

# U3ABC Compendium Eight: Bidding Commentary

## Introduction

This is a summary of Hands 1-24 from Compendium Eight, complete with Bidding Commentary to help explain the recommended bidding. As always, your mileage might vary when you play these hands.

### Advanced topics

Advanced topics are in green. These are included for completeness; you can ignore them for now or dive in if you want *more*.

## The Hands

### North East South West

1NT Pass 6NT Pass

♠ KQ6  
♥ K52  
♦ KJ95  
♣ 942

♠ T742  
♥ 9843  
♦ QT876  
♣

♠ J853  
♥ QJT6  
♦  
♣ JT875

♠ A9  
♥ A7  
♦ A432  
♣ AKQ63

### Board: 1 Dealer: North #1627

North has 12 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 1NT.

The 1NT opening bid promises 12-14 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has 21 HCP, a semi-balanced hand, and all four Aces. With 33-35 HCP, 6NT looks like the right contract.

6NT usually needs 33+ HCP.

#### ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

If you look at the hands, you can see 6NT won't be easy, as the Clubs split badly, as do the Diamonds. It looks like the key is to finesse the Diamonds three times.

### East South West North

2NT Pass 3♣ Pass  
3♠ Pass 3NT Pass  
Pass Pass

♠ 852  
♥ 653  
♦ J84  
♣ QJ93

♠ 63  
♥ JT82  
♦ 963  
♣ AT75

♠ AKQJ7  
♥ K9  
♦ AQT  
♣ K42

♠ T94  
♥ AQ74  
♦ K752  
♣ 86

### Board: 2 Dealer: East #2546

East has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT. With such a strong 5-card Spade suit, it's tempting to play in Spades, but you're not strong enough to open 2C and if you open 1S, partner might pass with fewer than 6 HCP, missing game.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

West has 5 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (25-27) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but with 4 Hearts they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit in a Major. 4H would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

Notice that West just needs 4 Hearts, they don't have to be 4 good cards!

East responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

West can't bid either Major without a 4-4 fit. With at least 25 HCP, they have just enough to bid 3NT.

#### ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

East is nearly strong enough to open 2C, but not quite (they have 8-9 tricks).

If they were playing Strong Twos, East could open 2S.

Notice that East has a 5-card major and would probably do better in 4S if partner has at least 3-card support. Finding a 5-3 fit after a 2 NT opening is difficult – which is why some people won't open 2NT with a 5-card Major.

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
♠ JT3 ♥ A9876 ♦ 2 ♣ AKJ8			
♠ K952			♠ A6
♥ 5			♥ JT32
♦ KQT65			♦ J987
♣ T95			♣ 763
♠ Q874 ♥ KQ4 ♦ A43 ♣ Q42			

**Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♦K #1641**

South opens 1NT. North has 5 Hearts and 13 HCP, so they start by bidding 2D, asking partner to transfer to 2H. When South bids 2H as requested, what does North bid next?

North has 13 HCP, and partner has 12-14, so the partnership has 25-27. You need 25 points for 3NT or 4H, but which is the better contract? North bids 3NT to tell partner:

- I have exactly 5 Hearts
- We have enough points for game in NT or Hearts
- You decide!

(That's what 3NT means in this situation, after the Transfer to Hearts – it has other meanings in other situations!)

Yes, it's a proper dialogue. South can pass to play in 3NT or bid 4H to play in 4H. With just two Hearts, they'd pass 3NT, as they've only got a 5-2 fit, not enough. With three Hearts, they would probably bid 4H unless they hate the idea for some reason; with four or more Hearts, they would bid 4H.

With three good Hearts, South is happy to bid 4H, game. (This type of bid, choosing between two options offered by partner, is sometimes called a **Preference Bid**.)

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

South only has three Hearts and a very balanced 4333 hand (so not much chance of ruffing anything), so they could pass 3NT - but they have two good Honours (K & Q) in Hearts, so they decided on 4H.

