

Hello,

Thank you for participating in COBA's Bridge Plus Brunch session. We have reserved Friday mornings of our Sectional tournaments for our rising stars. We hope that you enjoyed the event and added a few 'tricks' in your repertoire.

We need your feedback and support to sustain and grow this event. Based on your input, we now offer a 199er (by average) option and a 0-1000 option. Please inform your friends and club members about this expanded format. We have also added a brief lecture on selected topics. We have provided a more detailed hand analysis for your reference.

Many Bridge hands do not offer a black and white answer. We expect several different auctions and results on various boards. Your teacher/mentor may have different opinions about these analyses. That is part of what makes this game so fascinating. We have tried to be objective and drawn attention to important topics. We have also pointed out hands where one may deviate from the norm and borrowing a term from Barry Regal – Break the Rules.

We thank Emmy Haji and Dan Neill for their valuable insights.

Please visit <http://central-ohio-bridge-association.com> for future events and additional information.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Thank you

Joyce Penn

Mike Roberts

Siraj Haji

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

	♠ 7 3										
	♥ Q 4 2										
	♦ 8 4 2										
	♣ J 10 9 8 5										
♠ Q J 10 9	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A K 8 6 5 4
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 10 9 3		♥ J 7 5									
♦ A 10 9 6 5 3		♦ —									
♣ —		♣ K 7 6 2									
	♠ 2										
	♥ A K 8 6										
	♦ K Q J 7										
	♣ A Q 4 3										

EW 4♠; N 4♣; S 3♣; Par -100; N 5♣×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1 ♠	Dbl
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All pass			

East's 11-HCP hand with strong trick taking potential, should be opened 1 ♠ after North's pass. Following South's Takeout Double, West should jump to 4 ♠. North will pass. South's second double shows extra values targeted more at Takeout than Penalty. Some Norths may pull this double, which is the winning action on this board. However; generally, the five-level belongs to the opponents and pass is understandable. Some Wests may splinter in clubs. North-South should then find the 5 ♣ save easily and quite possibly push East-West to 5 ♠.

Splinter bids take away a lot of room from control showing Q bids, therefore, we would like to have a heart honor to splinter. However; voids can be very potent, and if West simply bids 4 ♠, their side could easily miss a slam opposite as little as ♠ AKxxx ♥ Kxx ♦ Kx ♣ xxx. We lean towards a jump to 4 ♠ because it may also make it difficult for opponents to bid hearts if that happens to be their fit.

Defending against 4 ♠X, South may have a problem reading North's ♥ 4 as an encouraging card. An unfortunate diamond shift will cost defense their third heart trick and lead to eleven tricks on a cross-ruff. UDCA adherents will an easier time reading the ♥ 2 as an encouraging signal. However; all roads lead to -590 or -690.

Those who save in 5 ♣ will get a great result. Down one doubled relinquishes only 100 points. There is a very good chance that some will even make this contract. Those of us who are not clairvoyant enough to underlead the ♠ A or ♠ K at trick one to score one spade, one diamond and a diamond ruff have to find the right continuation at trick 2. You may want to give this a minute before reading on....

East must play another spade to guarantee a trump trick for their side otherwise declarer could finesse their ♣ K, discard their second spade on the fourth heart and concede one diamond. losing only two two tricks (one spade and one diamond) and end up making 5 ♣X.

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ K 7 4 3	♠ 9 8 5	♠ Q 10
♥ J 4 3	♥ A Q 9 7 6	♥ K 8 5
♦ A 10 9	♦ Q	♦ K 8 5 2
♣ 6 4 2	♣ A J 10 5	♣ K 8 7 3
	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 0 5px;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A J 6 2	
	♥ 10 2	
	♦ J 7 6 4 3	
	♣ Q 9	

NS 2♥; NS 1N; NS 1♠; EW 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +110

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
1 NT	Pass	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	All pass	

The East hand does not meet the Rule of 20 or 22.

North must open 1♥ in fourth seat with this sound opener. This hand also meets the Pearson Rule of 15 - Add your HCPs to the number of spades to determine whether to open in fourth seat or not. This is also known as Casino Count.

South must decide whether to defend West's 1 NT bid or take the push. Additionally, East-West are not vulnerable and even a two-trick set only gets us +100. Partner's fourth suit opening should be a sound opener. This will incline us to take the push to 2♥. North should correct 2♥ to 2♠. You know that partner has at least four spades and may even have 5. You also know that a passed hand partner would have simply raised you with three card heart support. In a spade contract, your side will be ruffing diamonds in the hand with shorter trumps.

