

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

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

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

- 21-22, balanced; or eight playing tricks in any suit, unbalanced.
- Relay.

Lead: ♣ Q (top of a sequence).

South is too good to open 1♠ and rebid 3♠. That hand-type shows roughly 15-17 with a six card, or longer, suit. 2♣ is the correct opening bid. North has sufficient values to show his reasonable five card suit and South repeats his suit to show the sixth spade. North can raise in the knowledge that an eight card fit has been found.

The lead is normal. Declarer carefully wins this in hand, draws trumps, unblocks the hearts, crosses to ♣ A to enjoy three further heart winners. That's six spades, five hearts and two clubs. Thirteen tricks.

This hand can be described as a "four or seven" hand in that only a diamond lead will hold the contract to ten tricks. Is it feasible for West to lead a diamond from that dangerous holding? Well, yes, *provided East makes a lead-directing double of 2♦*. That simple, but intelligent, call gets the defence off to the right start and what will be a very good score for East-West.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 3♠; NS 2N; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; Par +140

West	North	East	South
		1 N ¹	DbI ²
2♦ ³	2♠	All pass	

- 12-14.
- Good 15+ (generally balanced, as here).
- Exit transfer showing 5+hearts.

[Follow-up from last week's workshop]

North's knowledge of South's hand is enough to allow him to compete with 2♠. With a minimum for the double South won't be tempted to bid on.

Lead: K♥ (top of a sequence).

Declarer ducks the opening lead and wins the second heart. This severs the defence's communications and means that West cannot enjoy a second heart winner. South plays a club to the ten and his luck is in when this loses to ♣ K. East is likely to play a diamond (possibly a small one lest declarer has a guess as to what to play - not a problem here) and South wins at some point to cross to ♣ A and play a trump towards hand. Whether East splits his honours or not (in the latter case declarer plays ♠ 10) the defence will only take one trump. Declarer can get to hand with a diamond ruff to draw any remaining trumps.

The defence takes one trick in each suit - nine tricks and +140 to North-South.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

♠ 9 5 2
♥ A 8
♦ Q 9 2
♣ Q 8 7 6 5

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

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

1. 12-14.

At some stage we may introduce the possibility of East being able to overcall 2 ♣, a conventional bid to show both majors. For now we'll bid our longest suit so the 2 ♠ card will hit the green baize. West has enough shape for an invitation to the spade game and East's hard cards (two aces and a supported king) plus decent club side suit will allow East to reach the vulnerable game.

Lead: ♣ 6 (4th best).

The lead does declarer no harm and he ruffs a club at trick two. The simple line is to draw trumps (very nicely distributed) and play on hearts. Now there will be eleven tricks - five trumps, two hearts, a club ruff and three top clubs.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

♠ 9 8 4 2
♥ 10 9 8 6
♦ 8 5 3
♣ 4 3

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

West	North	East	South
1 N ¹	Dbl ²	All pass	

1. 12-14 (possible if, sensibly, opener may hold a 5card major).
2. A good 15+, generally balanced (as here).

[Follow-up from last week's workshop]

When North doubles and East passes, South is none too happy but trying to bail out in these positions is akin to digging an even bigger hole. So South stoically passes.

Lead: ♦ 6.

North has a difficult lead but a diamond is the one that can set up a couple of winners in that suit. Importantly it also deprives declarer of an entry to the long clubs, a suit where two top cards need to be knocked out before the winners can be enjoyed. Declarer can play a club which North wins to play ace and another diamond. Declarer may as well play a second club. North wins, cashes the long diamond and gets off play with a heart. West cashes all the heart winners and plays ace and another spade. North enjoys two tricks in the suit but must give access to dummy by playing ♣ 9 to ♣ 10. West has used North as a *stepping stone* to a seemingly entry-starved dummy.

Had North led ♠ K, West would have ducked. This is an example of a *Bath coup** where declarer hopes the leader will continue the suit to arrive at a second spade trick. This plan can be foiled if the defence has good signals - here South should play ♠ 2 (if playing low to discourage) or ♠ 9 (if playing high to discourage).

*a play said to have been made many years ago during a whist in one of Bath's many coffee houses.

Board 5

North Deals

N-S Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

EW 5♠; EW 4N; W 3♥; E 2♥; EW 3♣; EW 2♦; Par -450

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

Some Easts will pass initially but the shape cries out for more positive action. When responder makes a delayed game raise the opening bidder should have in mind that partner has roughly 13-15 points in a relatively balanced hand (as here). East has a minimum opening bid and the void in partner's hand is no bonus.

Lead: ♥ 4 (4th best).

It often pays to lead aggressively against confidently bid games. Here that policy backfires as it takes away declarer's guess in the heart suit. Left to his own devices declarer has a *two-way finesse* in the suit. Declarer will plan to ruff some club losers in dummy. He finesses dummy's ♣ Q which loses to North who, in seeking to limit declarer's ability to ruff returns a trump. In order to take two club ruffs in dummy East rises with ♠ A and, lo and behold, is luckily rewarded when the king falls. Now he cashes the two other heart winners and can embark on a cross ruff, ruffing clubs in dummy and diamonds to hand. Now there are twelve tricks - six spades, three hearts, a top club and two club ruffs.

