

U3ABC Compendium Eleven: Commentary

Introduction

This is a summary of Hands 1-18 from Compendium Eleven, complete with Commentary to help explain the recommended bidding and play. 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 | 2♦ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 4♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

♠ K53
♥ J62
♦ K74
♣ AK76

| | |
|--------|--------|
| ♠ T987 | ♠ AQ42 |
| ♥ QT9 | ♥ 8 |
| ♦ QT2 | ♦ J985 |
| ♣ Q53 | ♣ JT98 |

♠ J6
♥ AK7543
♦ A63
♣ 42

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♣J #3658

South has 6 Hearts and 12 HCP, so they start by bidding 2D, asking (OK, telling) partner to bid 2H.

North bids 2H as requested (pew), what does South bid next?

They have 12 HCP, and partner has 12-14, so the partnership has 24-26. You need 25 points for 4H, but South bid 4H even though not certain that they have enough. Why?

They're in a suit contract with a fit (they have 6 Hearts, partner must have 2 as they bid 1NT, so that's 8 Hearts, a FIT). When you have a fit, you can add Shortage Points as described in the introduction. With two Doubletons, South can add 2 Shortage Points to their guaranteed 24 HCPs, making a total of at least 26 points. Game!

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 4♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

♠
♥ KJT6
♦ QJ83
♣ 87652

| | |
|--------|---------|
| ♠ AK84 | ♠ QJ953 |
| ♥ Q74 | ♥ 82 |
| ♦ A2 | ♦ 97 |
| ♣ T943 | ♣ AKQJ |

♠ T762
♥ A953
♦ KT654
♣

Board: 2 Dealer: East #17

East has 13 HCP, an unbalanced hand, and a 5-card Spade suit – so they bid 1S.

The 1S opening bid shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Spades (but see the Discussion for Hand 1). The hand may be balanced or unbalanced.

West has 13 HCP and 4-card support for partner's Spades. They can add another point for their Doubleton Diamond, if playing in Spades.

West can see a total of 26 points and 8 Spades, so bids 4S; game is almost certain.

Advanced Discussion

What's the difference between High Card Points and Points?

High Card Points indicate the Honours you hold. An Ace is worth 4, a King is worth 3, a Queen is worth 2 and a Jack is worth 1. A Ten is (maybe) worth ½. Add up your HCP to evaluate your hand in a NT contract.

Points are calculated by adding your HCP and your shortage points, **but only if you're playing in a suit contract and have at least 3 trumps (preferably 4) and you are going to be Dummy, not Declarer**. Shortage points are 3 for a Void, 2 for a Singleton, and 1 for a Doubleton. (Although experienced players might upgrade that to 5, 3 and 1.)

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

♠ K3
 ♥ 874
 ♦ AKQJ2
 ♣ 974

♠ AJT984
 ♥ T65
 ♦
 ♣ QT65

♠ 75
 ♥ KQ92
 ♦ 98743
 ♣ J8

♠ Q62
 ♥ AJ3
 ♦ T65
 ♣ AK32

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♠J #29

South has 14 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 1NT, showing 12-14 HCP and a balanced hand. (They could in principle open 1C, but then would not have a sensible second bid if partner responds!)

North has 13 HCP and a balanced hand. Even if partner has the minimum 12 HCP for their 1NT opening bid, that adds up to 25 HCP, so they can bid 3NT with confidence. 3NT will usually make with 25 HCP.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

♠ 4
 ♥ 9763
 ♦ K62
 ♣ A8765

♠ QT96
 ♥ AKJT
 ♦ AJ5
 ♣ KJ

♠ KJ873
 ♥ Q52
 ♦ T43
 ♣ Q9

♠ A52
 ♥ 84
 ♦ Q987
 ♣ T432

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♦7 #2970

West has 19 HCP and two 4-card majors in a balanced hand. With equal length majors, you open 1H, to make it easy for partner to raise (with 4 Hearts) or bid 1S (with 4 Spades). They plan to rebid 3NT to show their shape and 19 points (you don't plan to bid your second suit in a balanced hand).

