


Board 1

Dlr: N
Vul: None

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE


	N-S Score	Match- points
Board 1		
.....	100	
590	99	
.....	98	
500	97	
.....	96	
420	95	
.....	94	
300	93	
.....	92	
200	91	
180	90	
170	86	
150	81	
140	67	
120	52	
110	48	
100	41	
90	39	
50	36	
0	34	
-50	25	
-90	16	
-100	10	
-110	4	
-130	3	
.....	2	
-200	1	
.....	.0	

	West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass	2♥
Dbf	Pass	3♦	3♥	
Pass	Pass	Pass		

In Standard, South is a little bit short of making a direct limit-raise to 3♥, so would have to bid 2♥ as shown. Players using Bergen Raises (or other artificial methods) might have a way to make a direct three level raise correlating to South's values. After the single raise, West enters with a less-than-perfect shaped takeout double. East might take out to 2NT if the partnership plays that as minors (as opposed to natural), but is shown as bidding his five-card suit. South should absolutely go on to 3♥ (nine-card trump fit). East-West's job is done (push the opponents from two to three). Restricted choice suggests guessing the trump suit, but if West made a takeout double, declarer might play him for two low trumps instead of honor-third. It looks like declarer has to lose two spade tricks, but the suit is frozen (the defense can't profitably attack). Eventually, the ♣Q might provide a discard (though declarer can't really do everything).

Board 2

Dlr: E
Vul: N-S

	♠ 6 4	
	♥ Q 10 6 3	
	♦ A Q J 5 4	
	♣ 8 5	
♠ A J 10 8 3		♠ K
♥ A K 2		♥ 9
♦ 3		♦ K108762
♣ A 9 7 6		♣ K10 4 3 2
	♠ Q 9 7 5 2	
	♥ J 8 7 5 4	
	♦ 9	
	♣ Q J	

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 2	
.....	100
500	99
.....	98
150	97
.....	96
100	94
50	85
.....	78
-100	77
-110	74
-120	72
-130	71
-140	67
-150	62
-170	57
-180	53
-200	51
.....	49
-300	48
-400	38
-420	24
-430	16
-450	11
-460	9
-490	6
-500	5
.....	4
-920	2
-940	2
-1100	1
.....	0


West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♥(1)	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣(2)	Pass
??			

- (1) Splinter Bid
(2) 1 Keycard (using 1430)

Some East players might open with a sexy weak two-bid in diamonds, over which West could bid 2♠ and then likely 5♣ over East's 3♣ rebid. In the auction shown, East's 2/1 by a passed hand is non-forcing, of course. West might wonder why no weak two-bid and deduce that East has a two-suiter. The 3♣ rebid strikes gold, and East can make a splinter raise as shown. After Keycard Blackwood and a response of one, West has to guess about the ♣Q. Figuring he might already be ahead of the game (some pairs will play in a diamond partial), probably he shouldn't be a pig. In fact, the matchpoint table shows that 5♣ with an overtrick is good enough. Slam requires not only a club guess (starting with the ace and going with restricted choice odds will be fatal), but also some handling.

Board 3

Dlr: S
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	??	Pass

After North's 15-17 notrump, East could pass, hoping to lead the ♦ K against a notrump contract. On the actual deal, this would be a losing strategy because declarer's clubs run, giving him seven top tricks. I suspect most Easts will give in to the temptation to show a one-suiter, using whatever convention (or even natural) is available. If East-West land in 2♦, I'd make a takeout double with the North hand (1NT opener's subsequent doubles should be takeout if in front of the bidder. If behind the bidder, I still like it as takeout, but not all agree). South wouldn't be happy when removing to his four-card suit, but he'd love the dummy if he got to play in 3♣. That contract has five obvious losers, but minus 50 is better than going minus defending against 2♦. If East and South pass 1NT, West would be deterred by the unfavorable vulnerability from balancing (to show majors), but it wouldn't stop me!


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score	Match- points
--------------	------------------

Board 3	
.....	100
500	98
400	97
300	95
200	90
180	86
150	86
130	86
120	85
110	85
100	69
90	54
.....	53
-50	49
-70	44
-90	35
-100	24
-110	12
-130	1
.....	0

Board 4

Dlr: W
Vul: Both

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 4	
.....	100
100	98
.....	97
-120	96
-130	94
-140	93
-150	90
-170	86
-180	83
-190	81
-200	78
-210	78
-230	77
-240	76
-260	75
-270	75
.....	74
-600	73
-620	69
-630	65
-640	61
-650	59
-660	45
-680	33
-690	28
-710	22
-720	10
-800	1
.....	. 0


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

(1) 20-21

No, that is not a misprint on the range of 2NT. If you are still woodenly counting a hand like East's as 19, you need better valuation methods. Not only is it worth a point to have a good five-card suit, but a hand full of aces and quick tricks is worth more than its actual point count. I'd say East's hand is closer to 2♣ followed by 2NT than to a 1♦ opener (followed by 2NT). Still, I know in my heart, that most East's will be a slave to actual HCP count and stubbornly open 1♦. If they do, West responds 1♠, and East might go ahead as planned with 2NT. On the other hand, he might change tack and try to reach spades, maybe by reversing to 2♥ first. Anyway, all roads should lead to 3NT, and if declarer plays wide-open, he will take a ton of tricks. The ♥J lead is clearly most effective. Now, declarer will likely holdup (probably twice). Then, he has to guess which finesses to take. Of course, if he doesn't hold up, and takes both finesses, he will emerge with 13 tricks and a great board.

