

Board 1 ♠ J 3 2
 Dealer: N ♥ A 7
 ♦ K 7 3 2
 ♣ A J 10 6

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

♠ K 7
 ♥ Q J 10 5
 ♦ A 9 6 4
 ♣ 9 4 2

♠ A Q 8 6
 ♥ K 9 6 4
 ♦ 8 5
 ♣ K Q 7

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♥
pass	1NT	pass	3NT
pass	pass	pass	

Contract: 3NT by North
Opening lead: ♥Q

Bidding: Opener's 1NT rebid shows a minimum range hand (13-15) and denies four hearts (no heart raise) or four spades (no 1♠ rebid). This tells South that the partnership does not have a fit in either major, so he places the contract in 3NT.

The play: Declarer has 7 top tricks in 3NT: 1♠ + 2♥ + 4♣. If the ♦A is inside a diamond finesse would yield one more trick, but declarer would still need to develop at least one additional winner in spades. Since a) declarer's diamond holding is weak, and b) the spade suit might provide both the 8th and 9th tricks needed, declarer should begin by playing on the spade suit.

With both the ♠QJ between the NS hands, declarer is guaranteed to be able to establish a second spade winner to go along with the ♠A. There are two chances for a third trick in the suit: either a) find the ♠K doubleton onside (in the East hand), or b) a 3-3 spade split. The correct play is to start with a finesse by leading low from the North hand up to dummy's ♠Q. If the ♠Q loses, upon regaining the lead declarer can cash the ♠AJ to check if the missing spades are divided 3-3 (in which case dummy's 4th spade will be a winner). If the ♠Q wins, declarer can next cash the ♠A, hoping to drop the now-singleton ♠K in the East hand. *[Note that if declarer makes the mistake of leading the ♠J on the first round, East will cover with the ♠K and limit declarer to only two spade winners instead of three. Declarer would need to have the ♠10 as well for leading the ♠J to be right.]*

		West	North	East	South
Board 2	♠ 7 6 4				
Dealer: E	♥ 3 2			1♣	pass
	♦ A K 9 6 4	1♥	pass	3♥	pass
	♣ 8 5 3	4♥	pass	pass	pass
♠ J 10 2 ♥ A J 9 6 4 ♦ Q J 7 ♣ 7 6	♠ K 8 5 ♥ 8 7 ♦ 10 8 5 2 ♣ K Q J 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-right: 10px;"> ♠ A Q 9 3 ♥ K Q 10 5 ♦ 3 ♣ A 10 9 2 </div> Contract: 4♥ by West Opening lead: ♦A			

Bidding: East's jump to 3♥ shows four card heart support and a Medium range opener (16-18 total points in support of hearts, counting HCP + shortness). Note that East's hand would be stronger if the distribution were 5-4-3-1 instead of 4-4-4-1, as the five card suit would be a potential source of tricks.

The play: Declarer has five potential losers: 1♣, 3♦ and 1♠. There is no way to avoid losing one diamond trick, but the second and third diamonds can be ruffed, and there is a finesse position in the spade suit. There is no finesse or ruff available in clubs, but declarer may be able to establish an extra spade winner in the dummy to use for a discard.

After gaining the lead, declarer should pull trump ending in hand in order to take the spade finesse. Since he has the ♠10 (and ♠9) to back up the ♠QJ, it is both safe and correct to lead the ♠J; if the ♠J holds the trick, the lead will still be in the correct hand to repeat the finesse. If the ♠K is onside, declarer can play four rounds of spades and discard his losing club before turning to diamonds.

In diamonds, declarer can take advantage of the fact that North's ♦A lead marks him with the ♦K as well and take a *ruffing finesse*. Declarer leads out the ♦Q; if North plays low, East discards from the dummy and the ♦Q holds the trick. If North covers with the ♦K, declarer ruffs and now his ♦J is a winner.

Board 3 ♠ K 10 7 3
 Dealer: S ♥ J 6 4
 ♦ A 9 7 5
 ♣ 8 7

♠ Q 9 6
♥ A Q 7
♦ K Q J 8 3 2
♣ 5

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

West	North	East	South
			3♣
3♦	pass	3♥	pass
4♥	pass	pass	pass

Contract: 4♥ by East
Opening lead: ♣K or ♦6

♠ 5 4 2
 ♥ 3 2
 ♦ 6
 ♣ K Q J 10 9 4 3

Bidding: Over South's preemptive 3♣ opening bid, West overcalls 3♦: the hand has a strong six card suit, good distribution, and support for both majors. East's 3♥ bid is forcing: it is far more valuable for EW to be able to investigate the correct strain (which suit or notrump) than to be able to stop on a dime and play 3♥ instead of 3♦. (Just imagine the problem East would have if a 3♥ bid were non-forcing! It's unacceptable to make a passable bid with a hand that knows they belong in game, and a jump to 4♥ when partner doesn't have to have any hearts could be equally disastrous.)

The play: Barring 4-1 hearts, declarer has four potential losers: 2♣, 1♦ and 1♠. The play will depend on the opening lead. If the defense starts with a diamond lead and ruff, declarer can win the expected club switch with the ♣A and cash the ♥K to protect against a 4-1 trump split. If both opponents follow declarer knows the hearts are 3-2 and that it is safe to pull trump and run dummy's diamonds. If South shows out of hearts (meaning that North started with four), declarer has a heart loser to contend with and can't lose a club or a spade. He can accomplish this by cashing the ♣A and ruffing a club; crossing back to the ♠A and ruffing a club; then cashing two top diamonds discarding the remaining spades. North will score his ♥J at some point, but that will be the final trick for the defense. (Note that there is no need for declarer to risk the spade finesse.)

