

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

♠ Q J 8 7 4
 ♥ 10 8 5
 ♦ 8 6
 ♣ A 4 2

♠ 6 5
 ♥ 9 7 6 2
 ♦ A K 10 5
 ♣ K 8 7

♠ 3 2
 ♥ A K Q 4 3
 ♦ 9
 ♣ Q J 10 9 3

♠ A K 10 9
 ♥ J
 ♦ Q J 7 4 3 2
 ♣ 6 5

EW 4♥; NS 3♠; EW 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♦; Par -100: NS 4♠x-1

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

1. 4+ hearts, good raise or better.

South's takeout double is not automatic but the call has some merit. The double does not obey the usual SOS rules (Support for the unbid suits; Opening values and a Shortage in the opened suit) but South wants to get the spades in the picture. The thinking is that if partner bids 2♣ South will convert to 2♦, a possibility given the ranking of the suits (switch South's minor suit holding round and double cannot be recommended as playing in 2♦ could now be uncomfortable).

Here the double works well as North is able to compete at the three level. South bids game as a two-way shot, believing spades will make nine or ten tricks and unsure whether 4♥ is making (it is- East has bid it with a minimum because of the quality of the side suit).

East leads a top heart and the defence has to be careful. If East switches to the singleton diamond and West cashes two winners, declarer is able to set up the diamond suit discarding two clubs from hand. Now one of South's small clubs can be ruffed to make the contract (five spades, three diamonds, the ace of clubs and a club ruff).

No. The defence has to build a club ruff. East can either switch to a club or West, on winning one diamond, switch to that suit (the latter, away from the king, being more difficult). The defence has the tempo and nine tricks is the limit.

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

♠ K Q 6
 ♥ 8 7
 ♦ K Q 8 4
 ♣ K 9 7 6

♠ J 8 7
 ♥ A 10 3
 ♦ A 9 7 6
 ♣ A 3 2

♠ A 9 4
 ♥ K J 6 5 4
 ♦ J 5
 ♣ Q J 4

EW 4♦; EW 2N; EW 2♠; EW 3♣; EW 1♥; Par -130

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

1. 12-14.

[Follow-up to last week's workshop]

Lead : ♥ 5 (4th best).

Declarer has six top tricks and, with diamonds breaking 3-2, has a seventh winner. East will have to play on spades to make the two extra tricks needed for game. He will duck the first two rounds of hearts catering for a 5-3 heart break where the hand with the trebleton has ♠ A. With that layout the defence would be unable to enjoy the two extra heart winners.

Alas South has been dealt the critical card. The contract fails but it's the right contract. Declarer may rue the defenders' accuracy.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

NS 3♠; NS 2N; NS 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 1♣; Par +140

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

1. 12-14.

[Follow-up on last week's workshop]

West leads a 4th best ♥ 5. Declarer has seven tricks on top (two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs) and can develop the game-going tricks through two spade winners or one spade winner and making four diamonds (either the suit breaks 3-3 or East was dealt a singleton ♦ 10 or ♦ J such that a finesse of ♦ 9 will provide that fourth trick).

Declarer may duck the first heart and take the second. He crosses to dummy with a diamond and runs ♠ 9. It loses to West who continues hearts. South wins and plays on diamonds. No luck there so he'll have to hope East was dealt ♠ A. West, however, has that card and is able to cash two more hearts to beat the contract (in total, three hearts and two spades for the defence).

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

N 3♦; EW 1N; S 2♦; EW 1♠; E 1♥; N 1♣; Par +110

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♣	1 N ¹	All pass

1. 15-18 (or 15-17, by agreement).

After East's 1N North has no easy way back into the auction and will surely pass.

On the lead of ♣ 9 declarer has three clubs but the contract will be touch and go with scores ranging from eight tricks down to five tricks for declarer (there will be many variations in the play). One variation sees East leading a heart towards dummy. South will have to duck this to stop declarer making three heart tricks. Let's say South does play ♥ K (going against the general second hand low rule). Now declarer can play a diamond towards hand and has at least seven tricks (three clubs, a diamond and three heart).

A tricky little hand.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

NS 4♦; NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 3♣; NS 1♥; Par +130

West	North	East	South
	1 N ¹	Pass	3 N

All pass
1. 12-14.

[Follow-up to last week's workshop]

This should be straightforward to defeat.

East leads a 4th best ♥ 5, won by West. West returns ♥ 9 (top of a remaining doubleton). It matters not one jot which card North plays as East can win and cash three further heart tricks.