Unfortunately, 2♠ does not make, and 2♥ does on this hand. Those who pass 2♥ will be unjustly rewarded because North has an easy route to 8 tricks via 4 hearts, 1 spade and 3 clubs in a heart contract.

Some Wests will declare 1 NT and make it on a friendly heart lead.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ Q 7 6 3		♠ 9 8 2										
♥ A J 7 5 2		♥ Q 3										
♦ J 10		♦ K 9 6 3										
♣ A J		♣ 9 6 3 2										
	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S			♠ A K 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											
			♥ 9 4									
			♦ Q 8 7									
			♣ K Q 10 8 7									
		♠ J 10 4										
		♥ K 10 8 6										
		♦ A 5 4 2										
		♣ 5 4										

EW 4N; EW 4♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 2♦; Par -630

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣ ¹	Pass
2 ♠ ²	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

1. Game forcing
2. Does not promise extras

We do not expect too many variations on the auction.


Some declarers will end up with eleven tricks by setting up a diamond trick to go along with four spades, one heart and five club tricks. In order to hold 3 NT to 11 tricks, North-South must build a heart trick before West establishes a diamond trick. Although it doesn't matter on this hand, if South shifts to hearts, they should shift to ♥T when in the ♦ A. This is called a 'Surround Play'. It prevents the declarer from ducking to ♥ Q and then finessing against the ♥ K.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

♠ A 10 7 5 4 3 2
♥ 8 7 6
♦ —
♣ K 9 7



NS 5♠; NS 3N; EW 2♦; NS 1♥; Par +650

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 NT	2♦ ¹	4♥ ²
Pass	4♠	All pass	

1. Meckwell - Diamonds and a major
2. Texas transfer

Two-suited overcalls like Meckwell or DONT over 1 NT openings normally promise at least nine cards (5+ 4+) in two suits. We can hardly blame East for wanting to get into the action. Showing clubs and a major may lose the diamond suit and showing clubs and a higher may lose the heart suit. We like this approach the best because it keeps clubs as an option if partner insists on spades.


South has an easy 4♥ (Texas Transfer) available.

Vulnerability should keep West from getting frisky with their two jacks despite the diamond fit.

Declarer can discard one heart on the ♦ A. An eleventh trick is possible with a successful guess of the ♣ J.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

N 4N; NS 5♦; NS 5♣; S 2N; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; Par +630

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	3N
All pass			

Suggested auction coincides with the Walsh Style of 2/1 game force, where a jump rebid to 3 NT shows six or seven cards in your minor and shortness in your partner's suit. It assures 17-18 HCP with stoppers in both remaining suits. A jump to 2 NT shows the normal balanced 18-19 HCP hand with at least two or three cards in partner's suit. This is a difficult hand to bid and we expect several different auctions on this board. North may Pass and East may balance with 1♠. In that case, South will jump to 3♦, West would compete to 3♠ ending the auction. A possible light 1♠ response will lead to a challenging rebid for South. Anything less than driving to game is an underbid with this powerhouse. 2 NT falls in that category. An imaginative fake reverse to 2♥ is possible but South will eventually need to bid 3 NT.

West will lead their heart ♥ Q against 3 NT, and declarer will be glad to see diamonds behaving. This will result in eleven top tricks. South can be held to eight tricks with the opening lead of a small spade to ♠ 9, spade to ♠ A, followed by a third spade.

If North passes, East may balance with 1♠. South will jump to 3♦, West will compete to 3♠. South will double and settle for +300.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

♠ A 10 4 3
♥ Q J 2
♦ A J 9 8
♣ K 3

NS 2♠; EW 1N; EW 2♦; EW 1♥; NS 1♣; Par +110

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1 NT
2♣ ¹	Pass	2♦ ²	Pass
2♥ ³	2♠ ⁴	All pass	

1. Meckwell/DONT - ♣s and a major/higher
2. Asking for major/higher
3. Major/higher
4. Four card suit. May have bid earlier with five. Safer now.

