

Board 1

After a pass from North, East should not bother counting her points.

Points are a guide to how many tricks are likely to be made. Here East can count her tricks *directly and precisely*.

There are 8.

Because the hand few defensive tricks (two at the most) against an opponents contract in any other suit East should open 4♥.

If West has nothing 4♥ will be two down (-300 if doubled), but if that is the case North-South would be able to make a game (-400 or worse for East-West).

Actually West has the ideal hand; two tricks and "adequate trump support" (!) so 4♥ can be made.

East's best chance to make an overtrick is to lead out **all** the trumps.

The opponents will struggle to find the right discards and, if they both part with a diamond, that suit will give East another trick (or two if she is really lucky)

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>♠ AJ9 ♥ 1093 ♦ Q97 ♣ Q953</p> <p>♠ 108765 ♥ AK86 ♦ 10872 ♣ 10872</p> <p>9 7 11 13</p>		<p>Dir: N Vul: None</p>	
		<p>♠ 2 ♥ AKQJ8642 ♦ 542 ♣ J</p>	<p>♣♦♥♠NT</p> <p>N 2 - - 1 - S 3 1 - 3 3 E - - 4 - - W - - 4 - -</p>

DATUM: NS: 570 EW: 70

East should start with 1♠ and West, with "nearly enough points for game" but not sure which game, should bid 2♦ seeking some guidance from East's rebid.

East, with her 16 points, is strong enough to bid her second suit at the 3-level so she should bid 3♣.

If her hand was any weaker she would have to rebid 2♠ to avoid going above the "barrier" and miss out on a possible club fit.

On knowing partner has 5 spades, 4 clubs and 16 points West can agree the suit and bid 4♣. That is better than bidding 5♣ immediately just in case East wants to look for a slam.

On this hand East, with no extra values and two small cards in the only suit they haven't bid, will have no slam interest so will just sign off in 5♣.

East makes 5♣ by trumping a diamond in her own hand, which sets up the last diamond for her eleventh trick.

<p><b>2</b></p> <p>♠ J9 ♥ Q97632 ♦ 93 ♣ 862</p> <p>♠ 85 ♥ J8 ♦ KQ542 ♣ AJ73</p> <p>3 11 16 10</p>		<p>Dir: E Vul: N-S</p>	
		<p>♠ AK732 ♥ 104 ♦ A6 ♣ KQ95</p>	<p>♣♦♥♠NT</p> <p>N - - 1 - - S - - 1 - - E 5 4 - 3 1 W 5 4 - 3 1</p>

DATUM: NS: 490 EW: 170

What should South to open: 1♥ or 2♣? There is no easy answer!

This is in the "twilight zone" where her options are:

- (a) **Open at the 1-level** and miss a game if partner passes with 4-5 points, or
- (b) **Open 2♣** and get into a hopeless game if partner has no points.

The choice will decide whether the hand is played in 1♥ or 4♥.

Nine tricks in hearts is the limit unless West gifts declarer a trick with a poor opening lead.

A suit with the ace but not the king is often a poor lead so here a lead of a club or a trump is best.

To lead the ♠A doesn't do the defenders any harm here (but to lead a *small* spade certainly does!) but a diamond lead gives declarer tricks with both the ♦K and ♦Q and 10 tricks in all.

On any other lead declarer can only make one diamond trick as the ♦A will capture the ♦K.

<p><b>3</b></p> <p>♠ 873 ♥ 842 ♦ Q73 ♣ QJ76</p> <p>♠ A962 ♥ J10 ♦ A642 ♣ 932</p> <p>5 9 8 20</p>		<p>Dir: S Vul: E-W</p>	
		<p>♠ QJ1054 ♥ Q96 ♦ J109 ♣ 105</p>	<p>♣♦♥♠NT</p> <p>N 4 1 3 - 1 S 4 1 3 - 1 E - - - 2 - W - - - 2 -</p>

DATUM: NS: 230 EW: 460





Board 10

East should open 1♥ intending to bid NT on the next round showing a balanced 15-17 points.

But here West will pass gloomily and North should compete with 1♠.

What should East do now?

The answer is emphatically **pass!**

If East bids 2♥ (or anything else) she will go down badly.

Against 2♥ South will lead a spade (partner's bid suit of course) and trump the third round. That will be followed by three rounds of diamonds (down already! and declarer still has to lose a trump and a club).