Board 5

Dlr: N
Vul: N-S

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

West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	2♥
3♦	4♥	All Pass	

I like to have a good hand for a two level overcall, so for me, East's 2♦ is on the light side. Still, he is at favorable vulnerability and has an okay six-card suit. Furthermore, his ♠K is well positioned, and he has great distribution. South's 2♥ shows at least five hearts and 10+ points. It is forcing one round, but not to game (even if playing 2/1). West has a clear raise to 3♦ and North should raise hearts—there isn't room to show the sixth spade and raise hearts. Since 3♥ would not be forcing, North needs to do more (in support of hearts, his diamond void is huge). East and South could be tempted to bid again—it wouldn't surprise me if some enterprising North-South pairs reach a doomed heart slam. Even game is a little tricky if East skillfully holds up his ♠K at the right moment. Let's suppose the ♦Q is led. Declarer wants to keep the ace for control, so he might ruff in dummy and then draw trumps ending in hand (overtaking). Then, he runs the ♠10. If East ducks smoothly, and declarer greedily repeats the finesse, he will be down one.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 5	
.....	100
1430	99
.....	98
800	97
790	97
710	96
680	91
650	74
620	55
600	48
500	47
300	45
.....	44
200	43
.....	42
150	42
.....	41
100	39
50	37
-100	27
-110	17
-130	16
-150	15
-200	11
-300	5
-400	3
-500	2
-510	1
.....	0

Board 6

Dlr: E
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
		1♥!	Pass
2NT(1)	Pass	3♠(2)	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) Jacoby 2NT
(2) Shortness

For the first time in 25 years of writing/analyzing, I have shown an opening bid in a four-card major. Not only is the four-card suit the best, but there is a compelling reason for “breaking system”; – the rebid problem. Holding no spades, odds are strong partner will respond in that suit. What if you opened the East hand 1♦ and partner responded 1♠? You couldn’t show the hearts because 2♥ would be a reverse, promising extras you don’t have. You’d have to rebid 2♣ and that perfect four-card heart suit wouldn’t be mentioned! Put a small diamond in with hearts and go for it. West’s Jacoby 2NT response results in East bidding 3♠ (shortness). East can’t bail out – once he has opened 1♥, he must follow through. Spade shortness is not high on West’s dance card, but he has too good a hand to retreat to 4♥. He control-bids 4♦, and East knows there is no club control. I don’t like laying down aces on lead, but maybe some South players will find the ♣A lead. On a ♦2 lead, declarer might take all 13 tricks. There might be a lot of spade opening leads – and the first four tricks could be entertaining (AKQJ of spades with declarer throwing all four clubs). I’d expect 12 tricks.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 6	
.....	100
500	99
.....	98
200	97
100	87
.....	78
-130	77
.....	76
-200	75
.....	74
-600	73
-620	71
-630	66
-640	63
-650	48
-660	31
-680	22
-690	14
-710	11
-720	7
.....	6
-1370	6
-1390	6
-1400	6
-1430	4
-1440	2
-1460	1
.....	0

Board 7

Dlr: S
Vul: Both

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 7	
.....	100
1430	99
.....	98
680	96
660	94
650	90
630	85
620	66
600	46
.....	45
170	44
.....	43
-100	27
-200	7
-300	2
.....	0

West North East South


Pass 1NT⁽¹⁾ Pass 1♠
 Pass ?? 3♠

(1) Forcing?

I like to play the 1NT response as semi-forcing; many play it completely forcing. (Still others play it as old-fashioned 6-10). For a direct limit-raise, I prefer to have four trumps. True, 1NT could be the final contract with a hand such as North's (my way, South passes with a balanced minimum)—but I don't mind too much. Anyway, on the actual deal, South is shown as rebidding 3♠ (more to the point than 2♣—which could get passed on the wrong day). South is too strong for only 2♠. North now has to decide if he should try for slam (and how). After South's 3♠, it should be too late for a new suit, so North's four level bid here would be a control-bid in support of spades. Going up the line, North would bid 4♦, and slam will be reached at some tables. Slam shouldn't make, but the problem is that West (depending on the bidding—East could double a 4♦ control-bid) might make the fatal lead of a heart honor. Now declarer can get home by winning and running the ♥J, throwing a loser. The fall of the heart spots is perfect—declarer takes four heart tricks to go with six solid trumps and two side aces for a lucky 99% board.

Board 8

Dlr: W
Vul: None

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

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Match-
Score points

Board 8	
.....	100
1210	98
.....	97
990	94
980	81
.....	71
490	68
480	53
460	38
450	32
430	27
420	25
400	24
.....	23
-50	16
-100	6
-150	1
.....	0

With 22 balanced, South opens 2♣ (assuming 2NT is 20-21). I use 2♦ as a waiting bid. I'd show a suit only with 8+ HCP and a good at least five-card suit. I let opener describe and not get in his way. Over 2NT (22-23/24), North starts with Stayman (a 4-4 heart fit would be of interest). Over the 3♦ denial, North would like to show spades – but how? In “Standard,” 3♠ would be natural and forcing. But some players use Smolen (they would bid 3♥ to show at least five spades) and others use “Extended Texas” (they would bid 4♥ to show at least six spades and four hearts). North might try 5NT (pick a slam) at this point and bid 6♠ if South shows a minor. South might correct to 6NT. Declarer will start with a top spade, discovering the 4-0 break. It's 4-0 outside, so declarer can take a finesse and lose only one spade trick. He can take 12 tricks in spades or notrump. For missing this good slam, it is surprising that North-South get above average (+480).