The East hand is too weak to open 2♦ at this vulnerability. South has a normal 1NT opener. West may venture in with a Meckwell/DONT 2♣ bid. East will bid 2♦ (Alert) to ask for the other suit (not insisting on diamonds). West will show his second suit by bidding 2♥. North now has some comfort holding nine cards in the unbid black suits. He will show some sign of life by bidding 2♠ with his powerful four-card suit. Holding five spades, he may have shown that suit earlier using their methods over interference. Therefore, this bid can be made on a four-card suit. This is akin to balancing action where you have some leeway. This should end the auction. East must refrain from bidding diamonds at the three-level opposite a partner with clubs and hearts. South would double 3♦ for the magic +200 at matchpoints.

Eight tricks may not seem so obvious. Declarer gets there by establishing their fifth club to go along with four top spades, two club ruffs in dummy and the ace of diamonds.

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

♠ A 9 8 7 4
♥ Q 5 3 2
♦ Q 5
♣ 4 3

♠ K Q
♥ A 8 6
♦ 10 8 4 3
♣ K J 9 2



♠ 5 3 2
♥ J 7 4
♦ A K 9 6
♣ A 8 7

♠ J 10 6
♥ K 10 9
♦ J 7 2
♣ Q 10 6 5

EW 4♦; EW 2N; EW 2♣; NS 1♠; EW 1♥; Par -130

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦ ¹	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 NT	All pass

1. No 4-card major unless Game Forcing

We do not have any qualms with any pair reaching 3 NT with 25 combined HCP. We also expect several different routes to 2 NT or 3 NT. Some will employ Inverted Minors. Some will employ other minor suit raises available to them. For better or worse, we tend to relegate minors to second class citizens and do not always have as many tools available as we do for major suits. Those not playing Inverted Minors may have to improvise with 2 ♣ with the East hand if partner opens 1 ♦.

You may be wondering if we have lost our mind by suggesting the 1 ♣ opening. We were always taught to open 1 ♦ when holding 4-4 in the minors, regardless of suit quality. A lot has been written on this subject recently. Many experts believe that if your plan is to rebid 1 NT, it may be more flexible to open 1 ♣ with balanced hands with 4-4 in the minors. Try to imagine East's dilemma if their clubs and diamonds were switched and partner opens 1 ♦. Four triple three suit-distribution with 12 HCP is not enough for West to make a Game Forcing bid.

This auction would get interesting if North decides to overcall 1 ♠. Some Norths may choose to pass in hopes of showing both majors later.

Regardless of which minor is opened, East should not consider a jump to 2 NT showing a balanced 11-12 HCP hand. East needs stronger major suit holdings for that bid.

Unfortunately, an opening spade lead sinks 3 NT as long South remembers to unblock their high spade. Diamond partial fares very well because of the favorable club position and a likely doubleton club lead.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

♠ K 8 6	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 9 7 5 3 2
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 10 7 4		♥ J 8 2			
♦ Q 10 8 3 2		♦ A K 7 6 4			
♣ K 7		♣ —			

NS 1N; EW 2♦; EW 1♠; W 1♥; Par -90

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♠	All pass

East cannot rebid 2♦ because that would be forcing for everyone and Game Forcing for those playing 2-Way New Minor Forcing. We are not crazy about rebidding East's puny spade suit. However; our style is to pick an approach and stick with it instead of guessing each time. We tend to rebid our 5-card major hoping that we are right at least fifty percent of the time. 5-2 fits may play better than 1 NT. There is a possibility that your Central Ohio partner's 1 NT rebid has 3-card support for your spades landing in your eight-card fit. Our Southwest Ohio friends tend to support our major with three cards. Give preference to playing in a 5-2 fit rather than passing partner's 1 NT rebid, with a void. Why should partner go down when we can!

XYZ adherents will come out ahead if they decide to transfer to 2♦ and drop it there hoping to play in their better 5-2 or possibly 5-3 fit. It is highly unlikely that North-South will get to play 1 NT.

It is understandable if some Wests rebid their six card club suit. It happens to work out horribly on this hand.