I wonder which you chose - some people prefer playing in a suit, some people prefer No Trumps. I like cheese.

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		
♠ QJ9 ♥ 9543 ♦ K764 ♣ 92			
♠ K87642			♠ A53
♥ Q72			♥ AT6
♦ 953			♦ AJT
♣ Q			♣ A654
♠ T ♥ KJ8 ♦ Q82 ♣ KJT873			

**Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♣9 #2304**

West has a 6-card Spade suit with just one Honour and just 7 HCP; not really enough to open a Weak Two, but they do.

This Weak Two opening suggests 6 Spades and 5-10 HCP, and no (other) 4-card major.

East has three Spades, so they could raise to 3S based on that alone, to extend the pre-empt, but they have 17 HCP. They can see 9 Spades and 22-27 HCP, so they're strong enough to raise to 4S with a reasonable expectation of making it.

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

Strangely, East's high point count suggests that raising partner to 4S isn't a great idea. The opposition can't have enough points to make game, so you don't need to extend the pre-empt. But do you really have enough points to make 10 tricks? You have four Aces, but not much else, and partner probably hasn't got many points outside their suit so those Aces probably won't help promote extra tricks.

Looking at the cards, you will probably lose just one Spade, one Heart, and one Diamond, but only because most of the missing Honours are where you need them to be!

Sometimes you just need some luck.

**North East South West**

1♠	Dbl	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
	♠ KQJT7		
	♥ K862		
	♦ 94		
	♣ A9		
♠ A983		♠ 5	
♥ 743		♥ AQJT	
♦ KJ8		♦ AQ52	
♣ QJT		♣ K872	
	♠ 642		
	♥ 95		
	♦ T763		
	♣ 6543		

**Board: 5 Dealer: North #146**

East has 16 HCP, a single Spade, and no 5-card suit - an ideal hand to double the 1S opening for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12 HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a Takeout Double. Or it could be a strong hand with a long suit – see the [Discussion](#) below.

The double is forcing.

West has 11 HCP and no 4-card suit other than Spades, so they can't respond with a suit. With a stop in Spades, they can bid NT. A response of 1NT would show 6-9 HCP, so they respond with 2NT, showing 10-12 HCP, a balanced hand, and a stop in the doubled suit.

East can see they have 26-28 HCP and one stop in the opponents' suit. They're strong enough to raise to 3NT, although the single stop in Spades plus their Singleton is a worry.

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

If East had a 6-card suit, they could double and then bid their suit on the next round. They're far too strong for a simple overcall.

A double may not be for takeout; if on the second round, partner bids their own suit rather than raising or passing, then they have 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit. This is called **Double Then Bid**. The doubler's partner doesn't know which type of double has been made until that second bid.

**East South West North**

1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ QJT		
	♥ KQT9		
	♦ 73		
	♣ JT73		
♠ 973		♠ AK5	
♥ J3		♥ A852	
♦ A4		♦ K952	
♣ KQ9854		♣ A2	
	♠ 8642		
	♥ 764		
	♦ QJT86		
	♣ 6		

**Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♦Q #223**

East has 18 points and a balanced hand, with two 4-card suits, Diamonds and Hearts. They plan to open one of a suit and rebid 2NT to show their shape and points, but which suit? With a major and a minor you will usually choose the major – not least because there's a chance that partner has four and you'll find a fit right away. So they open 1H.

West has 10 points, an unbalanced hand, and a good 6-card minor. They don't have four Hearts so can't support partner's major. They are just strong enough to bid a new suit at the two level, so they bid 2C. Bidding a new suit at the two-level shows 10+ points and 4 cards, and is forcing.

East now knows that West has 10+ points, making a total of at least 28. So, instead of rebidding 2NT, East can rebid 3NT.

