

AN HONORS eBook FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

Stephen Paul

# Duplicate Bridge 403

DEFENDING SECOND-SEAT INTERFERENCE

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## Defending Second Seat Interference

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	4
CHAPTER 1    HAND EVALUATION .....	6
The Variables .....	7
The LW Function .....	11
CHAPTER 2    TAKEOUT DOUBLES .....	29
Supporting opener .....	30
Finding a fit .....	36
Cappelletti Transfers .....	43
CHAPTER 3    NATURAL OVERCALLS .....	53
Defending with cuebids .....	53
Defining the cuebid .....	54
After a jump overcall .....	56
Negative doubles .....	60
Opener's rebids .....	67
CHAPTER 4    TWO-SUITED OVERCALLS .....	73
Cuebids .....	74
Supporting bids .....	76
With no support .....	78
Michaels .....	83
Minor suits .....	83
Major suits .....	85
With no support .....	87
Special overcalls .....	95
CHAPTER 5    AFTER A PREEMPT .....	100
Responding to a takeout double .....	102
The rules .....	103
Detailed responses .....	109
The doubler after Lebensohl .....	115
In the balancing position .....	121
After a second-seat preempt .....	130

CHAPTER 6	LEBENSOHL – PART I	134
	Against natural 1NT overcalls	134
	Defending a double	135
	Defending a suit overcall	139
	After 2♣	141
	After 2♦	142
	After 2♥	153
	After 2♠	161
CHAPTER 7	LEBENSOHL – PART II	169
	Against one known and one unknown suit	169
	After double	170
	After 2♣	171
	2♦ as diamonds and one unknown	182
	2♥ as hearts and a minor	188
	2♠ as spades and a minor	194
CHAPTER 8	LEBENSOHL – PART III	200
	Against two known suits	200
	After 2♣ or 2♦	202
	After 2♥	209
	After 2NT	213
	1NT Overcall conventions	218
BIBLIOGRAPHY		221
INDEX		225

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# INTRODUCTION

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*“Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!”*<sup>1</sup>

Mike Lawrence<sup>2</sup> offers the following five reasons for overcalling:

1. You may buy the contract for a successful game or partscore.
2. You may get partner off to a good lead.
3. You may push the opponents too high; perhaps, on occasion, at expense to them.
4. You may find a successful sacrifice.
5. You may cause the opponents to misjudge their hands and either miss a game or slam or get to the wrong game or slam. Or for that matter, the wrong suit, period.

He goes on to state that overcalling makes life difficult for the side that opened.

If a partnership is to succeed at duplicate bridge the difficulties presented by an overcall need to be overcome. This text provides a complete range of defenses starting with *Takeout doubles* and finishing with two-suited overcalls of 1NT using *Lebensohl*.

Sound defensive bidding starts with an understanding of hand valuation. Chapter one presents hand evaluation using an algorithm developed by Lawrence and Wirgren<sup>3</sup>. Verified with computer simulations to be more accurate than anecdotal methods, it encourages the use of judgement to determine contract levels rather than the stubborn application of rules.

Defending a *Takeout double* (Chapter 2) focuses on supporting opener's major suit, and when that is not possible, the understandings required to support opener's minor suit or introduce a new suit are provided. For those willing to tackle a more challenging system, *Cappelletti Transfers* will double the number of ways a major suit opening can be supported.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Seuss.

<sup>2</sup> Mike Lawrence, *The Complete Book on Overcalls*, pages 9 - 11

<sup>3</sup> M. Lawrence and A. Wirgren, *I Fought The Law Of Total Tricks*.

Cuebids of the overcaller's suit and *Negative Doubles* are the primary tools needed to defend natural overcalls. A complete structure is provided in Chapter 3, allowing responder to make sound choices between supporting opener's suit, introducing a new suit, or making a *Negative Double*.

