

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 3♥; EW 2♠; NS 1N; N 1♦; Par +100: EW 3♠×-1

West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♠ ¹	3♥ ²

Pass 4♥ All pass
1. 5-9 (ish), 6card suit ("weak").
2. Stretching - see text.

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

East's overcall certainly falls into the category of "bid as high as you dare". Support with support is a standard mantra in competitive bidding. South duly shows his heart support. Since this is a crowded auction (South would have liked to raise to 2♥ but hasn't been able to) North should give partner some leeway. That said, it'll be difficult for North not to bid 4♥. Had the auction followed the genteel path of 1♥ - 2♥, the contract may have rested there (or North might have made a game try, rejected by South).

On best defence, the contract will fail by two tricks with declarer losing a spade, a heart, two diamonds and a club. That will happen after East leads a diamond and West switches to a spade.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 6N; EW 6♣; EW 5♦; EW 2♠; EW 2♥; Par -990

West	North	East	South
		2N ¹	Pass

3N All pass
1. 19-20.

By some clever play* it's possible to make twelve tricks in no trumps but is 3N the right spot? Not really but it's difficult to reach the very good 6♣. Why difficult? Because West has a flat hand and generally we don't have a way to show the minor suits when they are only 4cards long. Can we do anything about this? Yes, *for the very keen*, we can use a redundant 3♠ response as minor suit Stayman. Here 3♠ is usually 5/4 minors but it can be used, as here, with 4/4shape. The auction will be 2N - 3♠; 4♣ (showing 4/5card suit) - 4♦ (ace-showing cue bid); 4♥ (ditto) - 6♣, all pass.

In 6♣ declarer can draw trumps and test the diamonds. When they don't break well he can take a winning heart finesse (or can play as suggested below - a play that won't need the heart finesse since a spade can be ruffed) to land the minor suit slam. +920 will be a very good score for East West but expect lots of +460s that way.

**one way being to cash ♦K and when ♦10 is covered, duck (elegant if not necessary). Now ♦8 can be finessed and, with the heart finesse working, there are twelve tricks.*

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 3N; EW 4♣; NS 2♥; EW 2♦; EW 1♠; Par -300: NS 4♥x-2

West North East South

1♥

Pass

4♣ All pass

1. Preemptive (always 4+trump support).

2. Values (see text).

North takes advantage of the vulnerability to make a preemptive raise of hearts. This makes life hard for East West. One approach, as above, is for East to double to show values but to deny 4spades. We don't insist on West having 4spades for the initial double but this agreement gives the partnership a better chance of finding the right fit. Here West shows his 5card club suit and East West are in a good spot.

With the aid of the club finesse declarer should come to ten tricks. He can make East the master hand so can take four clubs, two heart ruffs in the West hand, two diamonds and two spades (for the last suit, ♠ K is well-placed).

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 3N; EW 2♥; EW 1♠; W 1♦; Par -600

West North East South

1 N¹ Pass 2 ♣² Pass

2 ♥ Pass 2 ♠³ Pass

3 N⁴ All pass

1. 12-14.

2. Stayman.

3. 4spades, game invitational.

4. Maximum, not 4spades.

Some Easts may favour bidding 2N on the second round, a bid that will show invitational values with 4spades (no heart raise so use of 2 ♣ implies the spade suit). That works OK here but using 2 ♠ is good because if opener is minimum and has 4spades it's possible to stay low in the cute 2 ♠ contract.

North leads a club. This is tricky. West might try ♣ Q but it is covered. If, instead (and unlikely), West plays low South will insert ♣ 10. Either way it's difficult to see declarer making more than one trick in clubs. From where shall we develop our extra tricks? With the hearts proving benign (♥ 10 can be finessed without risk after ♥ A is cashed) we have four heart, three diamond and one club winners. That's eight tricks and the diamond suit will provide the ninth. Really? Yes. One possibility would be to cash the three top diamonds. Now if ♦ J and ♦ 9 have fallen within these three rounds, ♦ 8 is established as a winner. Having both these important cards in one defensive hand may be asking a bit much. How about this? Cash ♦ Q and play ♦ 10, intending to run it if it's not covered. Bingo. If ♦ 10 is not covered it wins. If it's covered we win and cash the third diamond. ♦ 9 falls trebleton and, again, we have our game-going trick.

