

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 3N; E 3♥; EW 4♣; W 2♥; EW 2♦; EW 1♠; Par -400			
West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	3N	All pass

Lead: ♠ 4 (4th best from the unbid suit).

Over East's 3N West may continue with 4♦, a bid that confirms the fifth diamond and simultaneously shows the sixth club (because the lower suit as been bid first; with 5/5 2♦ would have been the initial response). That'll be unfortunate because it will take East West to an unmaking 5♣ (provided the defence takes ♠ A, there are two trump losers).

3N will fare better because ♠ 10 provides a second spade stop. Declarer can win the opening lead in hand and run ♣ 8. The defence continues spades but the suit breaks 4-4 so declarer loses two spades. With there being two club losers too declarer will be held to nine tricks but be pleased to have notched up a game (+400).

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 5♥; EW 2♠; EW 3♦; EW 1N; EW 1♣; Par -450			
West	North	East	South
		3♥	Pass
4♥	All pass		

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

For some 3♥ would be a bit light if vulnerable but here, where the vulnerability is in East West's favour, opening at the three level should be automatic - good-textured suit, decent shape. West knows that there will be a problem in establishing and getting to partner's winners in 3N so makes the correct bid of 4♥. Even if partner loses two trump tricks he can count five trump winners to go with his three bullets and the two supporting kings. In practice, with East holding ♠ K, there is an eleventh winner - two spades, five trumps and four minor suit winners in aces and kings.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 3N; NS 3♥; EW 2♠; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +400

West	North	East	South
Pass	3 N	All pass	3 ♥

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

Again South's preempt would be a little unsound if vulnerable but, not vulnerable, it's pretty normal. The responder cannot always take it for granted that opener has such a good suit. That said, because our pre-empts have some discipline it's still reasonable here to play partner to have opened with two of the two top honours. With that suitably visualised, North can count seven heart winners to go with the two outside aces. That translates to making nine tricks in a 3N game (yes, North has the requisite top cards and a stopped suit (spades) to justify this bid). This is a better game than 4♥ which is defeated provided the defence plays on clubs. If that suit isn't tackled declarer can play a small diamond towards ♦ Q. That'll build that card as a winner on which a club can be discarded.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 4♠; NS 4♦; NS 1N; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par +620

West	North	East	South
Pass	2 N ¹	Pass	3 ♥ ²
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	3 N ³
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

1. 19-20, balanced.
2. Transfer, showing 5+spades.
3. Choice of contracts (3N/4♠).

Some players may make an advance cue bid of 4♣ over 3♥ to say "I've got primary spade support and will co-operate in a slam investigation should you be interested". Some will view the North hand a little more circumspectly - the trebleton heart honour combination isn't great; the diamond honour has no support. The contract will routinely be 4♠ no matter the route that's been taken. If East makes a normal 4th best club lead of ♣ 5, declarer will be held to ten tricks as the club winner is established for the defence before the heart winners can be cashed. If we were playing teams, where we seek to defeat the contract rather than hold declarer to the normal number of tricks, we might start with ♦ A. Give partner ♦ K instead of ♣ K and the diamond ruff would spell defeat for North. In fact all leads bar a club concede an overtrick so those East Wests leading a club will score well on the hand.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

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

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

1. Inventive, showing 15-18(19), balanced.
2. 6+diamonds, slam try.
3. Support.
4. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
5. 1 of the 5 "aces".

This is a very awkward hand to bid and the route shown has East treating his hand as semi-balanced. One option would be to open 2 ♣ (the start to showing an eight playing trick hand) but the hand is aceless and has lots of its hcps in the shorter suits. The other option, in the illustrative auction, would be for East to rebid 3 ♥ - that's always game forcing once partner has responded in a new suit at the two level.

East West reach their eight card fit but find that the slam is dependent on bringing in the diamond suit for no losers*. It's correct to cash ♦ K first just in case ♦ Q falls (then the presumed 4-1 break can be picked up). ♦ Q doesn't fall ... until the second round and West can chalk up a slightly lucky +920. The irony is that 6 ♥ is a better contract even though it's only a 6-1 (seven) card fit. That's because West's ♥ 10 is gold dust, bolstering the trump suit so that only one loser there is likely. Note that in 6 ♥ there are no losers outside the trump suit, ♦ Q now being irrelevant to declarer's dummy play.

