

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

261114SupervisedPractice

♠ A 8 3

♥ 10 7 2

♦ A 10 7 4 3 2

♣ 2

♠ J 9 4

♥ K 9 4 3

♦ K J 8

♣ Q 10 3

W

N

E

S

♠ Q 5 2

♥ A Q 8 6 5

♦ 6

♣ A J 8 5

♠ K 10 7 6

♥ J

♦ Q 9 5

♣ K 9 7 6 4

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

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

1. 10-12, 4+hearts (limit raise - but see text).

Well, that's how the auction might go but West's hand is not really worth the ten points it undoubtedly has (very flat shape, suspect black suit cards). That said, a 2♥ raise may allow North to bid 3♦ and if allowed to play there the result will be worse than going off in the heart game. Point-counters will bid 3♥ but losing-trick aficionados will be more cautious as the West hand has nine losers and is only worth a raise to the two level.

South's normal lead is ♦ 5. ♦ J is played from dummy and North switches to the singleton club. This is an odd switch if North doesn't have shortage so declarer should rise with ♣ A and draw trumps. There are now nine tricks - five hearts, a diamond and three clubs. If East plays low on the club switch North receives a ruff and the contract fails by two tricks.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 10 9

♥ Q J

♦ A 8 4 2

♣ Q 9 6 2

♠ A J 4 2

♥ K 5 2

♦ J 9 3

♣ A 7 3

N

W

E

S

♠ K 5 3

♥ A 9 7 4

♦ 10 6 5

♣ 10 5 4

♠ 8 7 6

♥ 10 8 6 3

♦ K Q 7

♣ K J 8

NS 1N; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♠; NS 1♥; Par +90

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1 N ¹	All pass		

1. 12-14.

As simple an auction as it's possible to have. North South have no shape (i.e. they both have flat hands) so cannot enter the auction.

It's difficult seeing West making anything other than five tricks for two off (the two AK combinations plus ♣ A) but a sequence lead of ♠ 10 will allow declarer to make all four spade tricks for +90.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 7N; EW 7♠; EW 7♣; EW 6♥; EW 6♦; Par -2220

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♥ ¹	Pass	6 N	All pass
1. 15-17, 6+hearts.			

This is a good example of why it's important to keep the high card strength of the 3 ♥ rebid up to standard. With the knowledge of 15-17 points opposite, East knows that the partnership has a combined 34-36 points. That means that bidding the no trump small slam is a fine proposition (for a start, there cannot be two missing aces if, at worst, only six points are held by the opponents).

It's generally best to lead passively against 6N so South may start with ♠ 8 (second from rubbish) or ♠ 9 (top of same garbage). Declarer counts his winners - four spades, two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs. That's eleven tricks and an extra winners can come from one of three suits - a diamond (if the suit breaks 4-3); a heart (if the queen falls in one or two rounds); or a club (if the finesse against the queen works).

Declarer can combine his chances. Win the spade in dummy and cash both the heart and club aces (lest a queen falls). A 4-3 diamond break is about 62% so cash three diamonds, throwing two hearts from dummy. Sadly the suit breaks 5-2 so we cross to dummy's ♠ J and cash ♥ K. ♥ Q doesn't fall so we'll fall back on the club finesse (just over a 50% chance). That works and we chalk up a satisfying +1440.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1 N ¹	2 ♠
All pass			
1. 12-14.			

West may make a sequence lead of ♦ 10. East wins and, to cut down on possible heart ruffs, switches to a trump. It would be a mistake to draw trumps at this stage as declarer will be left with three hearts losers to go with the diamond and slow club losers (just making).

Instead South ducks a club (a club will always be lost and this is the best way to prevent the defence being able to ruff a club - yes, there's a small risk of a 4-1 club break when we'll suffer a ruff but playing ace and another club could see the hand with three clubs winning to give partner a ruff; playing ♣ A, ♣ K and a third round destroys the communication to the long club winner).