The 1H bid just shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts.

East has 8 HCP but only 3 Hearts, so can't raise partner's suit. They bid 1S to show their 4 card major and 6-15 HCP. This bid is forcing for one round.

Change of plan! West knows they have at least 25 HCP and 8 Spades, so bids game (4S) with confidence.

Advanced Discussion

The doubleton KJ is difficult to value. You could value it as 5 points (3 for the K, 1 for the J and 1 for the doubleton), but most players would take at least one point off.

| North | East | South | West |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1NT | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

♠ A93
 ♥ T74
 ♦ A72
 ♣ KQT6

♠ QJT62
 ♥ Q5
 ♦ J986
 ♣ 87

♠ 75
 ♥ AK62
 ♦ KT4
 ♣ 9532

♠ K84
 ♥ J983
 ♦ Q53
 ♣ AJ4

Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: ♥2 #640

North has 13 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 1NT, showing 12-14 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has 11 HCP and a fairly balanced hand. This isn't quite enough to be sure of making 3NT, as that requires 25 HCP. They bid 2NT to tell partner they have 11-12 HCP, asking them to bid 3NT if they have the maximum 14 HCP.

North does not have the maximum 14 HCP, so they should pass 2NT, but with 13 HCP, a promising Club suit, and two tens, they decide to risk 3NT.

Advanced Discussion

North has bent the rules slightly here, as tens aren't really worth half a point each – but it's this sort of nuanced decision that makes Bridge a game rather than a maths problem. Which were you, an optimist or a pessimist?

East South West North

1♠ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♥ Pass 4♠ Pass

Pass Pass

♠ 32

♥ JT863

♦ 4

♣ K8764

♠ A84

♥ A9

♦ AT973

♣ T52

♠ QJT65

♥ K742

♦ QJ8

♣ A

♠ K97

♥ Q5

♦ K652

♣ QJ93

Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♣Q #3236

East has 13 HCP, in an unbalanced two-suited hand. They open their longer suit, 1S, planning to rebid Hearts.

This 1S opening promises four Spades and 12-19 points. It denies a longer Heart suit, but not much else can be gleaned from the bid at this time.

West has 12 HCP in a balanced hand. They can't support partner's Spades with just three so they respond 2D, their longest suit, planning to rebid Diamonds, NT or Spades depending on Opener's second bid.

East now rebids 2H as planned, showing 5+ Spades, 4+ Hearts and 12-15 points.

West can raise partner's suit (option 1) with the 5+3 fit. With 12+12 HCP and 1 Shortage Point for their Heart doubleton, they have just enough to bid 4S.

South West North East

1♥ 1♠ 3♥ Pass

4♥ Pass Pass Pass

♠ 875

♥ QT96

♦ KQ9

♣ A94

♠ AKJT2

♥ 874

♦ 73

♣ KJ7

♠ 943

♥

♦ T8652

♣ QT862

♠ Q6

♥ AKJ532

♦ AJ4

♣ 53

Board: 7 Dealer: South #376

South has 15 HCP and a good 6-card Heart suit, so they open 1H.

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

West overcalls with 1S. This one-level overcall shows at least 5 Spades and 8 HCP.

North has 11 HCP and 4-card support for partner's Hearts, so jump raises to 3H. This shows 10-12 points and 4 Hearts.

South can now add 2 points for their Doubletons, playing in Hearts, making a total point count of 27-29. That's more than enough for game, but not enough to consider a slam – so they bid 4H.

West North East South

1NT Pass 2♥ Pass
 2♠ Pass Pass Pass

♠ 83
 ♥ AKJ7
 ♦ KJ86
 ♣ J86

♠ A76 ♠ QJ954
 ♥ Q32 ♥ T4
 ♦ Q54 ♦ A97
 ♣ AQ43 ♣ 752

♠ KT2
 ♥ 9865
 ♦ T32
 ♣ KT9

Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: ♥ A #2949

East has 5 Spades and 7 HCP, so they start by bidding 2H, asking (OK, telling) partner to bid 2S. This is a form of Weakness Takeout.