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

	♠ 932	
	♥ T983	
	♦ 82	
	♣ A765	
♠ KT764		♠ AQJ5
♥ K4		♥ J
♦ K943		♦ AJ65
♣ 32		♣ QJT4
	♠ 8	
	♥ AQ7652	
	♦ QT7	
	♣ K98	

**Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♥T 1385**

West has 9 HCP and a 5-card Spade suit with two Honours (K and T), just strong enough to overcall at the 1-level.

The 1S overcall shows 8-15 HCP and a 5-card Spade suit.

North has 4-card support for partner's Hearts and 4 HCP + 1 SP, so they raise partner to 2H; a bit misleading, as this promises 6 points, but not bad.

East has 16 HCP and excellent 4-card support for partner's Spades. They can even add 2 points for their Singleton Heart, so with 26-33 points they're strong enough to raise to game.

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

	♠ Q83	
	♥ Q975	
	♦ T9	
	♣ QJT2	
♠ K964		♠ 75
♥ AK		♥ T8632
♦ A52		♦ J643
♣ AK43		♣ 87
	♠ AJT2	
	♥ J4	
	♦ KQ87	
	♣ 965	

**Board: 8 Dealer: West #1731**

West has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

East has just 1 HCP so game is very unlikely. They could pass 2NT, but they have a 5-card Heart suit and two Doubletons, their hand is much more useful in Hearts than NT.

East also wants West's much stronger hand hidden from the Defence, so they want them to be Declarer – an advantage of a Transfer.

So East bids 3D, a transfer to 3H, then passes. Partner must have at least two Hearts, for a 7-card fit. Not ideal, but they are not strong enough to rebid 3NT to offer a choice.

At first glance the 3H contract looks more difficult than 2NT, after all it requires an extra trick! However, East's hand is so weak it's unlikely to make ANY tricks in NT, but might make two tricks (by ruffing) in Hearts.

**North East South West**

1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

	♠ 743	
	♥ AKQJT	
	♦ A	
	♣ A432	
♠ T95		♠ AKQ2
♥ 653		♥ 7
♦ KJ96		♦ T832
♣ Q97		♣ J865
	♠ J86	
	♥ 9842	
	♦ Q754	
	♣ KT	

**Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♠A #14**

With 18 high card points (HCP) and a 5 card major (which is REALLY solid), North's bid is easy, 1H. They're two-suited, so plan to rebid Clubs on the second round – with a jump to show their 16-19 point count.

With a bare 6 high card points (HCP), South might be tempted to bid 1NT, but they have 4 card support for their partner's major, so raising it is a MUCH better bid; 2H shows 6-9 points and 4 card support.

After South's 2H bid, North knows that between them they have at least 24 high card points and 9 trumps; the "missing" point doesn't matter much when they can see an easy seven tricks in their hand, so they bid 4H

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

North could open 1H with a lot less (12 points and a dismal 4 card suit); the 1H (or 1S) opening is right for a wide range of hands; North's SECOND bid will clarify their strength.

As South is raising a trump suit bid by partner, and they have four trumps, they can add an extra point (a Shortage Point) for their doubleton, but it makes no difference to their call.

**East South West North**

1♠	2♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ 876		
	♥ 95		
	♦ QJ852		
	♣ K87		
♠ Q432		♠ AKJT9	
♥ Q3		♥ 764	
♦ A4		♦ K93	
♣ J9432		♣ A6	
	♠ 5		
	♥ AKJT82		
	♦ T76		
	♣ QT5		

**Board: 10 Dealer: East #16**

South has 10 HCP and a good 6-card suit, so overcalls with 2H.

A 2-level overcall shows 11-15 HCP and a 5-card suit; South is a little weaker (10 HCP) but that's forgivable as they have a 6-card suit.

North has 6 HCP but only 2 Hearts, so isn't strong enough to raise.

South isn't strong enough to bid over 4S, so passes.