West has seen the bidding and if there is any playable contract for her side she can bid something at her turn. Note West here is in the upper range of the 0-5 points she has indicated!

But that's not enough for West to bid here so North will play in 1♠ where she should be able to scramble 7 or 8 tricks. But taking East-West down 2 would be better if they get the opportunity.

<b>10</b>		Dir: E Vul: Both
♠ AK874 ♥ QJ9 ♦ Q95 ♣ 86  ♠ J105 ♥ 82 ♦ J103 ♣ J10954  ♠ Q92 ♥ AK643 ♦ 762 ♣ AQ  ♠ 63 ♥ 1075 ♦ AK84 ♣ K732	♠ 84 ♥ Q1064 ♦ AQ95 ♣ 952  ♠ AKQ75 ♥ 3 ♦ 8742 ♣ Q108  ♠ 92 ♥ AK952 ♦ K1063 ♣ A7	♠ J1063 ♥ J87 ♦ J ♣ KJ643  ♠ - ♥ - ♦ - ♣ -
12 3 15 10	8 11 7 14	♠♦♥♣NT N 1 2 1 1 2 S 1 2 1 1 2 E - - - - - W - - - - -

DATUM: NS: 260 EW: 370

Board 11

A lively battle should start with South opening 1♥ and West bidding 1♠ with both the others able to support their partner's suit.

East's hand, although the weakest of the four, looks very good in the sequence 1♥, 1♠, 2♥ as she can "see" partner must be short in hearts when both opponents bid that suit.

That is because the opponents have probably 9 hearts, West has 3, therefore East will only have one, which means there will only be one loser in that suit where opponents have ♥AKQ.

What neither side will be aware of is they have a secondary fit in their other suit. That means more tricks can be made than the number of points would suggest.

*"Happiness is finding a fit; double happiness is finding a double fit"*

Any side which competes to the 4-level may be surprised they can make their contract and gain the game bonus.

<b>11</b>		Dir: S Vul: None
♠ 84 ♥ Q1064 ♦ AQ95 ♣ 952  ♠ AKQ75 ♥ 3 ♦ 8742 ♣ Q108  ♠ 92 ♥ AK952 ♦ K1063 ♣ A7	♠ J1063 ♥ J87 ♦ J ♣ KJ643  ♠ - ♥ - ♦ - ♣ -	♠ - ♥ - ♦ - ♣ -
8 11 7 14	♠♦♥♣NT N - 4 4 - 2 S - 4 4 - 2 E 3 - - 4 - W 3 - - 4 -	♠♦♥♣NT N - 4 4 - 2 S - 4 4 - 2 E 3 - - 4 - W 3 - - 4 -

DATUM: NS: 550 EW: 330

Board 12

After two passes East should open 1♥ and rebid 1NT over West's 1♠ showing a balanced 15-17 points.

West's 10 points is enough for game so she should bid 3NT. With her completely balanced hand 4♠ is unlikely to be better than 3NT even if partner has a 5-card suit.

4♠ is not a happy contract here. Not only are there four top losers it is also likely a club will get trumped.

There is a trap East must avoid as declarer in 3NT on the likely diamond lead. She must play a **low** card from dummy not the ♦Q.

If she plays the ♦Q, and North wins and returns another diamond, her ♦J will be smothered and the defenders will win the first five tricks (not to mention the ♣AK after that). Retaining the ♦Q in dummy avoids that fate.

It would also be essential to play low from dummy on a diamond lead if dummy were to hold ♦K6 rather than ♦Q6.

<b>12</b>		Dir: W Vul: N-S
♠ 64 ♥ 10864 ♦ A97 ♣ K983  ♠ AQ1083 ♥ Q5 ♦ Q6 ♣ 10642  ♠ J92 ♥ 973 ♦ K10843 ♣ A5	♠ K75 ♥ AKJ2 ♦ J52 ♣ QJ7  ♠ - ♥ - ♦ - ♣ -	♠ - ♥ - ♦ - ♣ -
7 10 15 8	♠♦♥♣NT N - 1 - - - S - 1 - - - E 2 - 1 2 3 W 2 - 1 2 3	♠♦♥♣NT N - 1 - - - S - 1 - - - E 2 - 1 2 3 W 2 - 1 2 3

DATUM: NS: 580 EW: 160