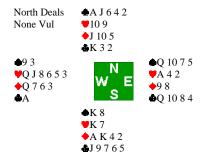
# IAP INDIVIDUAL TOURNAMENT

HANDS FROM INSTANT MATCH POINTS GAMES, GENERATED AND COMMENTED BY RICHARD PAVLICEK IN VARIOUS YEARS.

HE MENTIONS DIFFERENT STYLES, BUT TENDS TO USE A SLIGHT DIFFERENT BIDIDNG SYSTEM THEN WHAT WAS IN THE IAP CLASS.

BD COMMENTS BY BRIAN – I NOTED WHAT I EXPECTED MEMEMBER OF THE IAP CLASS TO KNOW AND DO, BUT READING RICHARD'S COMMENTS WILL GIVE YOU AN INSIGHT AS TO WHAT BRIGDE PLAYERS THINK ABOUT. HOPE YOU ENJOYED.



After two passes South has a choice of openings:  $1 \oplus is$  the normal call, intending to rebid 1 NT after a major-suit response;  $1 \oplus is$  desirable as a lead director; and a few may shade a point and open 1 NT (15-17) as a tactical move. None of these choices, however, will quiet West. A common sequence will be:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 🏚
1 🛡	1 🌢	2 🧡	Pass
Pass	2 •?	Pass	Pass
3 🛡	All Pass		

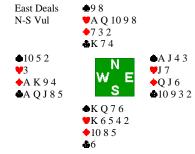
North's 2 \(\text{\phi}\) bid is unsightly (3 \(\text{\phi}\) may be better), but necessary to avoid a poor score. Three hearts is routinely down one.

Two spades can be made with careful timing — develop the clubs for a diamond discard.

Three clubs might be made. After a heart lead and  $\blacklozenge$  9 switch (which South must win), declarer can succeed with:  $\spadesuit$  K;  $\spadesuit$  A;  $\blacktriangledown$  K; club, and West is endplayed... but that seems tainted by hindsight. With straightforward play declarer cannot escape the loss of *two* diamond tricks, provided East leads diamonds when on lead with the  $\blacktriangledown$  A and  $\clubsuit$  Q.

BD: West one spade overcall is a little lighter then we have taught in our class, however many players would make this call, as the shape is worth a lot. North's rebid is hard, and I would not be surprised if many pass.

#### Board 2



West has a similar opening-bid problem to South's on the previous deal: how to bid with four diamonds, five clubs and insufficient strength for a reverse. I prefer to open 1 ♣ unless the high cards are extremely lopsided (such as ♠ A-K-Q-x ♣ Q-x-x-x-x). The occasional rebid problem is minimized if one takes a practical view — for example, I would rebid 2 ♣ after a 1 ♥ response, but *raise* a 1 ♠ response to 2 ♠.

As usual, the bidding never goes as expected:

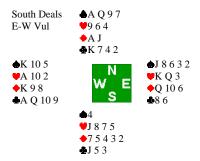
West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1 🏚	1 🛡	Dbl*	3 🕊
9			

<sup>\*</sup>negative

West will be tempted to bid (3 \( \bigop\) is a reasonable gamble); but he does well to pass to avoid a minus score... unless he wants to go for the man-of-the-year award with a flagrant double.

East-West can win only nine tricks in clubs as long as North leads a spade early on. If spades are never led, South can be endplayed in that suit for a 10th trick.

BD: We have not discussed negative doubles in our class, but will on Monday nights. Here east doesn't want to bid 1S with only four of them, as this bid tends to show five, so a negative double is used, which is similar to a takeout double, but by responder. South has a limit raise to 3H, but 2H is also an option, though slightly conservative. We will discuss what an endplay is later.



After a classical 1 NT opening by West, most North players will (wisely) stay out of the bidding. Using Jacoby transfers, East will respond 2 ♥, then rebid 2 NT to invite game in either notrump or spades. West should accept with his spade fit and well-textured hand, and my choice is to bid 3 NT — with no ruffing potential there is a good chance the same number of tricks can be won in notrump as in spades (which proves to be true). Without the Jacoby transfer East should respond 2 ♠ (Stayman) followed by 2 ♠ to show invitational strength with five spades. Then West will have a similar decision.

The play in notrump should please West. North cannot attack the hand, and the spade suit can be established for three tricks — finesse the 10, then lead the king and (when South shows out) finesse the eight. Nine tricks are routine, and many will win 10 tricks if North leads a club at any point.

#### **Board 4**

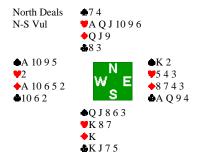


East-West can make 5 ♠, their eight-card fit, but *not* 5 ♣, their nine-card fit, because of the lurking diamond ruff. Could the computer be trying to tell us something? In any case, those who reach diamonds instead of clubs can attribute their success only to blind luck.

After 1 ♥ by West, most North players will overcall 1 ♠, and East will usually bid 2 ◆
— although a negative double to show *both* minors is preferable. South should leap to
4 ♠ as a preemptive measure — it might make on a lucky day — and this puts West on
the spot. I would pass (forcing) if East had bid 2 ♠, after which East has a close decision
whether to bid 5 ♣ or double. After a negative double, however, I would bid 5 ♣ with the
West hand. (I'm glad I didn't get to play this deal.)

East-West pairs who double  $4 \spadesuit$  will collect plus 200 for a good score, thanks to the elusiveness of  $5 \spadesuit$ .

