

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

Pass

1. Slight lack of high card points more than made up by long suit of good quality.

North has roughly seven playing tricks so the jump to 3♥ is possible. This bid usually shows 15-17 so some may choose to bid a simple 2♥. If the latter course is taken game will be missed.

East may lead what he thinks is a neutral diamond (♦ 6 - second from a bad holding) but what's neutral for East is not neutral for West. The lead has allowed declarer to find the queen of diamonds (though on the actual layout it was possible to ruff a diamond). Declarer wins in hand and leads a club. East wins and must switch to a spade else declarer can pitch a spade on the long club. When declarer led the club that was partly to be able to make the entry situation more fluid in playing the trumps to cater for a 4-1 break. We can unblock ♥ J before returning to hand to draw trumps. Obviously that precaution wasn't necessary here but we gave ourselves the chance of an eleventh trick in the process. North South making game will score well; the overtrick will be huge.

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

2♣

Pass

1♥

Pass

2♥

All pass

West starts with a temporising bid. If East shows extra values he may try for slam. When partner shows a minimum hand with 5+hearts West settles for a jump to the obvious spot. The defence has a chance to shine here and defeat the contract. South leads a spade (♠ 5 as second from rubbish*). North wins and returns a diamond. Now South switches to a club. In double-quick time the defence has four tricks in the bag. Those stages of the defence are all, of themselves, quite simple, but putting them together is more tricky. +50 will be an excellent score for North South.

**this is a difficult lead for North to read. It could be consistent with South making a fourth best lead from ♠ Q865. If North reads it as such he may play ♠ 9 on trick one. That's the right play if that's the suit layout ... but, here, ouch.*

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ A 7 5
♥ A J 6 3
♦ 9 8 6
♣ 8 5 2

♠ 9 8 4 2
♥ Q 8 7
♦ 5 4 3
♣ A Q 7

♠ 10 3
♥ 9 5
♦ K Q J 10 7
♣ K 10 9 6

♠ K Q J 6
♥ K 10 4 2
♦ A 2
♣ J 4 3

W

N
E

S

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

West

North

East

South

1 N¹

All pass

1. 12-14.

South can make as many as nine tricks here if he guesses to play West for the queen of hearts - four spades, four hearts and the top diamond. With the room playing a weak no trumps it's difficult to see there being any other contract but anyone playing in hearts will outscore the no trumpers if they make ten tricks. That needs two things to happen - that a similar guess for ♥ Q is made and West doesn't lead a club (a difficult lead from that holding). Now declarer can draw three rounds of trumps and play four rounds of spade ditching one of North's clubs. A diamond can be ruffed in the South hand and that will be the tenth trick..

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ K 8 6
♥ K 9 6 5 4
♦ A 10
♣ K 7 2

♠ A Q 10 5 4 2
♥ A J
♦ J 2
♣ J 9 4

♠ J 9 3
♥ Q 10 7
♦ Q 4
♣ A Q 8 5 3

♠ 7
♥ 8 3 2
♦ K 9 8 7 6 5 3
♣ 10 6

W

N
E

S

EW 3♠; EW 3♣; NS 2♦; NS 1♥; Par -140

West

North

East

South

1 ♠ Pass 2 ♣ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 3 ♣ All pass

This is a good, controlled auction where East issues an invitation to game but partner declines. Playing match pointed pairs it often pays to stay low when game is thin - protecting positive scores is important.

North has an awkward choice of lead with a diamond or a trump being best. A club would allow declarer to make an easy ten tricks as the lead can be run to hand and ♣ Q finessed later to provide sufficient winners to discard the heart loser. If North starts with an unfortunate heart declarer may also make ten tricks but will have to read the opponents cards well. He'll win the lead and finesse ♣ Q. ♠ J is run and North exits with a trump. The third round of trumps is drawn. Declarer knows North has ♣ K and can make three club tricks if he reads North to hold a trebleton club (without ♣ 10). Now he can play ♣ J which forces North to cover. With ♣ 10 now falling (it is said to be pinned) that works. The other option is to play ♣ 9 from hand hoping North started with a doubleton club. In that case the king of clubs would have beaten the air and ♣ J have been promoted. Expect lots of +140s, a few +170s and the odd -100 to East West.

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ Q 2
♥ Q 7 6 5 3
♦ 9 4 3
♣ Q J 6

♠ K J 6
♥ K 8 2
♦ 8 7 5 2
♣ K 10 8

W N E
S

♠ 10 8 5 4
♥ J 9 4
♦ —
♣ A 7 5 4 3 2

♠ A 9 7 3
♥ A 10
♦ A K Q J 10 6
♣ 9

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

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

- 21-22, balanced; or eight playing tricks in an unbalanced hand.
- Relay.
- Unbalanced, (5)6+diamonds.

South has a clear eight playing tricks and starts with the second biggest bid in the box. He shows his two suits and, with North showing values in the other two suits, 3N is reached.