An opponent making a two-suited overcall may or may not define which suits they have, and seldom promise a great deal of strength. These attacks consume bidding space and allow the opponents to find a fit quickly.

Chapter 4 starts with *Unusual over Unusual 2NT* and continues step by step with the adaptations necessary to defend more complex overcalls such as the *Roman Jump Overcall*.

Few defenses create as much confusion as the 2NT relay to 3♣, the *Lebensohl Relay*. The 2NT relay is small part of the bidding system and cuebids, doubles, and natural bids to are needed to define responder's hand. Ron Andersen's classic work "The Lebensohl Convention Complete" provided the guidelines for defend against four key situations. Andersen's guidelines are expanded and detailed in the following four chapters:

- Preemptive two-level openings (Chapter 5)
- Natural overcalls of a 1NT opening (Chapter 6)
- Conventional overcalls of 1NT with one known suit and one unknown suit (Chapter 7)
- Conventional overcalls of 1NT with two known suits (Chapter 8).

These defenses have been used everywhere Contract Bridge is played. They are effective at a Friday night game in the parlor, a pairs game at the duplicate bridge club, or against experts at the national level. Each key subject contains detailed continuations, summaries, and a follow up quiz.

## CHAPTER 1      HAND EVALUATION

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Success in competition depends on how accurately a hand can be evaluated and converted into a trick count. This is not a simple problem. A solution was offered in 1992 with the publication of *To Bid or Not to Bid*. The book promoted the Law of Total Tricks in competitive situations as “superior to any bridge player’s judgement”<sup>4</sup>. Cohen added to the concept with *Following the Law* in 1994 to “further explain the intricacies of adjusting”<sup>5</sup>. Problems continued to arise with the Law of Total Tricks and a more rigorous solution was needed. Mike Lawrence and Anders Wirgren used computer simulations and statistical analysis to evaluate the Law of Total Tricks. They identified why the Law fails and presented a superior methodology with “I Fought the Law of Total Tricks.” Their results are surprising to Law adherents. The only time the Law has an accuracy better than a guess is with fourteen trumps.<sup>6</sup> Each side holding a trump suit of seven cards occurs with a frequency<sup>7</sup> of 10.5%. With longer trump holdings success rates decrease to a low of 30% with 20 trumps. The results of the simulations were summarized by Lawrence and Wirgren<sup>8</sup> as follows:

TRUMPS	ACCURACY (%)
14	55.6
15	42.0
16	44.1
17	36.0
18	36.1
19	33.6
20	30.0

The most important outcome of the Law of Total Tricks is that it drew attention to the need for a better methodology. In an ideal world, a hand

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<sup>4</sup> Larry Cohen, *To Bid or Not to Bid*, page 6.

<sup>5</sup> Larry Cohen, *Following the Law*, page 9. In the introduction David Berkowitz states “Larry had to write another book and further explain the intricacies of adjusting.”

<sup>6</sup> Total trump is the number of cards in your side’s trump suit plus the number of cards in the opponents trump suit. Fourteen trumps is equivalent to both sides having a seven-card fit.

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 253.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 24.



evaluation system would be based on what you can see in your hand and imply from the bidding. It would include a summation of ALL the variables (high cards, distribution, controls, suit length, fit, etc.). Fortunately, Lawrence and Wirgren provided a simplified function and were careful to point out that it is not perfect and requires judgement.

This chapter presents a step by step approach to *estimating* the number of tricks your partnership can capture.

## THE VARIABLES

The Lawrence - Wirgren function ESTIMATES the number of tricks your side can take and contains two variables: Short Suit Total and Working Points.

### SHORT SUIT TOTAL

Short Suit Total is the total length of the partnership's three shortest suits and has a range of -3 to +5. Lawrence<sup>9</sup> describes it as follows:

*Take your side's shortest suit and add it to your side's second shortest suit. That gives you your short suit total (SST).*

Knowledge of a third short suit comes from the bidding and Lawrence uses the length of that suit to improve trick count. He explains the approach with a third suit as follows:

*If the third short suit is a:*

- *Doubleton, subtract one from your SST.*
- *Singleton, subtract two from your SST.*
- *Void, subtract three from your SST.*

It is the combined impact of the short suits in both of the partnership's hands that adds value.

