

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 5♥; NS 5♦; NS 2N; EW 1♠; NS 1♣; Par +450

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

All pass

1. Game forcing heart raise (4+trumps).
2. Spade shortage. See text.

[Follow-up to Jacoby 2N workshop]

North has a close decision as to whether to jump to game on the second round or to show the spade shortage. He has just 12 high card points but has 5-5 shape and quality cards (two aces and a king). That means he may treat the hand as if it were a decent thirteen count.

South is minimum for the game force and his hand isn't improved by partner's shortage. He's happy to sign off in game, knowing North will continue with an appropriate hand. North has bid enough so the contract rests in game.

Declarer should make eleven tricks, losing a diamond and a spade. He can lead ♦ J from hand. If East covers he plays a second diamond towards the ten. If East doesn't cover, the ace will draw ♦ K, setting up ♦ 10.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 5♠; EW 5♥; EW 2N; EW 3♣; NS 2♦; Par -450

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass

4♠ All pass

The modern approach with the West hand is to make a simple overcall and, if appropriate, make a later take out double to show the extra values and general shape of the hand. Here East is able to raise the spades and game is quickly reached.

North leads a diamond and the spade position is such that declarer can lay down the top trumps, drawing South's queen. A third round of spades is cashed and ♥ Q run. South may duck this (North providing a useful ♥ 9 count card) but West plays ♥ 10, running that. South must take the trick. Declarer has eleven tricks - five spades, four hearts and the two minor suit aces. +450 to East West which should be a goodish 60-70% score.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 6N; NS 6♥; NS 6♣; NS 3♠; NS 2♦; Par +990

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
Pass	3 ♠ ¹	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 N ²	Pass	5 ♥ ³

All pass

- 10+hcps, 4+hearts and 0-1spades (splinter raise).
- Roman Key Card Blackwood ("RKCB").
- 2 of the 5 "aces" without ♥ Q.

[Follow-up to Jacoby 2N workshop]

Of course, this hand contains a small trap in that we use Jacoby 2N with game forcing raises that don't contain shortages (singletons or voids). North begins with a 3 ♠ splinter-showing raise and South can't get excited with his spade suit showing some wastage (namely ♠ Q).

North has extra values and continues with RKCB (safe as he has controls in all the side suits). It would, of course, be unfortunate if partner didn't hold an ace but that's both unlikely and pessimistic. Here South shows two key cards so North knows two are missing and signs off. Note that if North didn't hold ♥ Q this auction would be more dangerous - now South might bid 5 ♠ (two "aces" plus the queen of trumps) and a no play slam will have been reached.

Declarer can finesse ♥ Q. A second heart draws the opposition trumps and there are twelve tricks (on the assumption of a diamond lead) - five hearts, five clubs, a spade and a diamond. If declarer escapes a diamond lead he can make all the tricks as the diamond loser is discarded on a winning club and two spades can be ruffed in dummy. The fourth spade is thrown on the fifth club winner.

We've stayed out of slam because it isn't a good contract. Here it just happens to roll in. Give West ♥ K107 and we would fail on a diamond lead and the same way of playing the trump suit (yes, slam could be made. It would need South to seek to run ♥ J. When that's covered, it's necessary to finesse ♥ 9.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

Some Easts might bid 3 ♥ and game would still be reached as West has sufficient shape and hard cards (ace and two kings) to carry on. 4 ♥ is appealing because of the doubleton diamond and extra trump (not to mention the club holding which will often be worth two tricks as we can play North for a sound holding in the suit [i.e. both the king and queen]).

There's little to the play. Declarer win ♣ K and draws trumps to play ace and another diamond. South wins and will have to play a small spade. This gives declarer a guess with the winning play to put in ♠ J (then eleven tricks emerge). If South doesn't switch to a spade declarer can throw two spades from dummy on the established diamonds (after ruffing the suit good). Now one of West's spades is ruffed in dummy - five hearts, three diamonds, a diamond ruff, a spade ruff and the ace of clubs (again, eleven tricks this way).