That cashing of the hearts early is good technique - when cross ruffing, take side suit winners early, before the defence is able to make discards that can embarrass declarer.

Is it possible to limit declarer's tricks? Perhaps to ten tricks? Yes, provided South starts with ♠ K lead (spectacular and far-fetched). Now North will win ♣ K and can lead a second trump. If declarer misguesses hearts there are only ten winners.

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

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

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

South's 1 ♠ bid is not automatic as it fails the suit quality test (one honour plus length of suit only summing to six but the overcall is contracting for seven tricks) but it's what lots of players will do. The hand has some shape, has the other major and is not rock-bottom minimum.

It's close as to whether North raises to game so 3 ♥ may be the final contract instead.

With the minor suit aces well-placed it's just possible that declarer can make eleven tricks - six trumps, ♠ A, two minor suit kings and two ruffs. +450 for North-South would be a very, very good score.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

♠ 3 2
♥ 10 4
♦ K 5 3
♣ Q J 10 8 7 6

♠ K Q 10
♥ 7 3 2
♦ A 9 7 6
♣ A K 9

♠ 9 8 4
♥ J 9 8 6 5
♦ Q J 8
♣ 4 3

♠ A J 7 6 5
♥ A K Q
♦ 10 4 2
♣ 5 2

NS 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par +110

West	North	East	South
			1 N ¹

Dbl ²	Rdbl ³	2 ♥	All pass
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1. 12-14, balanced (and sensible even with a 5card major).
2. A good 15+, generally (as here) a balanced hand.
3. Exit transfer, using the redouble to show the next suit, i.e. clubs.

[Follow-up from last week's workshop]

North is able to make use of the transfer to clubs to reach a very playable spot (in fact, with ♦ A well-placed, North-South can make nine tricks in clubs. East knows that his side will have at least half the pack (in high card points) and can compete. With a minimum West will respect East's bid and pass. North, at the vulnerability, will not risk a 3 ♣ call, though that's the winning action (barring doubling 2 ♥ and getting it off).

Lead: ♥ A (in an attempt to cut down on ruffs).

It's a normal lead but it won't defeat the contract. The only lead to give declarer a problem is ♠ A and a continuation or a low spade lead. Yes, we don't underlead side suit aces against suit contracts but it's mentioned because it happens to work. What happens is South wins the first round of trumps and can play a third spade for partner to ruff. In this way the defence comes to one spade, a spade ruff, three trumps and a diamond.

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

♠ K
♥ K 9 7 6 3
♦ Q 7 3
♣ K 9 5 4

♠ A Q 2
♥ J 5 4
♦ A J 4
♣ A 7 6 3

♠ 9 8 7 5 4
♥ Q 10 8
♦ 10 9 2
♣ J 8

♠ J 10 6 3
♥ A 2
♦ K 8 6 5
♣ Q 10 2

S 2N; NS 2♥; S 3♣; N 1N; NS 2♦; N 2♣; EW 1♠; Par +120

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	1 N ¹

Dbl ²	Pass	2 ♠	All pass
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1. 9-12, roughly a king stronger than over an opening bid.
2. Extra values.

In truth the auction could fizzle out in 1 ♣ by West or 1N by South. The former, a 4-2 fit, won't play well but the latter should play all right (especially if declarer sets up the heart suit).

In the above auction North's 1 ♥ is not automatic (see board 6, too) because bidding fails the suit quality test but North may take advantage of the vulnerability to get involved. In 2 ♠ declarer should lose a club, a diamond and two hearts. That means that fulfilling the contract will depend on losing just one trump trick. That looks unlikely and will, as a minimum, need declarer to show second sight to drop North's singleton ♠ K.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; NS 2♣; NS 1♦; Par +120

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

All pass

- 12-14.
- Transfer, showing 5+spades.
- Invitational and usually, as here, showing 5 ♠332 shape (or close to that).

Lead: ♦ K.

Declarer ducks the first two diamonds and, perforce, wins the third round of the suit. In practice North may take a losing heart finesse, which loses, and that allows East to cash two diamonds. Now East gets off play with a major suit card. Declarer will win (perhaps ducking a spade until the second round of that suit is played) and cash ♣ A and take a finesse of ♣ J. That loses and declarer has to be satisfied with a disappointing -50 when the contract is down one.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

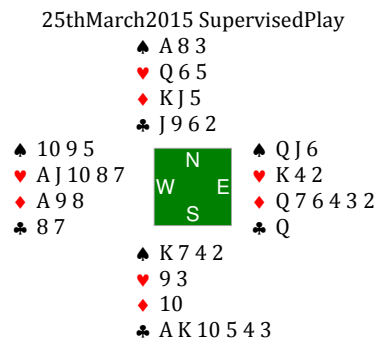
NS 3N; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♠; S 1♥; Par +600

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

1. Opens the higher of two four card suits.
2. Roughly 7-10.
3. Extra values.

North's hand is not suitable for a 1N overcall (no spade stop) so makes a flat takeout double and doubles again to show additional strength. West's decision to open the bidding was normal but the play in 2 ♠ is not very productive. West has four spade tricks and may develop a couple of hearts (having to play the suit from hand but thankful for a 3-3 break). That would be two off for a poor score so declarer will need some help from the defence to limit the undertricks to one (e.g. a club play round to ♣ K).

