

**Board 1**

North Deals

None Vul

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

EW 5♠; NS 5♥; EW 5♦; NS 5♣; Par -100; NS 6♣x-1; NS 6♥x-1

West	North	East	South
	1♥ <sup>1</sup>	1♠	2♣ <sup>2</sup>
4♠ <sup>3</sup>	5♣	Dbl <sup>4</sup>	5♥ <sup>5</sup>
5♠ <sup>6</sup>	6♥ <sup>7</sup>	Dbl	All pass

1. Too powerful for a weak 2♥ bid.
2. 8 hcp's but a decent 7 card suit.
3. Pressure bid, justified by the extreme shape.
4. Extra values for the overcall.
5. Lets partner know of the double fit.
6. Little defence; might even make (a so-called two-way shot).
7. Very, very tricky - doesn't expect to make but it won't be too expensive. As with West, North is not sure whether 5♠ is making.

One of the reasons you won't find many "textbooks" on high level competitive bidding is the amount of (informed) guessing involved. Here North South are able to bid on because of the double fit and the amount of distribution they hold. East West, for whom the double fit is more implicit (if they're sewing up hearts and clubs we must have the other two suits), can bid on because of the extreme shape of West's hands and East's extra spade length and general values.

West will probably lead ♦ A and switch to a spade. A further spade follows and South ruffs. It's now a question of one or two off. Declarer may reason that West's bounce to 4♠ was based on shape and play that hand for short hearts (it's not that clear). If that's the case declarer ruffs a diamond to dummy's king finesses ♥ 9 on the way back. ♥ A is cashed and the third trump after crossing to dummy with ♣ A. That's just minus 100 though minus 300 isn't bad with East West able to make 5♠ for +450 to them. East West lose just two tricks to the heart and club aces.

**Board 2**

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

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

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
2 N <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3 ♣ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 N	All pass

1. 19-20.

2. Stayman.

West is able to describe the hand well with the opening bid. That the hand has five spades should not prevent West from making such an opening. Once in a while there will be an eight card fit in spades that will never come to light but, then, no trumps could be eminently playable (of course if East has four spades the 5-4-spade game will be found via Stayman).

West's bidding should stop North leading a *fourth best from a broken suit* spade (though it doesn't cost here). North may choose a neutral (i.e. passive) lead of a diamond. West does best to win this in hand and play ♣ J. If the defence takes this, there are three club winners whereas ducking means there'll be just two. There is a paucity of entries to both establish and enjoy a third winner. In time West will duck a spade hoping the suit breaks 3-2. It doesn't but declarer can still clear the suit to make three tricks. Those, together with (say) two clubs and three diamonds will bring the total to eight but a ninth trick will prove elusive. The heart position is such that no trick can be garnered there.

The standard contract but, unfortunately, failing by one trick.

**Board 3**

South Deals

E-W Vul

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

EW 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par -90

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 ♣	Dbl	1 ♦ <sup>1</sup>
1 ♠ <sup>2</sup>	1 N <sup>3</sup>	2 ♠ <sup>4</sup>	All pass

1. Ignores the double.
2. Intrepid.
3. 15-16.
4. Competes to the level of the fit (eight known trumps so contract for eight tricks).

A reasonable, jostling, low-level competitive auction. North is likely to lead a top club and South will discourage a continuation as best he can (♣ 2 if low is discouraging; ♣ 5 if low is encouraging [playing ♣ J as discouraging is possible though may seem a little wasteful of a high card]). With South bidding 1 ♦ North switches to king and another in that suit. In double quick time North obtains a diamond ruff and the contract is soon defeated. North South will take one top spade, one spade ruff, two diamonds and two clubs.

T

**Board 4**

West Deals

Both Vul

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

NS 4♠; NS 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♦; Par +620

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 N <sup>1</sup>	All pass		
1. 12-14.			

As simple an auction as could be imagined. East West cannot find their 4-4heart fit because East has insufficient values to invoke Stayman. Whilst North South have lots of points and can make 4 ♠ it's difficult for them to enter the auction. One way would be for South to double the opening bid - in fourth seat (i.e. after two passes) this bid can be shaded (here South has a fourteen count albeit with some useful tens and a fitting nine). Then East West are likely to find a fit in one of the red suits and it's quite possible that North will end up playing the hand in 3 ♣.

