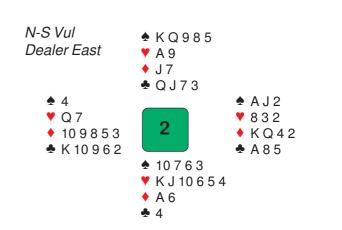
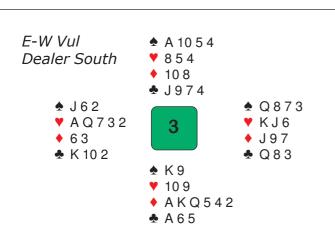


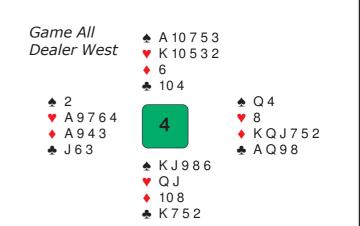
Playing a weak no-trump opening, East-West bid 1C-1H-1NT-3NT. South's natural spade lead has the unfortunate effect of giving declarer a third spade trick. A winning heart guess then results in eleven tricks. 460 is also possible after a diamond lead since that leaves the suit frozen and South exposed to an unusual squeeze, (Reese termed it a vice squeeze), in the pointed suits.



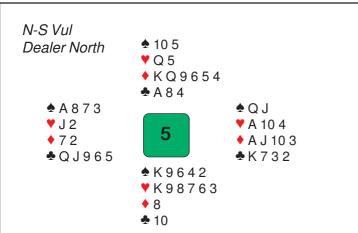
After East opens a weak 1NT, South might overcall 2H with the good suit despite the unfavourable vulnerability. North would come in if South did not. Staying out of 4S is likely to be tough. East should easily find the killing lead of the K♦. 4S is makeable on a club lead and diamond switch if declarer finesses the 9♥ at trick three, an unlikely play to find with only two hands on view.



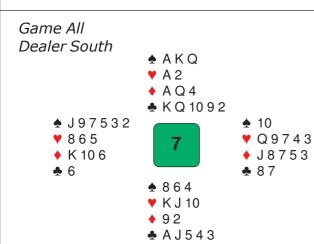
South opens 1D, West overcalls 1H and North may scrape up a double to show four spades. East raises to 2H, after which South will either bid 3D directly or perhaps double first. If West leads a club or if East fails to duck after West has led a spade, an overtrick results in 3D. On the marked heart lead, 3NT would fail by a trick. 3H should go two down, easily so if the defenders find their spade ruff.



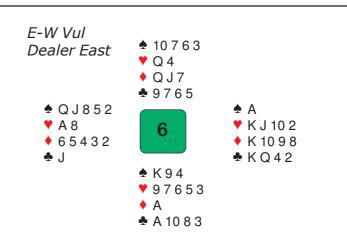
At most tables East gets to open 1D in third seat, South overcalls 1S despite the flawed heart holding and West takes some action – this might be a 3H fit-showing jump, 2H or even a double. North is likely to bid 4S or (if West has not already bid hearts) some sort of fit-showing jump. With three aces and a heart ruff to lose, 4S goes down a trick. East-West do better to press on to 5D, losing one trick in each black suit.



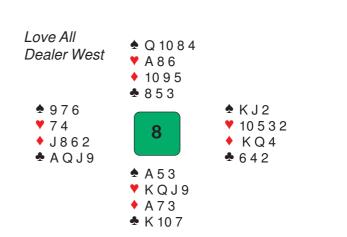
North opens 1D, East overcalls 1NT and South will want to compete. A natural 2H may leave West the option to make a take-out double. With only 23 HCP between them, East-West are likely to stay out of game. With most of the missing honours favourably placed, East can make two overtricks in 2NT. Ten tricks are also available in a club contract. They can beat 2H (doubled) if West scores an overruff on the third round of diamonds.



