

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Despite the 21 HCP and solid ten-card heart fit, N/S can make only seven tricks in a heart contract if the defence finds its club ruff. Meanwhile, E/W can make no fewer than 11 tricks in a spade contract. If North opens 1♥, South is likely to raise to game, pre-emptively, and West has to bite the bullet and bid 4♠. If North gets carried away with all his high cards and doubles, that could be +690. If North opens 1NT, South transfers, West overcalls 2♠ and East bids 4♠ over North's 3♥. Many routes lead to 4♠, sometimes doubled, sometimes not.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

East opens 1♠ and South overcalls 1NT. West's hand is quite inappropriate for a double, and a simple suit bid is non-forcing. He could force by jumping or bidding 2NT, which should show either a two-suiter or, perhaps, a constructive spade raise. Personally, I would bid a simple 2♥ – hearts rather than diamonds so that I can bid diamonds later if need be – and not worry of that ends the auction on what could be a huge misfit. On the actual deal, East will raise to 3♥ and West go on to game. 4♥ can be made except on a club lead.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 1♦, North may raise to 2♦ and East simply overcall 3♣, where he will play. A weak no trump opening leads to a very different auction, with east doubling after two passes. North may now run to 2♦ and if East bids 3♣ West may try 3NT, knowing that he is facing both long clubs and a strong hand. Or maybe East can make a forcing pass then, if West doubles, remove to 3♣. That is a little sophisticated but sounds like a stronger auction which would ensure a 3NT call from West.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

N/S can make 3NT but not 4♠. North will open 1♥ and raise the 1♠ response to 2♠. Now South is worth a try for game and the most descriptive bid he can make is 2NT, suggesting only four spades in a balanced hand with around 11/12 HCP. North has a close call now – not whether to accept the game try or not, as he has a minimum hand with two queen-doubletons, not great for a spade contract, but whether to pass or go back to 3♠. Those same holdings suggest no trump, while the fourth spade suggests bidding 3♠. Tricky.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

The East hand is worth an upgrade to an 18-count because of the club suit, so it becomes a 1♣ opening whether playing 12-14 or 15-17 no trump. Facing a passed partner, South should not stretch to double at this vulnerability, so West will get to respond 1♥ and East rebid 2NT, ending the auction.

It takes a diamond lead to defeat 2NT, and that is not a likely choice. On any other lead declarer has time to establish a second spade trick for a solid +120.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

N/S can make game on this one, surprisingly enough. Specifically, they can make 4♠, though of course they will never bid it. Indeed, it will be normal for east to play the hand, opening 2NT and stealing the pot – if going down in 100s qualifies as stealing when the opposition would never get past partscore. After a club lead, East would be well advised to grab the six tricks he can see in front of him and settle for down two. If he tries to get cute, he could be down three.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

N/S can make either 3NT or 4♠, though to make either may require a certain degree of inspiration from declarer. The 4-4 diamond fit does not provide game, however, thanks to the nasty trump split. Most likely, the contract will be 3NT. One possible auction is 1♦ from South, 3NT from North. If East leads her best unbid suit, hearts, declarer will need to pick up four spade tricks to succeed, while any other lead permits no fewer than 11 tricks. Of course, if South becomes declarer, a heart lead will be automatic.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

N/S can make 6♠, either by establishing the diamonds or by taking heart ruffs in the dummy. The more difficult part of the equation is to get to slam. After 1♠ – 2♦ – 2♥, it will be very nice for those who can bid a forcing 3♠ to set trumps and invite cuebids, as North has an easy 4♣ and will go on after South's 4♦ follow-up. For those who cannot set spades as trumps below game, perhaps 3♣ over 2♥ then 4♠ over North's 3NT, showing a hand too good for an immediate 4♠ bid, is the route to follow.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

N/S can make 3♠ while E/W can make 3♥. However, E/W may never even get into the bidding as South's initial response of 1♥ will silence most Wests. North rebids 1♠ and South raises to 3♠. Despite the heart void, North will usually go on to game. 4♠ goes down if the defence finds its club ruff, and declarer has to give them a second chance while he sets up the diamond suit due to the 4-1 trump split. The game should therefore fail, but will it?

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

South will open 2Nt at almost every table and play there, usually on a low diamond lead. Short of entries to the dummy, he may return a diamond to establish a third trick there. After winning the ♦Q, returning the jack may force an entry to dummy if West takes the second trick. Now declarer can hope to lead clubs twice towards his hand. The key moment may come when East wins the ♣A. If he switches to ♥Q, dummy provides a stopper, but if he leads a low heart declarer will follow the odds and go up with the king – and down goes the contract.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

After 1♥ – 2♣ – 2♠, North should bid 2NT, forcing of course facing a reverse, despite the three-card heart support. He has a double diamond stopper and 2NT leaves room for South to show any extra distribution at a convenient level.

