

Board 1

After two passes South's 1NT opening should end the bidding.

There are five tricks in top cards and the other two can only come from North's long clubs.

Declarer must avoid getting cut off from those clubs. That means not playing ♣A until the third round.

So, on the likely ♠K lead, declarer should win then lead a club from the table. East will win and probably lead another spade.

West will run her spades then lead a red suit, probably diamonds. South wins and ducks another club so when she finally plays ♣A it takes out West's last club and the last two clubs in the North hand can be cashed.

1		♠ A93	Dir: N
		♥ 842	Vul: None
♠ KQJ10	♠ 752	♠ A7632	
♥ Q10	♥ K765		
♦ J853	♦ Q1042		
♣ Q94	♣ KJ		
8	♠ 864		
11	♥ AJ93		
12	♦ AK6		
	♣ 1085		
		♣♦♥♠NT	
		N 1 - 1 - 1	
		S 1 - 1 - 1	
		E - 2 - 1 -	
		W - 2 - 1 -	

DATUM: NS: 300
EW: 280

Board 2

Very strong minor-suit hands are tricky as the early bids generally use up a lot of bidding space.

Here East should start with a game-forcing 2♣ opening.

And both East and West must always remember "game-forcing" means **GAME-FORCING!**

West will bid 2♦ showing 0 to 7 and East can choose between 3NT (which is sure to make unless the opponents can run five spade tricks first) or the more descriptive 3♦.

Over 3♦ West's best option is to bid 3NT herself. That doesn't stop partner insisting on playing a suit contract with a very unbalanced hand.

2		♠ 72	Dir: E
		♥ KQ1053	Vul: N-S
	♦ 10984	♠ J84	
	♣ 105	♥ A	
♠ 10965		♦ AKQJ63	
♥ J864		♣ AK3	
♦ 2			
♣ J976			
5	♠ AKQ3		
2	♥ 972		
11	♦ 75		
	♣ Q842		
		♣♦♥♠NT	
		N - - - - -	
		S - - - - -	
		E 3 3 - 3 3	
		W 3 3 - 3 3	

DATUM: NS: 490
EW: 170

Board 3

West should open 1♣ planning to rebid 1NT to show a balanced 15 to 17 points.

She can't carry out that plan as North will double, the hand being too strong for a 1♠ overcall.

East should pass, being vulnerable, despite the good club fit.

South 9 points is not quite enough for a positive jump response to the double so should be content to bid 1♥. Hearts is the best choice of suit as it gives the best chance of finding a fit in either major.

When North bids 1♠ South has a clear-cut raise to game. But not slam although the favourable lie of the cards allows 12 tricks to be made.

3		♠ AQ642	Dir: S
		♥ K53	Vul: E-W
	♦ KQ2	♠ 73	
	♣ Q3	♥ 1087	
♠ KJ		♦ 973	
♥ Q64		♣ 97652	
♦ J105			
♣ AKJ108			
16	♠ 10985		
15	♥ AJ92		
9	♦ A864		
	♣ 4		
		♣♦♥♠NT	
		N 2 6 6 6 2	
		S 2 6 6 6 2	
		E - - - - -	
		W - - - - -	

DATUM: NS: 70
EW: 580

Board 4

After two passes East should open 1♠ and South overcall 2♥.

West will want to do something with her 7 points but there is no "something" she can sensibly bid.

So it should be passed round to East but there isn't anything she can sensibly bid either. It would be quite rash to bid 2♠ (or anything else) given her partner's silence.

South will have an unhappy time in 2♥. The defenders will start with three tricks each in spades and diamonds (that's down already!) and there is still a trump and likely a club to lose as well.

Any EW pairs who bid on over 2♥ will go down just as badly.

4	♠ J95	Dir: W
	♥ 63	Vul: Both
	♦ 1076	
	♣ QJ1097	
♠ 82	♠ AK643	
♥ 1094	♥ QJ8	
♦ AK53	♦ Q84	
♣ 8642	♣ K3	
4	♠ Q107	♠♥♦♣NT
7 15	♥ AK752	N 1 - - - -
	♦ J92	S 1 - - - -
14	♣ A5	E - 1 1 - 1
		W - 1 - - 1

DATUM: NS: 350
EW: 320

Board 5

North opens 1♠ and East should overcall 1NT.

This 1NT overcall is quite different from the 1NT opening.

It is **NOT** 12 to 14 but 16 to 18 and also there must be a stopper in the suit the opponent bid.

Many players struggle to learn they must pass with a balanced hand less than 16 points after the RH opponent has opened the bidding.

Here West, knowing partner has a balanced 16 points can bid 4♥ with her 9 points and 6 card major.

That contract should be made, losing only two trumps and a spade.

5	♠ KQ9853	Dir: N
	♥ KQ	Vul: N-S
	♦ QJ64	
	♣ 4	
♠ 76	♠ A42	
♥ A98642	♥ 73	
♦ 97	♦ AK82	
♣ KQ8	♣ AJ52	
13	♠ J10	♠♥♦♣NT
9 16	♥ J105	N - - - 1 -
	♦ 1053	S - - - 1 -
2	♣ 109763	E 3 2 4 - 2
		W 3 2 4 - 2

DATUM: NS: 520
EW: 100

Board 6

N/S have 25 points but finding the best suit will take some time.