Careful play of leading the second diamond from the dummy will keep this to down one in 2♠.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ —		♠ A 10 8 7									
♥ Q 9		♥ J 7 2									
♦ Q 10 7 6 4 2		♦ K									
♣ K 10 8 6 3		♣ A Q 9 5 4									
	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♠ K Q 9 5 3 2									
		♥ K 8 6									
		♦ A J 8									
		♣ 7									
		♠ J 6 4									
		♥ A 10 5 4 3									
		♦ 9 5 3									
		♣ J 2									

EW 4♦; NS 2♥; EW 1N; NS 1♣; Par -130

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♣	1 ♠	Dbl
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦	All pass

North has a normal 1 ♣ opener and East has a normal 1 ♠ overcall. 2 ♥ by South would be a free bid. A free bid at the two level shows 5+ card suit and 10+ HCP. South satisfies the length requirement but lacks the strength for a free bid. South must start with a Negative Double. A Negative Double here implies 4 hearts with any strength or a longer suit with less than 10 HCP. West should pounce on the opportunity to bid 2 ♦ warning partner about a misfit. This is not a forcing bid and it does not show much strength. A new suit at the two level in response to an overcall is usually a sign of misfit. We do not have many forcing bids available after an overcall. One has to Q bid in order to force. We suggest a jump in a new suit as highly forward going but still not forcing. North has nothing to say. East will try to keep the auction open with his sound overcall and a fit for partner. This should end the auction.

A heart lead will set up a second heart trick for the declarer. They can now concede one spade discarding a club, and set up three spades tricks after trumping two in their hand. Most declarers will score 130.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ 8 7 4 3	♠ 8 7 4 3
♥ A 8 5 3	♥ A 8 5 3
♦ Q 5 4	♦ Q 5 4
♣ Q 2	♣ Q 2

EW 3N; EW 2♠; EW 3♦; EW 3♣; EW 1♥; Par -600

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	All pass

Yes. East-West can make 3 NT with these cards but passing 1 NT is the right action with the West hand. Aces and Kings are undervalued in our point count system but that still does not justify upgrading this to an Invitational hand. The reason this hand makes 3 NT is because partner has 17 HCP and ♣ Q drops doubleton which is an anti-percentage play and we are not optimistic about four club tricks without some help from the opponents.

We expect most declarers to take eight tricks after a low heart opening lead.

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ K J 10 3 ♥ 5 3 ♦ 10 7 5 ♣ 9 7 6 5	♠ 5 2 ♥ 10 7 ♦ K 9 6 3 ♣ A K Q 8 2	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A Q 8 4 ♥ A Q J 6 ♦ Q J 4 2 ♣ 4
♠ 9 7 6 ♥ K 9 8 4 2 ♦ A 8 ♣ J 10 3			

NS 2N; EW 2♠; NS 3♣; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; Par +100; EW 3♠×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	1NT	Pass
Pass	2♣	Dbl ¹	Pass
2♠	All pass		

1. Takeout!

We expect several different auctions on this hand. Some Norths may choose to open 1♣ opposite a passed hand. They are going with the theory of ‘Bid where you live’ or ‘Bid the suit you want lead opposite a passed partner’. That would make it easy for East to double. South will then bid 1♥. West will most likely pass with their 4 HCP. North will now feel trapped and forced to rebid their clubs. That turns out to be a good thing on this hand. East should double again implying at least eight cards in the unbid suit. If South passes, West will bid 2♠ allowing East-West to find a landing spot in 2♠ or 3♠. 3♣ by South will shut West out of the auction.

We suspect that most players will open the North hand 1♦ leading to the above auction. East has a difficult bid and must make up something. Double is not an option. Our ‘not so perfect’ choices are: 1NT overcall with a singleton, or 2♦ (Michaels) with only 4-4 in the Majors (not recommended in the long run). We may consider passing before making a Takeout Double with length in the opened suit and a singleton. Our experience has shown that partner keeps bidding that singleton until opponents get nasty and double 😊

Please note that the double of 2♣ falls under the category of ‘Low-level-doubles’ are better played as Takeout especially opposite a partner who has been silent up to this point in the auction. Double here implies 4 cards in each pointed suit (spades and diamonds). This would lead to a comfortable 2♠ contract for East-West.

Eight tricks are made collecting: five spades, two hearts and one diamond.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 9 8	♠ A K Q J 7 3	♠ 5 4									
♥ K 9 8 6	♥ Q 5 3	♥ 10 7 2									
♦ A J 7 4	♦ —	♦ K 10 8 5									
♣ A 6 4	♣ Q 10 5 3	♣ J 9 8 2									
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; margin: 5px;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ 10 6 2										
	♥ A J 4										
	♦ Q 9 6 3 2										
	♣ K 7										

NS 4♠; NS 2N; S 2♥; N 1♥; EW 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +620

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♦	1♠	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♠	All pass	

