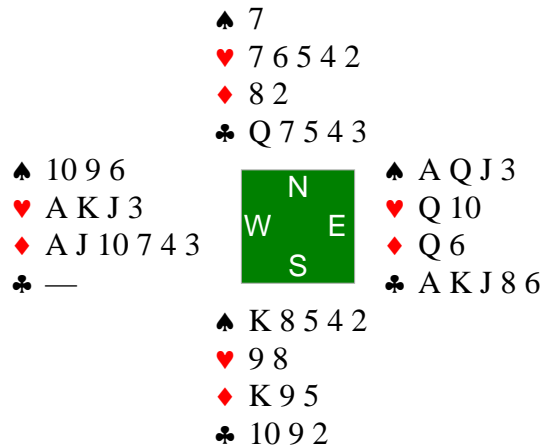
♠ K Q 8 7 3		♠ 6 5 4
♥ J 6 5 4		♥ K 10 3
♦ Q 5		♦ A K 9 2
♣ 10 5		♣ K 7 6
		
		♠ 10
		♥ A Q 9 8 2
		♦ 10 6 3
		♣ J 9 4 3
		♠ A J 9 2
		♥ 7
		♦ J 8 7 4
		♣ A Q 8 2

NS 3N; NS 4♦; NS 2♠; NS 3♣; EW 1♥; Par +400

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

Bidding is straightforward with South inviting 3 NT but North is not at the top of her range and declines the invitation. Be that as it may, nine tricks are available in notrump because ♦ Q is doubleton and one heart trick can be produced, one way or the other. That problem will be solved if East leads a heart.

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul



EW 7N; EW 7♦; EW 5♠; EW 5♥; EW 5♣; Par -1520

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

1. I normally recommend that you should bid 1 ♥ instead of 1 ♦ but this strong hand is the exception with six diamonds and more than game going values.
2. Fourth Suit Forcing is useful even after the opening bidder shows a strong hand.
3. 3 NT says I have a balanced or semi-balanced, 18-19 point hand.
4. Gerber
5. Two aces
6. Without a clear fit in any suit, 6 NT seems better than 6 ♦.

South is leading into the 18-19 point balanced hand so a passive lead of ♥ 9 is best. Partner is known to hold at least four hearts, if not five.

The lead does not give anything away but with ♦ K in the South hand, all 13 tricks roll home with six diamonds, four hearts and ♣ AK/♠ A.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

NS 3N; NS 3♥; NS 2♠; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; Par +400

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

1. Despite holding 12 high card points, East is unable to take any action when the bidding has started, 1 ♣ - 1 ♦.
2. There is no point in bidding 1 ♥ here since partner should not have four hearts unless at least invitational strength.
3. North counts extra values for the three 10's and one 9, and invites 3 NT.
4. It should go, all pass since South is minimum.

Again, South can make 3 NT. The normal lead is a spade giving South three spade tricks. Since ♣ AK are on side and both red suits are 3-3, South can make three tricks each in spades, hearts and diamonds, giving up two clubs and one trick in each red suit.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 4♦; EW 4♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; Par -130

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♠ ¹	All pass		

1. When 1♠ comes around to South, her thoughts should follow along these lines. If West has a normal opening bid with 13 points and East has say 3, that gives partner the strength of an opening hand but did not take any action. Maybe partner has 3 or 4 spades.

If so, pass is the best option for South. Who knows, maybe West has 19 points and partner 6-7. Those who balance on this hand, may see EW land in a better contract, 2♦ or 3♦, and make it for a higher score than 1♠ making.

If West plays 1♠, she can use the lone entry to dummy, the ♠K, in order to take the diamond finesse but it does not help much. She gains a diamond trick but loses a trick to the diamond ruff.

The normal lead is a heart, not the singleton diamond because North does not want ruffs but would rather force the declarer to take one or two ruffs with her long trumps. This is the best defensive strategy any time you have four or more trumps in your hand. Force the declarer to ruff once or twice in her hand. With that lead and repeated continuation of the same suit, West will lose control of trumps and only make seven tricks. If West plays a club after winning the ♠K, she loses two diamond tricks anyway.

Some South players will balance with a double because they have two places to play, hearts and diamonds. Ideally, a take-out double should be something like a 1-4-4-4 or 0-4-4/5 hand.

Since both sides are vulnerable, even 2♥ down one is worse for NS than 1♠ making by West. The real loss comes when EW end up in 3♦ and make an overtrick for an excellent match point score of +130! South will regret that she did not pass 1♠.

