

Some Special Balancing Auctions

RHO Opens 3rd Seat, then Passes
His Partner's One-Level Bid

Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	Pass	??

You're in the Pass-Out Seat

North East South West (you)

pass pass 1♣ pass

1♥ pass pass

- What do you know from this auction?
 - North could not open the bidding.
 - South has a maximum of 12 points, probably less.
 - Points on the hand are evenly divided.(19-21)either way.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	pass

Your Hand

♠ A J 7

♥ 7 3 2

♦ Q 9 7

♣ K 10 4 3

- I hate to let opponents play a 1-level bid.
- This is an exception.
- No suit to bid.
- No stopper in hearts.
- You have the values for a balancing double, but 3 cards in the unbid suits.
- Best to pass with this hand.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	dble

Your Hand

♠ Q 10 9 7

♥ K 3 2

♦ J 9 7 3

♣ A 3

- You did not double directly over 1♣, partner will know your hand is less than opening values.
- You have support for both the unbid suits.
- Partner must have a few points.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	dble

Your Hand

♠ K J 9 7

♥ 10 2

♦ A Q 7 3

♣ A 8 3

- You double.
- Your original pass over 1♣ tells partner you do not have a big hand.
- With 14 points, you can raise partner one level.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	1♠

Your Hand

♠ J 9 7 5 4

♥ A 2

♦ K Q 7 3

♣ 8 3

- You can bid 1♠ with this hand.
- Partner is a passed hand, but she will have some points and surely 3 or more spades.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	1♠

Your Hand

♠ A J 10 5

♥ 8 7 5 4

♦ Q 3

♣ A Q 3

- You can bid 1♠ with this hand.
- This hand does not work for a balancing double, because of your diamond doubleton.
- Your choice here is 1♠ or pass.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	1nt

Your Hand

♠10 5

♥ A J 9

♦ Q J 5 3

♣ K J 9 3

- Your 1nt bid shows 11 to 14 points.
- The hand is not good enough to make direct takeout double or a no trump overcall.
- You have stoppers in both their suits.

North	East	South	West (you)
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	pass	2♣

Your Hand

♠ 10 5

♥ 9 3

♦ A J 5

♣ K Q 10 9 5 3

- This is not a Michaels cue.
- It is wise to have a good 6-card suit when you do this.
- South does not promise a good suit when he opens 1♣.
- Partner will have about 10 points and hopefully a club or two.

North	East (you)	South	West
pass	pass	1 ♦	pass
1 ♠	pass	2 ♣	pass
pass			

New Auction

Your Hand

♠ K 8 7 5

♥ A Q J 9

♦ 7 5

♣ 9 7 3

- 2 ♥ It is risky to bid a 4-card suit at the 2 level.
- Your partner has 9 or 10 points.
- Surely in this auction, partner has some hearts.
- Vulnerable, you should pass.
- Not Vulnerable, bid.

North	East (you)	South	West
pass	pass	1 ♦	pass
1 ♥	pass	1nt	pass
pass			

New Auction

Your Hand

♠ Q 9 8 7 5

♥ A 9 7 2

♦ 5

♣ K J 3

- Opener has 12 to 14 points.
- Responder has at most 8 points, probably less.
- You have 10 points.
- Partner has 8 or a few more.
- On this bidding, partner probably has 3 spades.
- Bid 2♠.

North	East (you)	South	West
pass	pass	1 ♦	pass
1 ♥	pass	1nt	pass
pass			

New Auction

Your Hand

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

- Opener has 12 to 14 points.
- Spades and clubs are the unbid suits.
- Partner almost surely has some clubs with you, but she just might have 4 spades.
- Make a reopening double with this hand.
- Let partner choose which of the unbid suits she likes best.

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	pass	pass	??

A more traditional Balancing Auction

Your Hand

♠ Q 9 5

♥ A J 10

♦ J 10 8 5

♣ K J 9

- In this situation, a 1 no trump reopening bid shows 11-14 points.
- You have 12 points here.
- Bid 1nt.

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	pass	pass	??

A more traditional Balancing Auction

Your Hand

♠ A 9

♥ A J 10

♦ K 10 8 5

♣ K J 9 5

- To show a standard no trump overcall, you must double first.
- After partner bids, you will bid 1 no trump.
- Shows 15-17 points.
- No Stayman or transfers here.

North East South West
1 ♥ pass pass ??

A more traditional Balancing Auction

Your Hand

♠ A J 7 5

♥ A 3

♦ K 9 8 4

♣ K J 9

- Here you have a takeout double you would have made in the direct seat.
- You must listen carefully to partner's bid.
- Did he show extra values?
- Perhaps you will raise partner's suit.

North East South West
1 ♥ pass 1 nt ??

One final auction

Your Hand

♠ A J 7 5

♥ 9 3

♦ K Q 8 4

♣ K J 9

- This is not a balancing situation.
- If you pass and opener passes, partner will be in the balancing seat.
- A double here shows the same hand you would have had if you had doubled in the direct seat.

Final Thoughts

- Understanding how to balance and when it is correct to balance is an important part of good bidding.
- In matchpoint scoring, we must fight for our share of partscores.
- Nevertheless, we must choose to balance with careful thought, and vulnerability is always a factor.