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 7N; EW 7♠; EW 7♣; EW 2♥; EW 3♦; Par -1520

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

1. Jacoby 2N showing 4+spades and game forcing values.
2. A shortage in hearts and not rock-bottom (see text).
3. RKCB.
4. 2 of the 5 "aces" plus ♠ Q.

[Follow-up to Jacoby 2N workshop]

Just the six bids to arrive convincingly in a grand slam. West knows that there is no heart loser (♥ A covering the advertised shortage), solid trumps (queen has been shown in the RKCB response) and that partner holds both minor suit aces. That means the clubs are solid and ♦ 5 loser is covered by ♦ A. He doesn't know of the sixth spade so it would be a risk to bid 7N. Grand slams always score well (the opponents won't make more than 20% tops on the hand) so 7 ♠ is the non-greedy contract.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

West doesn't have quite enough to show values on the first round (by making a take out double) but partner's re-opening double allows 4 ♥ to be reached. There's an obvious spade loser (after the opening lead of that suit) so declarer needs to restrict himself to two trump losers. As good as anything is to play North to hold ♥ J. Alas, provided North is alert, the contract will fail. West runs ♥ 10 on which North plays a smooth ♥ 5. ♥ 10 loses to the knave and there are still two trumps to lose. If North flies in with the two top trumps he crashes partner's knave and ten tricks roll in.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 6♦; NS 6♣; NS 5N; NS 3♥; EW 2♠; Par +1100: EW 6♠×-4

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

1. Unbalanced with 8 playing tricks; or 21-22, balanced. Here semi-balanced, a practical shot.
2. Relay.
3. 21-22, balanced.
4. Stayman.

That's a bit of an agricultural sequence to 6♦. After all South may have been dealt 3♠3♥2♦5♣ and North would be playing in an uncomfortable 5-2 fit. Oh well, this approach is successful here*. Declarer will take a losing heart finesse but there are twelve tricks - one spade, two hearts, five trumps and four clubs.

**a more sophisticated approach would see North bid 4♦ over 3♦, a natural slam try showing at least five diamonds. South would cue bid the ace of hearts to confirm good diamond support. RKCB wouldn't be too helpful here because if partner holds two "aces" the small slam would be too high anyway. North may therefore blast 6♦ over 4♦. This approach is a little more scientific than the auction above (but still has an amount of bashing about it).*

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

 1. Preemptive.

Neither West nor East may find themselves with quite enough to come in over 3♥ (i.e. to be able to double for takeout) so South may steal the contract. There is one defence that beats 3♥ and that's for West to cash two clubs then switch to ♦K (perhaps helped by partner bidding the suit). Now East can play two more rounds of diamonds. This promotes West's ♥Q (if declarer ruffs low, West overruffs; if South ruffs high, ♥Q becomes a natural trump trick).

If East West reach 3♠ they may make this. As a minimum declarer will have to divine the position of the spade suit and play South to hold ♠10 (i.e. be able to run ♠6/7 or finesse ♠8).

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 6N; E 6♥; E 6♦; W 5♥; W 5♦; EW 3♠; EW 2♣; Par -1440

West	North	East	South
	2 ♠ ¹	Dbl	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 N	All pass		
1. 5-9, 6spades ("weak").			

The weak two bid makes things awkward for East who starts with a strength-showing double (one of the few exceptions to doubles being of the SOS variety*). After partner's response, East bids his suit, a bid that generally shows a 6+suit and, say, 19+hcps.

West, who may have passed 2 ♠ for penalties, is in a difficult position and may bid 3N (as above). The winning bid would be to bid 4 ♦ and now 6 ♦ is a real possibility.

This is good example of the weak opening bids creating some havoc and why we recommend their use. Left to their own devices (i.e.. an uninterrupted auction) East West might find the six level more easily.

*SOS - support for the unbid suits, opening values and shortage in the opened suit.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 4♥; EW 1N; EW 2♦; EW 1♠; EW 1♣; Par -620

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

West will lead ♥ K and East will overtake the first or second round. East does best to switch to a diamond, to seek to build further defensive tricks (the hearts are in the bag) but declarer has some control over the hand. He wins the diamond switch and attempts to run ♠ J. East may cover but there are now four spade, one diamond and one club winners for South. That's six in total, translating to minus 200 for North South.

