



**Trump Contracts**  
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**Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club**

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/TrumpContracts.pdf>

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## A. Bidding

### 1. No Trump Review

#### a. Opening One No Trump

Balanced 15-17, no singletons or voids, not 5-4 in the majors

Having four ♠'s means one does not have to rebid 1NT with any points other than 12-14. So one can be pickier with suits stopped and one's interpretation of balanced.

#### b. Systems Over One No Trump

1NT	2♣	Stayman	Partner do you have a four-card major? Partner answers: 2♦=No, (up-the-line) 2♥=4♥'s, 2♠=4♠'s no 4♥'s
2♦		Transfer to 2♥	Partner I have five ♥'s (bid ♥ again to show 6)
2♥		Transfer to 2♠	Partner I have five ♠'s (bid ♠ again to show 6)
2NT		Invitational (8-9)	Partner, are you max (good sixteen or any 17)?
3NT		10-15	With this range, make sure you get to game.

### **c. Systems Over One No Trump in Competition**

- They double:
  - Stayman and all transfers are on
- They bid 2♣:
  - Double of 2♣ is Stayman, stolen bid, Transfers are on.
- They bid 2♦ or higher.
  - Transfers are off.
  - Double is penalty
  - Two Level 2 Play
  - Three Level forces to game
  - Cuebid is Game Forcing Stayman 10+ HCP's
  - 2NT is the only invitational bid 8-9 HCP

Penalty doubles are absolutely necessary to keep them interfering at will because interference works well in the opponents favour because the system over One No Trump in interference is not as robust as the system with no competition by far.

#### **Benefits of Competition over No Trump to the Opponents of 1NT Opener:**

- Gets the strong hand as the dummy
- Gives partner a lead direct whenever he first gets the lead on opening or later.
- Makes opponents unsure about adequate stoppers.
- Takes away all invitational bids but one.
- Opponents may double for penalty and may not get as many points as if they had played a contract.

#### d. Balanced Hand Ranges

**12 - 14**

Open 1 of a suit and rebid 1NT.

**15 - 17**

Open 1NT.

**18 - 19**

Open 1 of a suit and jump in No Trump.

New Minor is forcing to game.

Asks partner to further describe his hand.

Opener bids unbid major with four cards first.

Without four of unbid major, opener supports existing Major with three Cards.

**20 - 21**

Open 2NT (all suits need not be stopped).

3♣ Stayman 3♦, 3♥ Transfers 4♣ Gerber

**22 - 24**

Open 2♣ and rebid 2NT.

3♣ Stayman 3♦, 3♥ Transfers 4♣ Gerber

**25 - 27**

Open 2♣ and rebid 3NT.

4♣ Stayman 4♦, 4♥ Transfers 5♣ Super Gerber

**28+**

Open 2♣ and rebid 4NT.

5♣ Stayman 5♦, 5♥ Transfers

## 2. Why a trump suit?

### a. Run-a-way Protection

There are two ways to defeat a Notrump contract:

Take high cards

Take established small cards of a long suit. (run-a-way with a long suit)

A trump suit allows:

## Run-a-way protection

## Trick Gain with short-hand ruffs

## b. Short Hand Ruff Principle

In general, one does not gain a trick by ruffing in the long trump hand. One must take all the short-hand ruffs one can.

♠987      Short-trump hand

♠AKQJ10      Long-trump hand

Cash 5 spade tricks 5 tricks

Ruff with the 10 and cash the remaining trump honours      5 tricks

Unless the trump split 5-0 and you lose a trick to the 6♠      4 tricks

Ruff with the 9, 8 and 7 and then cash the Ace through Ten 8 tricks

At the end of the hand, where you have gotten a 3-2 trump split, you might have the ♠Jack and ♠Ten left. You play those and throw two cards from the dummy you could have ruffed earlier in the auction but did not because you did not want to jeopardize the contract in case of a bad split.



### 3. Opening Checklist

Count your High Card Points (Ace=4, King=3, Queen=2, Jack=1)

Use the balanced hand ranges if balanced.

Open with 12 High Card Points (Do not count distribution without a Golden Fit-8 cards)

12
----

Five-card majors (♥ or ♠).

If not balanced, open your higher ranking 5-card major or longer.

Better Minor (♣ or ♦)

Without a five-card major, open your longer minor.

If the minors are 3-3, open 1♣.

If the minors are the same length and are 4 or longer, open 1♦.

### 4. Various Suit (Trump) Openings

1♣	1♦			Better Minor
1♥	1♠			Longer 5+ card major, Spades if equal length
2♣				Strong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 8.5 quick tricks</li> <li>○ 22+ High Card Points</li> <li>○ Game in your own hand (may not be 8.5 QT or 22 HCP's)</li> </ul>
2♦	2♥	2♠		Weak Two's: Good 6-card suit less than 10 points <p>With singleton should not have 8 or 10 points</p> <p>In first or second seat, never a four-card major and three-card major is rare.</p>
3♣	3♦	3♥	3♠	Good 7-card suit, less than 10 points.
4♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	Good 8-card suit, less than 10 points.
5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	Good 9-card suit, less than 10 points.

## 5. Opening Variances

- Vulnerability
  - Openings do not change with vulnerability
  - When vulnerable, Pre-empts are not minimum and the suit is at most a two-loser suit.
- Type of Game
  - For matchpoints, Chicago scoring and Rubber bridge with a leg-on.
    - Competitive Openings
      - All 12 point hands
      - 11 point hands with no wasted honours and a good six card suit or a good 2-suited hand.
      - 3-suited hand with 12+
    - In Rubber bridge with a leg on, One can be even one point lighter than above because partner will bail in the bidding as soon as you have enough to complete the leg.
  - For IMP Scoring (Swiss Teams) and Rubber Bridge with no leg on
    - Sound Openings
      - All 13 point hands
      - 12 point hands with no wasted honours
      - 11 point hands with no wasted honours and a good six card suit or a good 2-suited hand.
      - 3-suited hand with 12+
- Your Seat
  - In First or Second Seats:
    - No Change
  - In Third Seat:
    - Pre-empts can be one-card shorter (Ignore this until confidence is high)
    - Openings can be a Queen lighter than above.
  - In Fourth Seat:
    - All Preempts are 9-13 points
    - Open if your number of Spades plus points is 15 or more
    - Pass with 12 or less without four spades unless shapely and then consider 2-level. You do not want to give opponents an easy Spade overcall.

## 6. Overcalls

- a. An opponent opens a suit in front of you:
  - i. One-Level
    - 5-card suit
    - 8-16 not vulnerable
    - 10-16 vulnerable
    - The weaker you are the better is the suit for lead direction..
  - ii. Two-Level
    - Good 6-card suit
    - 12+ points
- b. Both opponents bid in front of you:
  - Take care.
  - Bid a long one- or two-loser suit
- c. An opponent opens 1NT in front of you:
  - Take care.
  - Bid a long one or two-loser suit.
  - Remember **Fits** not misfits drive auctions.
  - When missing 15-17 points to the opponents, shape is very key.
- d. 1NT is followed by two passes
  - With two points in distribution one can be aggressive bidding a long suit at the two-level.
  - What you lack in points, partner will have behind the 1NT opener.

## 7. Responding

### a. Partner opens 1NT

Pigeon Holes are

0-7	Partscore Find safest contract
8-9	Invitational
10-15	Game Forcing
16+	Slam Investigations

### b. Partner opens a Suit

0-5	Pass
6-9	Weak Responses 1NT New suit at the one-level Simple rebid any suit at the two-level Cannot introduce two suits unless the bidding goes: 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠.

If partner gives you a choice of suits, usually pick one of his.

10-12	Invitational New suit at the two-level Raise of partner's or own suit to the three-level 2NT
13-15	Game New suit at the three-level 3NT
16-17	Jump Rebid, Get that auction busy with forcing bids.
18+	Jump Shift

c. Partner opens a Pre-empt

- Minimum opener just pass
- Cover Cards
  - The AKQ of trump and the Aces and Kings of the side suits including singletons and voids are important. They each count as one cover-card.
  - Queens and Jacks are not considered in side-suits.
- Raise to Game
  - If your length in partner's weak two plus your points is 17 or more, raise to the four-level
  - Raise a three-level pre-empt to game with 3 or 4 cover cards.

d. Partner opens 2♣.