East may lead a club and that simplifies the play for declarer. West wins and fires back a second round, playing ♣ 10, a card that places North with his actual holding. If East lets ♣ J hold that's the opposition's ninth trick (one spade, one heart, six diamonds and that winner). So East wins and switches to a heart. Declarer puts in a hopeful ♥ 10 but it loses and West returns a neutral diamond. Declarer has one shot left - to play a spade and hope West was dealt ♠ K. We're in luck. Declarer has lost four tricks (one in each major and two clubs) but have, somewhat slowly, come to sufficient tricks.

Board 6
East Deals
E-W Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ J 6 4
♥ 8 4 3
♦ A K 7
♣ Q 10 8 5

♠ Q 9 8 7
♥ A Q 6
♦ Q 9 8 4
♣ A 4

W N E
S

♠ A K 10 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 2
♦ 3
♣ J 2

♠ 5
♥ 7 5
♦ J 10 6 5 2
♣ K 9 7 6 3

EW 6♠; W 5N; EW 5♥; E 4N; NS 2♣; NS 1♦; Par -1100: NS 7♣×-5

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

- 4+trumps, game forcing raise (Jacoby).
- Diamond shortage (not rock-bottom minimum, else 4 ♠).
- Ace-showing cue bid.
- Showing ♥ K and highlighting the problem in the club suit.

[Follow-up on Jacoby 2N workshop]

The opening bidder is able to show his shortage which isn't great facing partner's queen-to-length. After 4 ♦ West could sign off with 4 ♠ but as the bidding doesn't take the partnership past game he co-operates by cuebidding the ace of hearts. That's a great card for East to hear about but East has a problem. He has no control in the club suit so that may preclude him from using Roman Key Card. If he takes this approach and still wants to make a try for slam he'll bid 5 ♥, a bid that pinpoints the club weakness. With ♣ A West will bid the small slam. But, of course, whilst not generally recommended, East may wing it by using RKCB. West's response shows there's only one key card missing so the slam is reached (note that West would have bid the same way with the minors switched and the small slam shouldn't make).

Let's say South leads ♦ J. North wins and switches to a club (from the bidding he knows a second diamond is not cashing). Declarer draws trumps and ditches dummy's club loser on a long heart. A club is ruffed in dummy. Twelve tricks - five spades, five hearts, a club and a club ruff.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 4♠; NS 3♦; NS 1N; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par +620

West North East South

1 ♠
 4 ♠²

All pass

1. Jacoby 2N showing a game forcing hand with at least four spades.
2. Minimum hand (denies a decent thirteen count).

[Follow-up on Jacoby 2N workshop]

It's quite possible that many Souths won't open that ten point hand though the shape and honour concentration in the long suits makes the bid feasible. If it's opened North will be momentarily excited but will be brought back to earth by partner's warning bid of a jump to game ("I'm very minimum, partner").

It will be difficult for West to start with a club, with ♥ 10 (top of a sequence) being pretty normal. That's an unfortunate start as declarer can draw trumps and pitch two clubs on the second and third heart winners. With the ace of diamonds well placed* declarer can make eleven tricks (five spades, three hearts, three diamonds and a club ruff).

**declarer can talk himself into losing a second diamond if he thinks West is capable of ducking ♦ A when a diamond is played to the king. Now he may play a second diamond to the ten ... whoops, he's credited West with too much ability.*

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

West North East South

1 N¹
 2 ♠
 4 ♠

All pass

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

East follows a transfer sequence route to show a game-going hand that is balanced with five spades (5332 is the ideal shape for this sequence but sometimes the jump to 3N is a little off centre). West converts to the known 5-3 spade fit (but might pass 3N).

North leads his singleton diamond, won in the West hand. A trump is played to the knave. South wins and plays a second diamond. North ruffs and lays down ♥ A. That was lucky as the contract cannot be broken. Declarer may have reflected about the danger that has unfolded. Had he thought that a diamond ruff was imminent it would have been better to play ace and another trump. With the spades as they are North wouldn't have received a diamond ruff and West would have made an overtrick.

That would have been a better line of play. A heart lead would have held declarer to ten tricks in a more legitimate fashion (but is not an easy lead to find) - that lead builds two heart winners for the defence to add to the trump king.

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 7♥; NS 6N; NS 6♣; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; Par +1510

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

1. Game forcing with 4+trumps (Jacoby 2N).
2. Shortage in diamonds (and not a poor hand).
3. RKCB.
4. 1 or 4 of the 5 "aces".

[Follow-up on Jacoby 2N workshop]

South's diamond holding opposite the advertised singleton is bad. As South's hand has few good cards outside this suit he signs off in game. North does have extras so, once that big heart fit has been found, he can use RKCB. He knows there are no missing key cards so jumps to slam as, with a ten card heart fit, finding the queen of trumps in partner's hand is not important. He may have asked for side suit kings (looking for a grand slam) but South reply wouldn't have excited him.

Declarer can always throw North's spade loser away on the second top diamond. With the club finesse working there are thirteen tricks. If West doesn't cover ♣ Q declarer will ruff the fourth club; if West does play ♣ K, declarer would similarly expect to ruff the fourth club but, with ♣ 9 in the trebleton holding, that's not necessary as ♣ 8 becomes a winner.

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

1. 10-12 (including shortage points), 4spades ("limit raise").