BD: I think many in our group will play in 3C, maybe three diamonds. Here, similar to when you are opening and are 5-5 in the minors or major you should bid the higher ranking suit first. This will allow you to show both suits at a lower level. I think the auction should go, IH-IS-2D-P; 3D- pass out. You may have enough points for game, but NT doesn't look good as they have bid spades, and we are scared of those minor games. How, east may bid on and try 4C, that should get east-west to a 5D game.



North's hand should qualify for a weak two-bid even for the strictest disciplinarian, and South must judge the chances for game. This is best done by picturing some possible hands:



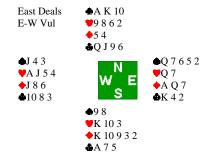
Game is excellent opposite Hand A; good opposite B or C; and fair opposite D. This suggests that the two most important assets are a singleton spade and the • A.

A few South players may have methods to locate a singleton, but most will bid 2 NT to ask for a feature. North should answer 3 ◆ (most consider Q-J-x a feature) and South should be content with 3 ♥.

Four hearts, of course, has no play unless East finds the inspired defense (make that *perspired* defense) of king and another spade, followed by a third spade from West...

BD: We have not discussed weak two bids, but will in the upcoming class. I suspect some table will managed to open norths hand 2H. But others will pass or try 1H. I think pass is what our books would suggest, and south will open p-p-IS-p; 2H-p-3H- pass out.

#### Board 6

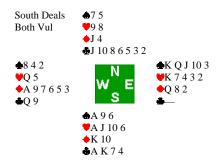


Unless South feels his hand is worth a direct overcall (gulp), he is likely to face a balancing decision after this beginning:

West	North	East	South
		1 🌢	Pass
2 🏚	Pass	Pass	?

It is clearly right to reopen — the opponents have shown a fit, the vulnerability is favorable — but should you double or bid 3 ◆? And if you double, should North bid clubs, hearts or notrump? Nothing stands out. My choices would be to double and bid 3 ♥, which at first glance looks like a debacle; but in reality it is your best contract. I will not go into a double-dummy analysis, but the chances of making 3 ♥ are good will skillful play.

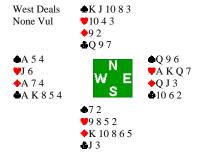
Those who play in 2 ♠ should be defeated one, maybe two tricks. How about this defense: spade to king; diamond to king; diamond; spade to ace; ♣ J (deceptive), king, ace; diamond ruff; ♥ 9 (safe exit) and wait for two clubs tricks — down two. Of course, declarer can hold it to down one by ducking the ♣ J.



Though South can easily make 3 NT, that will not be the popular contract on this exciting deal. After a 1  $\clubsuit$  opening by South, North might raise to 2  $\clubsuit$  whether or not West overcalls 1  $\spadesuit$  (seven-card trump support makes up for the lack of high cards). East will bid his spades, South should try 3 NT, and after that it is anybody's guess. North may retreat to 4  $\clubsuit$  (very dubious); East may bid 4  $\heartsuit$  (or 4  $\spadesuit$  if West overcalled 1  $\spadesuit$ ). South is likely to double any East-West contract, but North may get cold feet and bid 4 NT or 5  $\clubsuit$  (either contract is down one with best defense).

BD: This is an exciting hand, and I'm sure everyone will be playing in different places. As you can see from the shape, North South can make 3NT and East West can make 4S. Wow. Here is my suggested auction -1C-p-p-IS; INT-p-2C-2H; 3C-3S-p-?? I think either pass or 4S by East is reasonable. East starts with 1S as it is the higher of two equal length suits. South bids 1NT as there is no chance for game once partner has passed. North tries 2C vs. 1NT as the shape of the hand implies this is a better place to play. East needs to compete with 5-5 and a void. West has enough to show something over 3C.

#### **Board 8**



Many East-West pairs will bid:

West	North	East	South
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

East should not use Stayman because of his flat pattern. It is true that a 4-4 heart fit might be a superior game contract (particularly if West held a doubleton club), but there is no way to determine this in standard methods. Therefore, the winning action in the long run is to bid 3 NT without giving information to the opponents.

With the normal spade lead by North, declarer can win 12 tricks. Win the spade in dummy; give up a club, etc., eventually taking the diamond finesse.

Curiously, West also can will 12 tricks *without* a spade lead. This requires double-dummy play in 3 NT, but not so if one happened to bid in 6 NT — it would be your best chance. How? Cash your heart and diamond tricks (with a finesse) before conceding the third round of clubs to West, who is endplayed in spades.

Six clubs can be made along similar lines.

BD: I recommend Stayman here as to follow the general agreements, but many would not show the heart suit because of the lack of ruffing chances. Why tell the opponents what you have.

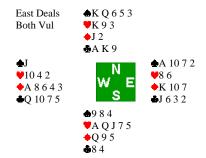


Beginning with North the bidding is likely to go:  $1 \, •$ , Pass,  $2 \, •$ , Pass. East then has a problem whether to bid 2 NT, rebid his spade suit or make an anti-matchpoint pass. Two notrump seems too aggressive with a singleton diamond, so I would try  $2 \, •$ , which should end the bidding.

Against 2 ♠ the defense should begin with the ♥ A and another heart, and then declarer starts cashing diamonds. When the third diamond is ruffed low and overruffed, declarer cannot avoid the loss of three spades, a club and heart ruff to go down one — a popular result.

Two notrump has a better chance (although if East bids 2 NT, West may raise to 3 NT). The ♥ 9 is ducked to the queen, and three top diamonds are cashed. North does best to discard a heart, after which perfect defense can prevail; but the situation is complicated and 2 NT may make in practice.