- 2♦ waiting
- Positive Responses:
  - 2♥      5♥'s, 2 of top 3 honours and an outside control
  - 2♠      5♠'s, 2 of top 3 honours and an outside control
  - 3♣      6♣'s, 2 of top 3 honours and an outside control
  - 3♦      6♦'s, 2 of top 3 honours and an outside control

## 8. What to respond

- Bid four-cards suit up the line
- Skip a four-card suit to bid the higher ranking 5-card suit or longer
- Bid a new suit at the two-level is 10+ HCP's and promises a rebid
- Bid a new suit at the three level is game forcing
- Responding in No Trump
  - 1NT 6-9 any distribution
  - 2NT 10(11)-12 balanced distribution
  - 3NT 13-15 balanced distribution

## B. Declaring

### 9. No Trump

- Count your winners
- Count your possible winners
  - Attack suits where you have more cards than the opponents.
  - Let the opponents break the other suits or leave them until the end.
  - If you only have suits with seven combined cards, pick the suit with better texture (more high cards and better intermediate cards, 9's and 10's).

### 10. Trump Contract

- Count your losers.
  - Can you get rid of some slow losers.
- Take care of Trump
  - If you have no short hand ruffs or opponents led a singleton, get rid of opponent's trump as quickly as possible.
  - Delay drawing trump if you need short-hand trump protection or a partial elimination.
- Develop a Side Suit

## **C. Defending**

### **11. General**

#### **a. Cooperation:**

- Cooperate with partner and do not cooperate with the declarer.
  - Sounds simple but application of the principle is not always so simple.
  - At No Trump, you do not switch to your suit, if partner was on opening lead, until you are out of partner's suit.
    - Usually the defense only has the timing to set up one suit and the suit of the opening lead has a head start.
    - Sometimes, you **do** lead your own suit, when you still have partner's suit because your suit and side entry are really good.
  - Unless you have a really good reason, return partner's opening lead.

#### **b. Footprint:**

- Keep your defensive footprint low.
- Open (lead for the first time) as few suits as possible.
- Finding out the defensive suit during bidding is very important.
- Leading a suit that declarer has broken honours, split honours or two-way finesses, will usually save declarer a trick.
- Exit cards, safe is implied, are very important.

## 12. Leads

If bidding is a science then leading is an art. There are books (not just pamphlets or chapters) on the subject. My favourite is Opening Leads by Robert Ewen though Mike Lawrence's "Opening Leads" and William Root's "Complete Guide to Defense" are good.

### a. Simplified Leads (All you need to know)

One tries to lead partner's suit, unless he bid 1♣ and you have a natural lead. When you lead partner's suit (or any suit), lead BOSTON, Bottom of Something, Top of Nothing. The exception is when you have not supported partner's suit at a trump contract, you do not lead top of nothing because he may think you have a doubleton. With a doubleton in partner's suit at a trump contract lead high then low and partner will know you want a ruff. With touching cards in partner's suit, always lead the top (Jack from J102) followed by the second top.

#### Natural Leads

Four card suit or longer with at least three touching honours. Two touching honours is okay at a Trump contract but it is not a natural lead. Ace from Ace King is a natural lead at a trump contract and a five card suit is a natural lead at a No Trump contract.

### b. Notrump Leads

1. Fourth Best from Five-Card Suits, broken or solitary honours, with a side-entry.
  - Five card suits almost always take precedence over four-card suits.
2. Partner's Overcalled suit or Major opening (probably number 1 for partnership harmony).
3. Top of honour sequences with 3+ touching honours.
  - a. KQJxx Top of an honour sequence.
  - b. KQ109x Top of a broken sequence.
  - c. K1098x Top of an interior sequence. (double gap)
  - d. KJ10xx Top of an interior sequence. (single gap)
  - e. Ace from any 100 honours suit with a side entry- Asks partner to unblock, drop any honour.
4. Partner's 1♦ opening (Not as lead directive as a major opening or overcall.)
5. Partner's 1♣ opening (Could be not lead directive at all)



## c. Trump Contract Opening Leads

1. Ace from Ace King, AKxx or AKxxx.
  - Ace from AKx or AK frozen may just be setting up declarer's side-suit.
  - If partner plays a low card or dummy has the Queen, you can switch.
  - Never Ace from Axxx or Axxxx and sometimes Ace from Ax.
2. Top of an honour sequence (3+ touching cards), Top of a broken sequence
3. Singleton
  - Not a singleton King which can win a finesse.
  - Not when you have a natural trump trick which you would lose if you ruff.
  - Partner must have an entry and you should have trump control.
  - You risk setting up a side suit for declarer.
4. Trump
  - When:
    - You want to cut down declarer's trumping power
      - Declarer will be relying on ruffs to make the contract
      - An opponent pulled the contract from 1NT
      - The defense has the balance of the points (or partner opened one No Trump, for example)
    - Could be a reasonable lead if you do not want to lead from an honour.
      - You do not want to lead from an honour if partner is bust or declarer is excessively strong (opened 1NT or higher).
    - either you or your partner can continue the action.
  - Not in certain circumstances
    - with Qxx or a singleton trump.
    - when a trump lead is guaranteed to lose a trick
    - when you have four or five trump.
      - You want to find a side suit that will possibly shorten the long trump hand of declarer.
  - Standard leading rules do not apply
    - Small from Axx or Ax.
    - Standard leads are meant to tell something to the person who could share the suit with you. In the case of the trump, this is the declarer. You want to tell him nothing.
5. Top of an honour sequence (2 touching cards)
  - not top of an interior sequence until Trick 2 or beyond.

6. Fourth Best from an honour
  - never from an Ace
  - unless dummy is marked with the King or a lot of points and partner could have the Queen and you want to fool the declarer.
7. Doubleton
  - Could be a reasonable lead if you do not want to lead from an honour.
  - You need to be very weak so partner will get in enough times to clear the suit and give you a ruff.
  - You should have good trump controls.

## 13. Signalling

- High card says you like the suit partner led because you have a doubleton and can ruff or you have the Ace, King or Queen. The Jack counts if partner leads the King.
- If you discard a high card, you want partner to play that suit ASAP.
- Note: 8 is usually high but it is low when that is your lowest card. As soon as you discard the 9 next partner will know the 8 was meant as low.
- Note: 3 is usually low unless the next discard is the 2, then the 3 was high. An echo is a high card followed by a low card and is a "come-on", you like the suit led or continued.
- Note: Never discard a card that may give away a trick.

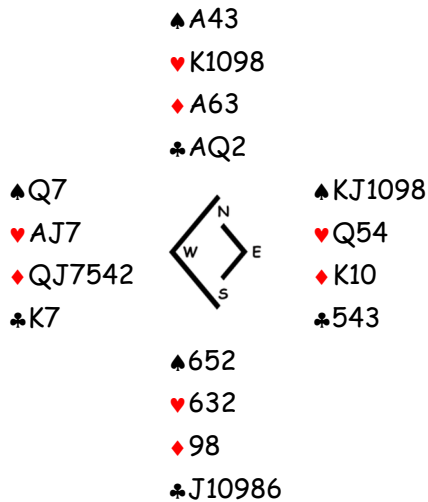
## E. Examples

### Example 1: Rule of Two-Balancing Over 1NT

(<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/1NT.pdf>-Example 4 modified)

North Dealer

None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
1NT	P	Pl	2♦
All Pass			

Opening Lead: 3♦

Results: 2♦ W+1 +110

#### Notes:

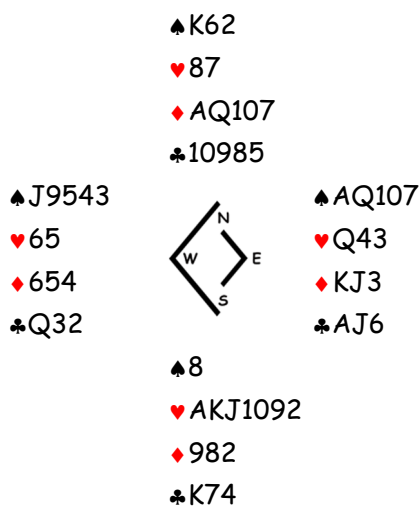
- North's points are on top of West's points so North needs safe exits.
- North is short on exit cards so he leads a small trump.
- A trump lead is good because West is likely bidding on distribution.
- North must duck spade twice—once works well here.
- **Rule of 2:**
  - When 1NT is followed by two passes, the RHO of the 1NT opener may get in the bidding with two distributional points and only a handful of high card points.
  - The less he has, the more his partner has behind the 1NT opener.
  - The long suit will give sufficient entries to finesse the 1NT opener.
  - Hands with 5 or less points are never meant to declare a hand.
  - Hands with 6 to 9 points rather have partner declare the hand.