First two bids are routine. Some Easts may bid 2♦ or even 3♦ at favorable vulnerability. We believe that the hand is too balanced for a preemptive raise. However; a nuisance competitive 2♦ bid is reasonable. This bid is not available to those who play Inverted Minors in competition. It is time to rethink that strategy. If East passes, South should bid 2♦ to show a sound raise to 2♠. A Jump Q bid of 3♦ would show a Limit Raise. South needs a fourth trump to make that bid and the value of ♦ Q is dubious at best. Regardless of East's bid, South will support Spades at the 2 or 3 level. West has nothing to add. Fitting hands with voids are often very potent because they turn the hand into a 30-point deck instead of a 40-point deck. Technically, North has a four-loser hand. We would increase the loser count a little because of the two unsupported queens. North should bid game opposite any good raise. Opposite a Single Raise, North should at least make a Help Suit Game Try in clubs. South should oblige with their maximum hand.

Declarer can ruff one club low and another with the ten to score eight trumps, two hearts and one club for an overtrick. An opening trump lead will hold the declarer to ten tricks.

Board 13
 North Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ Q 8 7 5 2	<table border="1" style="border: 2px solid green; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ J
N					
W E					
S					
♥ K 8		♥ 9 7 6 5 4 3 2			
♦ K 9		♦ 10 4 2			
♣ A 10 5 4		♣ K 2			

EW 3♥; NS 2N; NS 2♦; EW 1♠; S 1♣; Par -140

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	2♦ ¹	Pass	3♦ ²

All pass

1. Weak Two
2. Bridge is all about blocking and tackling whenever possible

This is a sound vulnerable first seat weak 2 bid. We would prefer better shape and crisper honors, but 10 HCP should make up for that. East is unable to bid his seven-card suit. South could pass or make a frisky raise to 3♦ with scattered values and Honor-doubleton (Hx) in partner's suit. Those playing Weak 2 bids with a 5-card suit even when vulnerable will not have this luxury available to them on this hand. A diamond raise is very likely to curtail further bidding.

If South passes, West has an easy 2♠ bid. East can now safely bid hearts to show the lack of fit for spades and length but not the strength for a direct overcall of 2♥. That should end the auction and garner nine tricks with a top board via seven hearts and two spades.

We have no qualms with West overcalling 3♠ over 3♦. It happens to work out horribly on this hand. This proves that preempts and blocking bids can cause serious headaches for the opponents. It is a matter of style. Serious players should be willing to accept a bad board occasionally to keep opponents from robbing them blind. You just need an understanding partner.

3♦ by North requires careful play and a winning guess in the club suit to avoid -200. It will be difficult for opponents to double 3♦ and -100 should be a good matchpoint score.

Board 14
 East Deals
 None Vul

♠ 5 4 2	♠ Q J 10 9 3	♠ A 7									
♥ A 9 2	♥ K 6 3	♥ Q 10 8 5 4									
♦ Q 8	♦ 7 2	♦ A K 9 6									
♣ 9 6 5 3 2	♣ K Q 4	♣ 10 8									
<table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>				N		W		E		S	
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ K 8 6										
	♥ J 7										
	♦ J 10 5 4 3										
	♣ A J 7										

EW 3♥; NS 2♠; EW 1♣; Par -100; NS 3♠×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1♥	Pass
2♥	2♠	3♥	3♠
All pass			

Holding the boss suit (spades) along with non-vulnerability wins the board for North-South. In reality, many will make 3♠. It takes a trump lead to hold North to eight tricks in spades. That will keep declarer from ruffing their third heart. One can hardly blame East for leading a high diamond. However; they should switch to trumps at trick two.

We expect 140s in both directions on this board.

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

NS 5♠; S 4N; N 3N; NS 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 1♣; Par +650

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

Many people do not realize that responding to a 1 ♥ opening bid with spades poses more challenges than other 1 over 1 auctions. The first two bids are routine. North has a difficult rebid. 2 ♠ is an underbid. 3 ♣ is virtually game forcing and therefore a gross overbid. Invitational jump to 3 ♠ requires a six card or longer suit. As weird as it may sound to bid 2 NT with a void, that is the only sensible option on this hand. The 2 NT rebid must include hands with five spades after the 1 ♥ opener rebids 2 ♦ or 2 ♥. Perhaps this could be a discussion topic for a future session. South accepts the Game Invitation and shows 3 card support on the way. North is delighted with this development and happy to bid 4 ♠.

