Board # 1

Dealer: North

Vulnerable: None

NORTH
♠ JT42
♡ JT9
◇ KT93
♣ Q9

WEST
♠ Q83
♡ 873
◇ AQ8
♣ K832

HCP: 7 11 1 21

EAST
♠ 95
♡ 654
◇ J6542
♣ T76

HCP: 11 12 7 10

SOUTH
♠ AK76
♡ AKQ2
◇ 7
♣ AJ54

HCP: 7 11 1 21

N-S have 28 combined points.
Suitable Level: Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	10	10	3	3
♠	11	11	2	2
♡	10	10	3	3
◇	9	9	4	4
♣	10	10	3	3

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	3Ns	8♡	+1	430	
	4♠n	6♡	=	420	
	4♠n	4◇	=	420	
	4♠n	4◇	-1		50
	6♠n	4♡	-2		100

North and East pass and South must decide: 2♣ or 1♣? 1♣ might be passed out on a bad day, but starting with 2♣ will probably get a 2◇ call from partner and now what? Three suits to show and we're already at the two level; not much space left--1♣ is better. West posses, North responds 1♠. 4♠ would be an underbid; the South hand is worth at least 25 points in support of spades! In this case though, staying out of slam is best, as it requires the Q♠ and K♣ to be onside (and they are not).

Board # 2

Dealer: East

Vulnerable: N-S

NORTH
♠ QJ8
♡ T4
◇ Q974
♣ AQ74

WEST
♠ -
♡ AQJ93
◇ KJ62
♣ JT92

HCP: 11 12 7 10

EAST
♠ AK952
♡ 652
◇ 53
♣ 853

HCP: 7 6 6 7

SOUTH
♠ T7643
♡ K87
◇ AT8
♣ K6

HCP: 7 6 6 7

N-S have 21 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	7	7	6	6
♠	8	8	5	5
♡	5	6	7	7
◇	7	7	6	6
♣	6	7	6	6

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♡w	4♣	-3	150	
	3♠s	A♡	-1		100
	2♡w	4◇	+1		140
	3♡w	Q♠	=		140
	3♡w	Q♠	+1		170

This hand illustrates an important point: voids and singletons work best when partner has strength elsewhere. E-W will find their heart fit and get to 3♡ or maybe 4♡, but the two discards available on the AK♠ don't help as much with the tricks available as having those seven points in different suits. If East has five small spades and the AK♣ instead of spades, now there is a reasonable shot at ten tricks. High honours facing shortness are not as good as having those points elsewhere.

Board # 3

Dealer: South

Vulnerable: E-W

NORTH
♠ AJT9763
♡ 86
◇ J94
♣ A

WEST
♠ 52
♡ K7432
◇ K8
♣ 9654

HCP: 10 6 10 14

EAST
♠ K8
♡ AJT
◇ 732
♣ QT732

HCP: 6 3 1 15

SOUTH
♠ Q4
♡ Q95
◇ AQT65
♣ KJ8

HCP: 10 6 10 14

N-S have 24 combined points.
Suitable Level: Possible Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	7	7	4	4
♠	9	9	3	3
♡	5	5	8	8
◇	9	9	4	4
♣	5	5	8	8

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♠n	3♣	+1	450	
	4♠s	5♠	=	420	
	4♠n	5♣	=	420	
	3♠n	3♣	-1		50
	4♠n	A♡	-1		50

South opens 1◇, West passes, North responds 1♠, and East passes. South rebids 1NT, and North jumps to 4♠, knowing that South will have at least two spades for the 1NT rebid. East's opening lead is crucial. North can pitch away a heart loser from hand on the K♣, so East needs to lead the A♡ and continue hearts, or a diamond to West's king and a heart switch. North cannot win the A◇ since it is needed as an entry to play the K♣ for the discard. A club lead gives declarer one heart to lose, along with the K♠ and K◇.

Board # 4

Dealer: West

Vulnerable: Both

NORTH
♠ K86
♡ AJ94
◇ K64
♣ KQ7

WEST
♠ Q92
♡ K7652
◇ A8
♣ 642

EAST
♠ T74
♡ Q83
◇ QJ973
♣ A5

SOUTH
♠ AJ53
♡ T
◇ T52
♣ JT983

HCP:
16
9 9
6

N-S have 22 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	8	8	4	4
♠	9	9	4	4
♡	6	6	7	7
◇	6	6	7	7
♣	9	9	4	4

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	2♡w*	2♠	-3	800	
	1Nn	2◇	+1	120	
	1Nn	7◇	+1	120	
	1Nn	7◇	+1	120	
	1Nn	Q◇	+1	120	

West passes, North opens 1NT and this becomes the final contract. Four clubs, three spades and the A♡ is eight tricks, and a normal result. As you see, one West decided not to sell out to 1NT and 2♡, I presume, was passed around to South, who made a takeout double that was happily converted to penalties by North, collecting what in bridge slang used to be called "a telephone number" (800)!