**South West North East**

1♥	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♠ 863		
	♥ T63		
	♦ 94		
	♣ AT954		
♠ AQT5		♠ KJ97	
♥ 9		♥ A752	
♦ KQJ72		♦ 63	
♣ Q82		♣ K76	
	♠ 42		
	♥ KQJ84		
	♦ AT85		
	♣ J3		

**Board: 11 Dealer: South #2725**

West has 14 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card suit, so doubles for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12 HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**. Or it could be a strong hand with a long suit – see the [Discussion](#) for Board #1.

This double is forcing.

North has just 4 HCP and a decent 6-card major. They're not forced to bid as West has intervened, so their "free" bid of 2S promises 6-9 HCP and a 4-card suit – exaggerating their points because they have a 6-card major. Hmm.

**West North East South**

1♣	1♠	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ AKQT98		
	♥ 7		
	♦ JT976		
	♣ 6		
♠ 764		♠ J5	
♥ AK43		♥ 982	
♦ K		♦ AQ43	
♣ QJ743		♣ AK52	
	♠ 32		
	♥ QJT65		
	♦ 852		
	♣ T98		

**Board: 12 Dealer: West #910**

North has 10 HCP and a good 6-card Spade suit, so they're strong enough to overcall at the 1-level.

The 1-level 1S overcall shows 8-15 HCP and a 5-card suit.

South has just 3 HCP and 2 Spades, so isn't strong enough to bid.

North isn't strong enough to bid again.

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
		♠ QT4	
		♥ 75	
		♦ AJT8	
		♣ AQ82	
♠ J973			♠ 2
♥ QT86			♥ AK32
♦ Q32			♦ 9764
♣ J7			♣ KT64
		♠ AK865	
		♥ J94	
		♦ K5	
		♣ 953	

**Board: 13 Dealer: North Lead: ♥ A #2569**

South has 5 Spades and 11 HCP, so they start by bidding 2H, asking partner to bid 2S. When North bids 2S, what does South bid next?

With 11 HCP, and partner's 12-14, the partnership has 23-25 – maybe just enough for 3NT or 4S but only if partner has the maximum 14 HCP. So West bids 2NT to tell partner:

- I have exactly 5 Spades
- I have 11-12 HCP, please bid game in NT or Spades if you have 14 HCP
- You decide!

The golden rule here is: after the transfer, with just five trumps, your rebid is 2NT (with 11-12 HCP) or 3NT (with 13+ HCP). Do not bid your suit.

This 2NT bid is a Game Invitation. North should now:

- Bid 4S with three or more Spades and 14 points
- Bid 3NT with two Spades and 14 points
- Bid 3S with three or more Spades and 12-13 points
- Pass with two Spades and 12-13 points

Phew! Look at it another way: when partner bids 2NT after the transfer, you need 14 points to bid game and you need three or more Spades to bid Spades.

North has three Spades (choose Spades) and 14 points (choose game), so bids 4S.

East	South	West	North
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
		♠ K93	
		♥ QT2	
		♦ AT852	
		♣ Q4	
♠ A742			♠ 65
♥ AJ8763			♥ 4
♦ Q			♦ K64
♣ 62			♣ AT98753
		♠ QJT8	
		♥ K95	
		♦ J973	
		♣ KJ	

**Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♠ Q #2689**

East has 7 HCP and 7 Clubs, enough for a 3-level pre-empt.

This 3C pre-empt suggests 7+ Clubs, 6-9 HCP, and no 4-card Major.

West has 11 HCP with a nice 6-card Heart suit, but that's not enough to bid Hearts. They only have 2-card support for Clubs, so can't raise to 4C – so they pass.

North and South have 11 points each, so neither is strong enough to double for take-out (needs 13-15 HCP), so they pass too.

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

Remember that pre-empts are weak, in effect a sacrifice to stop the opposition making Game; you aren't promising 9 tricks, far from it!