Declarer cannot afford to pull trumps because he needs to ruff clubs in the dummy. This leads to a pleasant bonus of dropping the doubleton Q offside. Even on a spade lead and getting his diamond king trumped, declarer can take five spade tricks in hand, two club ruffs, two diamonds and the club Ace for ten tricks.

Board 16

West Deals

E-W Vul

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

S 2N; NS 3♦; N 1N; NS 1♥; Par +120

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1NT	All pass	

East may consider opening 1♠ in third seat. Vulnerability in a battle for part-score should dissuade him from this action. If he does bid, East may be rewarded on this hand by landing in 2♠ for a good result. If East passes, the same vulnerability should discourage West from backing in with 2♣.

Defending 1NT without any bidding to guide them, East is likely to lead a spade from his 5-card suit. After discovering the bad break in diamonds, declarer can revert to hearts and finesse the ♥T, taking eight or possibly nine tricks.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

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

NS 3♠; NS 3♥; EW 3♣; EW 1N; Par +100; EW 4♣×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	2♠	2NT	Pass
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
4♣	All pass		

North dealers will pause a minute to evaluate whether to open or pass this six-five major suit hand. It meets the Rule of 20, but not the Rule of 22, does not contain two quick tricks, nor does it have defensive values. It's best to strike the first blow by opening a weak two spades, showing 5-10 HCP with a six card suit. We were previously taught not to preempt with length in another major. This hand falls in 'Breaking the Rules' category. Picture this hand opposite two little spades and three little hearts. Spades will play much better.


East will overcall 2 NT, advertising opening 1 NT values, with at least one spade stopper. South will need to decide if his hand is adequate enough to bid. Ordinarily, the weak two bidder's partner needs at least a strong opening hand to change suits with a forward-going bid. Raising partner with a doubleton (honor-small) is another blocking bid. It asks partner to NOT bid again. South may bid 3♠ as a blocking bid but unlike Board #13, opponents have already shown values and you have the ♠ K for a sneak attack against a possible 3 NT contract. Obviously we are not aware of East-West's six running club tricks.

West, short of values to risk bidding 3 NT, leaves the door open for North to "come alive, with six-five." An opening weak two bidder with a two-suited hand like this, has another opportunity to cause mischief and perhaps find a fit-dependent game in hearts, however South is comfortable returning to North's spade suit. More 'Breaking the Rules'.

West can now propose declaring the contract in Clubs, since North's hand is an open book. East is likely to have a generous fit in clubs, whereupon the hand will be passed out. East is aware that West may be (and is) weak, with a long club suit. However, East holds lots of values with two Aces and two Kings, making a good dummy hand.

North will probably lead his singleton diamond and get a ruff when South takes the Ace and returns a diamond. Declarer will do well to take a ruffing finesse in diamonds, discarding a spade, losing one diamond, one ruff, the heart ace and one spade. Down one doubled should be a good matchpoint score against three of a major making for the opposition.

Board 18
East Deals
N-S Vul

<p>♠ Q 10 8 7 ♥ 10 3 ♦ J 8 5 4 ♣ A 5 2</p>		<p>♠ 9 6 5 ♥ 7 6 5 ♦ 9 2 ♣ J 10 6 4 3</p> <p>♠ A K 2 ♥ A K Q J 8 4 ♦ A Q 7 6 ♣ —</p> <p>♠ J 4 3 ♥ 9 2 ♦ K 10 3 ♣ K Q 9 8 7</p>
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EW 7♠; EW 6N; EW 6♥; EW 6♦; EW 1♣; Par -1510

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		2♣	Pass
2♦ ¹	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT ²	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥ ³	Pass	3♠ ⁴	Pass
4♣ ⁵	Pass	4♦ ⁶	Pass
4NT ⁷	Pass	5NT ⁸	Pass
6♥	All pass		

1. Waiting
2. Game forcing (3C would have been 2nd negative)
3. Doubleton heart
4. Implied cue-bid for hearts
5. Cue-bid
6. Cue-bid
7. RKC 0314
8. Even number of keycards, some void

A fun slam hand demonstrating the ability to show an even number of key cards, with a void, by answering 5 NT to the RKC request. A 6♣ response to 4 NT would have shown an odd number of Key Cards, with a club void.

The East hand can easily infer that one king is missing, cannot count 13 tricks and will stop at 6♥. When East rebid 2♥ earlier in the auction, he announced a likely six card suit (or at least a chunky five card suit). Upon learning about East's void (with his 5 NT bid), Hearts became the best landing spot for the slam.