Board # 5

Dealer: North

Vulnerable: N-S

NORTH
♠ AQJ
♡ 97
◇ KT9865
♣ 96

WEST
♠ K975
♡ AJT
◇ 3
♣ AQJ82

EAST
♠ 84
♡ Q8543
◇ 2
♣ KT743

SOUTH
♠ T632
♡ K62
◇ AQJ74
♣ 5

HCP:
10
15 5
10

Highcard points are split 20-20
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	3	3	4	4
♠	8	8	5	5
♡	3	3	10	10
◇	10	10	3	3
♣	2	2	10	10

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4◇s*	A♡	+1	810	
	4◇n	4♡	+1	150	
	5◇n	K♣	-1		100
	3♡e	5♣	=		140
	5◇s*	A♣	-1		200

For a weak two in the majors in first or second seat, QJTxxx is the minimum requirement for suit quality, but for 2◇ we can scrape the depths a bit more. Many experts feel 2◇ is ineffectual; I disagree: 2◇ is harder to bid against, since 2♡ or 2♠ leaves two major targets for the opponents: the other major or notrump, while 2◇ leaves three possible targets (♡, ♠, NT) to choose from. A 2◇ opener by North and a raise by South keeps E-W from finding their heart fit.

Board # 6

Dealer: East

Vulnerable: E-W

NORTH
♠ AQ65
♡ KJ98
◇ QJ
♣ 642

WEST
♠ K932
♡ T3
◇ A532
♣ A75

EAST
♠ J8
♡ A754
◇ 7
♣ KQJT83

SOUTH
♠ T74
♡ Q62
◇ KT9864
♣ 9

HCP:
13
11 11
5

E-W have 22 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	5	5	8	8
♠	7	7	6	6
♡	5	5	6	6
◇	8	8	3	3
♣	3	3	10	10

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♣e	K◇	-1	100	
	4◇s	A♣	-1		50
	3♣e	6◇	+1		130
	2♣e	2♡	+2		130
	2Nn	K♣	-3		150

East is close to an opener but not quite there, and South gets to open an ultralight 2◇ (maybe not at less favourable vulnerability). The 2◇ opener stymies West and North also passes, and East gets in with a 3♣ call, which should end the auction and make ten tricks routinely. If East decides to open 1♣, South might pass instead of risking 2◇, and West responds 1♠. North passes and East rebids 2♣ and the result is similar.

Board # 7

Dealer: South

Vulnerable: Both

NORTH
♠ A98543
♡ Q92
◇ 4
♣ KQ8

WEST
♠ KQJ72
♡ J74
◇ AQ
♣ A97

HCP: 11 / 17 8 / 4

EAST
♠ 6
♡ AT85
◇ KT762
♣ J65

SOUTH
♠ T
♡ K63
◇ J9853
♣ T432

E-W have 25 combined points.
Suitable Level: Likely Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	4	4	8	9
♠	6	6	7	7
♡	4	4	8	8
◇	5	5	7	8
♣	6	6	7	7

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♡e	K♣	-3	300	
	3Ne	5◇	-1	100	
	3Ne	5◇	-1	100	
	2Ne	3◇	+3		210
	3Ne	5◇	=		600

South passes and West opens 1♠, surprising North who was about to open 1♠. When this happens, experienced players know to pass and wait to see what happens. Double doesn't work; partner will see this as a takeout double, not a penalty double. Usually when this happens it will turn out to be the opponents hand and your best bet is to hope they get to the wrong spot. East will respond 1NT and 3NT is likely final spot. South leads a diamond and 3NT is not easy!

Board # 8

Dealer: West

Vulnerable: None

NORTH
♠ KQT4
♡ AJ84
◇ K
♣ AT95

WEST
♠ J953
♡ KQT76
◇ AQ9
♣ 2

HCP: 17 / 12 11 / 0

EAST
♠ A2
♡ 93
◇ JT85
♣ KQJ43

SOUTH
♠ 876
♡ 52
◇ 76432
♣ 876

E-W have 23 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	4	4	8	9
♠	5	5	7	7
♡	4	4	9	9
◇	3	3	9	9
♣	4	4	8	8

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♡w*	K♠	-1	100	
	3Nw	4♠	-1	50	
	2Ne	8♠	-1	50	
	3Nw	4♠	-1	50	
	2Ne	6◇	+1		150

North is all set to make a takeout double of 1◇ but the opponents seldom cooperate and West instead opens 1♡. Now it is a lot more difficult, but double is probably best. East redoubles to indicate that it is E-W's hand, and South bids 2◇ to escape 1♡ redoubled. This may get doubled and so might anything else North bids, or E-W might try notrump (not easy). Even if South passes the redouble, West will pass and North will have no successful action. Takeout doubles are not guaranteed to work!

