The first three bids are likely to be North: 1♦, South: 1♠, North 2♣.

That sequence shows 5 diamonds and 4 clubs (or it could be more distributional) and a point range of 12 to 17.

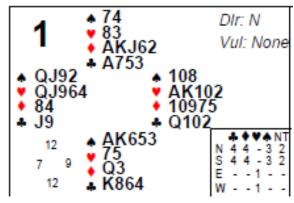
Many in the South would bid game with their 12 points but that is not a good idea as it is not clear which game they should bid. 3NT or 4♠ might be better than 5♣.

Better for South to just invite game by bidding 3.

Here North will pass but he would bid game if he had a bit extra.

If North's "bit extra" was ♥A or ♥K the best game would be 3NT.

And if North had  $\triangle Q$  (and no top heart honours) the best game would be  $4\triangle$ .

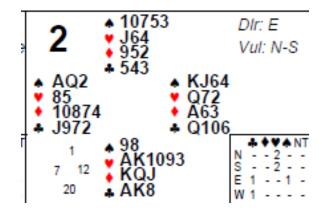


DATUM: NS: 300 EW: 470

Board 2

After East opens 1NT South should double showing 16 or more points. That is much better than bidding 2NT as it scores more no matter how many tricks are made. (If he makes 8 tricks 2NT scores 120 whereas 1NT<sup>X</sup> is down 2 for 300.) North might feel uncomfortable defending 1NT<sup>X</sup> but can only pass and hope South can beat 1NT on his own.

South might be confident of taking 1NT down 2 but after leading his hearts from the top (best) East will win with ♥Q and cash his four spade tricks. South will have to discard one of his winners on the last spade. The ◆A will be East's sixth trick.



DATUM: NS: 310 EW: 330

Board 3

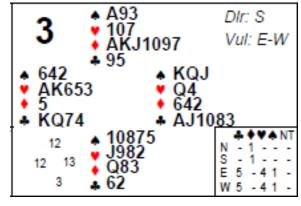
The first three bids should be West: 1♥; North: 2♦; East: 3♣. West's best option is to raise partner's suit to 4♣ rather than repeat the hearts as they aren't very good.

After 4.4 it is a good idea for East to suggest an alternative game by bidding 4.4.

This clearly won't be 4-card support because with that East would have immediately raised the hearts.

West can pass 4♥ if his hearts are good enough (which they are here) or otherwise he can stay with the club fit and bid 5♣.

Both 4♥ and 5♣ should be made.



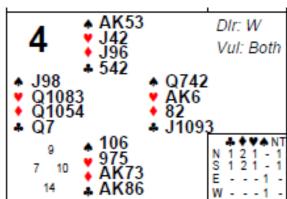
DATUM: NS: 720 EW: 120

South should open 1NT after three passes.

North's 9 points is not enough to consider game but enough to feel comfortable.

South will be less comfortable as his hand is a bit top-heavy with three AK combinations but few intermediates.

South's best (or probably only) chance is from the diamond suit. He must keep all his diamonds if the opponents run the hearts first. South should lead a diamond towards dummy at the first opportunity. West may be tempted to win with •Q (which solves declarer's problem) but if West plays low declarer should try •9. If that loses to •10 there is still a chance of a third trick in the suit.



DATUM: NS: 410 EW: 340

Board 5

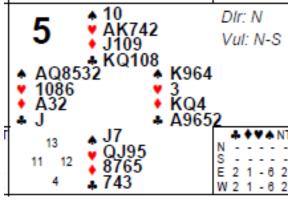
After North opens 1♥ East has the ideal hand for a takeout double, with support for all three unbid suits,.

That is much better than bidding 2♣ with such a weak suit.

South should pass now but some might consider an aggressive raise to 2 (which won't do their side any good here).

West's hand is much better than the 11 points suggests (especially if South *did* bid 2♥ allowing West to "see" the likely singleton heart in East's hand).

With or without a bid by South anything less than 4♠ by West would be a pusillanimous underbid. West can actually make twelve tricks as two hearts can be trumped in the East hand.