Board 9

Dlr: N
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Assuming a 15-17 notrump, it is hard to imagine anything other than this auction. North should not use Stayman as he is unprepared for an answer other than 2♥. West has a three-pronged opening lead choice:

- 1) ♦3 (Fourth from your longest and strongest)
- 2) ♠5 (Prefer leading majors to minors)
- 3) ♥J (More passive than the other leads)

I'd reject #1, because I don't like leading from AQxx, especially against only 1NT (sometimes, it might be the best try against 3NT). Also, I prefer majors (the opponents aren't as likely to have majors—they might have bid one). With the ♥9 as well, I think the ♥J would be a standout. As it is, I'd probably guess between spades or hearts. The cards lay incredibly well for declarer. Likely he would win any lead in hand and work on diamonds (running the jack). I'd expect +150 to be the most common result.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 9	Match-points
.....	100
800	99
.....	98
500	98
.....	97
400	95
.....	94
300	92
.....	90
200	83
180	74
150	61
140	50
130	49
120	43
110	34
100	25
90	16
70	13
.....	12
-50	9
-80	5
-90	4
-100	3
-110	1
.....	0

Board 10

Dlr: E
Vul: Both

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

West North East South

		Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Drury

It always causes me some pain to publish an auction where a pair buys it on the two level with an eight-card fit. Here, some North's might overcall 1♠, but vulnerable with that awful quacky hand, I'm not for it. East is worth a Drury-fit raise (if available—and if remembered!)—in support of hearts. He is too strong for only a simple raise. West bids 2♥ to deny game interest (Reverse Drury is the norm these days). Would North now have the nerve to balance (it isn't true balancing seat, but in effect, this is a balancing situation) with 2♠? I know I would—but I didn't want to show it in print and get nasty emails. How about South balancing with his 4-3-3-3 shape? I'd be tempted. In 2♥, declarer, with decent handling can manage to lose just one trick in each suit for a decent +140. If North-South do get involved with spades (especially at the three level), they might pay the ultimate matchpoint price of -200.

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Score Match-points

Board 10	
.....	100
500	99
.....	97
200	91
140	86
110	84
100	71
90	60
.....	59
-80	58
-90	54
-100	46
-110	37
-120	32
-130	31
-140	25
-150	19
-170	17
-180	15
-200	9
-300	3
-400	2
-500	1
.....	0

Board 11

MATCHPOINT TABLE

Dlr: S
Vul: None

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

N-S Score Match-points


Board 11	
.....	100
300	99
.....	98
150	97
140	95
120	94
110	92
100	84
90	78
80	77
50	67
0	57
-50	53
-70	49
-80	46
-90	39
-100	28
-110	25
-120	16
-130	7
-140	7
-150	4
.....	0

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

In fourth seat, a reasonable guideline is the Rule of 15. Add your HCP to the number of spades and open if it adds to 15 or more. Here, it would be 12+4=16. I prefer CRIFS- Cohen's Rule In Fourth Seat. In borderline cases, I pass the deal out if facing strong opposition. Against weak players, open it (they will misbid, misplay or misdefend). Just don't tell them after the deal why you opened so light. I doubt many will pass the deal out as East's hand just looks like an opening bid to me. The auction shown is fairly normal, especially at matchpoint scoring (maybe at IMPs, West would bid 2♦ on the second round, hoping that is a better partscore). North has a tough lead problem—maybe a passive diamond is the best bet. On any lead, declarer will eventually work on clubs. The J-10 falls, but North needs to hold up his ♣A until the third round of the suit. Then, South has to duck if dummy's ♥K is played (or rise with the ace if the 10 is led) to prevent declarer from enjoying the long clubs. Still, declarer might eventually get to hand in diamonds, of all things. The 10s and nines are in favor of East-West big time, so I expect most East-West pairs to go plus, assuming they open the bidding, that is.

Board 12

Dlr: W
Vul: N-S

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

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	1♠
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	??	

Some will pass West's hand, but by most guidelines it is an opening bid. East could respond 1♠, but with such a good hand (a hand that intends to force to game), I prefer to bid more naturally. There is no risk of losing spades by starting with diamonds. With a weaker hand, starting with a 1♠ response is fine. South overcalls, and then it is a struggle for East-West to reach their near lay-down club slam (only 4-0 clubs with North holding four would set it). With the start shown, East might punt again with 3♠, but still, it is far from clear how to reach 6♣ (99% of the matchpoints!) without good guesswork or a rosy view. This deal does not matchpoint well for North-South. I suspect that is because many Easts will respond 1♠ and get a nasty shock when they end up in 3NT—it won't be tough for South to figure out what to lead.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 12	
.....	100
800	99
.....	98
100	95
50	72
.....	52
-120	50
.....	49
-170	42
.....	36
-240	35
.....	34
-400	33
-420	19
-430	5
-440	5
-460	4
-490	4
-500	3
.....	2
-920	1
.....	0

Board 13

Dlr: N
Vul: Both

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

West	North	East	South
	1NT	MAJS	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Score Match-points

Board 13	
.....	100
300	99
200	98
180	97
.....	96
120	95
110	95
100	84
90	73
.....	72
-100	70
-110	67
-140	37
-170	6
-200	3
.....	2
-620	1
.....	0

After North's 15-17 notrump, most of the field will presumably have a way to show majors with East's hand. West could take a rosy view and bid more than 2♠, but to my way of thinking, you shouldn't push to reach close games at matchpoint scoring. If West invites, East might take the push and a no-play game will be reached. North has a routine trump lead, and as long as he doesn't err, the defense will take four tricks—sooner or later. If East-West stay silent they will do poorly to score only 100 against 1NT.

