

## **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 MEMBER 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.

## Board 1

North Deals ♠A J 6 4 2  
 None Vul ♥10 9  
 ♦J 10 5  
 ♣K 3 2

♠9 3  
 ♥Q J 8 6 5 3  
 ♦Q 7 6 3  
 ♣A

♠Q 10 7 5  
 ♥A 4 2  
 ♦9 8  
 ♣Q 10 8 4

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

After two passes South has a choice of openings: 1 ♣ is the normal call, intending to rebid 1 NT after a major-suit response; 1 ♦ 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 ♣ bid is unsightly (3 ♣ 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 ♦ 9 switch (which South must win), declarer can succeed with: ♠ K; ♠ A; ♥ 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 ♥ A and ♣ Q.

*BD: West one spade overall is a little lighter than 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

East Deals ♠9 8  
 N-S Vul ♥A Q 10 9 8  
 ♦7 3 2  
 ♣K 7 4

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

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

♠K Q 7 6  
 ♥K 6 5 4 2  
 ♦10 8 5  
 ♣6

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 ♥
?			


\*negative

West will be tempted to bid (3 ♣ 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.*


### Board 3

South Deals	♠A Q 9 7	♠J 8 6 3 2
E-W Vul	♥9 6 4	♥K Q 3
	♦A J	♦Q 10 6
	♣K 7 4 2	♣8 6
♠K 10 5		
♥A 10 2		
♦K 9 8		
♣A Q 10 9		
		
	♠4	
	♥J 8 7 5	
	♦7 5 4 3 2	
	♣J 5 3	

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

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

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♠ will collect plus 200 for a good score, thanks to the elusiveness of 5♦.

*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, 1H-1S-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.*

## Board 5

North Deals ♣7 4  
N-S Vul ♥A Q J 10 9 6  
♦Q J 9  
♠8 3

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

♠Q J 8 6 3  
♥K 8 7  
♦K  
♣K J 7 5

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:

- A. ♠x ♥A Q x x x x ♦x x x ♣A x x
- B. ♠x x ♥A Q x x x x ♦x x x ♣A x
- C. ♠x ♥A Q x x x x ♦A x x ♣x x x
- D. ♠x x ♥A Q x x x x ♦A x x ♣x x

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-1S-p; 2H-p-3H- pass out.*

## Board 6

East Deals ♣A K 10  
E-W Vul ♥9 8 6 2  
♦5 4  
♠Q J 9 6

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

♠9 8  
♥K 10 3  
♦K 10 9 3 2  
♣A 7 5

Unless South feels his hand is worth a direct overall (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; 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.

## Board 7

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

Though South can easily make 3 NT, that will not be the popular contract on this exciting deal. After a 1 ♣ opening by South, North might raise to 2 ♣ whether or not West overcalls 1 ♦ (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 ♣ (very dubious); East may bid 4 ♥ (or 4 ♦ if West overcalled 1 ♦). South is likely to double any East-West contract, but North may get cold feet and bid 4 NT or 5 ♣ (either contract is down one with best defense).

The play in 4 ♣ is interesting. After a club lead (ruffed), say East leads the ♠ K to the ace and ruffs the club return. A heart is led to the queen, then the ♦ A and another diamond leaves the defense helpless (the ♠ 8 in dummy prevents a heart ruff). South, of course, can foil this or any other attempt by *refusing to win* the ♠ A on the first round.

*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-1S; 1NT-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

West Deals	♣K J 10 8 3		
None Vul	♥10 4 3		
	♦9 2		
	♣Q 9 7		
♠A 5 4		♠Q 9 6	
♥J 6		♥A K Q 7	
♦A 7 4		♦Q J 3	
♣A K 8 5 4		♣10 6 2	
	♠7 2		
	♥9 8 5 2		
	♦K 10 8 6 5		
	♣J 3		

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 win 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.*

## Board 9

North Deals	♠A K 10 5	♠Q J 9 8 4 2
E-W Vul	♥A J 8 6 4	♥K Q 7
	♦8 4	♦5
	♣Q 9	♣A 6 5
	♣6	
	♥10 5 2	
	♦A K Q J 2	
	♣10 7 4 2	
		♣7 3
		♥9 3
		♦10 9 7 6 3
		♣K J 8 3

Beginning with North the bidding is likely to go: 1♥, 1♠, Pass, 2♦, Pass. East then has a problem whether to bid 2NT, 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 2NT, West may raise to 3NT). 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 2NT may make in practice.