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

♠ 10 2
♥ K 7 5
♦ 6 4 3
♣ A K Q J 3

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

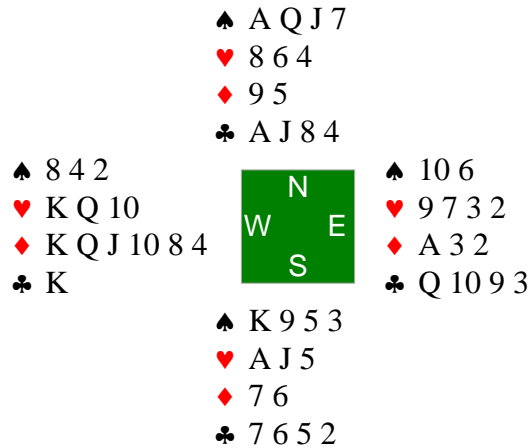
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♥	1♠	2♣ ¹
4♠ ²	Dbl ³	Pass	5♥ ⁴
Pass ⁵	Pass	Pass	

1. 2♣ by South here promises good 10+ points and four or five clubs. Anything less, and a Negative Double would be in order.
2. This is what is called a Weak Freak in bridge books, a preemptive jump to 4♠, especially at favorable vulnerability. West does not expect to make 4♠ but hopes to achieve a better score than 4♥ by North making. Doubled down three, non-vulnerable, is only -500 compared to -620 or 650 for 4♥.
3. Double by North here shows extra values. Pass would indicate minimum opening bid.
4. Based on partner's double of 4♠, South is able to compete to 5♥. Otherwise, pass would be the safest option (take your plus instead of bid and go down).
5. West needs extra shape, a singleton or void in hearts, to bid 5♠ here. Doubled down four would be really bad.

Since hearts are 2-2, North should make 11 tricks with hearts as trumps, losing only the two missing aces.

If West were to bid 5♠ and gets doubled, as she should, the defense will take two hearts, one diamond, two clubs and a club ruff with her lone ♠ K provided South starts with ♣ AK and continues a 3rd round of clubs.

Board 6
 East Deals
 E-W Vul



EW 2♥; EW 3♦; EW 1N; NS 1♠; EW 1♣; Par -110


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

1. North would like to have both 4-card majors but still, her hand warrants a take-out double of 1♦.
2. Normal raise to 2♦ even though she only has three trumps.
3. South has enough to bid 2♠ without jumping. For than action, she should have more strength, especially since ♥J will not carry full weight. However, West has six diamonds and no wasted honors in spades, in order to safely compete to 3♦.

Against 3♦, North might as well make a safe lead of a heart, the other major. It does no good here but a trump lead might also have finessed partner out of a diamond honor.

Almost any lead, and then a reasonable defense, would find the declarer losing four tricks and make only 3♦.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

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

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

1. Bidding up the line. Never mind how weak the major is, one should bid it. If partner also has four cards in the same major, it will play just fine as the trump suit.
2. North does best to bid 1 NT instead of 2 ♣ with a balanced hand. It may prevent opponents from introducing spades if they have a fit. And, a holding of three spades may offer a little bit of protection against the opponents cashing too many spades. It should end the auction.

The normal lead would be a diamond against 1 NT, which North should let it run towards her ♦ A10. After winning that trick with the ♦ 10, declarer should go after spades. When missing the KJ, you should take two finesses.

Since all the honors are in dummy on this hand, it doesn't matter whether the first finesse is taken against the king or the jack. It produces three spade tricks to go with two diamonds bringing the tally to five. While in dummy, the declarer should play a heart towards her ♥ KQ5 twice using ♠ AQ as entries. The opponents will have to give up either a club or a diamond in the end. 1 NT should make with an overtrick.

Board 8

West Deals

None Vul

♠ A J 8 7 5	♠ Q	♠ K 9 2									
♥ K J	♥ 7 6 4 2	♥ A 9 8 5									
♦ Q 8 6 5	♦ J 4 3	♦ K 7 2									
♣ J 4	♣ K 10 8 3 2	♣ Q 7 5									
<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <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										
♠ 10 6 4 3											
♥ Q 10 3											
♦ A 10 9											
♣ A 9 6											

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

At most table, West will open 1♠ and East will give partner a 3-card limit raise in spades, either by jumping to 3♠ (Standard) or Forcing 1NT in a 2-over-1 system then jumping to 3♠. West does not have any extra values to accept the invitation and passes. 3♠ will make three. Declarer must lose ♣AK and two diamond tricks due to lack of entries to the East hand. She needs to take the spade finesse after finding out North started with the singleton ♠Q but cannot also take the heart finesse, cash ♥K and get back to East hand to cash two more hearts.

The hand record says that East can make 3NT but not West. If North leads 4th best club against 3NT by West, South can duck to prevent East from ever winning a trick with her ♣Q. West will win the ♣J but then NS are poised to cash four more club tricks when South wins the ♦A because the duck maintains communication to the North hand. That's five defensive tricks.

If East is the declarer, granted, South may still find the ♣A lead and continue the suit when North encourages. Again, North will go up with the ♣K to prevent an immediate entry to East hand, and lead a diamond. South will also duck forcing ♦Q to win the trick. Going up with the ♣K was better for the defense because West is prevented from taking the heart finesse and will be held to nine tricks.

Look what happens if North ducks the second club to the ♣Q. Heart finesse is taken, ♥K cashed before playing a spade to the ♠K. When ♠Q shows up, East can cash ♥A and the ♥9 giving her four heart tricks. She runs the ♠9 next, which produces five spade tricks. In this scenario, 3NT will make with two overtricks!