The way to bid with two 5-card suits is to bid the higher ranking one first then bid the other one twice. That is the theory but it might take the bidding too high.

No such problem for North here after South opens 1♠.

She can bid 2♦ then 3♣ after South's 2♠ rebid and 4♣ after South's third bid (which can only be 3♠ (3NT is misdirected with nothing in the only unbid suit)).

Finally South can bid 5♣ which is their only makeable game.

North must make sure she trumps a diamond in dummy before all South's trumps are gone.

6	♠ 2	Dir: E
	♥ 86	Vul: E-W
	♦ AKQ53	
	♣ KQ1042	
♠ QJ94	♠ 108	
♥ QJ1073	♥ AK9	
♦ 84	♦ J10962	
♣ 86	♣ 975	
14	♠ AK7653	♠♥♦♣NT
6 8	♥ 542	N 5 3 - 3 2
	♦ 7	S 5 3 - 3 2
12	♣ AJ3	E - - - - -
		W - - - - -

DATUM: NS: 150
EW: 580

Board 7

South's opening 1♣ gives North a problem. She only has 5 points but they are "good" ones.

Should she bid and if so what?

It is normal to suppress minor suit support in favour of a 4-card major but the spades are so weak here.

If undecided about whether to bid AND what to bid maybe it is best to pass? In that case East is likely to bid 1♥, allowing South to bid 1♠, and North-South get to their best contract after all.

It is reasonable for both sides to compete to the 2-level; any further is a bit rash but in that event NS get lucky thanks to the favourable position of both their red kings.

7	♠ 10642	Dir: S
	♥ 73	Vul: Both
♣ K95	♠ KQ	
♠ Q1093	♥ AJ642	
♠ J97	♣ 8743	
♥ Q985	♠ 85	
♣ AQ62	♠ A853	
♠ J7	♥ K10	
5	♣ J10	
10 10	♠ AK642	
15		
	♣♦♥♠NT	
	N 3 - - 3 2	
	S 3 - - 3 2	
	E - 1 1 - -	
	W - 1 1 - -	

DATUM: NS: 290
EW: 280

Board 8

West should obstruct from the start with a 3♦ opening.

North will not be silenced and should bid 3♠ after which South has enough to raise to game.

If East was clairvoyant she would lead a heart for partner to trump. Another heart lead after winning with ♠A will defeat the contract.

But any real person will lead ♦J and North will make 4♠. She can make four tricks in hearts as, after seeing West started with none, a later finesse of the ♥10 is marked.

4 hearts, 4 trumps, ♣AK and ♦Q makes 11 tricks but it will be one less if one heart gets trumped.

8	♠ KQJ73	Dir: W
	♥ 62	Vul: None
♣ K	♠ AK873	
♠ 982	♠ A5	
♥ A1098642	♥ J98753	
♣ J92	♠ J3	
16	♠ Q104	
5 8	♠ 1064	
11	♥ AKQ104	
	♣ Q75	
	♠ 65	
	♣♦♥♠NT	
	N 2 - 3 3 1	
	S 3 - 3 4 1	
	E - 1 - - -	
	W - 1 - - -	

DATUM: NS: 180
EW: 600

Board 9

North should open 1NT and East with 17 points should double.

This is not a takeout double but indicates (probably) enough points to defeat 1NT.

South should pass trying not to look too smug.

West, with no long suit, can only also pass and hope for the best. Any bid by West is likely to be much worse than -180 for 1NT^x making.

Especially as South will be quick to double any bid (and won't worry how smug she looks this time!)

Defending 1NT^x East knows she is in trouble at the sight of dummy and is best to cash her six tricks to stop North making an overtrick.

9	♠ A53	Dir: N
	♥ 542	Vul: E-W
♣ AK107	♠ J108	
♠ J95	♥ AKQ8	
♠ 9762	♣ 964	
♥ 763	♠ AK2	
♣ J53	♠ KQ4	
♠ 873	♥ J109	
12	♣ Q82	
1 17	♠ Q1064	
10		
	♣♦♥♠NT	
	N 2 2 1 1 1	
	S 2 2 1 1 1	
	E - - - - -	
	W - - - - -	

DATUM: NS: 140
EW: 500

Board 10

East-West should have the bidding to themselves *at the start*.

East should bid 1♥ and West 2♥. East's 15 points won't make game opposite 6-9 so she should pass.

Now the focus is on South.

Her opponents have found a fit but stopped bidding at the 2-level. Clearly they don't have a lot of points, meaning both sides have about 20 (give or take a couple).

So South should compete now.

A takeout double is best, having support for all unbid suits.

North will bid 3♦ which can be made with one loser in each suit.

If East-West bid on to 3♥ they will go down.

10	♠ 104	<i>Dir: E</i>	
	♥ QJ8	<i>Vul: Both</i>	
	♦ K9642		
	♣ K74		
♠ K753		♠ QJ6	
♥ 9653		♥ AK742	
♦ 108		♦ AJ	
♣ A95		♣ 863	
9	♠ A982		
7 15	♥ 10		
9	♦ Q753		
	♣ QJ102		
		♣♦♥♠NT	
		N 2 3 - - -	
		S 2 3 - - -	
		E - - 2 1 -	
		W - - 2 1 -	

DATUM: NS: 370
 EW: 370