Board 14

Dlr: E
Vul: None

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♦	Pass
??		3♠	Pass

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points


Board 14	
.....	100
150	99
100	94
50	65
.....	40
-110	39
-120	37
-140	30
-150	24
-170	22
-180	21
-200	20
-210	20
-400	16
-420	9
-430	3
-460	1
.....	0

East's hand is too strong for a 15-17 notrump so he starts with 1♦, intending to jump rebid 2NT. West's 1♠ changes the plan. Now, East will jump-raise spades. He could take the high road and bid 4♠, but really his hand is in range for three invitational spades. These days, players (especially not vulnerable) are apt to respond on garbage—so East needn't drag his partner kicking and screaming into game. Should West accept the invitation? He has more than a six-point minimum, but the hand is quacky and the trumps are poor. He might try 3NT—which would be much more tempting if the minors were reversed (Q108 in the suit partner didn't show). That stab at 3NT would likely work well, because notrump plays much better than spades. In fact, the spade game will be swiftly defeated by ♦ A K and a ruff, eventually followed by South's trump trick.

Board 15

MATCHPOINT TABLE

Dlr: S
Vul: N-S

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


N-S Score	Match-points
Board 15	
.....	100
690	98
680	97
660	75
650	52
630	37
620	21
600	13
.....	12
210	7
200	6
180	6
170	5
150	5
.....	4
50	3
0	3
-100	2
.....	0

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Responder's issue here is similar to the one East had on Board 12. There, the diamonds were great and the spades lousy, so I showed a 1♦ response (though expecting the field to show the major). Here, the suit-discrepancy isn't as large, so I think most will respond in hearts as shown. South will surely be tempted to issue a three-card raise, but 2♣ is fine. North now has a routine 3NT bid (knowing there is no 4-4 major-suit fit). South will be disappointed that he never got to show heart support, but now is not the time. If North were interested in three-card support, he should have made a more delicate bid (such as 2♦) to investigate further. East would do better to lead the unbid major (spades) than to lead a dangerous fourth-best from ace-jack, knowing declarer has stopper(s). Let's assume a spade lead. Declarer, not knowing that clubs can run with an overtake of the king, will likely keep the ♠A in dummy as an entry, cashing the ♣K in case an opponent has ♣10xxx. With the ♣K out of the way, declarer will turn his attention to hearts. Low to the queen is good. Then, declarer has to decide if he should try for more overtricks by greedily leading to the ♥10 (best on the layout—as the lucky heart lie produces 11 tricks), or to start diamonds to build a sure 10th trick (all he can get against best defense from there on).

Board 16

Dlr: W
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	??		

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Score Match-points

Board 16	
.....	100
450	99
420	92
400	84
.....	83
200	81
180	79
170	69
150	52
140	37
120	23
110	16
100	14
90	13
.....	12
-50	7
-90	2
-100	1
.....	0

At unfavorable vulnerability, few East players will choose a light third-seat opener. That means we start as shown, and North has to decide if he should use Stayman. The general rule is that responder needs at least invitational values. This is so that if he gets the “wrong” answer, he can bail out to 2NT, prepared to be raised to 3NT. With short clubs, Stayman can be used with zero points (just pass any bid by opener, including 2♦). Here, if scrambling (some call it garbage or junk) Stayman is available, North can try 2♣. If partner bids 2♦, North bids 2♥ as a “pass-or-correct” action, willing to play in a 4-3 major on the two level. In actuality, South would respond 2♠ to Stayman and North might get greedy now and invite with 3♠, which would become the final contract. With the very friendly layout, 10 tricks are available (possibly requiring a very odds-on restricted choice finesse of the ♥8—wrong only if East had exactly ♥Q109). If left in 1NT, South will likely get a heart lead and guess the suit for nine easy tricks and a not-so-bad +150.

Board 17

Dlr: N
Vul: None

	♠ J 5 4	
	♥ Q 7 6 2	
	♦ 5 4 2	
	♣ A J 3	
♠ 10 9 7 6 3		♠ 2
♥ J		♥ AK10985
♦ A K 9		♦ 10 8
♣ K 7 6 2		♣ 9 8 5 4
	♠ A K Q 8	
	♥ 4 3	
	♦ Q J 7 6 3	
	♣ Q 10	

MATCHPOINT TABLE


	N-S Score	Match- points
Board 17		
.....	100	
430	99	
400	97	
.....	96	
180	94	
150	91	
140	88	
130	88	
120	84	
110	78	
100	73	
90	68	
80	65	
50	59	
.....	54	
-50	46	
-80	39	
-100	31	
-110	19	
-120	15	
-130	15	
-140	14	
-150	10	
-170	6	
-200	5	
.....	4	
-300	3	
-470	2	
-500	1	
.....	0	

West	North	East	South
	Pass	2♥	Dbl
Pass	2NT	All Pass	

The auction shown makes a few assumptions. An ELCD (Equal Level Conversion Double) is a takeout double, followed by a conversion of clubs to diamonds to not promise extra values. This popular treatment allows for a takeout double of a major with four of the other major and at least five diamonds. The doubler need not have clubs, as he plans to pull a takeout to that suit. This is different from standard where a double followed by a diamond (or any) bid would show a power double with about 18+. Assuming South can double, North is shown bidding a natural 2NT. Many advanced-to-expert players use a convention here called Lebensohl, whereby 2NT is a puppet to 3♣ to show a weak hand (with direct takeouts showing about 9-11). This is much more convention talk than I'd prefer. If North does get to play 2NT, it is hard to see how East would avoid a fatal heart lead-cutting off the two defensive hands. Declarer can now work on diamonds and take plenty of tricks for a good score. If South doesn't double, East will do quite well in his 2♥ contract, with many ways to emerge with eight tricks.