DATUM: NS: 570 EW: 40

Board 6

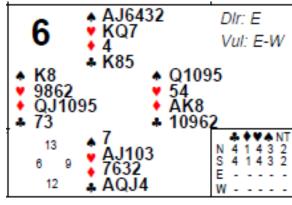
The recommended opening with three 4-card suits is the suit next in rank below the singleton so South should open 1♥ here.

If South were to open 1♣ he would have no sensible rebid if partner bids 1♣. And opening a suit like ◆ 7632 is best avoided if there is any alternative.

After North responds 1♠ South will rebid 2♠, which has a range of 12 to 17 points.

North has enough for game even if South is minimum so should bid 4♥ expecting South to have 5 hearts.

Although South's hand is a rare exception to two suit bids showing 5-4 he isn't in any bother in 4♥ provided he trumps one diamond in dummy before drawing trumps (and draws four rounds of trumps after that).



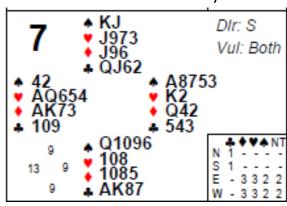
DATUM: NS: 170 EW: 550

The first three bids should be West: 1♥; East: 1♠; West 2♠. East now has multiple choices. Should he invite game? Although East only has 9 points they are "good" points (lower honours are better value when they are in suits partner has bid).

The other problem for East is what is the best suit? Neither red suit is likely to be eight cards and to bid 2NT with three small cards in the only unbid suit is risky.

Happily whatever East does should lead to a makeable contract. West will decline any game invitation.

If East declares 2NT he should discard a heart from dummy on the last club so the fourth heart *or* diamond will be his eighth trick if either suit is divided evenly.



DATUM: NS: 430 EW: 310

Board 8

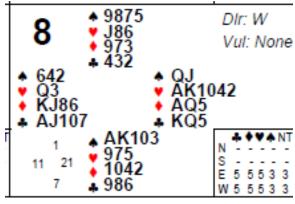
East-West have lots of points and no 8-card fit but game in any trump suit apart from spades is better than notrumps.

East has the points (21) to open 2NT but he might consider it more prudent, in view of the unguarded spades and 5-card major, to open 1 accepting the risk partner might have 4 or 5 points and pass.

Here West will respond 2♣ or 2♦ but that gives East a problem what to bid next.

East has enough for game but to bid 3NT now is unwise because the reason for not opening 2NT (weak spades) is still there.

It is probably best for East to take a chance on the trump suit quality and bid game either in hearts or partner's minor suit.



DATUM: NS: 610 EW: 120

Board 9

South must not get too excited after North opens 1NT.

His 18 points with partner's makes 30 to 32 which is not enough for slam.

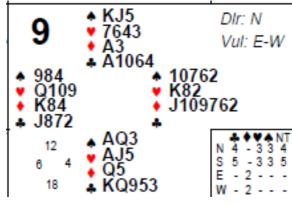
So South should just bid 3NT and expect partner to have an easy time.

The likely diamond lead hits the weak spot so North can't afford to lose the lead.

If North carelessly leads A first he will have a fourth round club loser and go down.

The correct play with a holding like those clubs is to win the first round in the hand with two top ones (that is South here with &KQ).

If either opponent discards on that trick declarer can finesse either 49 or 410 and avoid losing a trick to the other opponent's 4J.



DATUM: NS: 170 EW: 520

After East passes South should open 1NT.

West now has to decide whether or not to overcall 2.

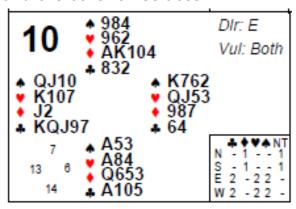
The downside is it might be a hand where both 1NT and 24 go down and with both sides vulnerable that is the worst time to be bidding too much.

Also a bid of 24 by West doesn't prevent North bidding another suit. But on the positive side if North does bid another suit West will want partner to lead a club.

On balance it appears bidding 24 is the best option for West.

Here West should make 24 losing only two diamonds and the other three aces.

If South is left in 1NT he would also make that with four diamonds and the other three aces.



DATUM: NS: 300 EW 300