Neat.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

♠ J 8 5		
♥ A J 9 3		
♦ 4		
♣ A Q 10 5 4		
♠ A K Q 4 2	W	N
♥ K 7		
♦ A 9 7		
♣ 9 8 3		
♠ —	S	E
♥ Q 10 8 5 4 2		
♦ J 10 5 2		
♣ J 6 2		
♠ 10 9 7 6 3		
♥ 6		
♦ K Q 8 6 3		
♣ K 7		

EW 2♥; NS 1N; NS 1♠; NS 1♣; Par -110

West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	2 ♥ ¹	2 ♠
4 ♥	Dbl	All pass	

1. 5-9 (ish), 6hearts ... well ... "bid as high as you dare".

This has shades of board one where the overcaller's bid was similarly frisky. The point is to strike at the right moment. Boards one and five have something in common - the preemptor is not vulnerable and can use that as licence to operate .

That said the action backfires here when North uses very good judgment to double 4 ♥. When West bid 4 ♥, knowing of the eight card fit, he also hoped it might prompt North South into bidding an injudicious 4 ♠. Alas that didn't happen.

South gets off to the best start with ♣ K. Now it's not possible for declarer to make more than eight tricks (losing two trumps and three clubs). 2 ♥ was a valiant effort but it has resulted in minus 300 for East West.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

♠ A J 9 7 5		
♥ A 9 7 4		
♦ J 8 6 4		
♣ —		
♠ Q 10 4	W	N
♥ 2		
♦ A K 10 5 2		
♣ J 10 9 4		
♠ 6 2	S	E
♥ 8		
♦ Q 9		
♣ A K Q 7 6 5 3 2		
♠ K 8 3		
♥ K Q J 10 6 5 3		
♦ 7 3		
♣ 8		

NS 5♠; NS 5♥; EW 4♣; EW 2♦; Par +450

West	North	East	South
		1 ♣	3 ♥ ¹
4 ♦	4 ♥	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	5 ♥	All pass	

1. 5-9, usually, as here, 7hearts ("weak").

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

4 ♦ may look a little pushy but such "overbidding" is normal when the auction becomes disrupted by enemy preempts. West also has some comfort in holding 4card club support for partner. Thereafter there's plenty of bidding as neither side can judge quite how many tricks each side will make. After North has bid 5 ♥ West might consider bidding on to 6 ♣ but the vulnerability suggests caution (go more than one off and the penalty of 500+ would be more than a making non-vulnerable game). If West doubles 5 ♥, reasonable given an expected two diamond tricks and at least one winner in partner's hand, he'll soon regret it. With North holding a club void and the spade finesse against ♠ Q working, 5 ♥ rolls in.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 6♦; NS 6♣; NS 5N; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; Par +1370

West	North	East	South
2 ♠ ¹	3 ♦	3 ♠	1 ♣
Pass	4 ♠ ²	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	6 ♦	All pass	5 ♣ ²

1. 5-9, 6spades ("weak").
2. Ace-showing cue bid.

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

East makes life difficult by bidding 3 ♠. Generally East should raise to the level of the fit. That means raising to the level of bidding consistent with the number of trumps held. That translates to "nine known trumps" so "contract for nine tricks" so "bid to 3 ♠". That's what East does here.

South has a tricky bid over 3 ♠. He could double. This is generally takeout but, in this auction, could be asking partner to bid 3N with a spade stop (note that the opponents' bidding has taken away the ability for North South to ask for a spade stop in any other way). After such a double North could bid 3N and that's a good spot. Eleven tricks are there for the taking (and twelve if the defence fails to lead a spade since a heart can also be developed).