## Board 10

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

Three passes to North will elicit a 1♣ opening by most players and a 1NT 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 get 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.










## Board 17

North Deals ♣K J 8  
None Vul ♥A 9 4  
♦A 9 5  
♣J 10 3 2

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

♣Q 10 4  
♥10 7 3  
♦K Q 8 7 6  
♣K 5



Most North-South pairs will begin:

North	South
1 ♣	1 ♦
1 NT	?

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 ♥ 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

East Deals ♣A 6 5 3  
N-S Vul ♥A 9 4  
♦8 6 3  
♣Q 9 6

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

♣7  
♥K Q 8 6 2  
♦A K  
♣A 7 5 3 2



A standard road to game will be:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♥
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All Pass			

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

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.

## Board 19

South Deals	♣Q 8 7 6 5		
E-W Vul	♥K 8		
	♦A 8 5		
	♠10 5 3		
		♠9 2	
♣K J 4 3		♥A 10 7 6 4	
♥Q J 3 2		♦Q 4 3	
♦K J		♠A Q 9	
♠8 6 2			
	♣A 10		
	♥9 5		
	♦10 9 7 6 2		
	♠K J 7 4		

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			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 ♦A and ♥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 where they should play.*

## Board 20

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

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 ♥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.*

## Board 21

North Deals	♣J 7 3		
N-S Vul	♥Q 10 9		
	♦J 9 7 2		
	♠A 8 2		
	♣9 8 5	♠A Q 10 6	
	♥K J 8 7 6 5	♥3 2	
	♦—	♦A K Q 8	
	♠K J 6 5	♣Q 9 4	
		♠K 4 2	
		♥A 4	
		♦10 6 5 4 3	
		♣10 7 3	

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.

After 1 NT it is easy to reach the best contract of 4♥ — West should just bid it (or use a Texas or Jacoby transfer sequence). But after 1♦ the road is a winding one: 1♦, 1♥; 1♠, 2♥; 2 NT ... and what should West do now? Maybe that's the reason I prefer to open 1 NT.

The play in 4♥ is routine for 10 tricks, except when West is declarer with a spade lead. He wins the ♠A, takes the top diamonds, throwing two spades, and must beware! If declarer cashes the ♦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 ♦Q prematurely.

## Board 22

East Deals	♣J		
E-W Vul	♥9 5 2		
	♦A K 10 4		
	♣9 7 5 4 3		
	♣9 8 3	♠K 6 2	
	♥8 6 4 3	♥A	
	♦J 9 8 3 2	♦Q 7 6 5	
	♠Q	♠A K J 10 6	
		♠A Q 10 7 5 4	
		♥K Q J 10 7	
		♦—	
		♣8 2	

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 ♥9. The ♠J 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 ♥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.*


## Board 23

South Deals ♣Q 9 7 4  
 Both Vul ♥K 6 5 3  
 ♦Q J 3  
 ♠Q 7

♣K 5  
 ♥9 7  
 ♦10 9 7 6 2  
 ♠A 8 6 2

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

♠J 10 8 3  
 ♥A Q J 8 4 2  
 ♦—  
 ♠K J 4



East has an intriguing problem after this beginning:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♥	?	1 ♦

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 ♦ K lead, declarer's best is a spade to the king (suggested by the bidding); ruff a diamond; ♠ J to ace; ♥ 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 ♣ Q.

*BD: With our agreements East has no choice 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

West Deals ♣K 10 7 6 5 4  
 None Vul ♥7 2  
 ♦Q 6  
 ♠A J 9

♣A 3  
 ♥A 9 8  
 ♦A 10 9 8  
 ♠Q 8 4 3

♣Q 2  
 ♥Q J 10 5 4  
 ♦7 5 4  
 ♠K 10 5

♠J 9 8  
 ♥K 6 3  
 ♦K J 3 2  
 ♠7 6 2



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.

## Board 25

North Deals	♠10 8 7 3		
E-W Vul	♥Q 6 5		
	♦9 8 2		
	♣K 5 2		
		♠A K J 4 2	
♣Q 6 5		♥K 10 4	
♥A J 9 8		♦6	
♦J 10 7		♣J 10 4 3	
♠A Q 7			
	♠9		
	♥7 3 2		
	♦A K Q 5 4 3		
	♣9 8 6		

Many tables will begin with this sequence:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 ♣	2 ♦
Dbl	Pass	?	

