

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

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

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

1. 17-18, game invitational.
2. Delayed support, so showing 3card support.

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

Were North to bid 3N at his second turn the partnership would languish in the inferior no trump game. East would lead a club (♣ 10 - top of an interior sequence) and the defence would make four clubs and a heart.

With North being able to bid a space-efficient 2N the major suit game is attainable. Now there are just three losers (a heart, the losing diamond finesse and a club) and ten tricks are the norm.

TALK HAND - SEE HAND ON FINAL PAGE OF THIS COMMENTARY

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

EW 3♥; E 1N; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; Par -140

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

1. 12-14.
2. See text.

Playing exit transfers, whereby all bids (including the call of double to show clubs) by the responder to the opening bid show 5+suits, North has no convenient bid. Holding a six count there's just a chance that the defence will rescue him by bidding. That happens here with East bailing out to the heart suit and West competing with his own suit (implying no heart fit). North is off the hook.

The contract is touch and go. West might be able to ruff a diamond in dummy and will come to four trumps (losing a spade, one way or another), a diamond, a diamond ruff and two clubs. Eight tricks and +110 to East West. That score might be reasonable but will be beaten if South plays in 1N doubled. A low spade will give the defence seven tricks and the magic +200 will accrue to East West.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 4♣; N 2♠; S 1♠; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; Par +130

West North East South

Pass 1♠ Pass 1♣

Pass 3♣ All pass 2♥¹

1. 16+, 5+clubs and 4+hearts. A reverse (see text).

When South goes above his barrier of 2♣ North knows of the extra values opposite. That said, North has no ambitions beyond partscore and gives preference to the first suit, safe in the knowledge of finding an 8+card fit. With a minimum (for the reverse) and a shortage in partner's suit, South does best not to make a further move. 3♣ will play nicely.

West could start with an unfortunate ♦ 7 (second from a bad suit) allowing declarer a "free" finesse - he puts in ♦ 9 and that draws ♦ Q. Declarer can now cash two further diamonds to pitch the spade loser. Two hearts are cashed and a heart ruffed. A spade is ruffed to hand and another heart played. West ruffs in but South, on winning the return, can try a club finesse of ♣ Q. It loses but the contract makes eleven tricks. That ought to be a good North South score.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 2N; EW 3♦; EW 1♣; Par -140

West North East South

1♥ Pass 2♣¹ Pass

2♥ Pass 3N All pass

1. Lower of two 4card suits.

West does not have the strength to bid 2♠ on the second round (see previous hand) and rebids the first suit. East jumps to game, a bid that usually promises a doubleton heart - that inference is useful as it allows West to bid 4♥ when holding a 6card heart suit. Here West clearly contents himself with a pass.

South leads a fourth best ♠ 7 and that does declarer no harm. Declarer wins and clears the heart suit. North does best to switch to a club and that holds East to nine tricks - four spades (declarer can finesse ♠ 10 for four tricks in the suit), four hearts and the top club.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

EW 5N; EW 5♥; EW 5♦; EW 3♠; EW 4♣; Par -460

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

1. 15-17, 6+hearts, game forcing opposite a two-over-one response.

East is minimum for the two level response (and, to boot, has passed on the first round) so the auction won't get past the game level. The defence can cash the two top clubs but that should be the limit of their trick-taking. Declarer can pick up all the trumps by finessing and repeat-finessing the heart suit. +450 to East West.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

EW 5♣; EW 4♦; EW 2N; NS 2♠; EW 1♥; Par -500: NS 5♠×-3

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

1. 17-18.

2. Best played as game forcing.

3. Heart values, looking to partner bidding 3N with something in spades.

4. Ace-showing cue bid.

5. Nothing extra for the 3 ♣ bid.

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

At the third turn some Easts might bid 3N but the defence should swiftly teach the opponents the error of that bid. South will lead a top-of-an-interior sequence ♠ J and North, being awake, overtakes with ♠ A to return ♠ 2 (leading back what was the fourth best of the original holding). Now the defence has five tricks. If North ducks the opening lead we have an "aaaaarrrrgggghhhh" moment and East West will chalk up an improbable ten tricks.

Because of the scoring vagueries (with minors being at the bottom of the pile) it's unusual to play in five-of-a-minor at match points. It should only be considered if 3N is deemed an unviable spot and there's not sufficient for a minor suit slam. Here some may reach 6 ♣ but with the heart finesse being wrong there are only eleven tricks.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 3♥; NS 3♦; EW 3♣; NS 1N; EW 1♠; Par +140

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

1. 12-14.
2. Stayman - can stand any response (i.e. will pass anything partner bids).
3. Or Pass - then South, with an undisclosed fifth heart, will bid 3 ♥.

