

Board 1

South has a good distributional hand for a light opening (better than East's one!) so bidding is likely to go S: 1♠, W: X or S: pass, W: 1♣.

Either will lead to East bidding 2NT sooner or later. If it stops there he will be Ok, as long as he loses just one diamond there are 8 tricks. If they get to 3NT it is likely to go down unless South decides to lead a heart (not a bad idea if spades have been bid but disaster for NS here) Alternatively EW might declare in diamonds probably making 3 or 4 (to make 5♦ requires a lot of skill and/or luck!)

Board 2

East might consider a sub-minimum opening (not a good idea with no aces; 1NT is too risky and 1♣ would probably mean having to repeat a very poor suit).

The partnership is likely to bid 4♠ regardless, even if North competes (with a takeout double of a 1♠ opening)

4♠ is sure to go down unless NS do something crazy (such as underlead the ♣A?)

Board 3

A weak 2♥ opening by South is unlikely to prevent EW reaching game.

West can either overcall 2♠ or X and East has enough to bid 3NT even if North gets frisky and bids 3♥ (if North bids 4♥ EW can double and collect 800!)

The best the defence can do is cash the top three clubs early but that is not easy to do. With both spades and diamonds breaking evenly 12 tricks can be made.

Board 4

A routine 1NT by North (aces are always good cards even if there's nothing to go with them!)

East has a similarly routine 2♣ overcall and will either play there for 9 tricks or West might try 3NT which can only be beaten if South can get the lead early and lead the ♠Q

Alternatively East might pass hoping to defend a NT contract and take them down with a volley of clubs. That ploy will backfire on East because South has an ideal hand for "Garbage Stayman" (Barry Jones' favorite; bid 2♣ and pass **any** response from partner) which will have NS playing in 2 of a major making 8 or 9 tricks.

Board 5

East-West can do a lot of bidding with very few points. After 1♦ opening by East, and 1♥ or (better) X by South East should raise to 2♦.

North is just good enough for a "free" bid of 2♥ or 3♣ in response to partner's double.

2♥ works better here, because with North as declarer East has a difficult time finding the best defence after cashing the ♦A. A switch to the ♠A and another spade is disaster! The best lead is a trump (although another diamond does no harm)

Either side might compete as far as game with their good fits disclosed and should (but might not!) go down.

Board 6

South might try a light opening of 1♣ (not recommended with indifferent suit quality) or a 1NT opening which is off-shape as well!

Such action here will lead to partner putting the side into an unmakeable game.

More likely North will open last with 1♠ (or 1NT is not a bad option, a solid suit like those spades does not always have to be trumps). South will invite game by bidding 2NT but North should decline.

An early heart lead from East will defeat 2NT probably by two tricks unless declarer "cashes up" his 7 tricks giving up any chance of making the contract.

Contracts below game in either black suit fare better.

Board 7

It is reasonable for South to open 1NT on the strength of all his 10s and 9s despite having only 11 HCP.

North has a close decision whether to force to game (by bidding 3♥) or not. "Or not" presents a problem as there is no way to invite game **and** show 5 hearts (a Stayman bid only shows four). To sign off in 2♥ is a bit wimpy (but could lead to the best outcome!)

North-South are unlikely to reach game if South doesn't open.

Whether 4♥ makes depends only on which way declarer finesses the hearts. To win with the ♥A then run the ♥J succeeds; any other line fails.

If South declares in notrumps and avoids a spade lead, the successful play of the hearts will yield the same ten tricks

Board 8

After West opens 1♦ the two weakest hands might do more than their share of bidding!

Anyone for a weak jump overcall in spades with just two Jacks? And can East add enough for his fine distribution to justify bidding hearts?

With distributional hands a sequence of 1♦ 2♠ 3♥ stands to gain more than it loses for either side.

Both sides are likely to compete to at least the 4 level and some contracts may well be doubled.

EW should out-score NS as they can easily make 11 tricks in hearts (much to South's surprise and dismay!) whereas NS have four unavoidable losers in spades. 5♠ doubled and down 2 (-300) is still better than letting EW have their game.

Board 9

A weak 2♠ opening by East gives West the precise information he needs to bid 4♠ immediately. That 3NT will probably make the same tricks on this layout is rather fortuitous.

The most effective lead against 4♠ is a diamond (if a heart is led and trumped by North the declarer easily takes the rest of the tricks).

Declarer can win, draw three rounds of trumps leaving the ♠J at large (only a clairvoyant or a lunatic will run the ♠10 and avoid any loser in the suit!) then lead four rounds of clubs discarding the losing diamond. The only tricks lost will be the ♥A and a spade.

Board 10

East opens 1♥ and West is likely to raise straight to 4♥, although some might find a way to declare notrumps which is just as good.

The only lead South can make which doesn't give declarer some help in that suit is spades.

There are lots of options for declarer to play the other suits.

Hearts (for one loser): Ace first then towards the Queen, run the Queen from dummy, run the ten from hand, which all succeed. The only line which loses two tricks is to lead up to the Queen and later finesse the ten.

Clubs are less kind to declarer; there is only one trick unless the opponents lead the suit.

Most declarers are likely to make ten tricks in either hearts or notrumps

Board 11

An opening bid problem for South. Whether to start with an off-shape 2NT or rather heavy 1♣ (It is not strong enough to open 2♣ when the length is only in the minor suits).

If he chooses 1♣ the auction is likely to stop there. 2NT will have North bidding hearts, to be rejected by South who will bid 3NT.

On the likely spade lead declarer should finesse in diamonds twice if necessary and hope West doesn't have more than 4 spades (or both diamond honours). He is in luck this time.

Board 12

After pass from West and 1♥ from North should East bid 2♦? Most would say no because it is too balanced and the suit not robust enough.

Here it can go wrong in two ways. East might end up in 2♦ doubled making just four tricks (that is -800, worse than an opponents vulnerable game!) Or it could result in South declaring 3NT and partner obligingly starting with the King and another diamond, getting declarer off to the best possible start.

NS have a close decision whether to bid game. The cards lie kindly for them, with both the ♠A and ♣Q favourably placed, so either 4♥ or 3NT are easily made.

Board 13

South is likely to bid 3NT after North opens 1♣ and rebids 2♣.

On a heart lead declarer needs to set up spades (best done **first** to minimise the risk of being cut off from dummy) and clubs. With three stoppers in hearts the lead can be lost twice safely. Declarer has an easier time on the more likely diamond lead as it gives him two diamond tricks, and ten in all, leaving the spades alone.

Board 14

South's hand is hard to value but he can safely start with 1♥ and postpone worrying about what to do next. North is best to raise to 2♥ (being one trump light is a minor defect) whether or not West overcalls in spades.

Now 4♥ looks obvious to South; a harder problem will arise if the opponents go on to 4♠. Double which gets 300 for down 2 is the best option. 5♥ can't be made **in theory** (but in practice a club lead will give declarer an extra entry to enable him to finesse the diamonds twice and avoid a loser in that suit).

Datums: Mini Moos 3 hands Sep 15 2013

Board	NS Datum	EW Datum
1	500	40
2	330	200
3	740	-130
4	200	200
5	460	280
6	150	160
7	200	600
8	550	100
9	700	100
10	680	-120
11	0	440
12	0	500
13	-50	720
14	100	530

Add the datum to the score achieved then
convert to IMPs

If the result is negative record it as zero

For a bye take 5 IMPs for that board