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<sup>9</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 126

The following examples demonstrate the short suit count in a single hand then progresses to Short Suit Total with the hands of both partners:

### Example 1

♠A 8 7 3   ♥A 6 5   ♦6 3 2   ♣A J 6

The two shortest suits are three cards each.

The *short suit total* is  $3 + 3 = 6$ .

A total of 6 indicates this hand is outside the accepted range of  $-3$  to  $+5$  and a different approach to hand evaluation is needed. The trick taking value of a balanced hand depends largely on high card strength. An SST of 6 is a negative factor in a suit contract.

### Example 2

♠K 7 5 4   ♥A K 9 8 4   ♦7 3   ♣10 5

The shortest suits are diamonds and clubs.

The *short suit total* is:  $2 + 2 = 4$

SST = 4

### Example 3

♠Q J 6 4 2   ♥K Q 9 7 2   ♦A 4   ♣9

The shortest suits are diamonds and clubs.

The *short suit total* is:  $2 + 1 = 3$

SST = 3

The true value of the methodology becomes apparent when the impact of your partner's distribution can be included in the calculation. An exact calculation of SST is possible in the following double dummy examples.

### Example 4

North: ♠K Q 5 4 2   ♥7 3   ♦A K 9 8 4   ♣10

South: ♠J 10 7 3   ♥A 8 2   ♦2   ♣A 8 6 5 4

The two shortest suits are South's singleton diamond and North's singleton club (SST subtotal = 2). The third shortest suit is North's doubleton heart, and this reduces SST by 1. The SST is:  $1 + 1 - 1 = 1$

### Example 5

North: ♠K Q 5 4 2 ♥7 ♦A K 9 8 3 4 ♣10

South: ♠J 10 7 6 ♥A 8 2 ♦— ♣A 8 6 5 4 3

The two shortest suits are diamonds (0) and clubs (1), and the third shortest suit is North's singleton heart. The correction for a singleton reduces SST by 2. As a result, SST is:  $0 + 1 - 2 = -1$

### WORKING POINTS

There are numerous variables affecting the value of honors (duplication, mirror distribution, bad trump splits, matching second suits, long suits, etc.). Understanding<sup>10</sup> the impact of those variables and adjusting their value is one of the keys to better results.

Working points (WP) represent an estimate of the combined value of high card points held by your partnership adjusted to reflect their ability to take tricks. The adjustments depend on a number of factors such as the position of enemy values relative to your hand, or sequences of honor cards within a suit to name a few.

The changing value of honors can be seen in the following extreme example. The placement of honors in West's hand allows North - South to make 10 tricks in a spade contract.

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<sup>10</sup> A comprehensive presentation of hand evaluation can be found in: *The Complete Book on Hand Evaluation in Contract Bridge*, by Mike Lawrence.

Example A

♠ A Q	N	♠ 5 4
♥ J 9 8 5 4 3 2	W	♥ 7 6
♦ A K	E	♦ J 10 9 8
♣ Q J	S	♣ 9 5 4 3 2
	♠ 9 7 3 2	
	♥ K	
	♦ Q 6 5 3 2	
	♣ 10 8 7	

Moving West's ♠A Q to East's hand would limit North - South to 9 tricks. There is no shortage of situations that impact the ability of honors to take tricks. This will be discussed further shortly.

X VARIABLE

The X variable is made up of steps containing 3 working points each:

X	WP
10	10-12
11	13-15
12	16-18
13	19-21 <b>Baseline</b>
14	22-24
15	25-27
16	28-30

The baseline is defined as 13 tricks with 19 to 21 points and reflects an SST of zero. Baseline values are the key to using the methodology at the table.