As we're playing match-pointed pairs once North South bid past 3N they may as well bid the slam (5 ♦ won't score much). That said, the above auction is sound. 6 ♦ is reached through a cue bid route. South cannot use Roman Key Card Blackwood because of the lack of a heart control. He shows continuing slam interest by bidding 5 ♣. North gets the message and bids the slam to confirm possession of ♥ K. There will be twelve tricks (once trumps drawn, declarer can ruff a spade or build a heart trick).

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 5♦; NS 3♠; NS 1N; NS 1♣; Par +400

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♣	1 ♥	Dbl ¹
2 ♥	Dbl ²	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥ ³	Pass	3 ♠ ⁴
Pass	5 ♦	All pass	

1. Takeout, denies 4spades (else 1 ♠ bid).
2. More takeout.
3. General force (comment as for previous hand).
4. Showing the spade stop, denying a heart stop.

This is a rarity (see comments on previous board). Playing matchpoints we only bid to five-of-a-minor when we don't think 3N is playable and the minor suit slam won't make. We're correct on both counts. The hand isn't good for the use of Roman Key Card Blackwood as a 5 ♥ response (which South would make to show 2 of the 5 "aces") would take the partnership too high. North knows that he wants partner to hold three+ of the key cards. He may argue that with such a holding partner would have started with 2 ♦, forcing, over the 1 ♥ overcall. That would certainly have been the case with 5+diamonds but wouldn't have been so obvious if South held only a 4card suit.

Scoring +400 should be a fine score for East West.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

		♠ Q 7 6		
		♥ Q 10		
		♦ A K Q 7 6 4		
		♣ K 7		
♠ A 10	<div>W N E S</div>	♠ K 8 3		
♥ 9 8 6 4 3		♥ A K 2		
♦ 8 5		♦ 2		
♣ J 9 8 4		♣ A Q 10 6 3 2		
		♠ J 9 5 4 2		
		♥ J 7 5		
		♦ J 10 9 3		
		♣ 5		

EW 5♥; EW 5♣; EW 1N; NS 1♠; NS 1♦; Par -650

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	2♦ ¹
Pass	3♦ ²	Dbl ³	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass

1. Points? Who needs them?
2. Upping the ante (see text).
3. For takeout.

Bidding 2♦ may not be everyone's cup of tea but it's useful to jostle the opponents and take away their bidding space. Here North's 3♦ continues the preempt - with a good hand North would have bid something else (note ♣ K is now devalued because the overcaller sits over this card). East is able to make a takeout double which strongly suggests his 6331♦ shape (with 5♣431♦ he may have started with a double). When West bids 3♥ East sportingly raises to game.

North cashes a top diamond and switches to a sneaky ♣ 7. It could be right to play small on this (if North had started with three clubs) but declarer puts up ♣ A. Two rounds of trumps are cashed. With the suit breaking 3-2 West is home. He can come to hand with a spade, ruff the diamond loser and knock out ♣ K. The defence has just a master trump to take. +620 to East West.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

		♠ A K J 6		
		♥ 9 8 2		
		♦ A 10 9 4		
		♣ Q 6		
♠ 9 5 3	<div>W N E S</div>	♠ Q 8 7 4 2		
♥ K		♥ Q 7 5 3		
♦ K J 6 5 3 2		♦ —		
♣ 10 7 3		♣ A 9 4 2		
		♠ 10		
		♥ A J 10 6 4		
		♦ Q 8 7		
		♣ K J 8 5		

NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 2♦; N 2♣; NS 1♠; S 1♣; Par +630

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	2N ²
Pass	4♥	All pass	

1. 4th suit forcing.
2. Minimum but with a (sort of) diamond stop.

North might have had slam ambitions but once South shows a minimum hand he jumps to the obvious game contract. This contract is not too easy to play but here's one line that succeeds (with some help from the opposition). West leads a club. Dummy plays low and East wins ♣ A (not best). East returns a club, won in dummy. ♥ 8 is led and run. West wins and plays a spade. Dummy wins and successfully runs ♥ 9. A further heart is led and East's trumps can be picked up. Declarer can count two spades, four hearts, one diamond and three clubs.

