

Barometer Game on Thu May 9, 2019

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

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

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦ ¹
1♠ ²	Pass	Pass ³	Pass ⁴

1. I would devalue ♣ Q9 and ♥ J73 by at least one point and open 1♦ instead of 15-17 NT
2. Not strong enough to double and bid spades at the 2-level.
3. Six points without support is not good enough to bid 1NT when partner has overcalled at the 1-level. The total points may not be close to 20.
4. South has four spades and therefore, no good option but to pass.

West is happy to see dummy does not have good 9 points, which would have meant that game was missed. With good 8 or 9 points, East would not have passed anyway.

North will lead partner's suit, diamonds. The 3rd round will be ruffed by West. Her best line of play is to continue with ♠ K with the intention of entering dummy with the ♣ A to finesse South for the ♠ J later.

South should duck the ♠ K. It will ensure two spade tricks to go with ♦ AK. Since ♣ Q falls under the ♣ A, there are no more defensive tricks for NS. 1♠ should make with two overtricks.

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 6♣; NS 5♠; NS 4N; NS 5♦; NS 3♥; Par +1370

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

1. South intends to open 1♠ and make a strong jump shift to 3♣. It shows 18-20 points, not quite strong enough to open 2♣.
2. Standard bidders will show 10+ points and diamonds by bidding 2♦.
3. If partner has 10 points and 5 diamonds, South certainly has enough high card points to jump to 3NT. If she bids 3♣ over 2♦, the bidding may get too high.

Those who play 2-over-1 GF convention would have to start with forcing 1NT with the North hand and then bid 3♦. Regardless, South will bid 3NT and play there.

The normal lead is ♥6, fourth best from the longest and strongest suit, which is also the unbid suit. South should play ♥Q to see if it wins. Play the ♣J to the ace when East does not cover and then cash ♦K. On the second round of clubs, the queen shows up so South can switch to ♠10 and run it if not covered. A losing finesse will go into the safe hand, which cannot attack her ♥K7.

You may have noticed that both North and South have an entry in the club suit to be able to cash winners in both hands without getting stranded in one hand or the other.

When ♠10 wins the trick. South should cash ♦A, come back to her hand in clubs to cash ♠AK. She will end up with four club tricks, two diamonds, three spades and one heart for a total of ten tricks making an overtrick for an excellent score of +630.

Although 6♣ makes on this hand, there is no logical way to bid the slam in a 4-4 fit when you are missing one key card, the ♥A, and the queen of trump.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

♠ 8 6
♥ A 10 8 5 3
♦ Q J
♣ Q 8 3 2

EW 4♠; EW 2N; EW 3♣; NS 1♥; Par -620

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

1. In the 2nd seat, West does not have an opening bid.
2. In the 3rd seat, if you can preempt, it is worth making life difficult for the opponents. In the 1st or 2nd seat, I would not open 2♦ with the North hand.
3. East should overcall 2NT instead of a double. If partner responds 2♥, East is not strong enough then to bid 2NT or 2♠. Overcalling 2NT does not deny a 4-card major. It only denies both majors.
4. Transfer to spades
5. Enough points for game opposite 15-18 point balanced hand.
6. Never play 3NT when you have a 9-card fit in spades and only one stopper in the opponent's suit.

In 4♠, South will lead ♦Q, partner's suit. Since there is no defensive ruff, East can simply draw trumps and give up two aces and a club trick later making 4♠.

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

W 4N; EW 4♠; E 3N; EW 1♥; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par -630

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

1. North is not strong enough in high cards or suit quality to show long club suit using whatever system NS play over their 1 NT opening.
2. Transfer to spades
3. This is part of Advanced Jacoby Transfers: it shows doubleton diamond, 17 points AND four trumps.
4. Re-transfer
5. Obliging partner's request for re-transfer not knowing how strong partner is.
6. Yes, she is strong enough to bid game. The re-transfer has allowed the contract to be declared from the right side.

There is not much to the play; no overtricks are possible because ♥ A is offside. North must lead a trump; all other leads are fraught with danger.

On the lead of ♠ J, declarer cannot avoid losing two hearts and a diamond.

The only other lead that happens to be safe is the ♦ A but North can never be sure of that.

On a heart or a club lead, one of declarer's losers disappear. If a club, then ♣ 10 wins in dummy and after drawing trumps, a heart can be discarded on the 3rd club. In this scenario, only red suit aces are lost, 4 ♠ making five.

The same is true if ♥ A or small heart is led away from the ace (nobody should even do that!), then the only losers are ♥ A and ♦ A.

Board 5
 North Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 2♥; NS 3♦; EW 1♠; Par +630

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

1. At favorable vulnerability, it pays to interfere. If NS do not have game-going values, partner will have 10 points and 2 ♠ will be a safe contract.
2. I recommend playing 3 ♣ by South has invitational.
3. North accepts the invitation since she has 17 high card points, ♣ AQ9 indicates that the club suit will run and two aces on the side. 3 NT should be almost cold.