## Example 2: Weak Hand with a Five-Card Major in Competition

(<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/1NT.pdf>-Example 2 modified)

East Dealer

North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
	1NT	2♥	2♠
All Pass			

Opening Lead: A♥

Results:

- 2♠ W= +110
- 2♥ S= +110
- 1NE-1 -50 Opening lead J♥

### Notes:

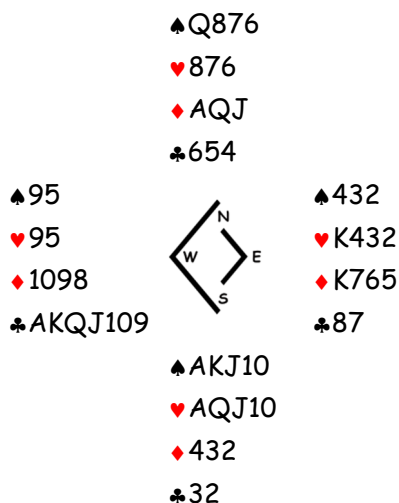
- When weak 0-7HCP, transfer to a five-card major and pass.
- When opponents compete over 1NT:
  - 2-Level 2 play.
  - 3-Level GF.
- If East and West are vulnerable, West passes 2♥, thanking his lucky stars that partner does not have to declare the hand in 2♠. If South passes, West transfers to ♠'s and passes.

### Example 3: Invitational Stayman

(<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/1NT.pdf>-Example 19 modified)

South Dealer

East West Vulnerable



W	N	E	S
			1NT
P	2♣	P	2♥
P	2NT	P	3♠
All Pass			

Opening Lead: A♣

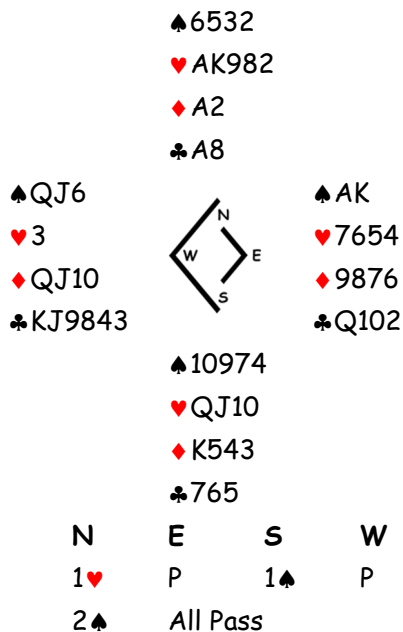
Result: 3♠+1 +170

#### Notes:

- 1NT only promises that two doubletons are both stopped unless you do not have a rebid
- Some say do not use Stayman when 4triple3.
  - That is incorrect. Look at what happens with ♣'s in 2NT or 3NT.
  - One passes with a 4triple3 8-count but this is 9.
- North promises a four-card major by bidding 2♣ and he subsequently denies four ♥'s and shows 8-9 by rebidding 2NT.
- South knows they have a ♠ fit.
- On declarer play, use entries wisely.

### Example 4: Four-Four is Better than Five-Three

West Dealer Both Vulnerable



Opening Lead: Queen♦

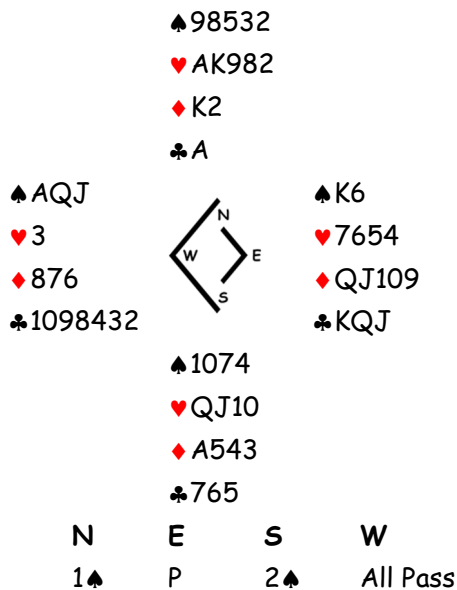
Results: 2♥N+1 +140  
2♠S+2 +170

#### Notes:

- 4-4 fit is without question better than a 5-3 fit, because
  - The declarer can pick which four-card suit to take short-hand ruffs and which hand to draw trump.
  - With a 5-3 fit, there are no short-hand ruffs if the hand with the three trump is flat.
  - The declarer gets two discards on the 5-card suit while he has a trump left in both hands.
  - Both contracts are equal when the 4-4 suit has a 4-1 break.
- Broken suits, such as the club suit in both East's and West's hands, are dangerous from which to lead.

### Example 5: Two Five-Card Majors

North Dealer North South Vulnerable



Opening Lead: King♣

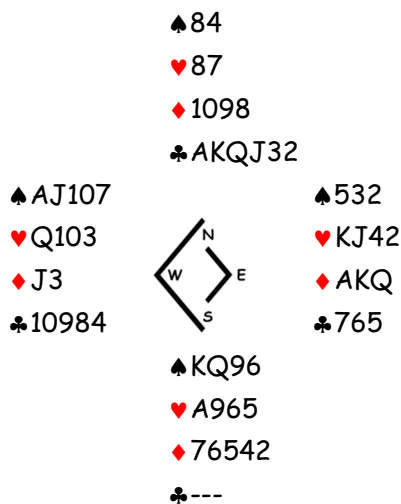
Result: 2♠N+2 +170

#### Notes:

- We saw in the last example that if the opponents have all the high cards in the trump suit, they will fall together with a normal break.
- Even though spades are weak, the higher ranking five-card major is bid first.
- When the last trump is the highest outstanding trump, do not take two of your trump for one of theirs. Run Hearts and let opponent ruff in.

### Example 6: Better Minor means longer

East Dealer      East West Vulnerable



E	S	W	N
1♣	P	1♠	P
1NT	P	P	2♣
2♥	P	P	P

**Opening Lead:** Ace♣ by North, 7♦ by South

**Results:**  
 2♥ E+1 +140  
 2♠ W-1 -100

#### Notes:

- Diamonds is a better suit, but when 3-3 open 1♣ not 1♦.
- South would love holding one ♣.
- 2♥ is not a reverse because of the 1NT rebid but actually shows 3 ♠'s. If East had four Spades, he would raise partner and if he had one or two spades, he would defend.



### Example 7: Better Minor-Three Card Diamond Opening

South Dealer

Both Vulnerable

♠6532		
♥KJ42		
♦AKJ		
♣76		
♠Q8		♠K107
♥A103		♥Q965
♦1098		♦Q654
♣KQJ32		♣54
	♠AJ94	
	♥87	
	♦732	
	♣A1098	



S	W	N	E
P	P!	1♦	P
1♠	P	2♠	All Pass

Opening Lead: King♣

Result: 2♠S= +110

#### Notes:

- One opens 12 point hands with no wasted honours or good ♠'s.
- Wasted honours are King, Queen or Jack singleton, Queen or Jack doubleton or Jack tripleton.
- This is the only shape where one opens 1♦ with three ♦'s. 4-4 in the majors
- North has a minimum opener (12-15) and four ♠'s so North just raises South to the two-level. If North bids 3♠, it shows 16-17 because jump raises are invitational, 16-17 by opener and 10-12 by responder.
- Responder has 6-9 and passes. With 10-12, he raises to the three-level (invitational) and with 13+, he raises to game.
- To play AJ9x opposite xxxx, you play to the 9 first and then to the Jack.
- Declarer will lose one in each suit and a ♣ ruff.