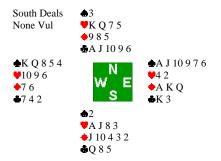
#### Board 10



Three passes to North will elicit a 1 ♠ opening by most players and a 1 NT opening by some. The latter is less desirable because of the weak diamond holding. After 1 ♠ South has a close decision. I prefer a raise to 2 ♠ (assuming five-card majors), but 2 ♥ is reasonable as a passed hand. Unfortunately, 2 ♥ will propel the partnership to game; North should raise to 4 ♥. Even a raise to 2 ♠ will result in game if North elects to make a borderline game try, since South should accept.

Game in either major suit is a reasonable venture, essentially requiring a normal spade break with the ace onside. But the 4-1 spade division allows either contract to be defeated *two* tricks — 4 ♥ simply by getting two spade ruffs, 4 ♠ by leading clubs at every opportunity; forcing dummy to ruff a club ensures three trump tricks for East.

BD: After 3 passes we would open 1NT with the North hand. South should got their 10 points, and jump to 3H forcing showing 5 cards in hearts, North will be happy to raise to 4H. Some might make it, as East will lead a low club, others might get the spade lead to West ace, another spade back, ruffed, not west will be wondering what to play. If East plays the Ace of diamonds and another diamonds, they can get another ruff. On Monday nights we will show how East could have told West which minor to have returned for another ruff.



After two passes, North will open  $1 \clubsuit$  (some may prefer  $1 \blacktriangledown$  as a tactical maneuver) and East will double since his hand is too strong for a  $1 \spadesuit$  overcall. South will get his two-cents worth by bidding  $1 \spadesuit$  or  $1 \blacktriangledown$  — most experts would prefer  $1 \blacktriangledown$  because of the lead-directing value and the fact that South is unlikely to bid again. West should bid  $1 \spadesuit$ , North should raise to  $2 \blacktriangledown$  if South has bid hearts, and East, after recovering from the shock of his partner's bid, should raise to  $4 \spadesuit$ . This contract is an early claimer with the  $\spadesuit$  A onside.

North may be tempted to sacrifice in 5 ♥, but this is against the odds because it requires two conditions to be successful. First, 4 ♠ must be makable; second, South must be able to win nine tricks to hold the loss to minus 300. As can be seen, the first condition comes through but not the second.

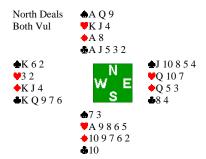
BD: Our auction should be p-p-p-1S; p-2S-?? North may decide to make a takeout double, as has almost enough points and 3 card support for every suit. If so East should bid 3S to end the auction. Thus, East West should either be in 2S or 3S. East should make 4S as they can take the finesse in clubs.

# **Board 12**



The auction is likely to begin with three passes, although a few may open the East hand (1 ♥, I suppose) in third seat because of the favorable vulnerability. If South opens 1 ♠ in fourth seat, North has an interesting problem. A 3 ♣ response does not do justice to the hand, nor does 2 NT. After all, 3 NT will be makable opposite as little as ♣ A-K-x and a major-suit king, which is only 10 points; and South should have more than that for a fourth-seat opening (especially vulnerable). If there ever was a hand to respond 3 NT as a passed hand, this is it.

The success of notrump and club contracts by North-South will be varied, depending on the lead and who is declarer. In notrump nine tricks can be won by North with a heart lead, or by South with a spade lead; otherwise, the limit is eight tricks. In clubs the domain runs from eight to 10 tricks. The only sure thing is that this will not be a flat board.



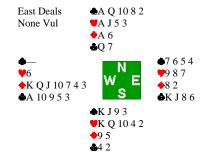
North's hand is too strong for a 1 NT opening, and most will begin with 1 ♣ and jump to 2 NT over South's 1 ♥ response. South's distribution should induce him to bid again — probably 3 ♠, although some may rebid 3 ♥. This will lead to the excellent 4 ♥ contract when North indicates his heart support.

A few North players may consider the five-card suit worth an extra point (or two) and open 2 NT, which routinely results in 4 ♥ after South shows a five-card heart suit. Nonetheless, reaching 4 ♥ will be a good score because some pairs will stop below game or reach the inferior 3 NT (unmakable with best defense).

Straightforward play brings home 11 tricks in hearts. After a club lead, declarer should win the ace and immediately play the • A and another diamond. The distribution is friendly. One ruff establishes the diamonds, and with trumps 3-2 and the spade finesse onside, only a diamond and a heart are lost.

BD: At our tables the auction will start the same, IC-p-IH-p; 2NT—p and now south has a hard choose. 3D is played as forcing since it is a new suit by and unpassed hand. I think south should just pass, or maybe try 3H.

#### **Board 14**



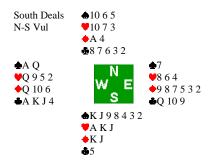
Here's a cute one. Each side can win 11 tricks, yet only one player has extreme distribution. How many diamonds did you bid as West in third seat?

Opening 5 ♦ is a standout — not just resultwise, but based on the extraordinary playing strength and major-suit shortness — after which North should double. South's hand is too balanced to remove the double, so West is headed for a great score... unless he misguesses clubs.

If West opens anything less than  $5 \bullet$ , North-South will surely bid to  $4 \heartsuit$  or  $4 \bullet$ ; then if West bids further, they will be more likely to compete to the five level.

The play in spades is routine for 11 tricks, irrespective of the lead, but in *hearts*, declarer is in danger of a spade ruff. This ruff is unlikely to be found, so West does best to bid one more for the road.