On the actual hand, South raises to 3NT, ending the auction. On a diamond lead, there are twelve tricks, otherwise only eleven. Meanwhile, in 4♥, declarer has to get the play right to make eleven on a diamond lead. Finesse and he has only ten.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

This messy little hand will usually be played by East in 1NT, after he has either opened or rebid that contract. As the cards lie declarer will do well to get out for one down as there are six top loser plus the club position to worry about.

Any West who hears his partner open 1♣ and then chooses to play 2♣ rather than 1NT may score well – but only if they are left to play there. If N/S balance they get to 2♦, which they should make.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

North has a normal 3♣ opening and East a take-out double. West has only 7 HCP but good distribution and should make a positive response. The question is which suit to bid. When playable in more than one suit, a cue-bid is often the correct action, but here West would be very uncomfortable should he bid 4♣ and hear 4♠ from partner. The choices are 4♦ and 4♥. Though East has not guaranteed four hearts, East's hearts are strong, and even a 4-3 fit may prove to be playable. Best is to be brave and jump to 4♥, which should make exactly.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

When East opens 1♦, I have a lot of time for the simple approach with the West hand – 3NT, showing 13-15 with a balanced hand and no major. After all, West has a stopper in every suit and no particular reason not to make the simple bid. After the normal heart lead, declarer will take the diamond finesse and South may switch to the ♠K, pinning dummy's queen. Declarer wins, cashes some diamonds, and it will be down to his club play to decide the number of overtricks.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

As North's long suit is not one that he particularly wants to have led, he may often pass in third seat. He is, after all, vulnerable, so why open light in a weak suit? East opens 1♠ and has to select a rebid over the 1NT response. Some will go for 4♠, though this is a bit of a stretch. 2♠ is the winner, as there are only eight tricks on accurate defence, but that seems rather pessimistic. 3♠ looks normal and ends the auction. Only if South leads diamonds, perhaps in response to a foolish third-seat opening, will 3♠ succeed.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

West will open 1♦ and North overcall 1♥. After a pass from East, South should surely bid 1♠ with that strong suit, despite the three-card heart support. West rebids 2♦ and that silences North, who can hardly repeat that heart suit or go to the three level on a misfit to show his clubs. South bids 2♥, however, and that will usually end the auction. Though there are two trump losers, 2♥ should be comfortable enough and eight tricks is the normal outcome.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

This one should be close to flat – famous last words! If North opens INT, South will transfer and North perhaps break the transfer. South can afford one slam try, whether 4♣ or 4♦ being a matter of style, but North will sign-off and that should be that. If North opens 1♥, South can splinter with 4♣, and the wasted club values will make it easy for North to sign off in 4♥, again ending the auction. And finally, 1♣ – 1♥ gets a simple raise from North and South will bid game – ten tricks.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Whether East opens 1♠ or 2♠, a borderline decision for may, N/S will have trouble stopping out of game if South bids immediately, not worrying about the dubious value of the ♠K. If South passes, North will overcall 2♣ or 3♣ as required. East will compete with 2♠ if he opened 1♠ and heard INT from West, and now South will either double, if for take-out, or bid 3♦. In the former case, North bids 3♣ and plays there, in the latter, he should pass 3♦, knowing that South is limited by his initial pass.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 2♠, normal enough even if the suit is nothing to write home about, he will usually play there. West has the wrong distribution to get involved while East is too weak. As for North, he has no reason to consider bidding. Where South passes, West may open INT and, after two passes, South can overcall 2♠, again playing there. It seems that there are eight tricks on most lines of play. If West gets a diamond ruff it should be at the cost of the defensive club trick.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Usually, South will open 1♠ in fourth seat and will play in 4♠. West has no good lead. The best he can do is to lead a spade, solving a problem that declarer rated to get right anyway. Anything else gives a trick, a heart costs the second heart trick, while either a club or a diamond costs the diamond trick. After a spade lead, declarer can attempt to guess the club suit to create a diamond discard. Ten tricks will be significantly below average, as either this guess or the opening lead will frequently give an eleventh.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

6♠ is cold for E/W. Some Easts may open 4♥ and now the slam will be missed as it is normal for West to pass. If East opens 1♥ he has to find a rebid over the 1♠ response. 3♥ will catch 3♠ from West and now East can cuebid 4♦, which should be sufficient to convince West to make one try and now slam should be reached.