**the slight danger of a heart ruff doesn't happen.*

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 6N; EW 6♦; EW 5♥; EW 5♣; EW 3♠; Par -1440

West	North	East	South
		1 ♦	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 N ¹	Pass
3 N	All pass		

1. 15-16, balanced.

A simple auction where West knows that a heart fit can be ruled out (1N denying 4card heart support) leading to the no trump game. South is likely to lead a spade to partner's ace. North returns a spade. East can make twelve tricks if he takes this and subsequently guesses to play South for the queen of clubs. That looks reasonable because South is the danger hand (having the long spades) so declarer will want to keep him off lead. The problem is that if the club finesse loses to North and he has another spade, he can play that card and partner will cash two more spades. That's just nine tricks when eleven were guaranteed. Declarer is more likely to cash his top cards and hope for an indiscretion - if South pitches a club, a third club winner is East's unexpected gift.

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

S 5♥; EW 4♠; N 4♥; NS 5♦; EW 3♣; NS 1N; Par +200:
EW 5♠×-1

West	North	East	South
			1 N ¹
2 ♠ ²	Db1 ³	4 ♠	All pass

1. 12-14.
2. Light, not the greatest suit, but very good distribution.
3. For takeout (see text).

West's intervention makes it difficult for North who makes a takeout double which is off-shape (usually there will be greater length in the club suit). North is hoping that if partner were to bid 3♣, he'd convert this to 3♦ and thereby show the nature of his hand (a red two-suiter). Well that's all academic when East blasts 4♠. It doesn't matter what North leads - with the spades breaking 2-1, declarer can ruff two hearts in East's hand. Declarer will lose three aces. As a small precaution declarer can throw a club on ♦ A. It then doesn't matter if the clubs were 4-1 when declarer could misguess picking up (i.e. finessing against) ♣ 10.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 4♠; EW 3N; EW 3♥; NS 2♣; NS 1♦; Par -420

West	North	East	South
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠ ¹	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

1. Forcing, usually (as here) a 6card suit.

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

West has, by now, the anticipated hand shape, values and the location of those values. Here East could hope 4♥ makes but can do better by introducing a new suit at the three level. This cannot be passed and it's better than that. West has support and raises to 4♠. Declarer should make ten tricks - six trumps, one heart, a diamond, a club and a club ruff. The lead ought to be a trick-building ♦ K. If, however, South leads an unwise low club (away from a king) that'll present declarer with an eleventh winner. Note that 4♥ - an eight card "fit" - has no play. The bad break scuppers the contract (three trumps and a diamond to lose). That may be unlucky but the hand demonstrates that it's possible to investigate an alternative, working game elsewhere.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

N 6N; NS 6♠; S 5N; NS 3♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par +990

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠ ¹
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 N ²
Pass	5 ♥ ³	Pass	6 ♠

All pass

1. Usually 16+, either 6+excellent suit; or 5+good suit plus primary heart support. Here South has a very distributional hand and eight spades so the hand is worth this space-consuming jump.
2. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
3. 2 of the 5 "aces", no queen of spades.

North is all right to raise responder's suit with his good doubleton. If partner has only five spades he'll have real heart support and will revert to that suit. The shape and controls in South's hand allow the use of RKCB and the slam is soon reached (had partner shown the third ace South may have investigated or punted a grand slam hoping to be able to get rid of the diamond loser). There is nothing to the play - there are always eight spades, three diamonds and a club. If declarer doesn't get a heart lead he can toy with the defence by running all of his winners. The defence shouldn't go wrong ... but you never know.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 3♠; NS 3♦; EW 1♥; NS 1♣; Par +140

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♦
Pass	2 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 N ²
Pass	3 ♦	All pass	

1. 5-9, 4+card support, no 4card major.
2. 17-18, game invitational.

South makes a try for game but North's seven count is not very good, the major suits being poor. North should decline the invitation and may, as above, retreat to the minor. That's the winning decision in that the defence can take seven winners though it may be difficult for West to lead a heart or East to switch to one if he wins trick one with ♣ K. On a "pointed" suit lead there are always nine tricks, three tricks more. In diamonds - the safe path - there are always nine tricks with declarer losing two tricks in each of hearts and clubs. So there are decisions on this hand and that'll lead to a disparity of results.