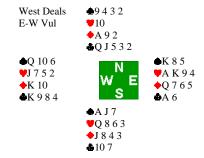
BD: Wow what a hand. I don't want to even guess what happened, hope you enjoyed it. :)



After South's 1 ♠ opening, West should double. This is much better than 1 NT because of the potential for locating an excellent heart contract. North should pass (note the vulnerability), East will bid 2 ♠ and South will rebid spades; my choice is 3 ♠. This is a slight overbid with partner silent, but the best strategy in these situations is to bid as high as you intend to immediately rather than inch up slowly. Over 3 ♠ West may gamble 3 NT (sometimes partner will have a better diamond suit). This contract would go down three tricks, but North may raise to 4 ♠ (I would), which will be a popular contract — often doubled.

Careful defense is required to defeat 4 - A fter a high club lead, West must shift to a diamond immediately. If clubs are continued, declarer ruffs and succeeds via - K, - A, club ruff and a spade exit. West now must establish the fifth club in dummy, else lead hearts or concede a ruff and discard.

#### Board 16



Most East-West pairs will duplicate this sequence:

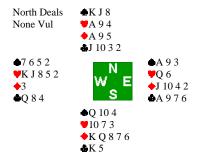
West	East
Pass	1 NT
2 🌢	2 🛡
4 🛡	Pass

But some West players may forego Stayman and raise immediately to 2 NT or 3 NT, which is not a bad idea with scattered, aceless values.

Four hearts is makable against any defense, but the play is tenuous and many will fail. Assume South starts a low diamond to the 10, ace, and North returns the suit. It is premature to draw trumps, so I would lead a spade to the king; South wins and probably returns a spade — the old scare tactic. Anyway, declarer doesn't need the finesse, so • Q; heart to the ace; • Q; spade ruff; • A; • K; club ruff with the • 9 (don't send a boy). South can overruff, but declarer wins the rest with routine play.

The key to success was not leading a second round of trumps after the ominous 10 appeared.

BD: This hand is all about making a plan at the beginning. You have only 4 sure tricks, how are you going to make 10??? Yikes, looks like you will need two spade tricks, 3 hearts tricks, 1 diamonds trick, 2 clubs tricks and two club ruffs... Another plan, and if you get the diamond lead, that helps, is 2 spades, 3 hearts, 2 diamonds, a diamond ruff, and 2 clubs. The second one looks easier with the lead. Plan a head, and then be flexible as things develop.



Most North-South pairs will begin:



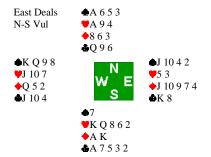
Whether South's hand is worth a raise to 2 NT is moot. If North could have 15 HCP, the raise is correct; but if his maximum is 14 (as it would be if playing 15-17 notrumps), I favor the pass. In any event, it is right to pass *this time*.

East has no outstanding lead; in fact, any of the four suits might be chosen. The  $\P$  Q turns out to be the killer; a low spade is about neutral; a low club helps declarer; and a diamond... well, that gets the manure pile.

After the ♥ Q lead, declarer does well to win seven tricks. Hold up to reveal the heart position; test diamonds (oops); knock out the ♠ A; then guess clubs correctly — the odds favor East to have the ♣ A if West passed with K-J-8-x-x in hearts. Declarer has an easier time with other leads and could win as many as 10 tricks with misdefense.

BD: Since we play 16-18 NT, we might get too high on this one, as south should raise to 2NT. North might even go, as south could have as much as 12 points, but passing seems more appropriate•

#### **Board 18**



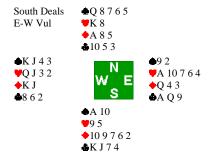
A standard road to game will be:



Some may contend that North's hand is too strong for  $2 \checkmark$  — not true, with the flat shape and doubtful  $\triangleleft Q$  — or that North should bid  $1 \triangleleft Q$ . The problem with  $1 \triangleleft Q$  is that South may rebid  $2 \triangleleft Q$ ; then North must overbid with  $3 \lor Q$  or give a measly preference to  $2 \lor Q$ .

Assume West leads the & K. A question in technique: Should declarer draw trumps immediately? Or play clubs early on? At IMPs the choice is clear — ace and another club — because declarer would be defeated if he drew trumps and found East with four clubs (and at least four spades). At *matchpoints* though, the question is moot; declarer would sacrifice an overtrick if West held K-x-x in clubs.

In any case, this is all academic as the cards lie. Declarer always will win 11 tricks, and can win 12 by guessing the doubleton & K — perhaps he *should* guess it if he adopts the "IMP line of play" mentioned above.



North-South may steal the contract if North relishes the vulnerability and opens in third seat:

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 🏚	Pass	1 NT
All Pass			

No one could seriously argue that East should overcall 2 ♥. A takeout double is barely palatable — at least it offers a better chance to find a fit — but the pass is correct. A case can be made for balancing after 1 NT; but East gets no blame on my account.

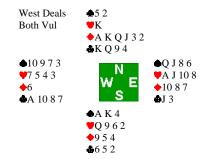
The defenders can do a job against 1 NT — probably down three after a heart lead. A score of plus 150 will salvage some matchpoints and redeem some respect, but it still falls short of the plus 170 they could make in hearts.

If North passes, East will open 1 ♥ and probably wind up in 3 ♥; or perhaps only 2 ♥ after a Drury 2 ♠ response by West. A few players will overbid to reach game. What else is new?