That could be an OK score for North South but will depend on how many East Wests bid to and make the playable 4 ♥. That contract may require the running of ♦ 10 (entry problem in first playing towards ♦ K Q) and ruffing a club to hand/throwing the a club on the fourth diamond. +620 to East West would be a fine score for them.

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

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

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

1. Preemptive.

East's jump to 3 ♦ isn't automatic (it unilaterally stops East West seeking to find a spade fit) but it's the bid that creates the biggest problem for North South. South can't be sure of the value of the dubious ♠ KQ but he has an eighteen count so can't really bid anything other than game. The preemptive overcall has worked its magic.

East may lead the club singleton and declarer will have to take ♣ A else he may suffer a club ruff. Now there's not much to do but play ace and another heart. By the end of the hand declarer will be two tricks short, losing a trump, two diamonds and two clubs. Minus 100 should be a little below average for North South (it beats a possible -110 when the opponents bid and make 2 ♠ but that's not a likely contract when South has such a big (but flawed) hand.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 3♠; EW 2♦; NS 2♣; Par -430

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

1. 4+trumps in a game forcing hand.
2. 15-18, balanced (may, as here, have a fifth heart).
3. No minor suit ace to cue (see text).

[Follow-up to Jacoby 2N workshop]

West shows his balanced hand with extras and East, with a minimum(ish) 2N raise, contents himself with a 4 ♥ call (he would otherwise have to cue bid 4 ♠, a bid that will take the partnership to the possibly-uncomfortable five level). Whilst West has extras he has concerns about the poor ♣ KQ holding and doesn't make another move.

That's a good decision because the hands are mirror images of one another. Declarer will lose a club and two diamonds and will be happy not to have bid beyond game. Those in 5 ♥ will regret their optimism.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

EW 5♠; EW 5♥; EW 2N; NS 2♦; EW 1♣; Par -650

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

- Game forcing with 4+spades (Jacoby).
- Minimum hand (denies a good 13+).

East's eleven count is as good as it gets (a couple of aces is always useful) but we have to draw a line somewhere. Our approach suggests East treats this as a "bad" hand so East jumps to game, a warning sign for partner. This is an example of the "principle of fast arrival" which applies when we are in a *game forcing auction*. Then jumps to game show the weaker hands and bidding at lower levels the stronger ones. We do this because we want to give ourselves plenty of bidding space with the better hands to find the optimum contract.

South leads a top diamond and declarer can see that twelve tricks may be there if the heart finesse is right (plus, generally, a 3-3 heart break). Well, one of these things is true but, with ♥ Q offside, eleven tricks is the limit of the hand. The club loser can be thrown on the fourth heart.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

30thDecember2015 SupervisedPairs

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

NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; EW 1♦; Par +120

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

- 5-9, 6spades ("weak").
- Enquiry, game interest.
- 5-7 hcps without two of the top three spade honours.

This auction shows good use of the 2N enquiry where North asks about South hcp range and the quality of the spade suit. When he receives the worst reply he sensibly stays in partscore.

Even the three level isn't completely safe. If West leads a heart, East can win, return a club and get a heart ruff. That process can be repeated and there are five defensive tricks. Similarly, on a different start, declarer may misplay the trumps by playing ♠ A and ♠ K. Now East can get in with ♠ Q and, say, cash ♥ A before playing a club. He receives a club ruff and the defensive again has its five tricks when we add the second top club to these winners.

In the absence of the first-described defence, declarer's winning play is to cash ♠ A and, when he sees ♠ J, finesse ♠ 10. Now a third spade can be cashed and East makes just ♠ Q in the suit. This is an example of the somewhat complex principle of restricted choice - when an opponent *could* have a choice of plays from equals (here ♠ Q and ♠ J) and he plays one of these cards, play him to have had no choice. So we play West to have been dealt a singleton spade. It can be shown mathematically that, in the long-run, this approach is a handsome winner.