## Example 8: Picky With No Trump

West Dealer      None Vulnerable

		♠ KQJ2	
		♥ 32	
		♦ AKQ42	
		♣ 32	
♠ A6			♠ 10987
♥ A10987			♥ 54
♦ 653			♦ 7
♣ QJ10			♣ AK9654
		♠ 543	
		♥ KQJ6	
		♦ J1098	
		♣ 87	
N	E	S	W
			P
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	2♦	P
3♦	All Pass		

Opening Lead:      Ace ♣ (Kaplan's rule)

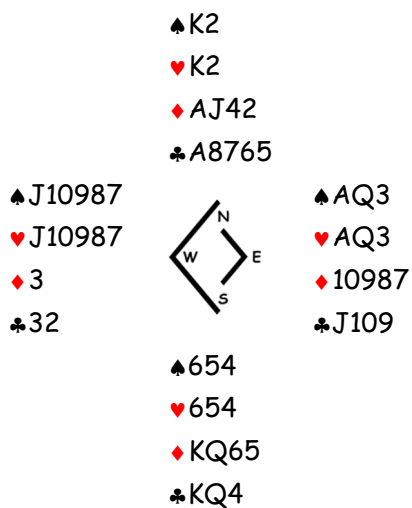
Results:              3NN-4              -200  
                          3♦ N=              +110

### Notes:

- North's raise to the three-level shows 16-17 points
- South has a minimum and is happy to pass.
- East is praying for 3NT. Against 3NT, he leads fourth best. If he had 100 honours and perhaps a side entry, he would lead the ace asking partner to drop an honour or give count.
- West's first discard will be the 10♥ so they would get 8 tricks against 3NT.
- Against 3♦, East will lead the Ace♣ and West will play the Q♣ showing either a singleton or the jack. West will play a small club (6♣, the original 4<sup>th</sup> best) to East's 10. From this, both defenders should know Declarer's has no more ♣'s. West will play a small spade. Yes! You never underlead an ace against a trump suit on the opening lead, but this is not the opening lead.

### Example 9: Picky With No Trump

North Dealer      East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
1NT	P	3NT	All Pass

**Opening Lead:** 10♦ is slightly better than the Jack♣, though both are considered

**Results:** 3N+1 +430

#### Notes:

- North will cash all minors for nine tricks ending in dummy.
- If East bares an ace (the appearance of a queen), declarer will play that suit and duck making 11 tricks.
- If East keeps AQ♠ and AQ♥, as she should, he will be end-played and declarer will get the tenth trick.

## Example 10: Picky With No Trump

East Dealer

Both Vulnerable

		♠ K4	
		♥ K4	
		♦ Q765	
		♣ QJ1098	
♠ AQ765			♠ J1098
♥ AQ65			♥ J10987
♦ 3			♦ 10984
♣ 432			♣ ---
		♠ 32	
		♥ 32	
		♦ AKJ2	
		♣ AK765	
N	E	S	W
	P	1♦	1♠
2♣	2♠	3♠	P
3NT	All Pass		

Opening Lead: Jack♥

Results: 3NN+1 +630

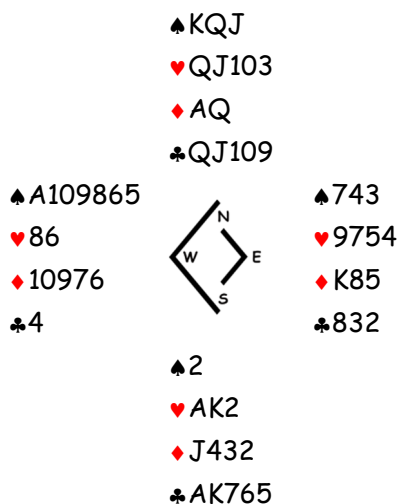
### Notes:

- South cannot open 1NT with two unstopped doubletons. It is asking for trouble.
- South opens 1♦ with the intention of rebidding 1NT if partner bids a major and bidding two clubs if the opponents bid a major and partner does something besides pass.
- Cuebid is forcing and can either say,
  - "Partner, I am making a slam try." OR
  - "Partner, tell me more."
- So how can one tell his partner more:
  - Show that his suit is longer than he has already shown
  - Tell partner he has delayed support
  - Tell partner he has a suit stopped implying a suit is not stopped
  - Bid No Trump with a ♠ stopper.
- Cuebidding to ask partner to bid No Trump with a stopper is called Western Cuebid and is usually done with one stopper himself or brute strength.

## Example 11: Five Clubs and Four Diamonds—a Problem Hand

South Dealer

None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
		1♦	P!
1♥	P	2♣	P
2♠	P	3♥	P
6♣	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** Ace♠ and switch to a diamond

10♦ sets the contract but that is difficult to find as it is declarer's first bid suit which appears to be a five-bagger.

**Results:** 6♣ making for +1370  
6N making for +1440

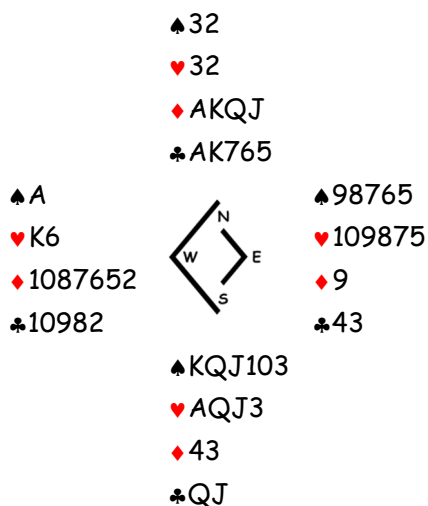
### Notes:

- South thinks ahead of his rebid. He cannot rebid 1NT with a singleton spade even (especially) if partner bids them.
- West is too weak to do a jump overcall vulnerable. Not vulnerable, he may decide to and hope partner does not expect more.
- If partner is a passed hand, he probably will, not vulnerable. With ♠ interference, North will choose 6NT not 6♣ guarding against a spade ruff.
- South shows delayed support which is three-card support. Direct support shows four cards and delayed raise always shows one less than direct or immediate.

## Example 12: Five Clubs and Four Diamonds-Not a Problem Hand

West Dealer

North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
			P
1♣	P	1♠	P
2♦	P	2♥	P
3NT	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** 10♥ Dummy has 5 ♠'s and declarer bid ♣'s and ♦'s so a ♥ lead is called for.

**Results:**

3NN+2	+660	♥ lead
3NN+3	+690	not a ♥ lead.
6NS=	+1440	

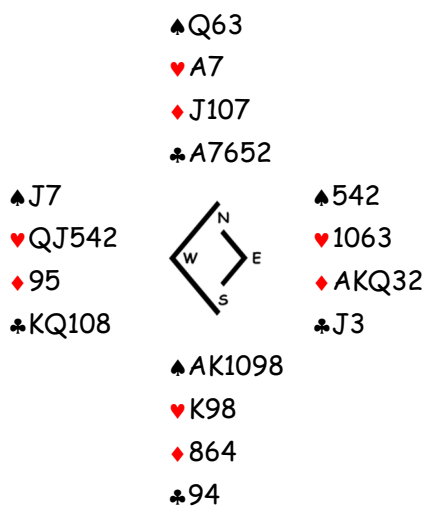
### Notes:

- North makes a reverse. His first suit is longer and he is at least better than a minimum opening.
- The right person playing the contract will sometimes result in another trick.
- Leading a suit bid by declarer is rare and usually frowned upon. Exceptions:
  - You have touching honours QJ108
  - You have a singleton and will not give up a trump trick with a ruff. You should have trump control.
  - You have excessive length (except it usually is dummy that is short.)