Ten tricks are available in hearts with a correct spade guess. This should be routine if declarer learns that North has the  $\spadesuit$  A and  $\heartsuit$  K — but beware of a tricky South player.

BD: North's one spade opening is a little light for us. Many players open lighter in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat, as they are expecting it to be the opponents hand, and they want to get in the way. East should open 1H, and West give a limit raise to 3H which is were they should play.

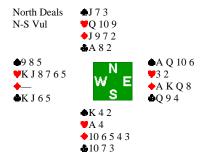
#### Board 20



Accurate bidding should land North-South in 3 NT. After a pass by West, North will open 1 ◆ and then jump to 3 ◆ after a 1 ♥ response. South, unless he is a wild gambler, should next bid 3 ♠ to indicate a stopper. Bidding a three-card spade suit may seem dangerous, but North won't be raising spades on this bidding — he cannot have four. If North happens to bid 4 ♥, South can correct to 5 ◆, which describes his hand well. Over 3 ♠ North has a comfortable 3 NT bid with clubs under wrap.

The play in notrump should produce 10 tricks. After winning the likely spade lead and playing a club to the king, declarer cannot establish an additional trick in both clubs and hearts because of entry problems. Whether or not he runs the diamonds now, the best he can do is lead the \(\Phi\) K, ensuring 10 tricks. However, some defenders will err (or lead clubs originally) to allow an additional overtrick.

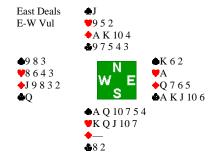
BD: This brings up something we have not discussed before, which is showing stoppers to get to NT. A stopper is an expected trick in the suit. After 1D-1H; 3D-3S would just show a stopper in spade and not a real suit, this will allow North to bid 3NT with confidence. Alternatively South could just try 3NT on their own.



After a pass by North, East will usually open 1 NT, although some traditionalists may reject this because of the worthless doubleton heart. A good case can be made for a 1 ◆ opening because East has a convenient 1 ♠ rebid over 1 ♥. However, my style is to open 1 NT and worry about it later.

The play in  $4 \blacktriangleleft$  is routine for 10 tricks, except when West is declarer with a spade lead. He wins the  $\spadesuit$  A, takes the top diamonds, throwing two spades, and must beware! If declarer cashes the  $\spadesuit$  Q before leading a heart to the jack, he can be defeated by continued diamond leads — North gets a trump promotion. Of course, declarer can avoid this by not cashing the  $\spadesuit$  Q prematurely.

#### Board 22



Some Souths may use a Michaels cue-bid, but I prefer a 1 • overcall which leads to a more traditional auction:

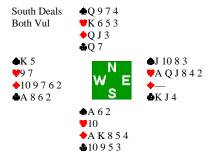
West	North	East	South
		1 🎃	1 •
Pass	Pass	1 NT	3 🛡
Pass	4 🛡	All Pass	

East has a difficult choice of reopening calls: A double is dangerous with the singleton heart; 2 ♠ is pushy, plus the suit is anemic; 2 ♠ is stagnant; and a pass is cowardly. I prefer 1 NT — slightly off-shape, but at least my singleton is a stopper. This gives South another chance so he opts for 3 ♥, and North raises to game.

It sounds as if East did South a favor by reopening. Hardly! 4 is ripped to shreds with continued club leads. Assume South ruffs the third club high (West ditches spades) and leads a top heart to the ace. The fourth club is ruffed high (West throws his last spade), and dummy is entered with the  $\P$ 9. The  $\P$ 1 is overtaken with the queen as West ruffs, then a heart return clears the trumps. The end result is down *three*, assuming East has kept a high club.

A better play is to crossruff (never lead trumps). This results in down *one*, although declarer might succeed if West fails to ruff the second spade lead with the  $\P$  6.

BD: Another crazy hand, bidding could be anything. Hopefully some souths will fall in love with their hands, and say this shape means I should be in game.



East has an intriguing problem after this beginning:



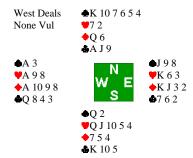
Most players will be obliged to pass — the standard procedure when an opponent bids your longest suit — then bid hearts later. But some partnerships engage a useful treatment: A bid in *opener's* suit is a cue-bid (Michaels or whatever), and a bid in *responder's* suit is natural. This allows an immediate 2 ♥ overcall, which West should raise to 3 ♥ (an ace and a king warrant some action).

In any event, expect a lot of heart contracts by East, ranging from 2 ♥ to 4 ♥, sometimes doubled, and almost always making.

After ruffing the lacktriangle K lead, declarer's best is a spade to the *king* (suggested by the bidding); ruff a diamond;  $\bf b$  J to ace;  $\bf v$  10 (no defense matters) to jack; spade ruff; diamond ruff; cash the top clubs, etc. Declarer wins 10 tricks — one spade, one spade ruff, two clubs and *six* hearts. Note that this line of play succeeds regardless of the location of the  $\bf b$  Q.

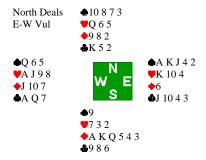
BD: With our agreements East has no choose but to stay out of the auction. So it should go, 1D-p-1H-p; 2C-p-2D. North should only bid 2D even with the 10 count as there are no aces and it looks like a miss fit. 2NT would be a mistake, but one that even some very good players would make.