Back to 1N by West. North will lead a fourth best ♣ 6. Dummy wins and declarer plays on hearts. South, at some point, wins ♥ A and fires back a club. North wins and plays ♣ 9 (a high card), a suit preference signal indicating an entry in a higher ranking suit, i.e. spades. West can't do much more and may cash his fourth heart and ♦ A. That's six tricks and one down. On the flip side, the defence has taken seven tricks in some combination - perhaps three clubs, a diamond, a heart and two spades.

**Board 5**

North Deals

N-S Vul

121114SupervisedPractice

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

NS 3♥; NS 2♠; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +140

West	North	East	South
	Pass <sup>1</sup>	1 N <sup>2</sup>	Dbl
2 ♣ <sup>3</sup>	2 ♥	3 ♣ <sup>4</sup>	Dbl <sup>5</sup>
Pass	3 ♥	All pass	

1. Not a weak 2♥ at the vulnerability - poor suit, poor shape, few points (otherwise OK).
2. 12-14 (very much top end).
3. Rescues to 5+card suit.
4. Taking advantage of the favourable vulnerability (competing to the level of the fit).
5. Takeout - asking partner to do something even leaving in and converting to penalties.

There are many ways to escape from 1N doubled and the above is a simple method - no transfers, a suit bid here showing 5+cards there (redouble can be used to ask partner to bid four card suits up the line until a fit is reached [sometime bailing out in a 4-3 partial fit]).

There is little to the play. East may lead ♣ A (if partner doesn't have ♣ K it's likely to be in the dummy so here won't cost a trick). Clubs are continued and West switches to a diamond. A diamond will always be lost so declarer takes the opportunity to be in dummy by rising with the ace and lead a trump. With the helpful lie of the trump suit there are just four losers - two clubs, a diamond and a trump. +140 to North South.

**Board 6**  
East Deals  
E-W Vul

121114SupervisedPractice

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

EW 5♦; Par -600

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♥ <sup>1</sup>
Dbl	1 ♠	2 ♦ <sup>2</sup>	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All pass		

1. Rule of 20 opener (good spade and points in long suits make this bid more obvious).
2. Few points but has a five card suit (should have hit an eight card fit).

Once North South bid and support spades, West can deduce that partner has a singleton in that suit so may make a try towards 5♦. That contract will make because one of the minor suit finesses is right and, with so many trumps, the three spade losers can be ruffed in dummy.

... but West decides to double - a typical matchpoint decision where West judges that reaching 5♦ may be too much but hopes to pick up at least +300 from defending the partscore. West has an awkward lead and may start with his own bid (and supported) suit. With the sight of ♦ K 2 in dummy there's no future in that suit and East can play ♦ 3 on the lead as a suit preference signal for the lower side suit (clubs). West duly plays ace and another club, setting up three club tricks. With West's spades providing two tricks the contract is booked to fail by two tricks. +300 to East West which should be above average.

**Board 7**

South Deals

Both Vul

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

NS 3♥; EW 2♠; NS 2♣; EW 1♦; Par +140

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

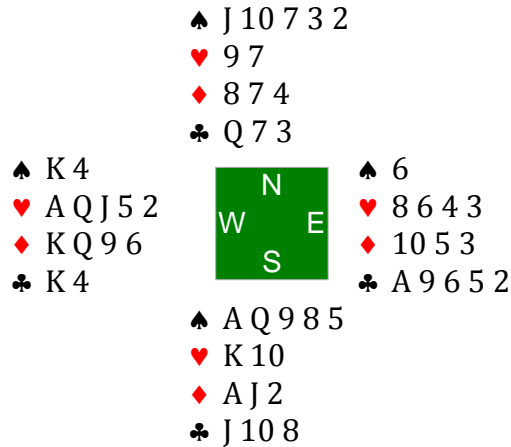
With West wanting to protect his holding in diamonds he may start with a small heart (yes, an underlead at trick one of an ace but not of a *side suit* ace). The idea behind this lead is for the defence to regain the lead quickly and play ace and another heart thereby minimising the ruffs declarer can take in dummy. In such a way - being able to draw three rounds of trumps - we increase the chance of making our diamonds.