### Example 13: Third Seat Opening

North Dealer Both Vulnerable

2014.09.29.Hands...



N	E	S	W
P	P	1♠	P
3♠	P	P	P

**Opening Lead:** King♣, top of a broken sequence

**Results:** Pass Out

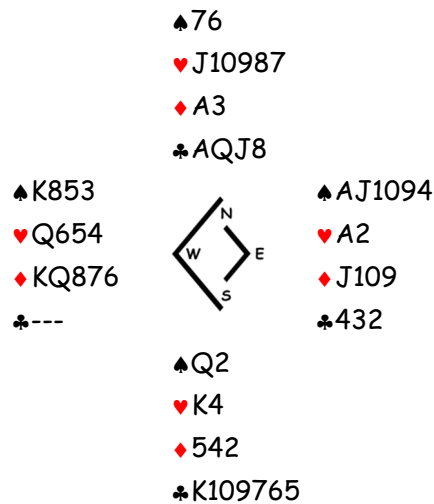
3♠S= +140

#### Notes:

- In third seat, you can have a Queen less than an opening in first and second seats.
- It is also a great lead direct here in case West has a good hand and becomes declarer.

## Example 14: Fourth Seat Opening

East Dealer None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W	
	P	P	P	
1♥	1♠	P	2♥	
P	2♠	P	3♠	All Pass

If East and West get up to have a smoke and go to the washroom:

N	E	S	W
	P	P	P
1♥		1NT	
2♣		3♣	
P			

Opening Lead: K♥

Results:	Pass Out	+0
	3♠E+3	+230
	3♣N=	+110

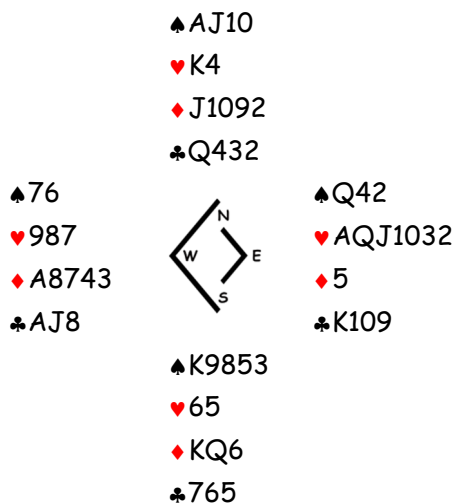
### Notes:

- West cannot count a void until he and his partner have a Golden Fit. It is tempting but will hurt partner's confidence in one's openers. West might open 1♦ because he is in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat.
- In Fourth Seat, you open 13 point hands but should pass all 12-point or fewer hands with short spades.



### Example 15: Fourth Seat "Weak" Two

South Dealer                  North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
		P	P
P	2♥	All Pass	

Opening Leads:                  5♠ against 2♥

   9♥ against 2♠

Results:                  2♥E+2                  +170

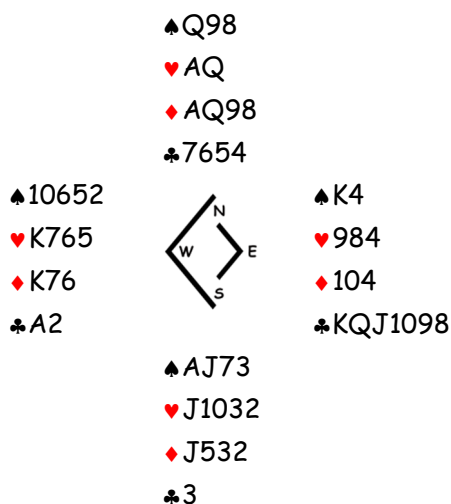
                                 2♠S=                  +110

#### Notes:

- South is more likely to come in with a ♠ bid over 1♥ than 2♥
- East and West, on defence, will not touch clubs because they have awkward holdings so South will likely get a club pitch on a diamond otherwise he will be down one.
- Leading from a King is sometimes better than leading from a Queen
- King from King Queen third is very risky if the opponents have the Ace and Jack even in separate hands.
- Leads from suits with three cards containing high honours are generally bad. J10x is an exception.

## Example 16: Retreat to Diamonds

West Dealer East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
			P
1♦	P!	1♥	P
1NT	P	2♦	All Pass

Opening Lead: King♣

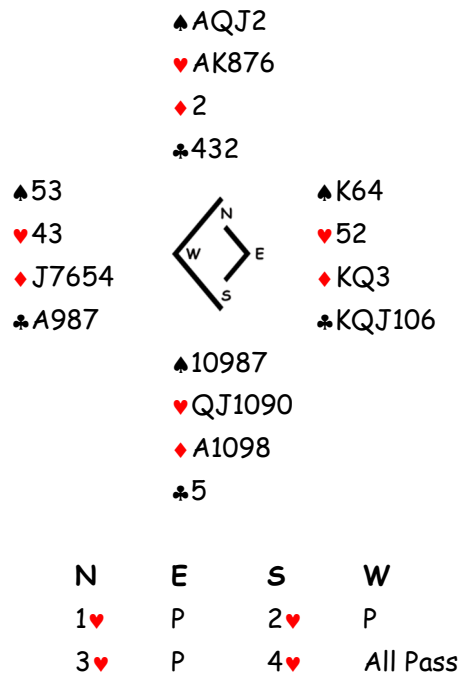
Results: 1NT= +90  
2♦ N+3 +150

### Notes:

- East does not have a bid vulnerable
- Rule of 22:
  - Need 22 points combined to set or to make 1NT.
  - Also need 22 points combined and 2 small card trump tricks (4+ trump) to set a one-level trump suit.
- South knows North has four ♦'s because he is not 4-4 in the majors otherwise he would have raised ♥'s.
- West must overtake the opening lead and return a ♣ in any contract. Declarer will ruff in 2♦.
- Declarer must play 8♠ to the Jack then run Jack♦ through if he thinks East has doubleton Ten♦ and play a small ♦ to the Queen if he thinks West has doubleton King♦. He then goes to Ace ♠ and takes the heart finesse Ruff another club. Back to his hand to draw last trump and lose one more club.

## Example 17: Flannery Hand

North Dealer None Vulnerable



Opening Lead: King♣

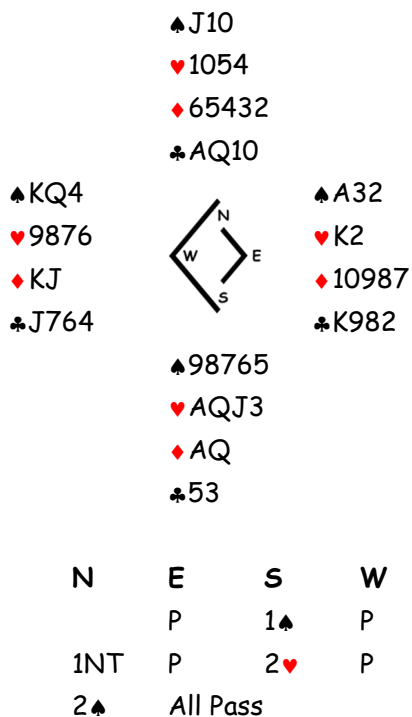
Result: 4♥N+1 +450

### Notes:

- North has a Flannery Hand.
- Some play that 2♦ opening shows five ♥'s and 4♠'s. I think a weak 2♦ is more frequent and effective. Flannery becomes difficult when partner is either bust or has the minors.
- This is also an example of a Dummy Reversal.
  - Trump ♦'s high and use trump as transportation.