#### **Board 24**



The bidding usually will begin with 1 ◆ by West and 1 ♠ by North, but then the road contains many forks. Some East players will raise to 2 ◆, but my choice is to bid 1 NT. This will not always be successful, but with a semblance of a spade stopper and 4-3-3-3 shape, a diamond raise is nothing to be proud of either. After that, who knows? South might bid hearts; West might compete further; North might rebid his spades — no two auctions may be alike.

The final contracts should range from 1 NT to 3 ♠ (unless someone goes berserk). Depending on the opening lead and the diamond guess, East-West can win six to eight tricks in diamonds. The play in spades by North is cut and dried for seven tricks, and hearts by South probably scores the same. One thing is clear — your chances for a plus score are better if you defend.



Many tables will begin with this sequence:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 🌢	2 🔷
Dhl	Pass	9	

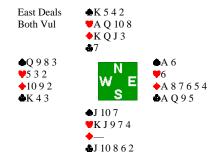
East has an awkward rebid after the negative double. I would bid 2 ♥, willing to play a 4-3 fit, rather than venture to the three level in clubs or (worse yet) rebid 2 ♠ and be left in a 5-1 fit. This may lead to 4 ♥ instead of the normal 4 ♠, but either game should come home as the cards lie.

In 4 ♠ declarer ruffs the second diamond; ♠ A; ♠ J; ♠ 10 to king; diamond ruff; ♠ A; ♠ Q; ♥ A; ♥ J. If North covers you make an overtrick, but I wouldn't risk the finesse: ♥ K; club ruff, and that makes 10 tricks.

In 4 ♥ declarer can succeed in a number of ways. Simplest is to ruff the second diamond and run the ♥ 10 to North, who had better return a trump — else declarer can win 11 tricks... and 99 percent of the matchpoints.

BD: Here is were the negative double comes in again. West has no bid, but some many points. What did you try?? I think 4S is the only bid in our agreements. Which is were East west should play. Some Souths might not bid 2D, but the strength of the suit make it a fine bid to get in the opponents way. Making 4S looks easy, but once the bad spade slit occurs, there should be problems. The A of diamonds should be lead, and then continued with the king. If the trump are draw, North is getting back in after a finesse and then leading back a diamond. Ouch, hope you found a way around that.

#### Board 26

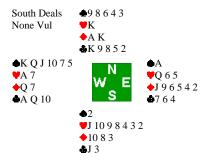


North-South can make a game in hearts, but the enemy bidding and the vulnerability make this a difficult contract to reach. After a 1 ◆ opening by East and a 1 ♠ response, North has no convenient action and should pass. East should rebid 2 ♣, and West should give a preference to 2 ◆. North now might speculate with 2 ♥, anticipating a useful dummy; East will bid 3 ◆, and South should raise hearts (I like 4 ♥ but I can't quarrel with 3 ♥ — whether North would continue to game over 3 ♥ is moot). East, of course, must exercise restraint not to double 4 ♥.

The best defense against 4 ♥ is a trump lead, but declarer needs only to time the play properly to develop 10 tricks: Win the heart in North, lead the ♦ K to ruff out the ace and play the ♣ J. West wins the king (a good play) and returns a trump, won in South.

Declarer rides the ♠ J to the ace, wins any return, cashes the diamonds and crossruffs (losing a trick at the end). Some pairs will make 5 ♥ against softer defense.

BD: In our group the auction might be 1D-p-p- and I'm sure we will get all types of calls from North. Double might work, INT is both short on points and shape, but someone might try, but I suspect there will be a lot of people just trying to bid a suit, but which one. If you choose a suit, I'd suggest spades, as it is the higher of two equal length suits. All bidding is not easy, some times you just have to make the best lie.



West is likely to reach 4 • at most tables. If North and South remain quiet, the bidding may go:

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 •	Pass	1 NT	Pass
4 🏚	All Pass		

Of course, some Souths will open 3 ♥ (count his marbles) or some Norths will overcall 2 ♠ (not a bad bid) so the auction will take different turns. Many of those in 4 ♠ will be doubled — I can see the foam dripping from North's mouth already.

- 4 ♠ is a poor contract but it should make. Assume a diamond lead and a trump shift. Declarer can give up a diamond and win the rest for an *overtrick* granted, he does not know this and may take a losing club finesse; but eventually he will cash the ♥ A and be all smiles.
- 3 NT also comes rolling home. If East is declarer, a heart to the king (would *you* play the ace?) and a spade shift limit declarer to nine tricks; but North is more likely to cash the A-K and hand over 10. If *West* is declarer, 11 tricks are available.

#### **Board 28**



Any West player who opens, see Board 27. Here is a reasonable sequence using the "reverse Drury" convention:

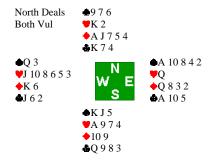
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 🌢
Pass	2 🌢	Pass	2 🍁
Pass	2 🏚	All Pass	

Two clubs is an artificial, one-round force;  $2 \spadesuit$  shows a normal opening bid (2s would show a subminimum); and  $2 \spadesuit$  indicates minimal values for the sequence (about 10-11 points). This allows South to check out in  $2 \spadesuit$ , as he was not thrilled with his hand in the first place.

A friendly deal. With the  $\bigstar$  K lead, declarer can win 11 tricks. Win the  $\bigstar$  A; return a diamond; win the club shift; finesse spades; take your discard; and guess hearts. The only doubtful play is the spade finesse which, if it lost, would let the opponents cash their club trick. The heart guess is easy once West is known to have the  $\bigstar$  K and both diamond honors

Should 4 • be bid? I think not. It's a poor contract with a club lead, and only fair with most other leads. But on the score sheet, any contract that *makes* is a good contract.

