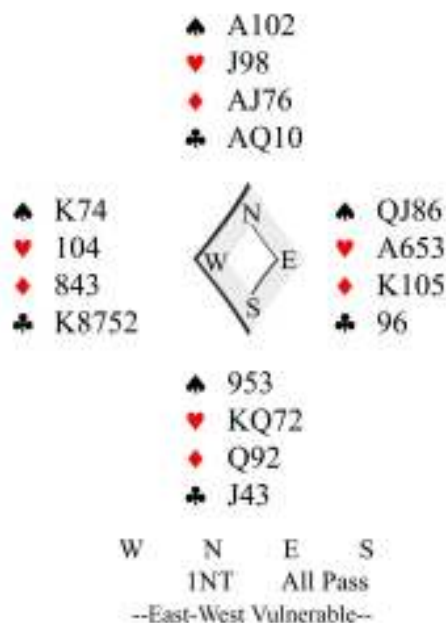


6. No Stayman with a Flat Eight Points

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The Bidding:

North, with 15-17 points and a balanced hand opens 1NT. South, with the requisite 8 points or more to respond Stayman or 2NT, passes because it is a 3-4-3-3 hand, a flat balanced hand with no quick tricks. It is not recommended to use Stayman with a flat balanced hand because there is no trumping power. Partner would take the invite with a good 16 points leaving the partnership short in 3NT.

The contract: 1NT

The Opening Lead: 6 of Spades

The Play: Declarer holds-up and wins the third round of spades. He takes two rounds of hearts. On the third round of hearts, East plays the Ace. East takes the last Spade and exits with a heart. Declarer plays the Ace of diamonds and then a small one which East wins with the King. East exits a heart and Declarer plays clubs from the dummy and wins 3 clubs on a finesse on the way to the rest of the tricks.

The Result: 1NT+1

The defense gets three spades, one heart and one diamond.

Question:

If South invited, would you have gone to 3NT? With 16 points and two Tens, 3NT is a very reasonable bid if partner invites and down one is the inevitable result.

Note:

With a 4-3-3-3, one can effectively subtract a point for eight-point hands, just as with a five-card suit, one can add a point.