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 where 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 where 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

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

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, 1NT 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.*

## Board 27

South Deals	♠9 8 6 4 3		
None Vul	♥K		
	♦A K		
	♣K 9 8 5 2		
		♠A	
♠K Q J 10 7 5		♥Q 6 5	
♥A 7		♦J 9 6 5 4 2	
♦Q 7		♣7 6 4	
♣A Q 10			
	♠2		
	♥J 10 9 8 4 3 2		
	♦10 8 3		
	♣J 3		

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

West Deals	♠A 10 8 5		
N-S Vul	♥8 5		
	♦A J 9 2		
	♣7 3 2		
		♠2	
♠K 6 3		♥A 9 3 2	
♥Q 10 7		♦8 6 4	
♦K Q 5 3		♣K 10 6 5 4	
♣Q 9 8			
	♠Q J 9 7 4		
	♥K J 6 4		
	♦10 7		
	♣A J		

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 ♦ shows a normal opening bid (2s would show a subminimum); and 2 ♣ indicates minimal values for the sequence (about 10-11 points). This allows South to check out in 2 ♣, as he was not thrilled with his hand in the first place.

A friendly deal. With the ♦ K lead, declarer can win 11 tricks. Win the ♦ 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 ♠ 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.

## Board 29

North Deals ♣9 7 6  
 Both Vul ♥K 2  
 ♦A J 7 5 4  
 ♣K 7 4

♠Q 3  
 ♥J 10 8 6 5 3  
 ♦K 6  
 ♣J 6 2

♠A 10 8 4 2  
 ♥Q  
 ♦Q 8 3 2  
 ♣A 10 5

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



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 1NT. 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

East Deals ♣6 5 4  
 None Vul ♥A Q 9 5  
 ♦7 4  
 ♣J 7 5 3

♠A 10  
 ♥J 10 3  
 ♦K J 8 6 3  
 ♣A 10 9

♠Q 7  
 ♥8 7 6 4 2  
 ♦A Q  
 ♣K 6 4 2

♠K J 9 8 3 2  
 ♥K  
 ♦10 9 5 2  
 ♣Q 8



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.



## Board 31

South Deals	♠A 9 7 4		
N-S Vul	♥9 7 4		
	♦5		
	♣Q 10 8 7 5		
♠K 6 3		♠8 2	
♥10 8 5 3		♥Q J 2	
♦A 9 8 7 2		♦J 10 6 3	
♣3		♣K J 6 2	

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠Q J 10 5			
♥A K 6			
♦K Q 4			
♣A 9 4			

North should declare 4 ♣ after the routine sequence:

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
	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 ♣ 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

West Deals	♠A Q J 9 5		
E-W Vul	♥5 2		
	♦A Q 10 3		
	♣Q 9		
♠10 8 7		♠2	
♥A J 6 4		♥10 9 8 7	
♦7		♦J 9 6 5	
♣A J 8 7 5		♣10 6 4 3	

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠K 6 4 3			
♥K Q 3			
♦K 8 4 2			
♣K 2			

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
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 ♣, 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.*

## Board 33

North Deals ♣Q J 6 4  
None Vul ♥A 9 6 5 4  
♦8 4  
♣7 2

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

♣3 2  
♥J 8 2  
♦K Q J 10 9 3  
♠A 9



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 ♥K-Q; then there's no need to fool with the spades, although that suit is friendly too.

If North-South compete to 3 ♦ (or 3 ♥) 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 ♣Q lead to the ace; diamond to the ace; ♣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 ♣Q-x, ♥A-x. Declarer can win two more tricks no matter which four cards East keeps.

## Board 34

East Deals ♣Q 7  
N-S Vul ♥J 10 9 5 2  
♦8 3  
♣Q 9 5 4

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

♠A 10 9 5 3 2  
♥A Q 7 4  
♦4 2  
♣3



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 ♣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 ♥A, 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.

## Board 35

South Deals	♣5			
E-W Vul	♥9 7 6			
	♦A 3 2			
	♠A J 10 9 8 3			
	♣10 7 2	♠K Q 8 6 3		
	♥Q 10 4	♥A 3 2		
	♦J 10 9 8 5	♦K 7 6		
	♣Q 4	♠7 5		
	♠A J 9 4			
	♥K J 8 5			
	♦Q 4			
	♣K 6 2			

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 3NT by South. Limit raisers may temporize with 1♦, allowing East to interject a 1♠ overcall; but South will bid 1NT, leading to the same contract.

Inverted raisers (my school) will respond 2♣ (forcing) and then raise 2NT to 3NT. 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 3NT and some declarers will make more. After the ♣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 ♦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

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

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
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♣ 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.