Board 18

Dlr: E
Vul: N-S

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

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
3♠	4♥	4♠	Pass
Pass	??		

South's hand is worth a one level opening (though some might preempt). After West's "normal" 3♠, North is stuck. He is very heavy for only 4♥ (shown), but not much else makes sense. Marty Bergen invented 4♣ by responder (on this exact auction) as a big 4♥ raise—which is a nice treatment if you can remember it the once a year it comes up. At this vulnerability, East has an easy 4♠ bid and North-South now have to guess to bid on. Settling for only 300 against 4♠ doubled would be a very poor score. Par is actually 800 as East-West do best to sacrifice against the few North-South pairs who reach the excellent 6♥. In a heart contract, declarer might try to make all 13 tricks by ruffing the opening spade lead so he can later lead towards his ♦Q. He will make all the tricks if East plays second hand low (later throwing the other diamond on the ♠A).


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 18	
.....	100
1660	99
1460	96
.....	95
1430	84
1250	72
1100	72
1050	71
800	69
710	64
690	61
680	46
650	29
620	28
.....	27
500	23
300	16
200	14
.....	12
100	9
50	5
.....	4
-100	3
-140	2
-200	1
.....	0

Board 19

Dlr: S
Vul: E-W

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points


Board 19	
.....	99
300	98
200	90
120	81
110	80
100	63
.....	61
-110	42
-120	34
-140	22
-150	13
-170	10
-180	9
-200	8
.....	7
-600	6
-620	3
-630	1
.....	0

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

I'm a huge advocate of opening 1NT with any 15-17 balanced (5-3-3-2 is fine – but not with two doubletons). Here, maybe this hand is worth 18 (if you add one for the five-card suit), but players like opening 1NT, and you can maybe discount the doubleton ♣Q to bring this into 1NT range. With a flat, spotless eight, East should pass. At these colors, I'd balance with the South hand, especially if I could bid 2♣ to show clubs and another suit (DONT or some variant). When West buys it in 1NT, an unfortunate fourth-from-your-longest-and-strongest diamond lead would present declarer with the first nine tricks. Where East-West play spades (maybe after South's balance), a non-diamond lead is also essential to hold declarer to only eight tricks.

Board 20

Dlr: W
Vul: Both

	♠ Q 9 8 5		
	♥ 9 3 2		
	♦ A 10 2		
	♣ 9 6 5		
♠ 7		♠ AJ10632	
♥ A K 10 7 6 5		♥ Q	
♦ K 7		♦ Q J 9 5 3	
♣ A 7 3 2		♣ 10	
	♠ K 4		
	♥ J 8 4		
	♦ 8 6 4		
	♣ K Q J 8 4		

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 20	
.....	100
500	99
.....	97
200	89
100	70
.....	68
-110	57
-120	56
-130	56
-140	50
-150	44
-170	42
-180	40
-200	40
-230	39
.....	38
-600	35
-620	26
-630	19
-650	16
-660	14
-680	8
-690	1
.....	0

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
??			


After the opening and response, this one is impossible to predict. Especially at matchpoints, many players prefer to rebid a good six-card major instead of showing a so-so four-card minor. With a good 6-4, I like to go 6-4-6 (in other words, I'd rebid 2♣, hoping to get a third chance, when I will show hearts again).

With a weak 6-4, I'm okay with repeating the major, especially a good one. Depending on West's rebid, East has to decide whether to go low with 2♠ or higher with an invitational 3♠. Looking only at the East-West cards, 4♥ looks to be the best game. This deal should have lots of different final contracts and too many possible tricks-taken outcomes to even attempt a prediction.

Board 21

MATCHPOINT TABLE

Dlr: N
Vul: N-S

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


N-S Score	Match-points
Board 21	
.....	100
150	99
100	98
80	97
50	91
.....	86
-80	86
-90	86
-100	85
-110	84
-120	76
-130	69
-140	69
-150	47
-180	22
-200	20
-300	20
-400	11
-430	1
.....	0

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

With 4-4 in the minors, I generally prefer to open 1♦—because that is where partner will expect a four-card suit. I don't feel strongly—and a 1♣ opener is also fine. After East's 1♥ and a 1NT rebid, East should probably pass as shown. Maybe vulnerable at IMPs, he could invite with 2NT, but still, he knows the partnership has at most 25 HCP—and East's hand is quite flat. Even if the opening is 1♦, I suggest the ♦10 lead. It is usually best not to get aggressive on lead against partscores. The ♠Q is also attractive, but slightly risky. Declarer has eight easy tricks (with clubs 3-3), and many will take a ninth trick with the ♠K. The defense has to be sharp to prevent this (in fact, without an opening heart lead, it is not possible to take the needed four heart tricks). Even without a spade lead, after the run of the minors, the defenders rate to give up an eventual spade trick. I'd expect a ton of 150s for East-West—and some lucky 400s for the overbidders.