If, for example, the defence starts with a diamond, ruffed by East, declarer may struggle to come to ten tricks (it is possible).

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 4♣; EW 3♦; Par +300: EW 5♦×-2

West North East South

Pass 1♥ 3♦¹ 1♣

5♦ Dbl All pass 3♥

1. Preemptive, usually (as here) 7diamonds.

Both North and South have horrible 4441 hands which are defensive in nature. Some Souths will not have opened the bidding and when it does get to 5♦ North South should take the money rather than pressing on to 5♥.

The defence is assured of a two-trick set. If, however, declarer misguesses the hearts (by running ♥J rather than putting up ♥K) there will be an additional undertrick. In a sense East West have done the right thing (since they can go for just 300 against the making 420 game) ... but it might not turn out that way.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 3♥; EW 2♠; EW 3♦; NS 1♣; Par +100: EW 3♠×-1; EW 4♦×-1

West North East South

1♦ 3♥¹ Pass 4♥

5♦ Pass Pass Dbl

All pass
1. 5-9, 7hearts ("weak").

[Follow up from last week's workshop]

There could be some variations in the bidding here. Some Wests, holding just 14 hcps, might open 2♣ intending to rebid diamonds to show an unbalanced, eight playing trick hand; and some Norths won't be red-blooded enough to jump to the 3level, preferring to bid 2♥.

It'll be certain, though, that if North South reach the reasonable 4♥ West has a problem. His hand looks offensive and that suggests bidding on. As it is, 5♦ will fail by two tricks (losing three clubs and a spade). Superficially 4♥ makes (for 620) so conceding 300 seems a profitable sacrifice. If East, however, starts with his singleton diamond West can cash two rounds of the suit but must now be careful. Before playing a third round of the suit he cashes ♠A. Now he plays a third diamond and this promotes partner's ♥10 for the setting trick (either declarer ruffs high turning this card into a natural winner; or declarer ruffs with ♥9 and East overruffs).

If West fails to cash ♠A at trick three, declarer can throw ♠6 away. If West now plays a fourth diamond, declarer can ruff with ♥9 and East is powerless as dummy no longer has any diamonds either.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

N 3N; NS 3♠; NS 3♥; S 2N; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; Par +600

West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Dbl	2 ♥
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♥ ¹
All pass			

Pass 2 ♠ Pass 3 ♥¹

All pass

1. Invitational (10-12) with 6+hearts.

West may start with ♣ 9. Declarer wins and, conscious of East's takeout double, plays and runs ♥ 8. It wins and declarer can continue with a diamond. With East holding both diamond honours declarer is assured of two tricks there. In fact there are now nine tricks. Declarer will lose a spade, two trumps and a diamond. +140 to North South on a relatively quiet board.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

2ndDecember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 6N; EW 6♠; EW 4♥; EW 5♦; EW 3♣; Par -990

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	4 ♣ ¹	Pass
5 ♣ ²	Pass	6 ♣	All pass

1 ♠ Pass 4 ♣¹ Pass

5 ♣² Pass 6 ♣ All pass

1. Splitter raise - 4+spades, 0-1clubs and extra values.
2. Ace-showing cue bid.

West does not have a great club holding opposite the splitter raise (♣ Axx/♣ Axxx would be better) but he's worth another try for slam over 4 ♣. It's not usual, *at the first opportunity*, to show a void in partner's suit so West cue bids 5 ♣ rather than 4 ♥. East may have some concern about a diamond being led through the potentially vulnerable diamond holding but blasts the slam, based on his great controls (aces and kings).

North may lead the ace of diamonds. This simplifies the play as it sets up three diamond winners. Declarer can ditch his two club losers on the top hearts. If North, instead, leads a trump, declarer can ruff two hearts to hand. With the hearts breaking 4-3 there are now four heart winners on which three diamonds and a club can be discarded. Along with the four hearts, West comes to twelve tricks with five trumps, a club ruff and two top clubs.