So after ace and another club, East wins and does best to cash ♥ A and play a second heart. One defender wins that and plays a second trump. We win, draw the third round and can throw the third heart on the established club. That's nine tricks for +140.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

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

1. 15-16, balanced.

Although North has a flawed ten count (♠ K may be of dubious value though pulls its full weight here) game will be reached after South's rebid. North introduces a second suit, forcing, not because he's interested in a diamond contract but to see if partner has 3card heart support. As South bypasses that suit he's known to have just a doubleton and he introduces the spade suit as the auction has not yet ruled out a 4-4 fit there.

No spade fit comes to light so the no trump game is reached. The best lead - not obvious - is for West to lead ♥ 7 (4th best). The effect of this is to set up three heart winners to go with the two top clubs for one down. Any other lead and there's every chance of making nine tricks especially if declarer takes the two-way diamond finesse through East (that happens to be the correct approach as that line collects four diamonds when East is dealt queen doubleton).

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

West	North	East	South
		2 N ¹	All pass

1. 19-20, balanced.

The sight of dummy is always a disappointment when the bidding languishes in 2N after such a start. West has no values (of which to speak) and is too flat to consider transferring to what could be a 5-2 spade fit. Better to hope and pray (emphasis on the latter).

East has a clear four tricks (♠ A, ♦ A, ♦ K and a top club) and the defence will do well not to give declarer more than one extra trick.

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 5♠; NS 3N; NS 5♦; NS 2♥; NS 1♣; Par +650

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

A classic delayed game raise sequence . North bides his time with 2 ♦ and jumps to game to show a hand of about 13-15 points and 3/4card trump support.

West is likely lead a diamond or a club. The usual club lead would be ♣ 7 but a non-orthodox ♣ 9 works a little better. With the latter lead East has no reason to overtake with the queen. If the queen is played ♣ 10 becomes finessable and that may give declarer a winning option.

That said, declarer should make eleven tricks. With nine trumps it's best to play them from the top. They fall 2-2 so there are no trump losers. Next comes a heart to the king. That holds and a second heart is played, preparatory to taking a heart ruff in dummy. Declarer can take a double finesse in diamonds to make two diamonds (that only fails if East has both ♦ K and ♦ Q). This combination adds up to five trumps, one heart, one heart ruff, two diamonds and two top clubs. Plus 650.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

NS 6N; NS 6♥; NS 6♦; NS 2♣; EW 1♠; Par +990

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 N ¹	2 ♠	4 ♥
All pass			
			1. 12-14.

2 ♠ may be a little extreme for some (few values) but 3 ♠ (preemptive) would, of course, be more so). 3 ♠'s merit is compromised by the lack of a shortage, 7222 shape being a bad distribution for aggressive action.

South shuts up shop with a jump to game and it's difficult to fault the auction. The fits in the reds suits, singleton ♠ A and favourable club position means that 6 ♥ and 6 ♦ always make.

We always say open 1N if in range (12-14) and having a balanced hand. Here opening 1 ♦ would be an exception that may make it easier to reach the six level (probably 6 ♦) ... but it's not recommended.

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ J 6

♥ 10 5 3

♦ A Q J 6 4

♣ 10 9 4

♠ 9 7 4

♥ A 8

♦ 7 5 3 2

♣ A 8 6 2

♠ A 5 2

♥ K Q 7 6

♦ K 10 8

♣ Q J 7

♠ K Q 10 8 3

♥ J 9 4 2

♦ 9

♣ K 5 3

W

N

E

S

EW 2♠; NS 3♦; NS 1♥; Par +110

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

A simple competitive auction where, hopefully, the auction won't follow an "everything you can do, I can do better". That would see South pressing on with 3♥, for West to press on with 3♠. Yuk.

South has extra values but should be carefully about competing further. 2♥ is quite possible, as here, with just three trumps and the flat shape of the hand should preclude South getting to the three level with possibly just seven trumps (as here).

West should come to eight tricks - four spades, a heart, a heart ruff and two top clubs. 3♥ won't play very well but going two off for -100 would be a good score.