South	West	North	East
3♦	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

♠ AJ8  
♥ AJ73  
♦ A9  
♣ AKQ7

♠ 64  
♥ KQT64  
♦ J653  
♣ 82

♠ KT953  
♥ 9852  
♦  
♣ T543

♠ Q72  
♥  
♦ KQT8742  
♣ J96

**Board: 15 Dealer: South Lead: ♥K #3049**

South has 8 HCP and 7 Diamonds, enough for a 3-level pre-empt.

This 3D pre-empt suggests 7+ Diamonds, 6-9 HCP, and no 4-card Major.

North has 23 HCP, 2-card support for Diamonds, and (critically) all 4 Aces. They can see 9 trumps and 29+ HCP. Definitely enough for Game (5D) and probably enough for 6D. There's no bid they can make to check, so they bid an optimistic 6D for the slam bonus.

East and West aren't strong enough to bid over the pre-empt.

#### ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

North has all four Aces, so knows that whatever the lead, partner should immediately have control. This helps considerably, as they can immediately implement whatever strategy suits them best – and there's no risk of the opposition leading A and then K for two quick tricks.

West	North	East	South
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1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

♠ 2  
♥ QT82  
♦ QT97  
♣ KJT9

♠ KJ98  
♥ 3  
♦ A85  
♣ A8653

♠ AQT7  
♥ A54  
♦ K63  
♣ 742

♠ 6543  
♥ KJ976  
♦ J42  
♣ Q

**Board: 16 Dealer: West Lead: ♣Q #2691**

West has 12 HCP, a 5-card Club suit and a 4-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand. They bid their longest suit, Clubs, even though majors are generally preferable, don't lie to your partner! They plan to rebid Spades, their second suit, if possible but they're too weak to bid above the barrier, so can't rebid 2S.

East has 13 HCP so game is likely. In NT? Even though their hand is balanced, they bid their 4-card Spade suit before choosing NT, just in case partner has four Spades. This 1S bid shows 6-15 points and 4 Spades. It's forcing, so East will get another chance to bid, to clarify or choose the contract.

West has a good fit in Spades (4 cards including 2 honours) but doesn't know East's point count yet (6-15!), so bids 2S to show the fit. This indicates 4 cards in Spades and 12-15 points. This bid is not forcing.

Now East has the good news about the fit, they can bid game in Spades; if West had bid anything else, they could probably bid 3NT.

#### ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

As a general rule, the person who knows more about their partner's hand is better placed to choose the contract. That's usually the responder, not the opener.

**North East South West**

2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass

2NT Pass 3♣ Pass

3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass

Pass Pass

♠ AKQ32

♥ K4

♦ A85

♣ AK6

♠ 764

♥ T52

♦ 643

♣ J932

♠ 9

♥ AQ96

♦ KQT97

♣ Q75

♠ JT85

♥ J873

♦ J2

♣ T84

**Board: 17 Dealer: North #3335**

North has 23 HCP and a balanced hand with a 5-card Major. Too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP) or 1S, they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

South has 3 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

North bids 2NT to show they have 23-24 HCP and a balanced hand. Partner can pass now if they have a very weak hand (less than 2 HCP) i.e. this rebid "cancels" the presumed Game Force.

South has 3 HCP so decides to bid on. They don't have a 5-card suit to bid, but do have two 4-card Majors, so use Stayman to look for a fit.

This 3C (Stayman) bid in response to 2NT shows 3+ HCP and at least one 4-card Major.

North bids 3S to show they have at least 4 Spades (and not 4 Hearts).

With a 4-4 fit in Spades, South raises to game

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

North's rebid could have been 2S rather than 2NT, but 2NT is safer as it cancels the Game Force – just in case partner has nothing. However, if they had bid 2S then they (not South) would be Declarer in 4S, and the weaker hand would be Dummy – which is always preferable.