Normal lead would be a spade, which gives the declarer ten tricks, six clubs, two aces, ♥ K and ♠ K on the lead. 3 NT should make four.

Even the ♥ Q lead does not prevent North from making ten tricks due to the presence of the ♠ J in dummy in a 3-card suit. After running clubs, discarding two or three diamonds, she can play a low spade towards ♠ K6 for the 10th trick. It would not matter who has the ♠ A as long as East has the ♠ Q. The defense can only score two spade tricks and another trick later in the wash.

Board 6
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

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

NS 2♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +110

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

1. Fiery competitive auction starts meekly with East opening 1 ♣ and South overcalling 1 ♥. Opposite an overcall, don't bid 1 NT without 11 to 14 points and one or two stoppers. If stronger, start with a cue-bid of 2 ♣ to see if partner has extra values for her simple overcall.
2. South should never sit for a 1 NT contract.
3. East could not bid 2 ♠ over North's 1 NT since it would show a much stronger hand. 2 ♠ would have been a "reverse". Having passed earlier, it is now time to show three places to play by re-opening with a double, which promises shortness in hearts. Not only that, it denies four diamonds (the opening bid would have been 1 ♦ in that case) and ostensibly promises four spades and five clubs.
4. West has a tough call here. She cannot bid 2 ♠ or 2 NT or 3 ♦ so she picks the least of all evils by going back to partner's 1st bid suit and a known 5-3 fit.
5. North cannot stand all this interference by the opponents so she doubles knowing her side has at least 21 points if not more. This is called a match point double. If they make 3 ♣, you are not going to get a good result. Doubled down one however, should defeat all those EW pairs who play 3 ♣ undoubled.

Good job by North who doubled 3 ♣, which goes down one, when her side cannot make 3 ♥. Plus 100 is the best NS can do despite holding more than half the deck.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ A Q J 7 5	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; 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	♠ 10 8 6 3
N					
W E					
S					
♥ A K 7 6 4		♥ 5			
♦ K 6		♦ A Q J 10 2			
♣ 2		♣ K 9 7			

NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 2N; NS 3♣; EW 1♦; Par +620

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

1. South is strong with only 4-5 losers but not quite good enough to open Strong 2 ♣.
2. Either 1 NT forcing or 2 ♣ are acceptable bids here. Pass is not an option.
3. Reasonable for East to come in with a 2 ♦ overcall.
4. South should show extra values by jumping to 3 ♥, invitation to game. North has 9 points instead of 6 and 3-card heart support so she should raise to 4 ♥.

On the expected diamond lead from West, South should count losers first. It seems there are only two, ♦ A and ♠ K provided hearts behave. Nope, they don't and ♠ K is offside so South must lose three tricks.

Her plan should be to win ♦ K, play a club to ♣ A and take the spade finesse. It loses and a club comes back. Ruff ♣ K, cash ♠ A and ruff a spade in dummy, overruffing if West ruffs in. It establishes the spade suit.

Only then, try to draw trumps. There is a sure trump losers so 4 ♥ should make four.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 2N; EW 2♠; EW 3♣; Par -120

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

1. Although only 3-4 in the majors, East has the goods to double 1♦ by North. ♦AQ and ♣AQ107 are what I call "positional" values. North has an opening hand so East expects both minor suit finesses to win. This possibility increases the value of the East hand.
2. South should make a nuisance of herself by jumping preemptively to 2♥.
3. Preempt does not stop West who has 10 points and four spades from bidding 2♠. Everyone should pass it out.

West may be worried about ending in a 4-3 fit but she also knows where most of the points are. It is reasonable to expect minor suit finesses to win, which eliminates any losers in those two suits.

There might be two trump losers, or three if they break badly, but only one heart loser. West has to take three finesses, one for the ♦K and two against ♣KJ so there is a possibility that North is able to give South a 3rd round club ruff.

All this doom and gloom still only adds up to five losers so 2♠ should make.

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

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

1. Does not meet the Rule of 22 for an opening bid (Points + length in two longest suits + Quick Tricks).
2. Strong enough for a vulnerable preempt at the 2-level promising about six tricks with hearts as trump (Rule of 2 and 3 for preempts).
3. Normal 3-level overcall promises this type of hand strength and suit quality. It does not deny four cards in the other major because the hand is not strong enough to double and bid 3♦ if partner bids 3♣.
4. West has four trumps but not enough strength to jump to 4♥, vulnerable. Doubled down two will be worse than any non-vulnerable game NS can make.
5. North has enough strength (about 10 points and 5+ spades) to come in with a 3♠ bid expecting partner to be short in hearts and therefore, 3-card support for spades. If by any chance, partner hates spades, she can bid 4♦. North would be OK with that.
6. If partner has 10 points and spades, South applies Losing Trick Count and bids game. There may be a trump loser and a loser in each minor but no more. She also expects the spade finesse, if needed, to win since ♠K for example, should be with West.