West transfers to 2S as requested (phew), what does East bid next?

They have just 7 HCP, plus 1 SP for their Doubleton Heart (but only if partner has 3 or more Spades – not guaranteed). There's no chance of game, they just want to play in Spades because 1NT might go quite badly (with 19-21 HCP); at least in 2S, you can maybe make a trick or two by ruffing Hearts.

So East passes 2S and hopes it won't go too badly.

Advanced Discussion

East could just pass 1NT. Their decision to play in 2S rather than 1NT isn't an easy one, as West will need to make one more trick in 2S than 1NT, to make the contract. Both contracts are uncertain, East just expects that 2S is a safer bet.

There's also a very subtle advantage to the Transfer: the Defence don't know whether East is strong or weak until they pass, so they have less chance to bid for the contract.

Notice also that the Transfer has made sure the stronger hand (West) is hidden from the Defence, making their job a bit harder. If you didn't use Transfers and East bids 2S as a Weakness Takeout, the Defence will be able to see all of West's points as they will be Dummy – making their job a lot easier.

North East South West

1♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
 4♠ Pass Pass Pass

♠ KQJ94
 ♥ A42
 ♦ A87
 ♣ J6

♠ 8 ♠ A75
 ♥ 975 ♥ QJT6
 ♦ T542 ♦ 93
 ♣ A9852 ♣ KT43

♠ T632
 ♥ K83
 ♦ KQJ6
 ♣ Q7

Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♥ Q #539

North has 15 HCP and a nice 5-card major in a balanced hand, so opens 1S intending to rebid 1NT to show their points and shape.

South has 11 HCP and good 4-card support plus one Shortage Point for the doubleton Club – making 12 points. More than enough to raise to 3S, not quite enough to jump to 4S.

Remember that a jump raise of a suit promises 10-12 points and 4+ trumps.

North can see a total of 25+ points, so raises to 4S for game.

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

| | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | ♠ K85 | | |
| | ♥ K95 | | |
| | ♦ T762 | | |
| | ♣ QJ2 | | |
| ♠ QJT6 | | ♠ A74 | |
| ♥ J3 | | ♥ Q82 | |
| ♦ Q854 | | ♦ AKJ3 | |
| ♣ AK9 | | ♣ 765 | |
| | ♠ 932 | | |
| | ♥ AT764 | | |
| | ♦ 9 | | |
| | ♣ T843 | | |

Board: 10 Dealer: East Lead: ♥6 #225

East 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.

West knows there's no major fit, but with 13 HCP can count 25-27 HCP, so they bid 3NT.

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1NT | Pass | 2♥ | Pass |
| 2♠ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

| | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | ♠ AQJ84 | | |
| | ♥ K4 | | |
| | ♦ 864 | | |
| | ♣ K97 | | |
| ♠ 72 | | ♠ 53 | |
| ♥ AT2 | | ♥ J987 | |
| ♦ Q952 | | ♦ JT7 | |
| ♣ QJT6 | | ♣ A854 | |
| | ♠ KT96 | | |
| | ♥ Q653 | | |
| | ♦ AK3 | | |
| | ♣ 32 | | |

Board: 11 Dealer: South Lead: ♣Q #1664

North has 5 Spades and 13 HCP, so they start by bidding 2H, asking (telling) partner to bid 2S.

South bids 2S as requested, what does North bid next?

They have 13 HCP, and partner has 12-14, so the partnership has 25-27 – enough for 3NT or 4S, but which is the better contract? North bids 3NT to tell partner:

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

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

With four Spades, South is happy to bid 4S, game. (This type of bid is sometimes called a Correction or Preference Bid.)