Here this defence is well-intended but doesn't work because of the power of dummy's clubs. After the trump lead, declarer wins in hand and plays a club immediately. East wins and returns a trump and West draws two rounds, declarer winning in dummy with ♥ Q. Now declarer ruffs a club (playing for clubs to break 4-2, as expected), returns to dummy with ♠ A and enjoys the club winners. Four trumps, two spades and four club winners add up to ten tricks and +170 for North South. That's a good score with 4 ♥ not being a realistic contract to reach.

**Board 8**

West Deals

None Vul



EW 5♥; EW 5♦; EW 4♣; EW 2N; S 1♠; Par -450

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

If North is rash and bids 4 ♠ he may come to regret that as the contract could be four off (-800 to boot). In 4 ♥ North will lead partner's suit and after winning ♠ A, South may switch to ♣ J. Declarer wins in dummy to lead a heart, finessing ♥ J. That holds and it suits declarer to cash ♥ A drawing the opponents' trumps painlessly. Now West can unblock ♣ K, cash ♠ K (pitching a diamond) and lead ♦ K. It's possible to ruff two diamonds in dummy so the trick total is eleven : five trumps, a spade, a diamond, two diamonds ruffs and two clubs.



**Board 9**

North Deals

E-W Vul

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

NS 1N; NS 1♠; N 1♥; W 1♥; EW 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +90

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♠	Pass <sup>1</sup>	1 N

All pass

1. Too flat to overcall.

There is no obvious lead for West on this hand. There's a modern tendency for leading passively against 1N if no five card suit is held. That could make ♠ 5 (second from rubbish) the candidate but, with North bidding the suit, could be helping declarer set up the suit (it doesn't here). A heart lead from a doubleton is aggressive (but works well) and the lead of either minor could be construed as normal. If ♦ 3 is led that will not cost the defense a trick. If ♣ K is led that will expose the club position (declarer being able to lead towards ♣ J with confidence).

The interesting lead is a low club (♣ 4). Now declarer has to do something good but not obvious - put in the knave which holds. Playing low, hoping to catch East play the king or queen, is reasonable but doesn't work as East will win with the more lowly ♣ 10.

With low level no trump contracts, the combinations of plays from both declarer and defence are many such that results from down two to plus one could abound.

**Board 10**

East Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 3♥; EW 2N; EW 2♠; EW 3♦; Par -140

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1 ♥	Pass <sup>1</sup>	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	All pass		

1. Right values but wrong shape for a takeout double.

It might be right for declarer to finesse ♥ 10 but that won't work here and it appears that West will make eight tricks - four spades and four hearts (a ninth trick can be made but it's not really a play made in this world). North leads ♣ A and South gives count by playing the second highest card from four (♣ 10). This play would be consistent with a doubleton holding in the South hand but North can work out that it is also consistent with the actual layout.

North decides to switch to a spade (♠ 7 - second from rubbish). Declarer wins in dummy (doesn't want to block the suit) and plays three rounds of trumps getting the news of the unexpected 4-2 break. He now plays the winning spades (always a good idea to leave a master trump out). There is no ninth winner this way. If West wins all four spades (North declining to ruff), West can exit with a small diamond. North wins with ♦ J, cashes ♦ A and ♥ 9 and can get off play with the king of clubs. West ruffs but must concede a diamond to South's ♦ K.

**Board 11**

South Deals

None Vul

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

EW 2N; EW 2♠; EW 2♥; EW 1♦; NS 1♣; Par -120

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 N <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2 ♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
2 ♠	All pass		
1. 12-14.			
2. 5+spades (transfer).			