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul



NS 2♠; EW 2♥; EW 3♦; NS 3♣; NS 1N; Par -100: NS 3♠×-1;
NS 4♣×-1

West	North	East	South
			1 ♣
1 ♥	2 ♥ ¹	3 ♥	4 ♣

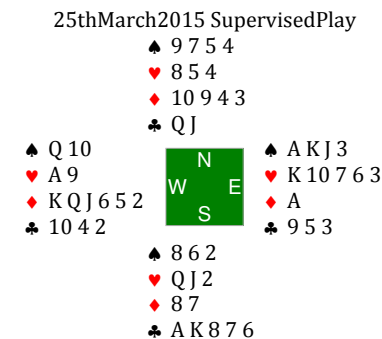
All pass

1. An assuming cue bid, showing a good raise of clubs (10-12, can be better).

Lead: ♥ A.

The defence may start with three rounds of hearts, declarer ruffing the third round and drawing trumps into two rounds. There is always a spade loser. The only way to make the contract is to hope for no diamond loser. This can only be achieved by playing for a defensive slip. Lead ♦ 10 and West, viewing dummy, may think South has a guess to make in the suit. If West ducks (believing declarer will now run ♦ 10 to partner's queen), declarer should hop up with ♦ K. Now the diamond loser has disappeared and North-South chalk up a pleasing +130.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul



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

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

1. Showing 5+hearts and 4+spades, a so-called responder's reverse (best played a game forcing).
2. 4th suit forcing (to game, as bid at the 3level).
3. Unenviable choice but shows this decent card.

A very awkward auction where East-West explore but reject playing in 3N. This contract fails if the defence starts and continues playing clubs (provided South overtakes the second round of the suit; and, if South is on lead, he doesn't block the suit by cashing ♣ A). 4 ♥ will also similarly fail if the defence take their three club tricks as there is an unavoidable trump loser.

Curiously the strange-looking, but impossible-to-bid, 4 ♠ always makes. ♠ Q10 are very powerful cards and four rounds of trumps can be drawn before enjoying the red suit winners.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

♠ A Q 5 3 2
 ♥ 8 4
 ♦ 7 5
 ♣ K 10 7 6

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

West	North	East	South
	1 N ¹	2 ♥	2 ♠

All pass
1. 12-14.

[Follow-up from last week's workshop]

We have some further intervention after a 1N start, albeit a suit overcall this time, not a double. The important thing is that exit transfers are OFF if there's a *suit* intervention. South can show a competitive hand with at least five spades by simply bidding 2 ♠. West has nothing to say so North does not need to consider competing to 3 ♠.

Lead: ♥ 10 (top of a doubleton).

Declarer ducks two rounds of hearts but East, who has won the second round, plays a third round. Declarer will always lose a spade so does best to pitch ♦ 5 - an example of a *loser-on-loser play*. East might now switch to a trump and declarer can come to nine tricks with careful play. Win the switch and duck a club. Win the next trump lead and play two more rounds of clubs. The suit breaks 4-2 but the fourth club can be ruffed in dummy. With East out of trumps the play is a success. If South plays three rounds of clubs from the top, West wins the third round of the suit and can play a fourth. Either East overruffs ♠ 6 or West gets a trump winner if declarer desperately ruffs with ♠ K.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

25thMarch2015 SupervisedPlay

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

♠ Q J 10 8 7 4 3 2
 ♥ K 5
 ♦ 2
 ♣ 5 2

EW 7N; EW 7♦; EW 7♣; EW 4♥; NS 1♠; Par -1520

West	North	East	South
		1 ♣	4 ♠ ¹

Dbl² All pass
1. Full-blooded.
2. Values, not penalties.

Lead: ♦ 6 (4th best) or ♣ A.

This will be a very good test for East West as reaching a small slam, never mind a grand slam, is far from easy. Part of the problem is that neither East nor West knows that his partner has extra values. The above auction would be sensible even if we took away an ace from each of East and West's hands. The auction demonstrates how aggressive bidding has become a part of modern bridge and how successful that approach can be.

4 ♠ will be defeated by three tricks - two trump, one heart, one diamond and two club losers. That translates to +500 for East West and only the board's vulnerability can give East West some comfort. They'll have to hope other East Wests bid to, but stop in, 5 ♦. That will make +440 but any other pairs playing in no trumps will score +520 - just 20 scoring points different from our table ... but a massive difference in matchpoints.