Board 22

Dlr: E
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
		1♦	1♠?
??			

With his 5-5 shape, East is worth an opening bid. South has the wrong shape for a takeout double, so makes a rare (for me, anyway), four-card overall in his 100-honors suit. West has no good call, but might make a flawed negative double (usually, this would deliver a fourth heart). North has a little too much for a preemptive jump-raise, but not quite enough for a limit raise. A popular expert treatment is to use a jump cue-bid (3♦ in this case) to show at least four trumps and “mixed” strength (more than weak, less than limit). North-South actually do best in hearts (no outstanding heart ruff), but I suspect more North-South pairs to reach the eight-card spade fit (with the start shown).


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 22	
.....	100
1100	99
.....	98
800	97
.....	96
590	94
530	93
500	92
450	91
420	81
400	72
300	70
200	67
180	64
170	56
140	42
110	34
100	31
90	28
.....	28
-50	21
-90	13
-100	9
-110	4
-130	2
-150	1
.....	0

Board 23

Dlr: S
Vul: Both

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 23	
.....	100
2220	99
.....	98
1460	94
1440	88
1430	82
1390	79
1370	77
.....	75
720	74
710	71
690	63
680	54
660	42
650	31
640	29
630	25
620	21
600	17
170	16
.....	15
-100	10
-200	3
.....	0

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	5♥ ⁽²⁾	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	


(1) 0 or 3 keycards

(2) ♠Q ask

I've shown South reversing to 2♥—because his 15 HCP are worth much more upon hearing a 1♠ response. It is a slight overbid, but I love hands with lots of aces. North's 2♠ shows at least five spades and is forcing for one round (the most common agreement after reverses). South raises spades, and North might infer club shortness and use Blackwood immediately. Instead, a pair of control-bids is shown. Since 4♦ denies a club control, South's 4♥ shows not only a heart control, but one in clubs, too. RKC with a trump-queen ask and denial leads to the small slam. East might lead his singleton, and the play is complex. Aside from the spade and diamond finesses, there are entry problems. The normal play in spades is the ace and the 10 for a finesse (since that picks up 4-1). A well-deserved good score goes to pairs who bid six even if they don't make the available overtrick.

Board 24

Dlr: W
Vul: None

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

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

North's 15 is so-so, but still, I expect all 15-17 notrumpers to start with 1NT. With 4-3-3-3, I don't recommend using Stayman, thus South's direct 3NT. (Even if a 4-4 fit is found, notrump might play the same—and using Stayman gives away a lot of information). East might lead a disastrous ♥J (prefer majors to minors) after which declarer can make 11 tricks (losing only to the ♥A and ♣K). Refer back to Board 21 to see why I liked the safe ♦10 (knowing that honor-honor-low is dangerous). If East leads anything but a heart, declarer will be in a tough battle for a 10th trick. Against a spade contract, the ♥J lead is also fatal, but on any other lead, declarer will be able to easily make 10 tricks (throwing a diamond on a club and losing only two hearts and the ♣K).


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 24	
.....	100
500	99
490	98
480	97
460	94
450	80
430	61
420	40
400	21
230	15
210	14
200	14
180	14
170	13
150	12
140	12
100	12
50	11
0	10
-50	6
-100	1
.....	0

Board 25

Dlr: N
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Score Match-points

Board 25	
.....	100
400	99
.....	98
150	97
130	97
120	96
110	93
100	89
90	82
0	76
-50	59
-90	42
-100	29
-110	15
-120	15
-140	14
-150	9
-200	2
.....	0

Some players like to rebid 1NT with South's hand, but count me out. I would rebid 1NT with a singleton only if absolutely stuck. South's 2♣ is raised invitationaly to 3♣, leading to a fairly normal partscore contract. With such good diamonds, West, in spite of it being a singleton, should lead a trump. General rule: When declarer lands in his second suit, lead trump. Declarer will work on diamonds, but the nasty minor-suit layouts rate to doom the 3♣ contract. In fact, going down only one trick is an above-average score for North-South.

Board 26

Dlr: E
Vul: Both

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

West **North** **East** **South**
 ??

Not much of a predicted auction. Let's discuss East's three possible opening bids: 1) 1♦. The problem is that after the anticipated 1♠ response, there is no good rebid (this hand is not good enough to reverse and a bit over-strengthened and off shape for a 1NT rebid). 2) 1♥. This is a very good four-card suit, and avoids the rebid problem. However, partner will expect five hearts and might preference a 2♦ rebid into a 4-2 heart fit. 3) 1NT. I like this best (the smallest lie), but don't want any emails about regulations concerning opening 1NT with a singleton. This is a rare time I would be tempted—because the singleton is an honor and all other actions have worse flaws. After a 1♥ opening, South would get in with a takeout double, whereas the other two suggested openings might silence North-South for the entire auction. East-West probably will play in a partscore, but I can see it being in clubs, diamonds, hearts or notrump! In fact, when this deal was played many years ago, East-West recorded scores for +80, 90, 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170 and 180!