**East South West North**

1NT Pass 2♥ Pass

2♠ Pass 2NT Pass

4♠ Pass Pass Pass

♠ K98  
♥ K6432  
♦ J9  
♣ 542

♠ AJ753  
♥ Q97  
♦ A64  
♣ 86

♠ T64  
♥ A5  
♦ KQ75  
♣ KQT3

♠ Q2  
♥ JT8  
♦ T832  
♣ AJ97

**Board: 18 Dealer: East Lead: ♥J #1118**

West has 5 Spades and 11 HCP, so they start by bidding 2H, asking partner to bid 2S. When East bids 2S, what does West bid next?

They have 11 HCP, and partner has 12-14, so the partnership has 23-25 – maybe just enough for 3NT or 4H but only if partner has the maximum 14 HCP. So West bids 2NT to tell partner:

- I have exactly 5 Spades
- I have 11-12 HCP, might be enough for game - in NT or Spades – but only if you have 14
- You decide!

The golden rule here is: after the transfer, with just five trumps, your rebid is 2NT (11-12 HCP) or 3NT (with 13+ HCP). Do not bid your suit.

This 2NT bid is a Game Invitation. East should now:

- Bid 4S with three or more Spades and 14 points
- Bid 3NT with two Spades and 14 points
- Bid 3S with three or more Spades and 12-13 points
- Pass with two Spades and 12-13 points

Phew! Look at it another way: when partner bids 2NT after the transfer, you need 14 points to bid game and you need three or more Spades to bid Spades.

East has three Spades (choose Spades) and 14 points (choose game), so bids 4S.

### ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

This is very similar to the previous hand, but West has one less HCP. Now, if their partner decides to bid an optimistic 3NT with just 13 HCP, they are quite likely to regret it; with just 24 HCP, 3NT is usually going to fail. Yes, one point can make a big difference. Optimists need short memories...

**South West North East**

1♠ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♠ Pass 4♠ Pass

Pass Pass

♠ JT2  
♥ A6  
♦ KJ753  
♣ AJ8

♠ A84  
♥ KJ985  
♦ T86  
♣ 54

♠ 6  
♥ QT73  
♦ 42  
♣ KQT963

♠ KQ9753  
♥ 42  
♦ AQ9  
♣ 72

**Board: 19 Dealer: South Lead: ♣5 #2723**

South has 11 HCP in an unbalanced hand with a 6-card Spade suit, so they open 1S intending to rebid 2S to show their shape and point count. (They can open under the Rule of 20.)

This 1S opening promises four Spades and 12-19 points.

North has 14 HCP in a balanced hand, with a 5-card suit. They can't support Spades, so they bid 2D to show their suit and points. This 2D response shows 10+ HCP and 4+ Diamonds. It denies 4-card support for Spades and is forcing for one round.

Partner opened, so must have 12-19 HCP. North can see at least 26 HCP, so expects to reach game, but in Spades? Or No Trumps? After all, they do have stops in the unbid suits. It all depends on partner's rebid.

South rebids 2S as planned. This bid shows a one-suited hand (6+ Spades) and 12-15 HCP. (It doesn't deny support for Diamonds, as you don't usually support a minor if there's any other bid available!)

North can now raise partner's suit (option 1) with the 6+3 fit. With 26+ HCP, they are strong enough to bid 4S.

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ T83  
♥ QJT94  
♦ 63  
♣ QT2

♠ KQ6  
♥ AK  
♦ Q87  
♣ 87643

♠ 7542  
♥ 852  
♦ AKJT  
♣ A5

♠ AJ9  
♥ 763  
♦ 9542  
♣ KJ9

**Board: 20 Dealer: West Lead: ♥Q #1161**

West does not have four Hearts or four Spades, so responds 2D to the Stayman 2C bid. This shows less than four Hearts and less than four Spades. It doesn't say anything about Diamonds.

East knows there's no major fit, but with 12 HCP they can count 24-26 HCP, so they bid the 2NT Game Invitation, asking partner to bid 3NT if they have the maximum points for their 1NT bid.