BD: Drury, what's that? Our auction should be p-p-p-1S; p-2S pass out. West with a nice hand just has no bid to make. You need a suit not just points.

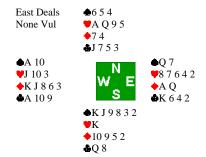


This deal may be passed out at some tables since no one has a clear-cut opening bid. But I suspect that a few North players will open 1 ♠, or if not, many East players will open 1 ♠ (my choice); or failing that, some Souths will bid 1 ♠. (Bridge players like to get their entry fees' worth.) After the most probable 1 ♠ opening, West is too weak to respond 2 ♥ and must bid 1 NT. However, when East obligingly rebids 2 ♠, West can bid his hearts after all, resulting in the best contract.

The play in hearts is arduous, but declarer is aided because North is on lead. After, say, the ♠ A and another diamond, North is put back on lead with the ♥ K. Then what? A diamond allows declarer to finesse the eight to advantage; a club or heart blows a trick. Suppose North plays a spade, ducked to the king; club back (best) to the ace; the ♠ Q (South throwing a club, best); diamond ruff; ♠ Q to the *ace*; spade ruff; ♥ J, and West can make 2 ♥. (Don't bet on it.)

BD: I think this hand should be passed out.

# **Board 30**

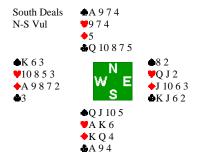


A wide variety of results can be expected on this deal. Here is a beautiful auction (if you ignore the hands that go with it):

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2 🌢
Dbl	3 🏚	4 🤎	All Pass

Some Norths may double 4 •, but I think that is wrong. Partner is unlikely to take more than one trick on defense, and the double may help declarer in the play.

The funny thing is — despite four natural trump losers — 4 ♥ has a chance to make. Assume South leads a spade (wouldn't you?) and dummy's 10 wins. Lead the ♥ J and North is likely to cover with the ace or queen. This looks like an error; but ducking would be a poor play whenever East held the king. After the crash, declarer can succeed by force. Assume a spade return; heart to North, etc. If North breaks the club suit, declarer wins three clubs and three diamonds; else declarer wins two clubs and four diamonds.



North should declare 4 • after the routine sequence:

North	South
	1
1 🌢	4 🌢

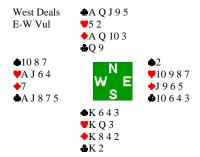
Even if South deems his hand worth only 3 ♠, North should carry on to game based on his excellent club fit.

In spades, declarer will win nine, 10 or 11 tricks. After a heart lead (most annoying), the first order of business is to avoid a heart loser so lead the ◆ K to West's ace. Win the heart return, take your discard, and run the ◆ Q. At this point there is no standout play — mainly because it is awkward to establish clubs by the normal percentage play (two finesses through East).

The winning line is to draw trumps ending in hand and run the  $\clubsuit$  10 (or any high club) — 11 tricks. Another possibility is to lead a low club from dummy — 10 tricks, assuming declarer takes the club finesse later. If declarer goes wrong in clubs (ace and another), he can be defeated whether he draws trumps or not.

BD: Seems like a straight forward auction, but the play is tricky. Pickup the clubs suit is heart, but after a heart lead, North should realize they need to get ride of the heart, and play a top diamond first. After West returns another heart, North wins and plays the Q of diamonds, pitching a heart, now there are no heart losers. Take the spade finesse, and you can now only loose two clubs, making on time.

#### **Board 32**



Almost all North-South pairs will bid to 4 •, but the auctions will vary according to system. Some will bid this way:

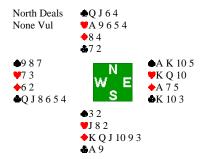
West	North	East	South
Pass	1 🌢	Pass	3 NT
Pass	4 🌲	All Pass	

Three notrump shows a forcing raise with no singleton or void. (This is played in conjunction with limit raises and splinter bids.) Some Norths may feel their hand is worth a slam try (debatable) and bid 4 •, but South is likely to cool the proceedings with 4 •.

Four spades makes 10 tricks, and some declarers will connive 11 by leading a *low* from dummy. If West ducks, declarer can cash one or more diamonds, strip out the hearts, and exit with a club. West will have to concede a ruff and discard. Obviously, West should not fall for this — but didn't anyone ever say to you, "Aces are meant to take kings." Sorry, not this time.

A few pairs will get to  $5 \spadesuit$ , probably after a Blackwood sequence. This raises the stakes on declarer's chicanery in the club suit.

BD: After 1S opening, south should bid 2D and then raise to 4S. If south does try 3NT, north while wants to play in a suit contract, doesn't have enough of a reason to over rule South. Richards is playing 3NT as a conventional bid, which we do not know. And actual few people play.



Sensible bidding by East-West will lead to a comfortable partscore, although an onlooker might wonder, "What happened to the *majors*?"

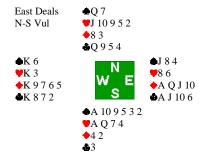
West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 🍎	1 🔷
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2 🎍	Pass	Pass	2 💠
3 &	All Pass		

West uses good judgment to pass the first time — an immediate club raise surely would propel East into a hopeless 3 NT (down three). East also is wise not to take a stab at 3 NT over 3 •— one diamond stopper is not enough since the club suit will not be running in light of West's initial pass.

The play in clubs should produce 10 tricks. Dummy's entries should be used to lead twice toward the  $\P$  K-Q; then there's no need to fool with the spades, although that suit is friendly too.