The contract is one down. Had East led any other suit (perhaps a top of a sequence ♣ Q) declarer would have prevailed - three spades, four diamonds and two clubs.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

NS 4♥; NS 5♣; EW 3♠; NS 3♦; NS 1N; Par +400

West	North	East	South
		1 ♠	2 N ¹

4 ♠² 5 ♣ All pass

1. 5+/5+minors.
2. Pressure bid.

West's barrage bid, given the adverse vulnerability, is not for the faint-hearted. It works well in that if North South misjudge and defend they will only defeat the contract by one trick for a paltry plus 200 to them (they take two diamonds, a club and a heart).

Once West has raised to 4 ♠ East West have put the opponents on the back foot. 5 ♥ may play very well* but it would be a little unwise for North not to support one of the suits shown by his partner. 5 ♣ makes (losing a spade and ♥ K) but is lower scoring than 5 ♥ (plus 400 against plus 450) though, as below, there's a risk 5 ♥ doesn't make.

**it makes unless West receives a club ruff.*

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

EW 4N; EW 2♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par -630			
West	North	East	South
			1 ♣
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
All pass			

This is a hand on which the light opening bid may ensure that East West have no easy entry into the auction though they can make 3N. This arises because though both East and West have opening values they also have flat hands.

Declarer is likely to make at least seven tricks. If the defence doesn't start on trumps, he can ruff two hearts in dummy, make dummy's two aces and should come to at least three trumps in hand.

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

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

1. Borderline but may be tempted by the five decent diamonds.

When East makes the invitational bid of 2N West has a decision to make. If feeling optimistic he may treat the reasonable 7 hcp hand as an honorary 8 hcp holding and raise to game; else he may pass hoping eight tricks is the limit of the hand. After all it pays not to press too much to thin games when playing match-pointed pairs (it's a matter of preserving plus scores).

As it is, the optimistic path proves the winner. With the diamonds breaking 3-3 there are always at least nine tricks (two spades, five diamonds and two clubs). The defence is unable to unravel the heart suit to make more than three tricks there.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

EW 4♠; S 3♥; N 2♥; EW 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♦; Par -300: S 5♥x-2

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

1. 5-9, 6 hearts ("weak").
2. Increasing the preempt.

South's preemptive raise of the weak opening creates a problem for West. He could start with a double but that wouldn't find partner bidding spades were that hand to hold a trebleton spades. If that were the case, over say a 4♦ bid, West may follow up with 4♠ in which case, he might as well have bid 3/4♠ in the first place.

It would be quite possible for East to pass 3♠ but four trumps and an ace make the raise attractive, not least because East knows that partner will have a good hand to overcall at the three level.

Declarer wins ♥ J lead (top of an interior sequence), draws trumps ending in hand and runs ♣ 8. That loses but declarer can take a second, winning club finesse. Provided South has at least one of the diamond honours (here the hand has both) declarer will lose just two diamonds and a club.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

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

E 4♦; EW 2N; E 2♠; W 3♦; E 3♣; W 2♣; W 1♠; EW 1♥;
Par -130

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

Although leading from a four card suit is not attractive, it is North's best lead. So after ♥ 2 start, declarer tries ♥ Q, taken by South. South continues with ♥ 10 (top of the remaining doubleton) and declarer ducks but, perforce, takes the third heart.

Declarer has six top tricks and, whilst spades can provide one/two tricks, declarer will have to play on diamonds to have any chance to make the contract. He plays a low diamond from dummy. South may play low so the trick is taken by North who cashes the fourth heart and switches to ♣ 9, won in the West hand (declarer keeping ♣ J as an entry for the long diamonds). Next comes ace and another diamond and the defence knows the contract has been defeated. On the third diamond South pitches an encouraging ♠ 9 (or ♠ 3 if playing low likes) and North switches to a spade.

The defence has taken one spade, three hearts and two diamonds - six tricks, defeating the contract by two. Plus 200 to North South.

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

<p>♠ 8 5 4 2 ♥ Q 10 6 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ K 8 2</p>			
<p>♠ Q 3 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ A 5 2 ♣ Q 10 9 7 5</p>	<p>N W S E S</p>	<p>♠ A K 9 6 ♥ J 4 2 ♦ K 9 4 ♣ J 6 4</p>	
<p>♠ J 10 7 ♥ K 9 8 3 ♦ Q 10 7 6 ♣ A 3</p>			
<p>EW 4♣; EW 2N; EW 2♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -130</p>			
West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 N ¹	Pass	3 N	All pass
1. 12-14.			