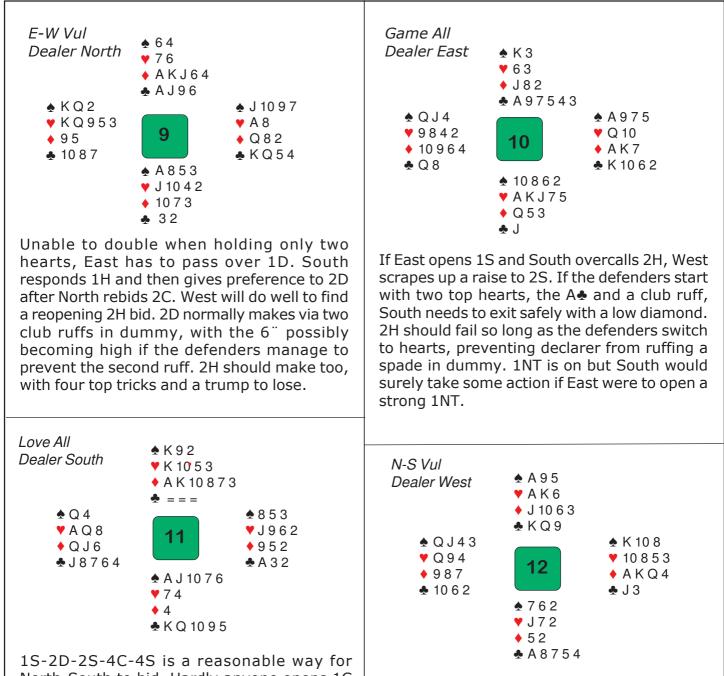
North has a huge hand and starts with the system strong bid. Depending upon the exact point range shown, South will either bid or invite a slam. With a good combined 33 HCP, reaching 6NT should be normal. The K \blacklozenge is onside and news of the 6-1 spade split helps declarer to decide to play East for the K \blacklozenge for all thirteen tricks. If you are playing in clubs, you do not need the heart guess, but you will need to be in 7C for a decent score.



Planning a 1NT rebid, East might open 1H. Having responded 1S, West will then look for game. East, with good intermediates in the red suits, should show the hand as in the upper half of the 15-17 range. With the West hand short of entries, East may well be tempted to lead up to the K♦ rather than to the 10♦, which results in defeat in 3NT. 4D makes – but 130 might not be good enough.

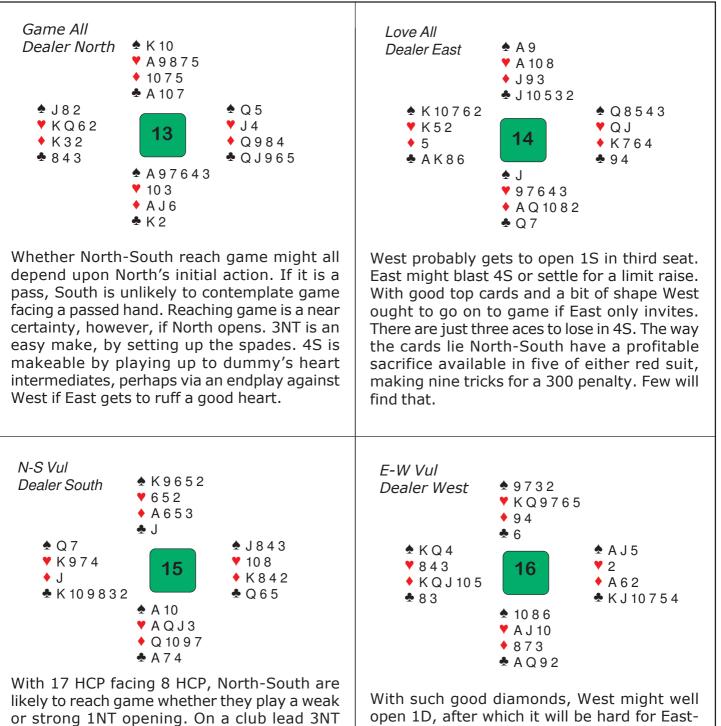


South opens 1H in fourth seat and, in the modern style, rebids 1NT over North's 1S response to show 15-17 points. Knowing that South is likely to hold the K♣, West leads a diamond. If East then switches to a club, even 1NT fails. There is perhaps a case for West to lead the 8♦ rather than the normal 2♦, thereby encouraging East to switch. 1H and 1S are on – but you cannot stop there.