## Example 18: Weak Five-card Major

East Dealer North South Vulnerable



Opening Lead: 4♣

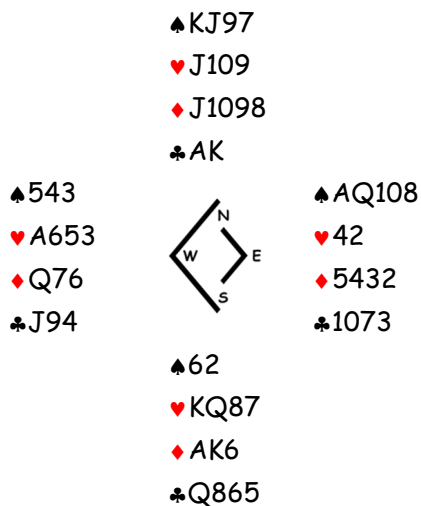
Results: 2♠ = +110

### Notes:

- Five-card spade suit is opened with any quality. Overcalls and light openings must have a lot better quality.
- Draw trump as soon as possible. A defensive cross-ruff is terrible.
- Five-two fit is usually better than 4-3 especially if the opponents can tap the long trump hand.
- With three little opposite AQ10, play to the ten then the Queen. With a 9- or 10-card fit, finesse to the Queen. With an 11-card fit, play the ace.
- With two little opposite AQ10, play the suit as late as possible to gather information to help with the guess. Since the suit was the opening lead, guess the 10. People, incorrectly, think leading from a Jack is better than from a King.
- Play a small ♥ to the Jack not the Ten in case it gets covered by doubleton or singleton King.

## Example 19: Four-Card Suits Up-the-Line

South Dealer East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
		1♣	P
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
3NT	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** Do You have a Five Card Suit?

5♠

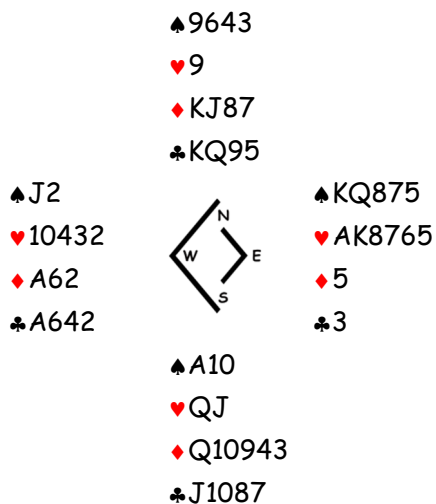
**Results:** 3NS= +400

### Notes:

- North and South bid their four-card suits up-the-line which means in the order of the bidding ladder.
- Leads from four-card suits with a solitary honour and no intermediate cards (9's and Ten's) are bad leads.

## Example 20: Six Hearts and Five Spades

West Dealer Both Vulnerable



N	E	S	W	
			P	
P	1♠	P	1NT	
P	2♥	P	3♥	Re-evaluation by West
P	4♥	All Pass		Re-evaluation by East

Opening Lead: J♣

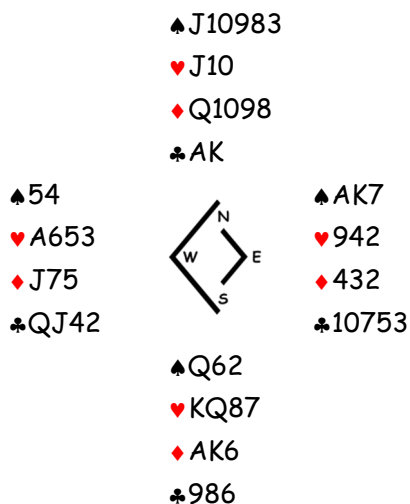
Result: 4♥E+2 +680

### Notes:

- East is not strong enough to reverse by bidding the longer lower ranking ♥ suit first then showing ♠'s at the two-level.
- A reverse needs 17 HCP's.

## Example 21: Skipping a Four-card Suit

North Dealer North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
P	P	1♣	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♦	P	3♠	P
4♠	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** 3♣

**Result:** 4♠N= +620

### Notes:

- North skips his four-card ♦ suit to bid his five-card ♠ suit.
- Bidding 2♦ shows 10+ HCP and a five card ♠ suit because North would bid four-card suits up the line.
- South will go to 4♠ with 15 or more, 2♠ with 12 to 13 and 3♠ with 14.
- The Lead:
  - A good lead is not clear
  - Ace from Ace King (Kaplan rule) is always a good lead except when it is trump.
  - Suits bid by the declarer should not be led.

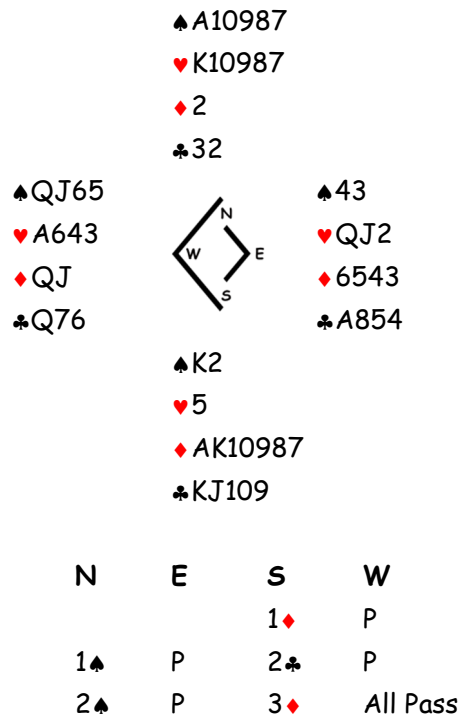
East Dealer East West Vulnerable





South Dealer    Both Vulnerable

South Dealer    Both Vulnerable



**Opening Lead:** A♥, the unbid suit

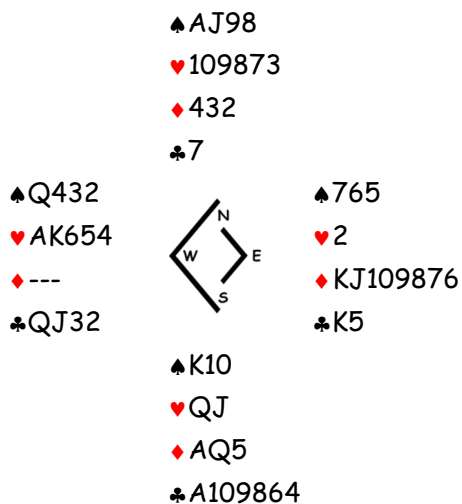
**Results:**      2♠ N+2      +170  
                     3♦ S+1      +130

**Notes:**

- South rebids 2♣ because it is better to show partner 9 cards than 6 cards
- North does not have the points to adequately show his hand so he cannot. He really does not like either of partner's suits so he rebids ♠'s.
- Even if the fourth suit does not force game, a rebid of 2♥ by North is a new suit at the two level showing 10+ HCP's.
- If South rebids 1NT then 2♥ could be less than 10 points if New Minor Forcing is being used. We are not using it.

## Example 24: Responder is Weak with a Long Suit

West Dealer None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
			1♥
P	1NT	P	2♣
P	2♦	All Pass	

**Opening Lead:** Ace♣

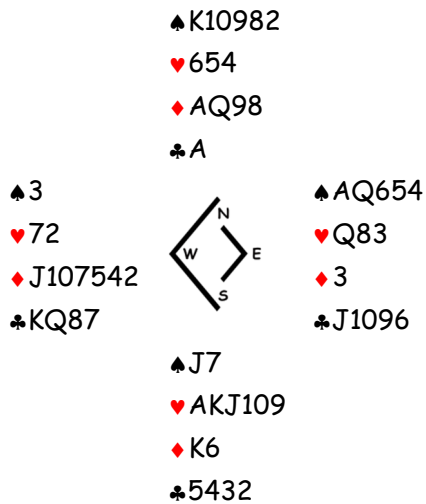
**Result:** 2♦ E-1 -50

### Notes:

- A new suit at the two-level is 10+ points unless it is preceded by 1NT or a negative double (see Example 27).
- Leading an ace is usually not done without the possession of the king, but there is the hope of giving partner a ruff.