Advanced Discussion

If South had three Spades, they might pass 3NT if they had a 4333 hand and no Honours in Spades, but would usually bid 4S. Then again, some people prefer playing in a suit, some people prefer playing in No Trumps

West North East South

2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass

2NT Pass 3NT Pass

Pass Pass

♠ T63
♥ 85
♦ 52
♣ AQT863

♠ AKQ
♥ KQT4
♦ AK6
♣ K92

♠ 87
♥ AJ6
♦ J743
♣ J754

♠ J9542
♥ 9732
♦ QT98
♣

Board: 12 Dealer: West #2297

West has 24 HCP and a balanced hand. Too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP), 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.

East has 7 HCP, not quite enough for a positive response, 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.

West 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.

East doesn't have a 5-card suit to bid, or a 4-card Major to investigate with Stayman. They do have 7 HCP, more than enough to raise to 3NT

North East South West

2♦ Pass 3NT Pass

Pass Pass

♠ 862
♥ 87
♦ KJ9743
♣ Q4

♠ QJ
♥ K932
♦ T
♣ KT9875

♠ AT975
♥ J4
♦ 8652
♣ J3

♠ K43
♥ AQT65
♦ AQ
♣ A62

Board: 13 Dealer: North Lead: ♣T #2598

North has a 6-card Diamond suit with two Honours and 6 HCP; an excellent Weak Two opening.

This Weak Two opening suggests 6 Diamonds and 5-10 HCP, and no 4-card major.

South has 19 HCP, a balanced hand with stops in all the suits, and two good Diamonds. They can see at least 24-29 HCP and expect (hope) partner's long Diamond suit will deliver several tricks, so 3NT looks easy.

It is!

East South West North

1NT Pass Pass Pass

♠ T7
♥ 983
♦ KQT4
♣ QJT3

♠ 652
♥ AKJ7
♦ 973
♣ 986

♠ A43
♥ Q2
♦ A865
♣ A542

♠ KQJ98
♥ T654
♦ J2
♣ K7

Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♠K #26

East has a balanced hand and 14 HCP (High Card Points), so the best opening bid is 1NT. (They could open 1D, and later bid 2C, but 1NT scores better.)

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

West has a balanced hand and 8 HCP. With a maximum total point count of 22, they know that game is impossible, so they pass.

| South | West | North | East |
|-----------|----------|-------|---------|
| 1♣ | 3♦ | Pass | Pass |
| Dbl | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| | ♠ T9 | | |
| | ♥ 83 | | |
| | ♦ QJ964 | | |
| | ♣ AKT5 | | |
| ♠ 852 | | | ♠ A7643 |
| ♥ Q7 | | | ♥ JT965 |
| ♦ AKT8753 | | | ♦ 2 |
| ♣ 8 | | | ♣ Q6 |
| | ♠ KQJ | | |
| | ♥ AK42 | | |
| | ♦ | | |
| | ♣ J97432 | | |

Board: 15 Dealer: South Lead: ♣A #1535

West's bid of 3D over South's 1C is a double jump, a pre-empt.

With 14 HCP, good support for the two unbid suits and a void in Diamonds, South doubles 3D for takeout, asking partner to choose one of the unbid suits.

Remember: A double of a 3-level pre-empt is for takeout, if there are unbid suits to choose between. Even if partner has already bid a suit (as in this case). A double of a 3-level bid that isn't a pre-empt (such as 1S pass 3S X) is for penalties.

North does not have any length in the unbid suits, so they must either support partner's Clubs (they have good support) or pass the takeout double to convert it into a penalty double. They can see 2-3 tricks in Diamonds and 1-2 tricks in Clubs. Partner has an opening hand (11+ HCP), so should take another trick or two. So they decide to pass the double, converting it to a Penalty Double.

When you look at all the hands, you can see this is a great decision! E-W will lose 2 Spades, 2 Hearts, 1 Club and 2-3 Diamonds. 3 down doubled is a big penalty!

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|---------|------|--------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| | ♠ 5 | | |
| | ♥ QJT83 | | |
| | ♦ QT4 | | |
| | ♣ KJT8 | | |
| ♠ KQJ64 | | | ♠ AT98 |
| ♥ 954 | | | ♥ A762 |
| ♦ AJ | | | ♦ 7653 |
| ♣ A96 | | | ♣ 5 |
| | ♠ 732 | | |
| | ♥ K | | |
| | ♦ K982 | | |
| | ♣ Q7432 | | |

Board: 16 Dealer: West Lead: ♥Q #1341

West has 15 HCP and a nice 5-card major in a balanced hand, so opens 1S intending to rebid 1NT to show their points and shape.