The valuation of West's doubleton heart isn't clear so it wouldn't be wrong to bid a quiet 2♠ instead (though losing trick counters will always bid 3♠ as the West hand has eight losers - one spade, two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs).

South leads ♣ K and North brightly overtakes to switch to ♦ 10. South wins and gives partner a diamond ruff. The defence will make one heart and the contract makes exactly (yes, East West can be held to eight tricks if North receives a second diamond ruff. That would happen on the unlikely defensive start of ace and another diamond followed by North putting South back in by underleading his ace of clubs).

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 7♥; EW 5N; EW 5♣; EW 3♠; EW 3♦; Par -1510

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Pass	2 N ¹	Pass
4 ♦ ²	Pass	4 N ³	Pass
5 ♦ ⁴	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♥ ⁵	Pass	7 ♥ ⁶	All pass

1. Jacoby 2N showing 4 or more hearts and game forcing values.
2. Singleton (occasionally a void) in diamonds.
3. RKCB.
4. 0 or 3 of the 5 "aces".
5. Confirms 3 aces and denies a side-side suit king.
6. Not without risk.

[Follow-up on Jacoby 2N workshop]

East's use of RKCB works well on this hand but, with three small spades, it's not obvious for East to use it. When RKCB is invoked in such circumstances East is implicitly hoping partner has a control in spades (ace or king, less likely to be a shortage given the diamond splinter). In fact East could be said to have used good judgment as West is likely to have the ace or king of spades to have sufficient high card points for an opening bid.

After the RKCB reply East signs off lest partner has no aces. It is imperative in these ambiguous auctions for the replier to RKCB to continue bidding if holding the better hand, hence West bidding 6♥, a bid that denies a side suit king (else, *by partnership agreement*, that bidder shows a king by bidding the relevant side suit).

East takes a bit of a risk when raising to seven but plays partner to hold something useful - here that comes in the form of holding four clubs including the knave. In the play it's possible to throw dummy's two losing spades on the long clubs and ruff West's two losing spades.

Yes, a tad exuberant (Christmas cheer to the fore) but successful.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 3♥; EW 2♣; NS 1♠; EW 1♦; Par +140

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1 ♣	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♣ ¹	Pass	2 ♥

All pass

1. Cue bid. 10+, with 3+card support for partner's hearts.

North shows his good support by cue bidding the opponents' suit (with support and a lighter hand he would have raised the suit directly, i.e. bid 2♥).

West does best to lead a club and now the defence will come to one club, a diamond, a spade and the top trump. Without a club play from the defence it's possible for declarer to discard South's club loser on the ♦ Q (declarer leading *towards* this card to promote it).

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ A 10 4

♥ K J 10 5

♦ 7 4 2

♣ J 8 5

♠ K Q J 7 6

♥ A Q 7 4

♦ 8 5

♣ Q 10

♠ 8

♥ 9 8 6

♦ K Q J 10

♣ A K 9 3 2

♠ 9 5 3 2

♥ 3 2

♦ A 9 6 3

♣ 7 6 4

W

N

E

S

NS 3♠; EW 2♥; EW 3♣; EW 2♦; Par +140
West North East South
3♥ 1♠ Dbl¹ 2♠
All pass²
1. See text.
2. See text.

East's hand satisfies the SOS rules* for a takeout double though the holding in hearts is somewhat meagre. Some might prefer to bid 2♣, a bid that works well here as the club partscore plays well. Here West has just too much not to bid over 2♠ so the delicate 4-3 fit is reached.

The club position is good for declarer (the queen dropping) but the contract can be defeated. Declarer can ruff two spades in dummy (the defence may force him to do this) but he always has a problem getting back to hand. It is quite possible for North to make two ruffs (one of a diamond, the other of a club) in addition to the natural trump tricks (ace and queen).

Of course, North South may compete to 3♠, a contract that should make. Declarer should delay drawing trumps and can take a winning finesse in hearts and ruff the two small hearts.

*Shortage in the opponents' suit, opening values and support for all unbid suits.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

23rdDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

♠ 9 7 4 3 2

♥ 10 8 6 5

♦ 9 7

♣ K Q

♠ K Q 8 6

♥ Q 2

♦ A J 3 2

♣ 10 8 6

♠ 5

♥ J 9 7

♦ K Q 10 5 4

♣ J 7 4 3

♠ A J 10

♥ A K 4 3

♦ 8 6

♣ A 9 5 2

W

N

E

S

NS 5♠; NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 3♣; NS 2♦; Par +450
West North East South
Pass 1♠ Pass 1♣
Pass 3N All pass
1. 15-16.

We finish with a simple but effective auction to the obvious 3N. West leads ♥8 (second from a bad suit), a lead that gives nothing away. Declarer has a clear nine tricks - four spades, three hearts and the two minor suit aces - but settling for making the contract won't score too well. Declarer can play on clubs to make a tenth trick. Yes, the suit breaks 4-2 but the honour position is such that ♣9 can be promoted to winning rank. So, +430 will be a good but common score.

Merry Christmas and
A Healthy and Peaceful New Year.