West has 14 HCP, the maximum for their 1NT opening bid, so bids 3NT as requested.

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ KT6  
♥ AK72  
♦ 9653  
♣ AT

♠ 975432  
♥ QJ9  
♦  
♣ QJ97

♠ A8  
♥ T864  
♦ KQJT8  
♣ 84

♠ QJ  
♥ 53  
♦ A742  
♣ K6532

**Board: 21 Dealer: North Lead: ♦K #2779**

North has a balanced hand and 14 HCP (High Card Points), so the best opening bid is 1NT. (They could in principle open 1H, but then would not have a sensible second bid if partner responds!)

The 1NT opening bid shows 12-14 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has a fairly balanced hand and 10 HCP. With a maximum total point count of 24, they know that game is unlikely, so they pass.

East	South	West	North
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ KJ95  
♥ 632  
♦ A972  
♣ T4

♠ A64  
♥ Q754  
♦ K86  
♣ 862

♠ Q73  
♥ AKJT8  
♦ 54  
♣ AKQ

♠ T82  
♥ 9  
♦ QJT3  
♣ J9753

**Board: 22 Dealer: East Lead: ♦Q #2698**

With 19 high card points (HCP) and a 5 card major, East's first bid is easy, 1H. They intend to show their strength on the second round with a jump or maybe game.

With a balanced 9-point hand and four Hearts, West raises partner to 2H. They might be tempted to bid 1NT with a balanced hand, but with 4-card support for their partner's major, raising it is a MUCH better bid; 2H shows 6-9 points and 4+ Hearts.

After West's 2H bid, East knows that between them they have at least 25 HCP and 9 trumps, so 4H should be easy and is the obvious bid.

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ A5		
	♥ AKT4		
	♦ 9432		
	♣ 984		
♠ QJT9		♠ K872	
♥ 9532		♥ 876	
♦ T7		♦ 865	
♣ KQT		♣ A73	
	♠ 643		
	♥ QJ		
	♦ AKQJ		
	♣ J652		

**Board: 23 Dealer: South Lead: ♠Q #31**

South does not have four Hearts or four Spades, so responds 2D to the Stayman 2C bid. This shows less than four Hearts and less than four Spades. It doesn't say anything about Diamonds.

North knows there's no major fit, but with 11 HCP can count 23-25 HCP, so they bid the 2NT Game Invitation, asking partner to bid 3NT if they have the maximum points for their 1NT bid.

South has 14 HCP, the maximum for their 1NT opening bid, so bids 3NT as requested.

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

The 2D response to the 2C asking bid is sometimes called a **Negative Response** or **Denial**, because it's a bit disappointing!

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ QT87		
	♥ 75		
	♦ QT5		
	♣ KQJ5		
♠ A5		♠ 2	
♥ AQJ62		♥ KT983	
♦ A63		♦ K842	
♣ 963		♣ A84	
	♠ KJ9643		
	♥ 4		
	♦ J97		
	♣ T72		

**Board: 24 Dealer: West #389**

West has 15 HCP and a good 5-card Heart suit, so opens 1H.

The 1H opening bid shows 4 Hearts and 12-19 HCP (but see the discussion for Hand 1).

East has 10 HCP, 5-card support for Hearts, and can add 2 points for their Singleton Spade, making 12 points.

With 12 points, East knows that their partnership has at least 24 points, nearly enough for game in a Major. They could bid 3H, asking partner to bid 4H with 15+ points. But really, partner only needs 13 points - so East decides to take the small risk of bidding straight to game, 4H. Their 5-card Heart suit is - perhaps - justification enough!

**ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION**

If East wanted to be more cautious, they could respond 2D on the first round, showing 4 Diamonds, 10+ points, and forcing partner to bid again. Partner's second bid should clarify whether they are weak, intermediate, or strong. But most people would just bid 4H!