Board 9
 North Deals
 E-W Vul

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

♠ Q 9 5 3
♥ A 9 5 4 2
♦ J 3
♣ Q 5

NS 4♠; NS 3♥; NS 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♦; Par +420

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

1. East is vulnerable and should not even think about coming in over the 1 NT opening bid.
2. Whether you play Smolen or not, this hand can start with Stayman 2 ♣ and then bid hearts if partner responds 2 ♦.
3. When partner shows four spades and not four hearts, South hand goes up in value and should jump straight to 4 ♠. Granted, ♦ J3 and ♣ Q5 may not carry full weight but 4-5 in the majors will.

Against 4 ♠, East has an automatic lead of the ♥ Q because she has three touching honors. North might as well win ♥ K, ♥ A and play a third round to see if hearts are 3-3.

When hearts become established in the South hand, that hand becomes the master hand. North should play her hand as dummy from that point forward.

♠ A and another will find East winning the ♠ K and shifting to ♦ K. That defense will net EW three tricks, one spade, one diamond and one club. 4 ♠ should make four.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ 10 6 4
♥ K J 10 6
♦ J 9
♣ J 7 5 2

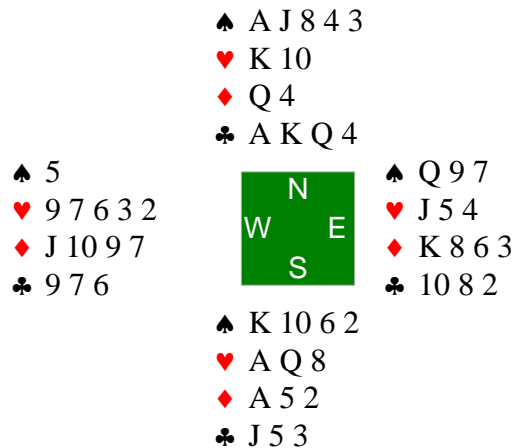
NS 1N; EW 2♦; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; NS 1♣; Par -90

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

1. Although West does not like diamonds and has five hearts, it is not a good idea to keep the bidding open with only two points.
2. Normal balancing 1 NT over a minor suit opening by your left hand opponent.
3. If partner had not passed 1 ♦, East hand is strong enough to reverse into 2 ♠ forcing a 3-level contract or 2 NT. Opposite a passed hand however, a simple re-bid of 2 ♦ with a 6-card suit and extras seems best. Competing over 1 NT all by yourself when vulnerable does promise extra strength.

Even a trump lead (dangerous as it is) does not stop East from ruffing one spade in dummy so 2 ♦ should make with five diamond tricks and three spades in the end.

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul



NS 7N; NS 7♠; NS 7♣; NS 3♥; NS 2♦; Par +1520

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

1. Having found a 9-card fit in spades, North is strong enough to simply ask for key cards and drive to slam. Even a grand slam may be possible if South has the right cards (♦ A, ♥ A, ♣ J and ♠ KQxx)
2. South shows 0 or 3 key cards (Standard 0314 response), must be three based on what North has.
3. Next available bid after the RKCB response asks for the queen of trump.
4. South denies it by going back to the trump suit as cheaply as possible.
5. It is risky to bid the grand slam in spades when ♠ Q is missing. North would have to guess where it is or hope for a 2-2 break.

East should make a non-trump lead and most pairs will make 6 ♠ by playing spades to be 2-2 because they are unable to glean more information about the hand to guess that East has ♠ Q97. They will cash ♠ AK and lose a trump trick. The diamond loser is discarded on the 3rd heart.

Board 12

West Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 2♠; NS 1N; EW 2♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♥; Par -110

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
Pass ¹	Dbf ²	Rdbf ³	2 ♣ ⁴
Pass	Pass	2 ♦ ⁵	Pass
2 ♠ ⁶	All pass		

1. Despite holding 3-card support for partner, West does not have six dummy points to bid 2 ♠.
2. North should balance with a double. Her side should have half the deck (about 20 points) and she does have three places to play.
3. East should re-double to show strength, not bid a simple change of suit to 2 ♦.
4. South has the normal preference to a club contract opposite partner's take-out double. She must not jump since partner has balanced with the knowledge that South has points.
5. Having re-doubled first, now is the time to show a second suit.
6. West takes a preference to the known 5-3 fit. A diamond contract can never be better with three spades and only three diamonds.

Trumps break badly for East so eight tricks in the limit of the hand as long she goes after a diamond ruff before drawing even two rounds of trump.

If South leads a trump, she gives up one of her natural trump tricks, but wins a diamond later.

If South leads a club, East can play two rounds of diamonds ending in dummy to take the spade finesse. South will continue with a second club. East will ruff and should play a 3rd diamond. South ruffs, and plays a trump, which East wins. She plays a 4th round of diamonds letting South ruff it with her last trump. That only adds up to five defensive tricks. Again, 2 ♠ will make two.

However, declarer's line of play is not obvious and 2 ♠ will probably fail at many tables.