## Example 25: Two Hearts Over One Spade

North Dealer East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
1♠	P	2♥	P
4♥	All Pass		

Opening Lead: 7♥

Result: 4♥S+1 +450

### Notes:

- Do you really want to lead a singleton in dummy's five-card suit?
- It makes 5♥ with or without a ♠ lead. A spade lead is risky because it helps set up a source of tricks for the declarer.
- Leading from strength is best when declarer has a long suit (♠'s) for pitches.
- Here a good lead is not apparent.
- Declarer will ruff the third round of spades with the Nine if necessary.

## Example 26: Negative Double

East Dealer Both Vulnerable

		♠ 972	
		♥ 876	
		♦ 765	
		♣ K873	
♠ 654			♠ Q3
♥ QJ109			♥ K42
♦ 98			♦ KQ32
♣ QJ109			♣ A642
		♠ AKJ108	
		♥ A53	
		♦ AJ104	
		♣ 5	

N	E	S	W
	1♦	1♠	Dbl
P	2♣	All Pass	

Opening Lead: Ace♠

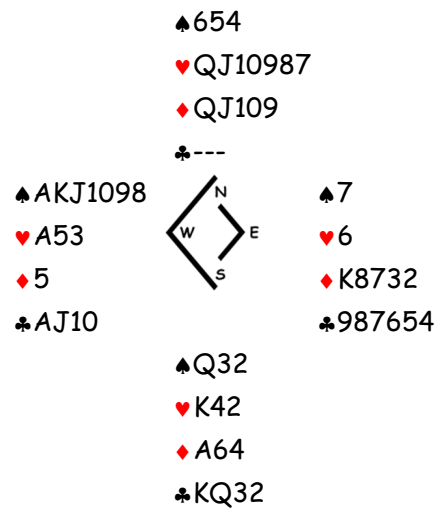
Result: 2♣+1 +110

### Notes:

- Low-level doubles are usually for takeout.
- A negative double is a takeout double when RHO overcalls partner.
- To double RHO for penalty, one must trap pass and hope partner doubles.
- West is showing four-cards in the two unbid suits and 6-9 points.
- If West bids 2♥, she shows 5 ♥'s and 10+ HCP's. If one or two conditions is missing, a negative double is made.

## Example 27: Responder is Weak with a Long Suit in Competition

South Dealer None Vulnerable



E	S	W	N
	1♣	1♠	Dbl
P	1NT	P	2♥
P	P	2♠	P
P	3♥	All Pass	

**Opening Lead:** 7♠ (any doubt? No)

**Results:** 3♥ N= +140

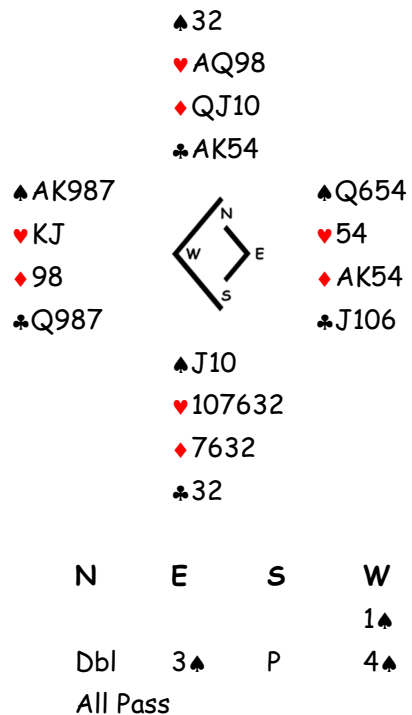
2♠ W= +110

### Notes:

- A new suit at the two-level is 10+ points unless it is preceded by 1NT or a negative double.
- A ruffing finesse exists in ♣'s. Declarer plays the King♣ and only ruffs if it is covered.

## Example 28: Limit Raise

West Dealer North South Vulnerable



**Opening Lead:** A♣ and South plays the 3♣ then the King and then a ruff then a ♥ switch.

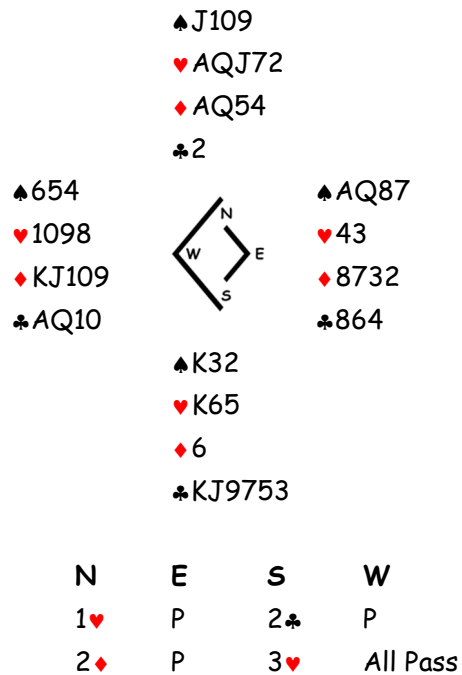
**Result:** 4♠ W-2 -100

### Notes:

- Jumps to 2NT or a raise of a suit to the three-level is a limit raise, 10-12 points with four card support.
- With only three-card support and 10-12 points, one would redouble then show support or bid a new suit at the two-level (without an intervening double) and then show support.
- Need 24 Points for game when an opponent has a full opener.

## Example 29: Delayed Support

North Dealer Both Vulnerable



**Opening Lead:** 8♣ followed by the 6 then the 4

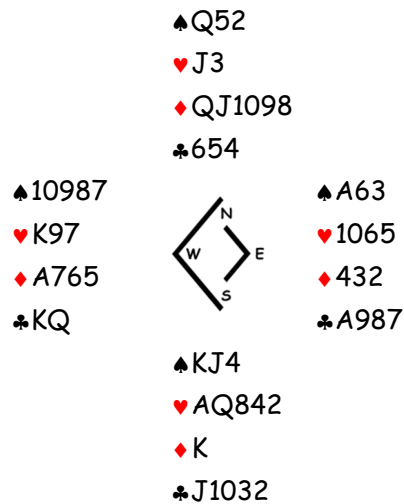
**Result:** 3♥N+2 +200

### Notes:

- If South had four ♥'s, she would have done a limit raise (jump to 3♥) immediately.
- A delayed raise always shows one less.
- If partner gives you a chance to make a delayed raise and you do not, you are denying one less support.
- Here is an example of where one takes a ♦ finesse opposite a singleton. Three diamond ruffs would be nice and then a finesse would not be needed, but that line of play is impossible since the opponents will lead trump.
- Defenders always do the opposite of declarer. If declarer delays drawing trump, the defenders will lead trump at their first opportunity.

### Example 30: Delayed Simple Raise

East Dealer None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
	P	1♥	P
1NT	P	2♣	p
2♥	All Pass		

Opening Lead: 10♠

Result: 2♥ = +110

#### Notes:

- South has a good rebid and cannot rebid 1NT because of the singleton ♦.
- North prefers ♥'s over ♣'s.
- A 5-2 fit is often better than a 4-3 unless a cross ruff exists and trump are not led.
- Declarer will cash the King ♦ and lead up to the Jack ♥.
- Defense should hold up with the Ace ♦ because it is not directly downstream from a ruffing finesse.



South Dealer    North South Vulnerable

♠K	♠J765	♠Q432
♥98763	♥AJ104	♥2
♦AKJ	♦Q32	♦109875
♣Q984	♣K2	♣765

Diagram of a diamond shape with vertices labeled N (North), S (South), E (East), and W (West).

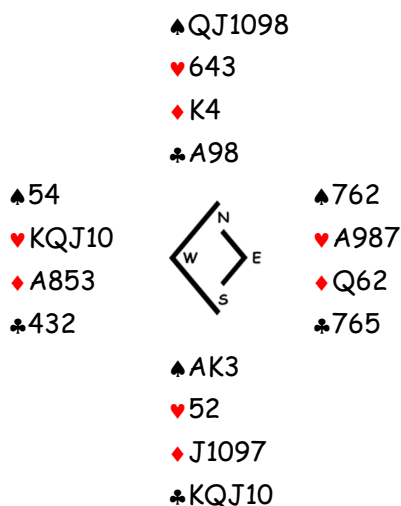
N	E	S	W
		1♣	P
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♠	P	4♠	All Pass

**Result:** 4♠S= +620

- Ace from Ace and King and small cards is almost always a good lead because one can switch if partner does not like the suit or dummy has the Queen and the suit is not set-up.
- Ace from Ace empty could possibly set-up declarer's side suit.
- Declarer must run a small ♠ through losing to the King and then he can run the Jack through keeping the lead in dummy.