Perhaps the last defence was easy (relatively) but this is tougher. North may start with a 2nd from rubbish ♠ 5, a lead that gives nothing away (but note the spade pips as the layout means declarer has four tricks in the suit).

Let's say declarer wins in hand and leads a small club. North has to be alert and play ♣ K (a play not in line with the old whist rule of "2nd hand low") and must find the diabolical switch to a heart, ♥ 10 being the most flexible card. That may be ducked all round but North plays a second heart, ducked again. West takes the third round and plays another club. Unfortunately for declarer, South wins ♣ A and can cash the fourth round of hearts.

The defence takes three hearts and two clubs so East West will record minus 50.

Expect to see this contract making often.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

<p>♠ 8 5 4 ♥ A K 6 5 4 ♦ 7 5 ♣ Q J 4</p>			
<p>♠ K Q J 3 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A J 6 ♣ 7 3 2</p>	<p>N W S E S</p>	<p>♠ 9 7 6 ♥ 8 7 2 ♦ K Q 9 4 ♣ A K 9</p>	
<p>♠ A 10 2 ♥ 9 3 ♦ 10 8 3 2 ♣ 10 8 6 5</p>			
<p>EW 3♠; EW 2N; EW 3♦; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par -140</p>			
West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 N ¹	Pass	3 N	All pass
1. 12-14.			

[Follow-up on last week's workshop]

North kicks off with a 4th best lead of ♥ 5. West wins and can count seven clear tricks - one heart, four diamonds and two clubs. Spades will be the source of the game- going tricks so declarer plays on the suit. Provided South takes the first or second round of the suit he can play a heart and North will cash four tricks there to defeat the twenty six point game.

If South "gets clever" by ducking a couple of rounds of spades he will regret that decision, having allowed the game to slip through. It's easy to snatch at winners so we learn to duck. But when we do that we have to know why we're doing it. Here a little knowledge ...

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

♠ K Q 2
 ♥ Q 10 9
 ♦ J 10 9 8 2
 ♣ 9 6

♠ 9 8 6 4
 ♥ —
 ♦ 6 4 3
 ♣ 10 8 7 5 4 2

♠ J 10 7
 ♥ 6 5 4 3 2
 ♦ K Q 7
 ♣ Q 3

♠ A 5 3
 ♥ A K J 8 7
 ♦ A 5
 ♣ A K J

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

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

All pass

- 23-24, balanced; or any game force.
- Relay.
- Natural slam try.

This is a very difficult hand to bid. South could rebid 2N to show 23-24 hcps but the aces and kings in that hand make it much better than a run-of-the-mill 24 count (if any such holding could be called run-of-the-mill).

When South rightly upgrades his hand the bidding gets to a high level and North's best approach is to invite a slam with a natural call of 4N (yes, that hand might feasibly jump to 6N too). Over 4N South will accept the invitation and can jump to 6♥. North will only pass this if he knows the bid shows five hearts. If not he will convert to 6N.

6♥ is the better contract because, despite the 5-0 trump break, declarer can ruff a club in dummy for the twelfth trick (the other winners being five trumps, three spades, a diamond and two clubs).

6N is a little dicey but declarer can combine his chances. First he plays on diamonds by running ♦ J. That's covered so a second diamond can be built and the contract is home. Had ♦ J lost declarer would cash ♦ A (lest the other diamond honour fell) before taking a club finesse (the ultra cautious may cash a top club first in case West were dealt a singleton ♣ Q).

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

13th January 2016 Supervised Play

♠ K J 10 8
 ♥ K 4 2
 ♦ K 7
 ♣ A 9 8 3

♠ A Q 7 6 5 4
 ♥ 10 5 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 10 6 2

♠ 9 3
 ♥ 6
 ♦ A Q 6 5 3 2
 ♣ K J 7 5

♠ 2
 ♥ A Q J 9 8 7
 ♦ J 10 9 8 4
 ♣ 4

NS 4♥; NS 2N; W 2♠; E 1♠; S 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +300: W 4♠×-2

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

All pass

- 10+, 3+hearts (good raise, or better, of hearts).

North has some concerns about the position of his ♦ K (under the diamond bidder so potentially worthless) but gives partner a sporting chance. When South accepts the invitation he does so because of his extreme distribution.

Declarer has been dealt what turn out to be very useful diamonds. He can draw trumps and give up two tricks in diamonds. Game made via six trumps, three diamonds and the ace of clubs.