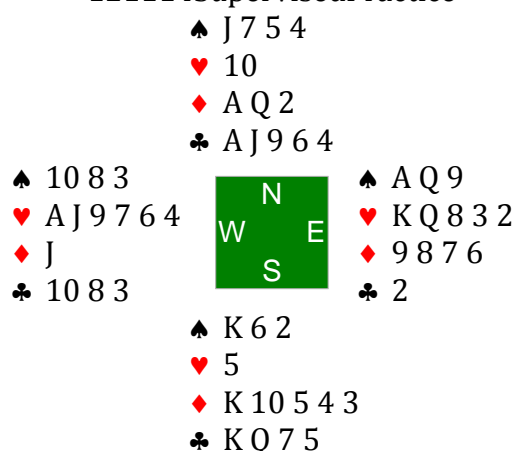
A simple transfer auction with East being cautious (game might be on somewhere [3N/4 ♠] with this decent ten count opposite the opening bid). It is generally right to be circumspect playing matchpointed pairs - aim for a plus score and hope that any overtricks you make outscore the opponents' part score results.

North may elect for a passive lead so begins with ♦ 2. That works all right provided South put in ♦ 9 when declarer plays low from dummy (play ♦ Q and partner's ♦ J is finessable). Declarer may play on clubs to establish a winner there while he's still got entries to hand. The defence has time to make a heart (declarer pitches one on the ♣ J), a diamond and two clubs. North also makes a natural trump trick so the contract is held to eight tricks.

**Board 12**

West Deals

N-S Vul



EW 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 5♣; NS 2♠; Par +100: EW 5♥×-1

West	North	East	South
2 ♥ <sup>1</sup>	Dbl	4 ♥	Dbl <sup>2</sup>
Pass	5 ♣	5 ♥	Dbl
All pass			

1. Weak two - 5-9, 6card suit.

2. Values. Usually, as here, not 4spades (else 4 ♠ bid, knowing of spades opposite).

Not as spectacular as board one but another example of a high-level (mini)battle. East bids on to 5 ♥ confident that this will not be too expensive given the eleven card heart fit and decent shape of the hand. With the ace of spades well placed for North South this was the right thing to do as five clubs cannot be defeated (five clubs, five diamonds and a spade to win). With high level competitive auctions it's often right to seek to cash out the winners and North may start with the safe ♣ A lead. With a singleton club in dummy South can make a suit preference signal for (the lower ranking side suit of) diamonds by playing a low club (♣ 5). With North holding ♣ 4 and dummy having ♣ 2 this is a clear signal, made even more so if West follows with ♣ 3 (yes, playing, say, ♣ 8 masks the position but ever so slightly).

North duly switches but West ruff the second round and draws trumps. He can cross ruff two clubs and two diamonds and is then in the good position of being able to play a spade to ♠ 9. This is seemingly a deep finesse where declarer will usually later finesse the higher ♠ Q. Here, though, South finds himself well and truly endplayed - forced to play a spade into the jaws of dummy's holding or give a ruff and discard. Yes, North held ♠ J so the deep finesse and a second finesse line will have worked but declarer will be pleased with the way the hand has been played.

**Board 13**

North Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 3N; EW 5♦; EW 4♣; EW 2♠; EW 1♥; Par -600

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

A good, natural auction. It's often the case, as here, that when the opponents imply a good holding in the unbid suit that they do indeed have such assets. Here North may make an attack on the opener's unsupported second suit, spades. West is happy with that choice and when the diamonds break 3-2 there are ten easy ten tricks - two spades, six diamonds and two clubs.

That will give a very good score as 3N will not be reached at some tables. Further a heart lead will hold declarer to nine tricks.

**Board 14**  
East Deals  
None Vul

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

NS 6♦; NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 4♣; Par +920

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3♦ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	3♥ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	3N

All pass

1. (16)17+ with 5+diamonds and 4+spades - a reverse (or "going above the barrier").
2. 100% game forcing (because of the two level response and reverse).
3. 4th suit forcing (might instead just bid 3N).

North has great controls and may have thoughts of slam. He knows that partner has only three card trump support (else a direct raise from the passed hand) and wisely stays in the nine trick game.

When the opponents bid fourth suit forcing and then follow with 3N it can mean that the stoppers in the fourth suit are a little suspect. Here West may lead ♥ 6 (or ♥ 7 if treating the three card holding as "bad"). That does declarer no harm and South plays on diamonds to make four tricks in the suit. With spades and hearts each providing two tricks, and with ♣ A in the bag, that's nine winners and contract made.