Board # 9

Dealer: North

Vulnerable: E-W

NORTH
♠ J32
♡ KQJT42
◇ 75
♣ T7

WEST
♠ KQ976
♡ 86
◇ A642
♣ AJ

HCP: 7 / 14 14 / 5

EAST
♠ A85
♡ A7
◇ JT9
♣ KQ863

SOUTH
♠ T4
♡ 953
◇ KQ83
♣ 9542

E-W have 28 combined points.
Suitable Level: Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	1	1	12	12
♠	0	1	12	12
♡	7	7	6	6
◇	2	2	10	10
♣	1	1	12	12

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4♣e	9♡	-1	100	
	4♡n	J◇	-3		150
	4♠w	K♡	+2		680
	4♠w	K♡	+2		680
	4♠w	K♡	+3		710

North opens 2♡ and E-W should get to 4♠ after East bids 3♣ or doubles and West introduces spades. That part is easy; the hard part is maximizing the number of tricks you take in 4♠. You win the heart lead, pull trumps, and cash the A♣, then overtake the J♣ with the K♣, so you can play the Q♣ and pitch a losing heart. Clubs don't break 3-3 and overtaking leaves South with the 9♣ as a winner, so you now switch to diamonds, leading the J◇ and losing only one diamond, making six!

Board # 10

Dealer: East

Vulnerable: Both

NORTH
♠ 853
♡ KT94
◇ K95
♣ Q86

WEST
♠ 976
♡ Q853
◇ AQT6
♣ AJ

EAST
♠ AQ
♡ AJ2
◇ J743
♣ 9732

SOUTH
♠ KJT42
♡ 76
◇ 82
♣ KT54

HCP:
8
13 12
7

E-W have 25 combined points.
Suitable Level: Likely Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	6	6	7	7
♠	6	6	7	5
♡	5	5	8	8
◇	4	4	9	9
♣	7	7	6	6

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	2Ne	4♣	-2	200	
	4♡w	3♠	-2	200	
	3Ne	4♠	-1	100	
	3◇e	7♡	=		110
	3Ne	4♠	=		600

East opens 1◇ and if South passes, West will bid 1♡, East will rebid 1NT and West will raise to game. If South overcalls 1♠, West makes a negative double, but East rebids 1NT anyhow and West will again raise to 3NT. 3NT is a decent contract on these 26 cards, the only problem is the distribution of the other 26 cards: the hearts cannot be established and the other three kings are all offside. Unlucky!

Board # 11

Dealer: South

Vulnerable: None

NORTH
♠ 942
♡ 9642
◇ 9865
♣ AJ

WEST
♠ AT3
♡ JT87
◇ 72
♣ 8742

EAST
♠ J8
♡ K5
◇ AQJT43
♣ Q93

SOUTH
♠ KQ765
♡ AQ3
◇ K
♣ KT65

HCP:
5
5 13
17

N-S have 22 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	5	5	8	7
♠	9	9	4	4
♡	8	8	5	5
◇	5	5	7	7
♣	7	7	6	6

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	3♠s	7◇	=	140	
	3◇e	K♠	-2	100	
	3◇e	K♠	-2	100	
	3♠s	7◇	-1		50
	4♠s	7◇	-1		50

South opens 1♠ and West passes. North might pass, or bid 1NT or even 2♠. East will come in with diamonds at this point, and South will rebid spades. South can make nine tricks in spades but 3◇ is only two down, minus only 100 at this vulnerability (unless someone doubles). Except that on a spade lead to dummy's ace and a losing diamond finesse, N-S can take 3◇ down three: Q♠, K♣, A♣, heart to the Q♡, club ruff, heart to the ace: seven tricks for the defenders!