If North-South compete to  $3 \spadesuit (or 3 \heartsuit)$  East should double, hoping for plus 300. It appears that South can win only seven tricks in diamonds, but skillful play may produce eight: Assume the  $\clubsuit$  Q lead to the ace; diamond to the ace;  $\clubsuit$  K, then a diamond return. Draw the last trump; spade to jack, king; ruff the club return and lead the last two trumps to reduce dummy to  $\spadesuit$  Q-x,  $\heartsuit$  A-x. Declarer can win two more tricks no matter which four cards East keeps.

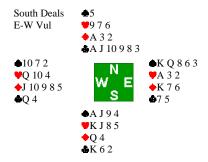
# **Board 34**



After 1 ♦ by East and 1 ♠ by South, West will be torn between bidding notrump and raising diamonds. A lot depends on system. West has the values to insist on game; so if 2 NT or 3 ♦ would be a limit bid (nonforcing), he must commit himself with 3 NT or temporize by bidding 2 ♣. I vote for 3 NT.

In any event, 3 NT by West will be a popular contract. After the rianlge Q lead to the king, declarer has only eight tricks, so the club suit must be tackled at some stage. A losing finesse into North would be disastrous (spade through); but a losing finesse into South would be OK as long as South has the rianlge Q, which is likely on the bidding. Therefore, declarer should guess clubs.

Accurate play brings home 11 tricks: Win no more than *three* top diamonds, then lead a club to the king and back for the finesse; finish the diamonds (discarding a heart); finish the clubs, and exit with a heart. South must give you another trick with the ♥ K or the ♣ J.

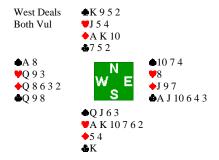


After a 1 ♣ opening by South, North has the values to make a forcing raise (borderline perhaps). Traditional bidders will have the easiest sequence — 3 ♣, then 3 NT by South. Limit raisers may temporize with 1 ♣, allowing East to interject a 1 ♣ overcall; but South will bid 1 NT, leading to the same contract.

Inverted raisers (my school) will respond 2 • (forcing) and then raise 2 NT to 3 NT. The best North-South scores will go to those who catch a wayward East in 2 • doubled (which nets an easy 500 or maybe 800), or better yet, 3 • doubled!

Nine tricks are easy in 3 NT and some declarers will make more. After the  $\spadesuit$  2 lead to the queen, ducked, East is likely to continue the suit to give declarer nine top tricks. Then a correct heart guess makes 10. If West leads the  $\spadesuit$  J to the king, East should shift to a *low* spade. Now declarer could win 11 tricks by finessing the jack, but the odds favor finessing the nine.

#### Board 36



Almost every North-South pair will reach a major-suit game, but which one? Here is a practical auction:

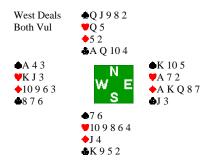
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 🛡
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 🏚
Pass	3 🛡	Pass	4 🜹
All Pass			

The same contract might be reached after a Drury sequence (witness Board 28). Nonetheless, many pairs will play in 4 \(\infty\) because of the often superior prospects of a 4-4 fit.

Four hearts is a breeze for 10 tricks. The only chance for 11 is to catch East napping when a club is led from dummy.

Four spades appears to be comfortable, but actually it is a nightmare. Good defense will prevail. Assume East leads the ace and another club, ruffed in dummy. Declarer leads the • Q to West's ace, then a diamond is returned to the king. Declarer cannot afford to draw trumps with a club in his hand; and if he ruffs a club, he cannot return to his hand without opening up the diamond suit. Declarer cannot win 10 tricks, even at double-dummy.

Note that the key defense against 4 • was to tap the dummy; this is sound strategy when the dummy has a long side suit.



Standard bidders should duplicate this auction:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Declarer is thankful for no club lead, but he has to decide the best strategy after the ♥ 10 lead. If this is a *standard* lead (i.e., it might be from Q-10-9 or 10-9-8) it is better to play the jack at *trick one* — otherwise the finesse cannot be taken safely. If the lead shows "zero or two higher" (i.e., it cannot be from Q-10-9) declarer should play low from dummy and win the ace; later the queen gets the guillotine.

Defensive tip: The above scenario is one reason why many of the top experts prefer *standard* opening leads. The "fancy leads" are sometimes more helpful to declarer than they are to partner.

The heart guess is the only legitimate variation in the outcome, but I suppose some North players will donate a trick by throwing away too many spades.

The "greatest con job" award goes to this line of play: Win the **V**K and lead a *club*; four, jack, king. Assuming a nonclub return, North can be squeezed down to one club and then thrown in to lead spades — 11 tricks, and a couple of miserable opponents.

# BRIDGE LESSON AND GAME FOR NEWCOMERS

# LEARN NEW TRICKS

Have fun and meet new people while playing the world's greatest card game.

This Bridge Plus game focuses on enjoyment and improving fundamental skills. The game is limited to individuals with little or no club experience or ACBL members with under 50 Master Points.

Each game will be preceded by a 20 minute lesson.

This game will be run every Monday starting February 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm to 9:30pm in building 4, room 145 on the MIT Campus.

Email brianeduran@yahoo.com or visit http://web.mit.edu/mitdlbc for more information.

Card Fees: \$2 for students. \$4 for non students

You do not have to be an ACBL member

Class Sponsored by the MIT Draper Bridge Club (http://web.mit.edu/mitdlbc/www/home.html) and the MIT Math Department



39

40