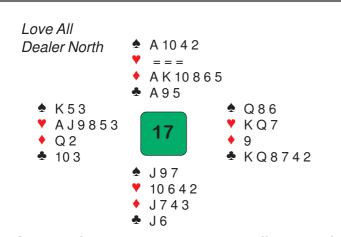
North-South to bid. Hardly anyone opens 1C with 5-5 in the black suits any more. North's 4C splinter, showing three-card spade support and a club shortage does not enthuse South. If West doubles 1S, this does not really affect anything. Even though the diamonds are 3-3, declarer cannot really avoid losing two tricks in the side suits, so an overtrick depends on the trump guess.

This is a good hand for the strong no-trump because South is likely to pass whatever North opens. There are eight top tricks – five clubs and three in the majors – if you play in notrumps. So long as East does not lead a trump – tempting though that is with the ace-kingqueen – even 1D can fail. The defenders make four trumps, a heart and two spades.

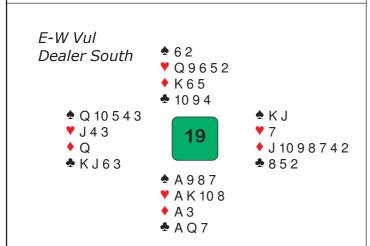


West to stop short of game. The club layout is goes two down because declarer can make such that no winning guess is possible. You only two spades, three diamonds and two aces probably finesse the jack or ten anyway, all the before West can regain the lead. 4S fares more so if North has made a weak jump better, down only one trick, with two trumps overcall. If North plays in hearts, the defenders and the two red kings to lose. Indeed if East may need to cash their diamond winners early ducks the first diamond and declarer guesses to hold declarer to eight tricks.

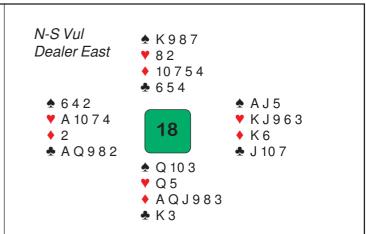
correctly, 4S might make.



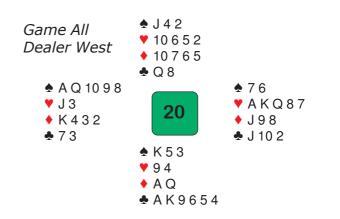
After North opens 1D, East overcalls 2C and North will either double or bid 2S. North will either double or bid 2S. East then raises hearts and South will do well to support diamonds. The play in 4H requires care. If you ruff the second diamond in dummy low, you need to play a high club from dummy and, if North ducks that, a second high club from dummy. You can then ruff out the clubs with the Qф as an entry. 5D makes via the double spade finesse.



South opens 2NT and probably makes a super acceptance bid after North transfers into hearts. I play that 4H shows four-card support and a control in all other suits, which fits this hand. You might make an overtrick on an endplay (West forced to lead a club) if East does not switch to a club when in with a spade. If you play in 3NT, you will need an endplay for ten tricks to avoid a poor score.



If East opens 1H, South overcalls 2D and West makes a 4D splinter. East, with a near minimum opening and the poorly fitting K♦ signs off in 4H. As it happens, if you take the winning view in trumps, you will also find the club finesse works and twelve tricks roll in. The outcome is less predictable if East opens 1NT, though it will be rather rare for everyone to pass!



If East opens 1H in third seat, South overcalls 2C and West bids 2S. South will find it difficult to pass this out. If 2S is the contract, to stop the overtrick the defenders do best to start with three rounds of clubs and they want to leave the diamonds well alone. If South is in 3C, after a heart lead and a spade switch, East scores a spade ruff to beat the contract by two tricks. If hearts are trumps, 140 is unbeatable the way the cards lie.