### Example 32: Limit Raise With Only a Five Card Suit

West Dealer East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
			P
P	P	1♦	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♣	P	3♠	P
4♠	All Pass		

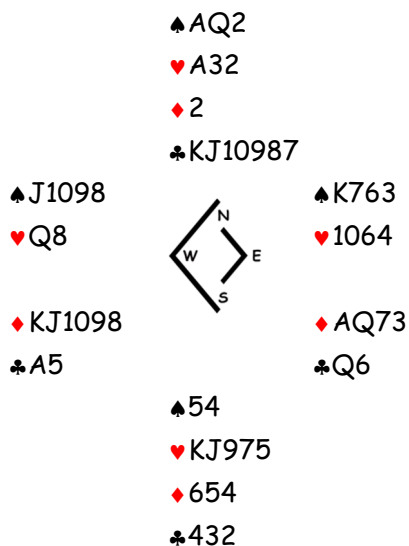
**Opening Lead:** Trump, Nothing else pops out

**Result:** 4♠N= +420

#### Notes:

- South shows delayed support for spades and a maximum for his 1NT rebid when she bids 3♠.
- When you have limited your hand, a jump shows a maximum of that range or distribution has increased you out of that range.
- North does not have four ♣'s but he wants to show 10+ points and give South a chance to make a delayed Raise. 2♣ is forcing and if partner raises ♣'s, he can retreat to ♠'s or No Trump.
- 2♣ is called New Minor Forcing.
- Had North rebid 2♠, he is showing 5+ ♠'s and 6-9 points.
- Had North rebid 2♠, if partner had not rebid 1NT (2♣ instead), he would be showing 6+ ♠'s and 6-9 points.
- Had North rebid 3♠, he would be showing 6+ ♠'s and 10-12 points.

**Example 33: Rebid of Opener's Minor Shows Six**  
 North Dealer None Vulnerable



<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>
1♣	P	1♥	P
2♣	All Pass		

<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>
1♣	P	1♥	P
2♥	All Pass		

**Finesse can be taken multiple times**

AQ	65	1
A6	Q5	K
A5	Q6	K
Q5	A6	J
Q6	A5	J
65	AQ	2
5	AQ6	2
6	AQ5	2
Q	A65	1
A	Q65	2
AQ6	5	J
AQ5	6	J
A65	Q	K
Q65	A	J
---	AQ65	2
AQ65	---	J
Jack beats King 6-3		
1=always 1 loser		
2=always 2 losers		

**Finesse can be taken only once**

AQ	65	1
A6	Q5	K
A5	Q6	K
Q5	A6	J
Q6	A5	J
65	AQ	2
5	AQ6	2
6	AQ5	2
Q	A65	1
A	Q65	2
AQ6	5	2
AQ5	6	2
A65	Q	K
Q65	A	2
---	AQ65	2
AQ65	---	2
King beats Jack 3-2		
1=always 1 loser		
2=always 2 losers		

**Opening Lead:**

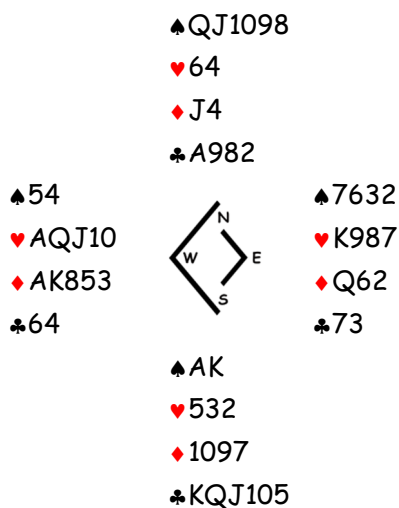
**Results:** 2♣N+3 +150  
 2♥S+2 +170

**Notes:**

- Once North rebids ♣'s, South cannot risk a 2♥ call.
- North could raise South with only 3 ♥'s because of the singleton diamond.
- To play the ♣'s, without any information from the bidding or play, one plays a small ♣ to the Jack (see the tables above).

### Example 34: Opener Rebids Minor With only Five-Cards

East Dealer North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
	P	1♣	P
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♠	All Pass		

N	E	S	W
	P	1♣	1♥!
1♠	P	2♣	2♦
3♣	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** Trump

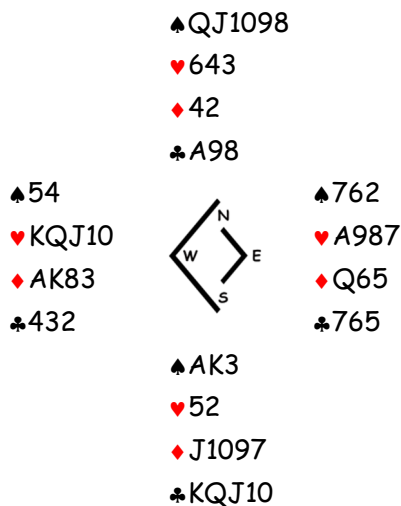
**Results:** 2♠N+1 +140 (East and West must take their tricks or it could be +170)  
3♣S= +110 (a 4-4 fit is better than a 5-4 fit because there could be a discard)

#### Notes:

- South cannot rebid 1NT with either a ♥ bid or a ♦ bid by the opponents.
- One can lead an Ace without having the King if partner bids the suit.
- One sometimes wants to lead trump when one wants full value of their side's high card points when the opponents have the same strength and the only difference may be ruffs.

### Example 35: Opener Rebids One No Trump

South Dealer East West Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
		1♦	P!
1♠	P	1NT	P
2♠	All Pass		

N	E	S	W
		1♦	1♥
1♠	2♥	2♠	P
P	3♥	P	P
3♠	All Pass		

**Opening Lead:** Trump

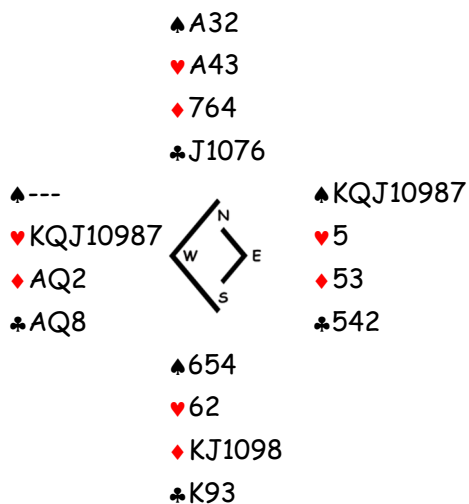
**Results:** 2♠+1 +140  
2♥= +110

#### Notes:

- South is 4-4 in the minors so she opens 1♦.
- West cannot make an opening double because he is not short in the suit being doubled and does not have adequate support for an unbid suit, spades and club support is adequate but barely.
- Here a four-card suit overall is not a bad bid. An overcall at the one-level is almost always five cards.
- North would not repeat ♠'s if partner had not rebid 1NT
- In competition, North shows five ♠'s. With only four ♠'s, she would make a negative double.
- In competition, one does not bid ahead of partner with a minimum.

### Example 36: Weak-Hand Suit Takes Priority

West Dealer Both Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
			1♥
P	1♠	P	3♣
P	3♠	P	4♥
P	4♠	All Pass	

**Opening Lead:** 4♠

**Results:** 4♠E+1 +650

4♥W-1 -100

**Notes:**

- One must choose the contract to give the weak hand entries
- One never follows standard leads when leading trump because one does not want to tell declarer anything.
- The seven-card fit makes while the eight-card fit does not.
- One does not need finesses or ruffs when a long suit that one can get to has been set up.