Match point auctions, at low levels, can be scrappy affairs with lots of jostling for "position". North South must think they've bought the contract but East is there with a delayed takeout double. 3 ♣ will, in practice, probably go down one but that would be adequate compensation with 2 ♥ making.

In fact the cards are favourably placed for 3 ♥ to make. With East holding both ♦ A and ♦ K (and ♦ 10 conveniently popping up) declarer can set up the diamonds and not lose more than one spade*, two diamonds and a club. If West engineers his diamond ruff, that prematurely sets up the diamonds and declarer won't lose a spade. If West had an entry, an initial spade would break the contract as it would be possible to make two defensive tricks in the suit.

**were the defence to lead a spade it's important that ♠ Q is not played from dummy.*

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

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

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

1. 17-18.
2. Delayed, so 3 card, support.

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

A very good natural auction to the top spot. Here it wouldn't be correct for 3 ♥ to set the trump suit because the delayed support has not guaranteed an eight card fit. The opener, in turn, should have the opportunity to show his three card support for partner and the safer major suit game is reached. In other words, in this sort of auction, 3 ♠ is natural and not a cue bid agreeing the hearts.

4 ♠ will lose three tricks - a spade, a heart and a diamond. Declarer can play on diamonds to provide a heart discard. That saves declarer having to take a second heart finesse, although here with the heart honours split, there are always two heart winners.

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 4♠; NS 3N; NS 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 3♣; Par +420

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

1. 12-14.
2. Transfer showing 5+spades.
3. OK.

South pursues an invitational-to-game route showing five spades in an otherwise balanced hand (so 5332 shape). North has more than enough for game (some might have treated it as a 15 count since it has three tens and they are working in synergy with the cards around them - it's good to have touching cards).

East has no clear lead and may decide on "fourth best from longest/strongest". Out comes ♣ 3. West wins with ♠ K *then* plays ♣ Q. Usually we play the lower of touching honours first but, by reversing the order, West shows partner that he started with a doubleton club. This start is useful for declarer as he will be able to build a club trick. He can win West's trick three switch to a spade, unblock the spade and play a club. East wins and plays back the fourth club. Declarer takes a winning diamond finesse (East not covering a touching honour else there are three diamond winners for declarer) and crosses to hand with a top heart to clear the spades. In time declarer has four spade, two heart, two diamond and one club winners. +400 to North South.

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

EW 4♣; EW 2N; NS 2♠; S 2♥; N 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -130

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

1. Takeout double (denying 4spades - see text).
2. Asking for a heart stop for no trumps.

There are some who play that the double shows exactly four spades (and 1 ♠ after the 1 ♥ overcall of a minor shows 5+cards) but playing the double to deny as many as four spades is the modern approach. It caters for hands with some values that don't have a spade stop (which would make a 1N bid flawed).

East makes an attempt at reaching the no trump game but West denies a heart stop and retreats to his long suit. This has been accurately bid and the contract is of the goldilocks variety (neither too hot nor too cold). There are exactly ten tricks with the defence winning two hearts and a spade. North knows, from the heart raise, that partner has 3+cards in hearts so may switch to a spade at trick three. That'll simplify the defence though it ought not go awry. Let's say North continues with a third heart. West would win and rattle off some trumps (keeping all of dummy's diamonds). Were South to pitch a diamond, West would be able to ruff the fourth diamond good, using the spade as an entry. That shouldn't happen because South should keep the same diamond length as dummy.

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 4♦; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; Par +430

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

All pass
 1. 17-18.
 2. Best played as forcing to game.

[Follow up on last week's workshop]

On this hand North has the same hand as West on board 6 and the auction begins in a similar way. Here, however, declarer has robust holdings in both majors and bids 3N with some confidence. West leads a fourth best spade (♠ 3) and declarer can count nine winners - two spades, one heart, one diamond and five clubs.

It's just a question of overtricks. With the greater length in the suit, it seems more attractive to play on diamonds. When the finesse of ♦ Q loses, the diamonds don't break and a spade comes back, declarer still has only nine tricks. He'll now have to risk the heart finesse to make ten tricks though if it loses he will have gone off in a cold (i.e. unbeatable) contract.