East has just 8 HCP, but good 4-card support plus two Shortage Points for the singleton Club – making 10 points. Just enough to raise to 3S.

Remember that a jump raise of a suit promises 10-12 points and 4+ trumps.

West can see a total of 25+ points, so raises to 4S for game.

| North | East | South | West |
|----------|----------|-------|--------|
| 1♦ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |
| | ♠ QJ76 | | |
| | ♥ KJ | | |
| | ♦ AK542 | | |
| | ♣ 83 | | |
| ♠ 82 | | | ♠ A953 |
| ♥ QT7543 | | | ♥ 962 |
| ♦ QT98 | | | ♦ 76 |
| ♣ J | | | ♣ QT97 |
| | ♠ KT4 | | |
| | ♥ A8 | | |
| | ♦ J3 | | |
| | ♣ AK6542 | | |

Board: 17 Dealer: North Lead: ♥5 #1163

North has 14 HCP in a two-suited unbalanced hand, so they open with one of their longer suit, 1D, and plan to rebid Spades.

This 1D opening promises four Diamonds and 12-19 points. It denies a longer major suit, but not much else can be gleaned from the bid at this time.

South has 15 HCP and a 6-card Club suit, so they respond 2C. They can see at least 27 HCP, so game is almost certain, maybe in NT, maybe in Clubs (27 points is usually enough for game in a minor, if you have a fit).

This 2C bid shows 4 Clubs and 10+ points and is forcing for one round, like any change of suit by Responder (on their first bid). It denies a longer major, but doesn't say anything about their holding in Diamonds; in general you don't support a minor on the first round.

Change of plan. North is not strong enough to rebid Spades as planned, because 2S would be above the barrier (set at 2D by their first bid), and that would promise 16-19 HCP. So North rebids 2D.

The 2D rebid promises 6+ Diamonds and 12-15 HCP.

South can't support partner's suit (option 1), but with stops in the two unbid suits they can rebid NT (option 2); they have enough points to rebid 3NT, so they do.

This 3NT rebid by responder requires 13+ HCP and a stop in each of the unbid suits. North could "correct" the bid to 5C or 5D if their hand is really unsuitable for playing in NT, but it looks OK, so they pass. 3NT is usually a better contract than a minor game!

| East | South | West | North |
|--------|---------|------|---------|
| 1NT | Dbl | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |
| | ♠ 65 | | |
| | ♥ QJ874 | | |
| | ♦ 92 | | |
| | ♣ KJ92 | | |
| ♠ Q983 | | | ♠ AJT |
| ♥ 9 | | | ♥ KT5 |
| ♦ JT63 | | | ♦ A8754 |
| ♣ 8653 | | | ♣ T7 |
| | ♠ K742 | | |
| | ♥ A632 | | |
| | ♦ KQ | | |
| | ♣ AQ4 | | |

Board: 18 Dealer: East Lead: ♠2 #490

South has 18 HCP and a balanced hand. They're strong enough to double 1NT for penalties.

A double of 1NT is always for penalties and requires 16+ HCP.

West doesn't have a 5-card suit to rescue partner, so must pass.

North has 7 HCP so is strong enough for the double to succeed, so they pass. This pass shows 5+ HCP, or less than 5 HCP but no 5-card suit.

East has a 5-card minor, so could bid it (2D) to escape the double but chooses not to – perhaps because the suit is quite weak.

Advanced Discussion

East chose to play in 1NT doubled, but with their hand I would rather bid 2D. This will remove the double and the opposition might not double 2D, so even if 2D does go down, the price will be much less.

Looking at the hands, 2D should make easily (ruff two losing Hearts), but 1NT should down by several tricks – expensive!