Although the hand makes 7♠, we cannot rationally bid that. Opener has three spades at best and five or six hearts, possibly seven. In Spades, East is able to ruff one club, cash two high trumps, use the ♥T entry to hand to pull last two trumps. You get the statistically unlikely 3-3 split missing six cards in the trump suit. This is very lucky lay of cards. Correct slam to bid is 7♥.

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ A J 10 6 3	♠ Q 9 8 4 2	♠ 5									
♥ A J 8 2	♥ 9 3	♥ 10 7 6 5									
♦ 9 2	♦ K Q 7	♦ 10 6 5 3									
♣ 4 2	♣ Q 10 8	♣ A K 5 3									
<table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>				N		W		E		S	
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ K 7											
♥ K Q 4											
♦ A J 8 4											
♣ J 9 7 6											

EW 2♥; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par -110

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	1 NT	Pass	1 ♦
2 ♥	All pass		Pass

This is a fairly normal bidding sequence. North will lead top of touching honors in partner's suit - ♦ K. When North sees the dummy, he realizes that their side probably holds 22 HCPs. Partner has an opening hand, dummy has seven, so the declarer is marked with 10 HCP and five spades and four hearts. Declarer's hand is specifically 5-4-2-2, 5-4-3-1, 5-5-2-1, 5-5-1-2, 5-4-3-1, 5-4-1-3, or 5-5-3-0.

This is not an easy hand to declare. After ♦ K lead, North may cash ♦ Q and then shift to ♥ 9 in an attempt to cut down spade ruffs in the dummy. They may switch to ♥ 9 at trick two. Some may even lead it at trick 1 due to their spade length. We do not recommend that because that may help declarer by finessing partner in the trump suit. Partner sitting behind the dummy may be able score their trumps by overruffing the dummy. We suspect that most defenders will play three rounds of diamonds. Declarer can score one spade, two clubs, and five heart tricks with careful play. They have to ruff the fourth diamond with the ♥ J when south follows suit.

Board 20
 West Deals
 Both Vul

♠ Q 8 7 3	♠ 5 4	♠ J 9 6 2
♥ 6 3	♥ J 9	♥ A 7 5 4 2
♦ Q 5 4	♦ K 10 7 3	♦ J 6 2
♣ J 9 8 4	♣ K Q 10 7 3	♣ 2
	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 0 5px;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A K 10	
	♥ K Q 10 8	
	♦ A 9 8	
	♣ A 6 5	

NS 6N; NS 6♣; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 3♠; Par +1440

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

South opens 2 NT with their 20 HCP. Most Norths will simply raise to game. Some may try 3 ♠ as Minor Suit Stayman. We do not expect most people to bid this slam but you should take twelve tricks on any defense.

Due to the lack of Stayman, West should favor a low spade lead. With two spade stoppers, declarer can score twelve tricks by simply forcing out the ♥ A. You have two spades, three hearts, two diamonds and five club tricks. In order to bring home the club suit, declarer must cash a high honor in the dummy first and then lead low to the ♣ A. They can now take the marked finesses against the ♣ J.

Board 21
 North Deals
 N-S Vul

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

♠ K Q J 10 4 3
♥ 3
♦ K Q 9
♣ Q 10 6

NS 5N; NS 5♠; NS 4♥; NS 4♣; NS 3♦; Par +660

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♠ ¹
Pass	4 ♣ ²	Pass	4 NT ³
Pass	5 ♥ ⁴	Pass	5 ♠

All pass

1. Game forcing, spades is trumps
2. Cue-bid
3. RKC 0314
4. 2 or 5 keycards, no trump Queen

Some in South seat, may employ an artificial 3 ♣ bid as a variation of 3 ♣ Ask or New Minor Forcing (not literally on this hand). Please note that we suggest 3 ♠ rebid as forcing. Otherwise, it is very difficult to explore for slam. Some people play Wolf Signoff and other gadgets.

All roads lead to spades as trumps followed by RKC Blackwood. There will be disappointment upon discovering that there are two missing key cards. If East does not cash the ♣ A when in with the ♠ A, they will go to bed with it. Declarer can ruff one heart to set up a fourth heart and discard three clubs on them. They will score five spades, four hearts and three diamond tricks for a total of twelve tricks, if East does not cash the ♣ A.