Spade finesse is working but diamond finesse is not; therefore, North will lose a club and a diamond to make 11 tricks regardless of the opening lead.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

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

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

1. Aggressive players may be tempted to open a 3♣ preempt with South hand but it is not recommended. Two conditions would have to be met before contemplating such action: NS need to be non-vulnerable and the club suit should not be so raggedly.
2. Always open 1-of-a-major instead of 1 NT with 15-17 points especially when the other three suits have aces and kings or king/queens.
3. Do not bid 2♠ with North hand. It is too strong for a preempt.
4. East on the other hand, is weak enough to make a preemptive jump to 3♥. A normal raise to 2♥ should promise more values opposite a 3rd seat opening bid by West. East's preempt effectively shuts everybody out and 3♥ becomes the final contract.

Please note EW have arrived at their best competitive contract since 2♠ by North cannot be defeated. If East was to bid 2♥ instead of 3♥, North will probably compete to 2♠.

Then if East were to bid 3♥, she may get doubled. Vulnerable, doubled, down one is worse than any part score NS can make. Immediate preempt to 3♥ makes it difficult for NS to double 3♥.

North will probably lead her singleton club and obtain a ruff but it comes at the loss of a natural trump trick. Regardless, 3♥ by West should go down one for a score of minus 100.

If West were to open 1 NT, North would probably come in with a 2♠ overcall and shut out East. Since 2♠ makes, EW will get a bottom board. Opening 1♥ allows East to compete to 3♥ and save the day against a makeable contract of 2♠ by North.

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ 10 8	<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td style="font-size: 8px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="font-size: 8px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="font-size: 8px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 10 8
N					
W E					
S					
♥ A Q 5 2		♥ A Q 5 2			
♦ 5		♦ 5			
♣ A K Q 10 8 3		♣ A K Q 10 8 3			

NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 1♥; Par +430

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

1. West has the values for a take-out double at the 1-level (4-5-4-0 shape requires only 9 points, 4-4-4-1 requires at least ten).
2. North is a little too strong for a preemptive jump to 3 ♣.
3. Once North bids 2 ♣, East needs more than a bad six points to respond to partner's take-out double. Pass is correct.
4. South takes another bid, which shows extra values and invites game, probably in notrump.
5. North has all her points in the two unbid suits but without ten points, the best she can do is 2 NT. North would be weaker if she were to bid 3 ♣ over 2 ♥ by partner.
6. With six running clubs and an ace outside, South expects two tricks from partner and bids 3 NT.

With ♠ AK being onside (as expected because of the take-out double), EW cannot defeat 3 NT.

If West leads a diamond, South can finesse and claim nine tricks. If West leads a heart, it gives South a free finesse for the ♥ K and again, she can claim 3 NT. Declarer actually does one trick better if West cashes ♠ AK. Then South can take the diamond finesse for the 10th trick. It would not matter if West switched to a different suit after cashing ♠ A at trick one. Too late; there is nothing West can do from that point forward. A diamond or heart gives South a free finesse and then she can lead a spade herself towards the ♠ Q7 in dummy to make an overtrick.

The best opening lead for the defense is ♦ 3 and a diamond continuation even if South makes the risky play of a spade towards ♠ Q76.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 4♣; EW 2N; EW 2♥; EW 1♦; Par -420

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

1. With a balanced 25 count, East opens a strong 2 ♣ with the intention of bidding 2 NT next.
2. It is usually a good idea to preempt a level higher, especially at favorable vulnerability, when your right hand opponent opens a strong 2 ♣. However, South does not have any business bidding with that hand without shape or long suit or strength.
3. Many play 2 ♥ as the Double Negative (less than six points, no ace or king) but the standard response is 2 ♦. If it followed by 3 ♣, it shows the Double Negative.
4. It is a bad idea to jump to 3 NT when you have at least one four card major. It is highly unlikely that partner will pass 2 NT (she should not).
5. Stayman inquiry results in a superior contract of 4 ♠. In fact, 3 NT can be defeated if South leads her 4th best diamond although it does require North to drop the ♦ J as ♦ Q is played from dummy.

Since ♦ Q happens to be an entry to West hand, the declarer can take the spade finesse and come to ten tricks one way or another. She may be able to ruff the 3rd diamond in dummy and then lead a small heart towards her ♥ KQ3. North must duck to get two tricks later with her ♥ AJ. There is no need to go up with the ♥ A because East bid 2 NT, which means she has at least two hearts. The ♥ A is not going anywhere.