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Match-
Score points

Board 26	
.....	100
500	99
400	98
300	96
200	88
.....	82
120	81
110	79
100	66
90	54
80	54
.....	54
-80	53
-90	49
-100	42
-110	33
-120	23
-130	17
-140	16
-150	14
-160	13
-170.....	12
-180	10
-200	9
-210	6
-300	5
.....	4
-600	2
-630	1
.....	0

Board 27

Dlr: S
Vul: None

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

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 27	
.....	100
590	99
.....	98
450	96
430	94
420	83
400	70
300	69
200	69
180	68
170	66
150	64
140	62
120	59
110	56
100	56
90	56
50	55
-50	41
-100	15
-150	1
.....	0

West North East South


			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

East might come in with a takeout double, but all roads should lead to 4♠ by North once South shows 18-19 balanced. As long as declarer doesn't make the poor play of a low spade to the king on the first round, he should have no trouble taking 10 tricks, losing only two spades and the ♦A. If East isn't careful about taking his ♦A, he might never get it. The most likely way this could happen is if after drawing trump, declarer leads a low diamond from hand, and East plays low. Now, declarer's ♦K goes on the long heart. I really don't understand the matchpoint table—if you sat East-West, you shouldn't be pleased with this one. Does the field not know how to play this spade suit?

Board 28

MATCHPOINT TABLE

Dlr: W
Vul: N-S

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

N-S Score	Match-points
Board 28	
.....	100
200	99
150	97
100	89
50	70
.....	69
-90	56
-100	56
-110	55
-120	50
-130	45
-140	45
-150	41
-180	36
-200	34
-210	34
-300	33
-400	22
-430	7
-460	4
-500	3
-800	1
.....	0


West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1NT(1)	Pass	3NT	All Pass

(1) Assuming Walsh style

East has no reason to distort by bidding notrump with no stopper in either major. Also, I prefer to avoid inverted-minor auctions even if 2♣ is available here. I feel that bidding is more accurate after a one level response. So, assuming a 1♦ response, should opener show his major(s)? The footnote refers to the modern "Walsh style." This means that after a 1♣ opening, responder bypasses diamonds to show a four-card major. If the response to 1♣ is 1♦ (natural), it means that either responder has no four-card major, or he is strong enough to introduce it later (roughly opening-bid values). In this style, there is no need for opener, with a balanced hand, to show his major(s). There is no fear of missing a 4-4 fit, because that is responder's job. So, here, opener can rebid 1NT, raised to 3NT with East's very good 12-count (three 10s). North might lead any of three suits (anything but clubs). On the auction shown, I like the passive ♥9. Diamonds is dummy's suit, and the ♠Q is too dangerous. The play is complex—I can't even begin to predict which suits declarer will work on, or how many tricks he will take.

Board 29

Dlr: N
Vul: Both

	♠ 9 7	
	♥ K J 10 3 2	
	♦ A J 10 8	
	♣ 8 5	
♠ K 5 3		♠ QJ8642
♥ A Q 8 5		♥ 9 7 4
♦ 4 3		♦ 7
♣ A 10 4 2		♣ J 9 7
	♠ A 10	
	♥ 6	
	♦ K Q 9 6 5 2	
	♣ K Q 6 3	

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Dbl	1♥	3♠	Pass
Pass	4♦	All Pass	

East's 3♠ might not be everyone's choice. I like to play it shows six trump and something like East's hand. It doesn't mean "more than a 2♠ bid." I like it to be played as shape-showing—a LAW of Total Tricks bid. East knows his side has at least nine trumps (opposite a normal takeout double), so he is able to compete to the three level. North isn't thrilled, but probably would guess to bid 4♦ and if South passes, par is achieved. After a spade lead, declarer has to lose a trick in each side suit, for +130. Without a spade lead, 11 tricks are easy.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 29	
.....	100
800	99
750	98
.....	96
630	95
620	94
600	86
500	79
.....	78
200	77
180	76
170	75
150	65
130	40
110	24
100	23
90	23
.....	22
-100	14
-140	5
-170	4
-200	2
.....	0

Board 30

Dlr: E
Vul: None

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

West	North	East	South
1♠	1NT	1♦	Pass
		All Pass	

It is hard for East-West to find their 4-4 heart fit, with or without North's 1NT overcall. That is why UMJODOO (a Rodwell invention which you can Google) is becoming popular. West responds with an artificial (conventional) 2♥ to show 5 spades, 4 hearts and at most 9 HCP. (With 10 or 11 and that shape, he responds 2♠).

I find this to be a good convention but don't recommend it unless you play every day with the same partner and can remember it. North's 1NT overcall is aggressive, but I like getting in early, like not being vulnerable, and like aces and kings. East or West might act again, but "all pass" as shown is certainly plausible. East-West won't get a good score with the shown auction—they need to play the hand in either red suit to get above average.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 30	
.....	100
500	99
300	98
.....	97
150	95
120	95
110	94
100	85
90	75
50	57
-50	38
-90	35
-100	31
-110	27
-120	23
-130	22
-140	15
-150	8
-170	6
-200	4
-420	3
-450	1
.....	0

Board 31

Dlr: S
Vul: N-S

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
			All Pass

Why 1NT with two doubletons? To avoid the rebid problem. Opening 1♣ creates a problem in that East's hand is just a little too light to reverse. After a 1♠ (or 1NT) response, there is no good rebid. Anticipating the second bid before making the first is an important part of being a good bidder. Sure, you might get away with 1♣, but partner is likely to respond in your short suit (spades)—it is just with the odds. With clubs 3-3 and the diamond finesse on, declarer has eight easy tricks. The defense does best to lead spades, after which 120 should be the most common score.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score	Match-points
-----------	--------------

Board 31	
.....	100
150	99
100	98
50	92
-80	88
-90	84
-110	76
-120	65
-130	53
-140	46
-150	36
-170	27
-180	20
-200	14
-210	13
-300	12
-400	9
-420	6
-430	3
.....	0

Board 32

Dlr: W
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2♣	Dbl
2♥	3♣	??	