When in a standard contract, as here, it's right to go for overtricks at match points and taking that heart finesse is the winning strategy. That said, some will settle for nine tricks. Those who take the heart finesse before playing on diamonds will have serendipity on their side.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 6♥; NS 6♦; NS 6♣; NS 1N; NS 1♠; Par +1400: EW 6♠×-6

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♥	2 ♠ ¹	Dbl ²
3 ♠ ³	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥

All pass
 1. Weak, 6card suit.
 2. Takeout.
 3. Adding to the pressure (very flat hand but knows of the nine card fit and favourable vulnerability).

East West apply sufficient pressure in the bidding to make it difficult for North South to investigate the possibility of a slam. In a sense that helps North South because slam, in either clubs or the higher-scoring hearts, is not a good proposition. The heart finesse works so that hurdle is crossed. But what happens in the club suit? The finesse of ♣ J loses so slam fails. Or does it? Well, declarer will need to be inspired and take the *backward finesse* in clubs. That is, he plays ♣ J from dummy and runs it if it's not covered. If it's covered he intends to finesse ♣ 9, playing West to hold ♣ 10. Here ♣ 10 pops up on the second round. This flashy finesse would only be taking if you felt sure East held ♣ Q. It's generally against the odds because it needs two cards to be well placed (i.e. here ♣ Q and ♣ 10).

Making +650 for North South should be common.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 2♥; NS 1N; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +110			
West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 ♣	Pass
1 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 ♣	All pass

1. Bids lowest of 4card suits.

When East bids 2 ♣ he's marked with at least 6cards in the suit - if he had 5clubs with 4cards in a second suit he'd have raised diamonds or bid a major. If he were 5332 shape he would be rebidding in no trumps. Logic exercise over, West has nothing further to add and the auction fizzles out (some intrepid Norths may make a delayed takeout double - to show the majors - and South bids 2 ♥ on a three card suit. Eight card fit reached!).

If declarer plays 2 ♣ in straightforward fashion he'll go two off for a bad score (-200) - losing two trumps, three diamonds* and two spades. If the defence opens up the diamond suit that blows one of their tricks (unless North receives a diamond ruff as compensation) and -100 may not be too bad.

Any North South making a creditable +110 may feel aggrieved if they lose out to those +200 North South scores.

**if declarer plays the suit he need to lead a low diamond from dummy and, on the second suit, duck in dummy. ♦ A beats the air and ♦ Q is promoted.*

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

12thAugust2015 SupervisedPractice

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

NS 5♥; NS 4♣; EW 3♦; Par +450			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♣
1 ♦	Dbl ¹	3 ♦ ²	4 ♥
5 ♦	Pass	Pass	5 ♥

All pass

1. For takeout showing both majors (see text).
2. Best played as preemptive (2 ♣ = a better raise)

We end with some fireworks with North South reaching their par. If East West overstretch by bidding on to 6 ♦ they'll regret that. The contract will be doubled and fail by three tricks. -500 will be worse than conceding to the making 5 ♥ (-450).

North's double is a useful competitive device to show 4/4 majors. It's handy because if there's further competition, partner (here South) can always bid a major *knowing the doubler has support*. South with his "six-five come alive" shape bids one more for the road (5 ♥ bid). This is a standard manoeuvre in high level competitive auctions where it's unclear as to who's making what. How right that decision is. There are exactly eleven tricks with declarer able to ruff the fourth round of clubs to set up the fifth and sixth cards as length winners.

12th August 2015 Supervised Practice Talk Hand

Board 18
North Deals
None Vul

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	2 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 ♥ ²
Pass	3 N ³	Pass	6 N
Pass	7 N	All pass	

1. 23-24, balanced or any game force.
2. Relay.
3. 25+, balanced.

When South knows of at least 25 hcps opposite he can confidently blast 6N in the knowledge of holding at least 33 hcps between the two hands. North, with a thirty count, has considerable extra value so can raise the small slam to the seven level.

The hand requires little analysis. With hearts breaking 3-3 there are fifteen top tricks.

The board, the second to contain a hand with 30 points recently at the club, was played in last Wednesday night's gentle duplicate. All pairs were confident of playing it in no trumps but there was some variation!

Grand slam - 3 pairs (89% score)

Small slam - 2 pairs (61%)

Game - 5 pairs (28%)*

*with one pair getting 0% for making 12 tricks (finessed ♥ 10?).