Board 4
Dealer: W

♠	A Q 4 3
♥	8
♦	Q J 10 5 2
♣	K Q 8

♠ J 9
♥ **K** Q J 5 3 2
♦ A 8 7
♣ A 5

♠ 7 5 2
♥ 10 7 6
♦ 9 6 4
♣ J 7 4 3

♠ K 10 8 6
♥ A 9 4
♦ K 3
♣ 10 9 6 2

West	North	East	South
1♥	Dbl	pass	2♠
pass	4♠	pass	pass
pass			

Contract: 4♠ by South
Opening lead: ♥K

Bidding: When the auction begins 1♥ - Dbl - Pass - ?, advancer will sometimes find himself forced to bid with few or no points. With that in mind, South must jump to 2♠ in response to partner's takeout double: a 1♠ bid would limit his strength to at most 9 points, while the jump to 2♠ shows roughly a good 9-11. It is critical that South bids spades at the level that correctly shows his values: if he could bid 1♠ with 2 or 12 points, partner would never have any idea of what to do next. Once South shows some strength by bidding 2♠, North will raise.

The play: South has potential losers in hearts, diamonds and clubs. Dummy's diamond suit will provide four tricks once the ♦A is dislodged, giving declarer three discards. Declarer should plan on discarding two clubs and one heart, leaving him with one heart loser that needs to be ruffed. If declarer assumes a 3-2 heart split, he can play three rounds of trump and then lead the ♦K to drive out the ♦A. (If the defense doesn't take the ♦A immediately, keep leading diamonds until they do.) From this point, declarer should have no trouble discarding on the diamonds, trumping one heart loser in dummy and knocking out the ♣A. Some caution is needed, however: the ♦A must be knocked out while dummy still has a trump (to protect against a second round of hearts from the defense). Likewise, declarer must be void in hearts before leading clubs, otherwise the defense will cash a heart winner when in with the ♣A.

Board 5 ♠ K 7 2
 Dealer: N ♥ 8 5
 ♦ A K Q 9
 ♣ K 10 8 3

♠ Q 5 3
 ♥ A Q 7 6
 ♦ J 10 8
 ♣ J 6 5

♠ 10 6
 ♥  10 9 4 2
 ♦ 7 4 2
 ♣ Q 9 4

♠ A J 9 8 4
♥ K 3
♦ 6 5 3
♣ A 7 2

West	North	East	South
	1NT	pass	2♥
pass	2♠	pass	3NT
pass	4♠	pass	pass
pass			

Contract: 4♠ by North
Opening lead: ♥J

2♥ = Transfer to 2♠
 3NT = 10-14 with exactly 5♠
 4♠ = 3+ card spade support

Bidding: If North falls asleep at the wheel and reflexively passes responder’s 3NT rebid, NS will land in the hopeless contract of 3NT. Responder’s 3NT rebid does **not** say “I want to play in 3NT”: if he knew he wanted to play 3NT, why would he bother transferring to show his five card spade suit? Instead, the 3NT rebid sends the message: “Partner, you already know I have five spades. I’m strong enough for game: should we play in 3NT (no spade fit) or 4♠ (if you have 3+ spades with me)?” It is North’s responsibility to correct 3NT to 4♠, since he is the one who can tell that the partnership has a 5-3 spade fit.

The play: When dummy has the longer trump holding it is often easier to think of setting up the dummy, rather than making declarer’s hand good. Using dummy as the ‘master hand’, there are four potential losers: 1♠, 2♥, and 1♣. After losing the first two heart tricks, declarer must avoid a black suit loser to make his contract. If the defense errs by playing three rounds of hearts they make the job easy: presented with a ruff-sluff, declarer simply trumps the third heart in the North hand while discarding a small club from South. If the defense correctly switches (probably to a diamond) after the second round of hearts, declarer has two chances: a) spade finesse, and/or b) a 3-3 diamond break. After pulling trump (taking a finesse in the process), declarer cashes the ♦AKQ. If both opponents started with three diamonds, North’s ♦9 is now a winner which can be used to discard one of South’s small clubs.

Board 6	♠ J 7				
Dealer: E	♥ K Q 9 5 3			<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
	♦ 10 8 7 6				<u>East</u>
	♣ 6 3				<u>South</u>
♠ Q 10 ♥ 8 7 6 2 ♦ K 2 ♣ Q 10 8 5 4		♠ A K 9 8 6 5			
		♥ J 10			
		♦ A 3			
		♣ A J 9			
	♠ 4 3 2				
	♥ A 4				
	♦ Q J 9 5 4				
	♣ K 7 2				

		1♠	pass
1NT	pass	3♠	pass
4♠	pass	pass	pass

Contract: 4♠ by East
Opening lead: ♦Q

Bidding: The key bid in this auction is opener's rebid. A 2♠ rebid would show the extra spade length but incorrectly limit East's strength to a Minimum range opener (13-15 total points). With a Medium range hand (16-18) East must jump to 3♠ to show his spade length and hand strength. This is the bid that enables EW to reach their excellent 4♠ game; if East rebids only 2♠ it will end the auction, as West would know that his 8 points plus partner's 13-15 is not enough for game.

The play: Declarer has three potential losers: 2♥ and 1♣. With the ♣K offside he will lose all three, but should have no difficulty taking the rest.

If South finds the aggressive lead of the ♥A and the defense continues hearts, declarer will face a decision on the third round of the suit: ruff with the ♠9 and hope that North has the ♠J, or ruff with the ♠A and hope that one opponent started with the ♠Jx. On this layout, declarer can't go wrong.