Or maybe an old-style Acol player will rebid 4♥ over 1♠, arguing that this shows a semi-fit for spades. If West is on the same wavelength, he will go on with 5♦ and East will bid slam.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

E/W make ten tricks in spades without breaking sweat, but may will stop short of game. My clone and I – a partnership for which the world is not yet ready – would bid: Pass – 1♠ – 3♠ – Pass, if playing standard methods. It happens that East has the right doubleton to make game cold. Give him a third heart and 3♠ would be the limit. It happens – two partners both do normal things but the result is poor.

Not to worry, next Board!

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

The distribution around the table should lead to plenty of bidding on this one. N/S can make 4♥, but that seems to require a low diamond play towards the jack – not very likely – while E/W can make 4♠, which is quite a lot more plausible.

Once the auction starts to get competitive, momentum may see many tables get to 4♠. Much will depend on North's approach. A simple heart overcall would be my choice, planning to bid diamonds later if necessary, but some will surely try an unusual 2NT over a 1♣ opening, leading to a very different auction.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

If either major-suit ace had been present there would have been a slam on this deal, but on the actual layout the key is to get to the no trump game rather than 5♣.

That may not be so easy to achieve. If it begins 1♦ – 1♥ – 2♣, East will do very well to avoid playing 5♣ or, worse, 6♣. Perhaps West should rebid 2♦, then bid 3NT over East's 3♣. Well done West!

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

In theory, N/S can make only seven tricks in spades. However, as E/W are cold for 4♥ that need not be bad at this vulnerability. Anyway, that requires E/W to take two club ruffs, which is not trivial, and N/S are unlikely to bid very high in spades anyway.

East should open 1♦ and bid out his shape, despite being quite light in high-card terms. If South overcalls, West will make a negative double, North show a constructive spade raise, and East jump to 4♥. That will normally end the auction.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

This one looks to be indescribably dull.

E/W will bid 4♠ and make an overtrick. East opens 1♠ and West goes through whatever bid his system requires to show a good high-card raise to game.

East will not co-operate and West will have no reason to make more than the mildest of slam tries, then pack up.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

South may open 1NT and be raised to 2NT via Stayman. Holding a minimum opening, he will decline the invitation. Or perhaps he will open 1♣ and rebid 1NT, which gets raised to 2NT and he again passes. If he instead rebids 1♠, North will jump to 2NT and South will again decline the invitation to game. In theory, there are nine tricks played by South and only eight played by North – but the latter requires a club lead which would not be a normal choice. +150 will be common and +400 very good.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

E/W have a slam in either minor, and both are decent contracts, though not so easy to reach. If West opens 1NT, East will need to have a suitable club in his bag to show a good minor two-suiter, else he may just close his eyes and raise to 3NT. If West opens 1♥ East will bid 2♦ then 3♣ over the 2NT rebid and, if West gives preference to 3♦, may go on with 4♣ and get to slam. A 1♣/♦ opening may get an inverted raise followed by East showing the other minor, but will West co-operate with his weak clubs?

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

That's a fair old hand! After 2♣ – 2♦ – 2♠ – 3NT, North will bid 4♣ and South has to give preference to spades, having already denied three of the suit. 4NT would be a mistake, as North will surely have significant distribution so that playing in a suit contract will be better.

Now it is up to North. He may try 4NT, RKCB, intending to play 7♠ or 7NT facing the ♠K. But when South shows no key card North has to guess where to play facing what will usually be a small doubleton spade. 6♣ makes, while 6♠ is on the spade guess – low or the queen on the second round?

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

N/S make 3♠ and E/W 5♣ but only 4♦. If East opens 1NT, South will show his two-suiter and West will search for a fit but may not be able to find one so easily. If N/S buy the contract they should score well. Where East can open 1♣, South may again show the two-suiter, but now West will be better placed and is likely to go on to 5♣ whatever N/S do.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 1♥ West should double and east respond 1NT whether or not North bids 1♠. West can raise to 2NT to invite game and East accept the invitation. Should South open 2♥, West will again double and east may guess to pass, as he will have a problem with his response if playing Lebensohl. That pass will be a big winner, as 2♥ can be held to five tricks and, even should a trick be lost in the defence, +500 will still beat what can be scored in 3NT – a pretty routine ten tricks for +430.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Where West opens 1NT, North will bid 2♦ if natural but often be forced by his methods to pass, in which case East will use Stayman then bid 2NT, which will end the auction and fail by at least a couple of tricks. A 1♠ opening will usually see North overcall and East make a negative double. West has a little to spare so may try 2NT, play there and again go down, or he may rebid a cautious 2♠. That contract can be made with care and +110 may score pretty well for E/W as so many rate to be going down in a no trump contract.