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

♠ K 8 2

♥ A 9 5 2

♦ K Q J 9

♣ J 5

♠ Q 7 6 5 4 3

♥ K 6

♦ 6 3

♣ K 6 2

♠ A J 10

♥ Q 8 4

♦ A 8 5

♣ Q 9 4 3

♠ 9

♥ J 10 7 3

♦ 10 7 4 2

♣ A 10 8 7

W

N

E

S

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

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

1. 12-14.
2. Stayman.
3. No 4card major.

A Stayman sequence where 3N is reached once no major suit fit is found. The best lead for West is a passive diamond (probably ♦ 7 - second from rubbish). Declarer can win that in dummy and play a low heart. That will set up a second heart whether East rises with ♥ K or not. Declarer cannot play on clubs to good effect so may have to rely on a spade finesse for the ninth trick (there are already two spade, two heart and four diamond winners).

This is another two-way finesse position but after three rounds of both diamonds and hearts declarer will know that East has doubletons in both suits. That makes it more likely that East has long spades so the marked play is to cash ♠ K and finesse through East. Not guaranteed to succeed but well-reasoned and here successful. Going with the odds is for winners.

(East's spade suit is not good enough to open a vulnerable weak 2♠).

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 4♦; EW 2♣; NS 1♠; NS 1♥; Par -430

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

1. 10-12, 4card diamond support (limit raise).

It wouldn't be too bad to open 2 ♣ (21-22, or, as here, an eight playing trick hand) but 1 ♦ is the more flexible call. With the holdings in the short suits looking "no trumpy" the above auction gets East West to the top spot.

There will always be ten tricks (three spades, one heart and six diamonds) and the defence will have to lead a heart early to hold declarer to this. If there is no heart play from the defence, declarer can play on clubs to make an eleventh winner. Dummy has entries in either spades or diamonds to enjoy ♣ Q.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

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

1. Trial bid.

2. Can't help in the spade suit but shows the decent club values.

A slightly aggressive auction to a contract that will fail more often than not. Declarer's plan is to ruff a spade loser in dummy, pitch the other spade on ♣ A and take a heart finesse. With ♥ K badly placed the contract is doomed.

There is no reason for East not to take that heart finesse but one way for the defence to prevail would be for South to lead ♦ 10. After three rounds of diamonds, North plays a fourth round and South will always make ♥ K (fantasy bridge - on sight of dummy North will switch to a spade).

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 3N; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; NS 1♣; Par -620			
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	3 ♣
All pass			

This is what passes for a classical three-level preempt - great suit and good shape (7321 being so much better than the barren 7222 shape of East's hand on board 8).

It's not impossible but it's a big position for East to protect (i.e. make a call after two passes) with a take out double - perfect shape albeit lacking in points. West's best option would be to take the money by passing. After all there is no guarantee of an eight card major suit fit and bidding 3N happens to work only because of East's unexpected club card.

3 ♣ doubled will cost 500 (there's an unavoidable trump loser to go with two spades, two hearts and a diamond) but expect to see many North South's conceding 200.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

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

NS 4N; NS 3♠; NS 4♦; NS 4♣; NS 1♥; Par +430			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♦
1 ♥	3 N	All pass	

South has a non-touching three-suiter and opens in the suit immediately below the singleton. North's 3N call is a slight underbid but it gets the partnership to the right spot.

East will lead partner's suit - ♥ 3 (lowest from three cards being normal when partner's bid). North starts to cut the defence's communications by ducking and winning trick two when East plays a second heart. Now a losing diamond finesse is taken but, crucially, West can never get in after playing a third heart. Declarer took that finesse so as to knock out the danger hand's entry as soon as possible. If East is put in too early he can clear hearts and West's outside entry will still be there to enjoy the hearts. North cashes the diamonds ending in the South hand and prepares to take a club finesse. West's void is not a hindrance as ♣ J is still finessed. Whilst it loses, declarer can finesse against ♣ 10 later. With the spade finesse also working there should always be ten tricks (two spades, two hearts, three diamonds and three clubs). +430 to North South.