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 2♠; EW 1N; EW 2♦; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par -110

West	North	East	South
1 N ¹	Pass	2 ♣ ²	1 ♦
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠ ³	Pass
2 N	All pass		Pass

1. 15-17 or 15-18 (your choice).
2. Stayman.
3. 4spades, game invitational (some may bid 2N but that loses a potential spade fit at the 2level).

There is no correct overcalling bid for West on the first round. Bidding 1N tends to be the modern approach. It gets over the general nature of the hand (extent of the values, balanced shape) but forgets one, usually important, facet - a stop in the opponents' suit. The bid doesn't work well here as East West climb to a theoretically-unmakeable contract. Let's say North leads ♦ Q. South cannot afford to overtake this so it holds and North is forced to switch, probably to a club. Declarer can take seven tricks (three spades, two hearts and two clubs). He also knows that South can take four more diamonds, a number that does not jeopardise making 2N. In these situations, with no suit to develop, it's best to win and fire back a diamond, letting South cash the winners and forcing North into making some discards. Should North, at any time, throw a spade, the fourth spade becomes the eighth trick (he'll also have to keep two clubs). The moral? Never give up.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

N 4N; NS 4♠; N 4♥; S 3N; S 3♥; NS 3♣; NS 2♦; Par +630

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 N ¹	Pass	2 ♣ ²
Pass	2 ♦ ³	Pass	2 ♠ ⁴

- All pass
1. 12-14.
 2. Stayman.
 3. No major.
 4. Treats the hand as "weak" with 5spades and 4hearts.

We usually talk about Stayman as showing 11+, i.e. invitational values or better. We shouldn't forget about the weak variant where responder has at least five in one and four cards in the other major. If that's the case we bid Stayman and if partner bids 2♦ we sign-off in our five card suit, safe in the knowledge that we've reached a 5-2 fit and hoping it might be a 5-3 one. Of course if partner bids 2-of-a-major we pass knowing we've reached an eight card, or better, fit. Here South isn't "weak weak" (he's close to an invitational hand) but he treats it as weak - at matchpointed pairs it pays not to stretch for thin games. When South follows the above sequence* he arrives in a comfortable 5-2 fit. As it is ten tricks may roll in. West does best to lead a diamond. East wins but it's dangerous to play a second round as South *might* make ♦ J (though a low diamond return from East puts declarer to a guess ... who's got ♦ 10?). East will in practice switch and that'll allow declarer to play a club after which the diamond loser can be discarded. With declarer playing the spades in normal fashion (finessing ♠ 10) and the hearts breaking 3-3 with the king well placed, ten tricks may well evolve.

**alternatively 1N - 2♥; 2♠ - 3♥; 3♠, where North shows both suits (starting with a transfer) - an aggressive route that gets the contract a level higher.*

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 6N; NS 6♥; S 6♦; N 5♦; NS 3♠; NS 3♣; Par +1440

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

1. Ace-showing cue bid agreeing hearts.

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

It simplifies auctions if a four level change of suit response to a pre-empt can be used to show support for the opened suit and first round control of the bid suit - a so-called advance cue bid (that is, a cue bid where the suit has been agreed implicitly). South carries on strongly by cue bidding in diamonds. The message should be clear to North - South wants to be in slam if North has second round control of spades*. North holds ♠ K and this holding is also protected from the lead (though partner's ♠ Q makes that academic).

North bids the small slam and dummy doesn't disappoint. East is likely to lead a spade, the ace being taken by West. North's club loser can be discarded on either a spade or a diamond. +1430 to North South.

*if North had ♠ A or a void in spades he would have cue bid 4 ♠ over 4 ♣.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

9thSeptember2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 5N; NS 5♥; NS 5♦; NS 3♠; NS 3♣; Par +460

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♥
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 N ¹
Pass	3 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♥ ³

All pass

1. 15-18.
2. Forcing, showing 3card support.
3. Might try a 3 ♠ ace-showing cue bid instead since North's hand has not yet been limited. Partner may co-operate with 4 ♦ but opener will leave the decision to partner by signing off in 4 ♥. The contract ought to rest there.

It's still possible to make eleven tricks on a club lead but, in practice, that's the lead (or switch after West wins ♥ Q) that holds declarer to ten tricks. South will lose two trumps and ♣ K. Without a club play from the defence it's possible to pitch both club losers on the fourth and fifth diamond winners (with declarer being able to ruff the spade loser in dummy).