I like the 1NT opening by West to avoid the rebid problem (the theme of this set of boards, it seems). Yes, even with two small doubletons. The alternatives (which we've explored throughout this set) are to open a four-card major, or to open 1♦ and have to lie with the rebid. With 5-4 in the majors, it is best to start with Stayman. South makes a lead-directing double, and North can raise clubs. East might bid 4♣ now (hopefully not Gerber). West can control-bid 4♦ and the beautiful slam might be reached. With the magical fit and spade finesse on, 13 tricks are easy in diamonds or hearts (and even spades!). Just finding game in hearts and taking all 13 tricks is good enough on the matchpoint table.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 32	
.....	100
300	99
200	98
100	96
.....	95
-150	94
-170	93
-190	92
-200	92
-230	91
-240	91
-260	90
-500	90
-600	89
-620	85
-630	83
-640	76
-650	67
-680	56
-690	48
-710	36
-720	25
-800	24
-1100	23
-1370	22
-1390	17
-1400	14
-1430	11
-1460	5
.....	0

Board 33

Dlr: N
Vul: None

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

West **North** **East** **South**
 1NT All Pass

West would like to balance, but most systems are for showing two-suiters, not three-suiters. Actually, I would balance with West's hand and just guess to show two suits (I prefer DONT, so would bid 2♣ to show clubs and another suit). Against the auction shown, East rates to lead a very unfortunate spade (another reason for West balancing). Still, declarer has only three spade tricks, and even though the cards are well-placed, there are many awkward decisions in the play.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Match-
Score points

Board 33	
.....	100
800	99
.....	98
590	97
.....	96
500	95
.....	94
430	93
420	93
400	92
.....	91
180	90
170	88
150	83
140	72
120	62
110	54
100	48
90	46
70	45
50	44
-50	31
-100	11
-110	4
-130	4
-150	2
.....	0

Board 34

Dlr: E
Vul: N-S

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

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
Dbl	Rdbl	2♥	3♣
Pass	3♦	3♥	Pass
Pass	4♦	All Pass	

Not many will play this board, and even if they do, I doubt anyone will have the auction shown. West is a bit light for a takeout double but does have perfect shape. There were surprisingly few takeout doubles in this set of deals. North might bid 2NT if available as a Limit-Raise (Jordan), or could redouble as shown. East does lots of competing as do North-South. With the friendly lie, six diamonds is makeable—but just getting to game isn't likely with the North-South cards.


MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 34	
1370	99
.....	98
750	97
.....	96
630	95
620	84
600	68
500	62
.....	61
170	47
150	28
130	19
120	17
110	16
100	14
50	10
0	8
-100	5
-140	2
-170	1
.....	0

Board 35

Dlr: S
Vul: E-W

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

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♠	Dbl
Rdbl	3♣	??	

(1) Drury

MATCHPOINT TABLE


N-S Score Match-points

Board 35	
.....	100
200	98
100	92
0	87
-90	86
-110	85
-120	82
-140	76
-150	70
-170	53
-180	36
-200	36
-230	35
-600	34
-620	17
-630	1
.....	0

After the Drury auction, I would want to get in with South's hand as shown. South was short of a takeout double the first time, but now with the opponents about to settle in two of a major with likely at least an eight card fit, I like to get involved. Especially helpful is the vulnerability. West might redouble as shown and then it isn't clear what will happen over North's 3♣. East-West would do really well on defense, but might take the push to the three level. The cards are extremely favorable for East-West, but the field won't reach game.

Board 36

Dlr: W
Vul: Both

	♠ A 10 7		
	♥ 6		
	♦ A K Q 4 3		
	♣ J 10 9 5		
♠ K Q 9 6 3		♠ 8 4 2	
♥ AKQJ974	N W  E S	♥ 8 5 3	
♦ —		♦ J 6 5 2	
♣ 8		♣ 7 4 2	
	♠ J 5		
	♥ 10 2		
	♦ 10 9 8 7		
	♣ A K Q 6 3		

West	North	East	South
1♥	Dbl	Pass	3♣
3♠	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The most exciting deal and hardly anyone will get to play it. I suppose it would require an 18-table section. With a freak two-suiter, I prefer to open with a one-bid rather than 2♣. This makes it more likely you can get both suits in. North has a normal takeout double, and South a fairly normal invitational jump to 3♣. West can now make a high-level reverse into spades and I show North bidding the club game. West isn't done, and his 5♥ is likely to get doubled by either opponent. There isn't anything to the play; declarer has to lose two spades and a club for minus 200. Remarkably, North's ♠10 is the keycard in a club contract; it allows declarer to throw his unexpected diamond loser. It would be unlucky for North-South to reach 5♦ and fail with the 4-0 trump break. On the other hand, I suspect West would never sell out to that contract, so it is a moot point.

MATCHPOINT TABLE

N-S Score Match-points

Board 36	
.....	100
620	99
600	98
.....	97
500	96
200	90
150	85
130	82
110	80
100	72
-100	59
-140	54
-150	53
-170	48
-200	40
.....	36
-620	26
-650	11
-680	5
-730	5
-790	4
-850	1
.....	0