Board # 12

Dealer: West

Vulnerable: N-S

NORTH
♠ AKT8
♡ JT64
◇ AQ98
♣ Q

WEST
♠ 94
♡ 8
◇ T742
♣ JT9542

EAST
♠ Q762
♡ 73
◇ KJ6
♣ K763

SOUTH
♠ J53
♡ AKQ952
◇ 53
♣ A8

HCP:
16
1 9
14

N-S have 30 combined points.
Suitable Level: Game

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	11	11	2	2
♠	11	11	2	2
♡	12	12	1	1
◇	8	8	5	5
♣	5	5	7	7

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	6♡s	J♣	=	1430	
	4♡s	9♠	+2	680	
	4♡s	J♣	+2	680	
	4♡s	9♠	+1	650	
	4♡s	J♣	+1	650	

How does South make 12 tricks with the K◇ and the Q♠ offside? It's called an endplay. South wins the club lead in hand and ruffs the second club in dummy. Two rounds of trumps follow, ending in hand, and the J♠ is run around to East's queen. East is endplayed: a spade goes around to North's ♠AKT, a diamond goes around to the ◇AQ and gives up on a diamond winner, a club allows South to pitch a diamond loser from hand and ruff in dummy. Ruffing that second club and leaving trumps in both hands is the key play.

Board # 13

Dealer: North

Vulnerable: Both

NORTH
♠ KJT4
♡ Q54
◇ KQ5
♣ 952

WEST
♠ 87
♡ KT93
◇ A864
♣ T83

HCP: 11 / 7 11 / 11

EAST
♠ 652
♡ A86
◇ J972
♣ AQ7

HCP: 7

SOUTH
♠ AQ93
♡ J72
◇ T3
♣ KJ64

HCP: 11

N-S have 22 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	8	8	5	5
♠	9	9	4	4
♡	7	7	6	6
◇	7	7	6	6
♣	8	8	4	4

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	1Nn	2◇	+2	150	
	2♠s	2◇	+1	140	
	1♠n	A♡	+2	140	
	PASSOUT	0	=	0	0
	4♠s	3♡	-1		100

North passes the 11-count but East's 11 includes aces and probably is an opening bid of 1◇. Unlucky, this allows South to make a takeout double and they find their spade fit easily. If East passes, South might open 1♣ and North will bid 1♠, so N-S will find the magic spade fit either way. Only if East and South both pass will the auction be passed out. Otherwise, a partscore in spades for N-S makes nine tricks.

Board # 14

Dealer: East

Vulnerable: None

NORTH
♠ J8
♡ AJ9543
◇ 2
♣ AJ85

WEST
♠ K6
♡ KQ6
◇ AJT9875
♣ 9

HCP: 13 / 9 / 7

EAST
♠ A732
♡ T2
◇ 643
♣ KQ64

HCP: 9

SOUTH
♠ QT954
♡ 87
◇ KQ
♣ T732

HCP: 11

E-W have 22 combined points.
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	3	3	6	9
♠	7	7	6	6
♡	7	7	6	6
◇	3	3	10	10
♣	7	7	6	6

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	4◇w	J♠	=		130
	2◇w	A♡	+2		130
	3◇w	A♡	+1		130
	4◇w	A♡	=		130
	3◇w	J♠	+1		130

East and South pass, West opens 1◇, North overcalls 1♡, or maybe 2♡, and the race is on. West's suit is worth at least one rebid, and diamonds play better than hearts do for North-South. Ten tricks in diamonds was the unanimous result last week, although there were various levels reached.

Board # 15

Dealer: South

Vulnerable: N-S

NORTH
♠ Q4
♡ 642
◇ QJ97
♣ AQJ8

WEST
♠ 6
♡ KQJ3
◇ KT84
♣ K753

HCP: 12 / 12 8 / 8

EAST
♠ T9732
♡ AT95
◇ A5
♣ 64

HCP: 8

SOUTH
♠ AKJ85
♡ 87
◇ 632
♣ T92

HCP: 12

Highcard points are split 20-20
Suitable Level: Partscore

Available Tricks:

	N	S	E	W
NT	7	7	5	6
♠	7	7	5	6
♡	4	4	8	8
◇	6	6	7	7
♣	6	6	6	6

Players	Contract	Lead	Result	NS	EW
	2Ne	6♡	-2	100	
	3♡w	2♡	-1	50	
	1Nw	8♣	=		90
	3♡e	K♠	=		140
	3♡e	8♡	=		140

Another hand where points are split 20-20. East-West have a heart fit and but finding it is difficult. 1◇ - 1♠, 2♣ - 2♡ is the likely start, but 2♡ doesn't necessarily show a suit, many modern pairs play that a fourth-suit bid like this is forcing and artificial, something used by responder to promise a good hand. With that in mind, East may prefer a 2NT rebid and the heart fit will end up in the blind spot.