## THE LW FUNCTION

The Lawrence - Wirgren (LW) function relates trick count to Working Points and Short Suit Total as:

$$LW = X(WP) - SST = \text{Estimated Number Tricks}$$

Values of the LW function are summarized in the following table:

Number of tricks = X(WP) – SST

SST \ WP	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
10–12	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	
13–15		13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	
16–18			13	12	11	10	9	8	7	
19–21				13	12	11	10	9	8	WP Baseline
22–24					13	12	11	10	9	
25–27						13	12	11	10	
28–30							13	12	11	

← Unbalanced Hands                      SST Baseline                      Balanced Hands →

The table demonstrates how X and SST combine to provide a trick estimate. It is easy to use in a live auction by remembering that SST changes one trick per step from the baseline value AND each step of WP has a value of 3 working points.

## IN COMPETITION

The LW function accounts for the value of distribution and high card strength in the *combined* partnership holdings (as estimated from the bidding). The following examples use the LW function to determine the contract level. Note that the methodology requires a fit with your partner in a suit contract. Your partner opens and the bidding proceeds as follows:

West	North	East	South	
	1♥	Pass	1NT <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Forcing, 10 – 12 HCP
2♣	2♥ <sup>2</sup>	4♣	?	<sup>2</sup> Promises 6 hearts <sup>11</sup> , 12 – 14 HCP

---

<sup>11</sup> Opener should not re-enter the bidding with 11 HCP. Opening 1♥ and rebidding 2♥ shows 12-14 HCP.

Your *left hand* opponent overcalled clubs and is raised to 4♣ suggesting they have at least a nine-card fit. How many tricks can your side take with the following hands?

**Example 1**      ♠7 5 3   ♥A 6 2   ♦Q J 4 3   ♣K 6 2

Consider how the value of this hand changes as a result of the opponents bidding:

HCP: You and your partner have a combined 22 to 24 HCP.

WP    The ♣K is located in front of the strong opponent. Holding three cards with an honor in the opponent's suit is undesirable. Hand value should be downgraded a full trick to 19 to 21 WP.

X:     A valuation of 19 to 21 WP corresponds to the baseline value of 13 tricks.  $X = 13$

SST:   The opponents likely have a nine-card fit and this will leave partner with a singleton club. This singleton is added to your three-card-suit to obtain a total.  $SST = 1 + 3 = 4$

LW:   Available tricks is  $X - SST = 13 - 4 = 9$  tricks.

Any values your partner has in spades (i.e. ♠Q x x) will be compromised if your right hand opponent has the ♠K J x. You may have difficulty making 3♥ and should pass. The number of clubs held by the opponents is only important because it allows you to locate your partner's singleton.

**Example 2**      ♠9 5 3   ♥A 6 2   ♦K Q J 4   ♣9 3 2

The honors in this hand are outside of the opponent's known suit and are working together.

HCP: You have a combined 22 to 24 HCP.

WP:    The ♦K is protected and no adjustments are needed.  $HCP = WP = 22$  to 24

X:     The count is one step higher than the baseline value.  $X = 14$

SST:   The opponent's 9+ card fit places partner with a singleton club (at most). The short suit total is partner's singleton plus your three-card suit or  $SST = 1 + 3 = 4$

LW:   Available tricks can be calculated as:  $14 - 4 = 10$  tricks.

Your partner holding the following minimum hands will have a good play for a 4♥ contract:

♠K Q x   ♥K x x x x x   ♦A x x   ♣x  
 ♠A Q J   ♥K Q x x x x   ♦x x x   ♣x

A game contract will be challenging if partner's values are concentrated in hearts and clubs:

♠Q x x   ♥K Q J x x x   ♦x x x   ♣A

**Example 3**      ♠K 10 9 4   ♥A 6 2   ♦K J   ♣J 7 5 3

Your partner opens and the bidding proceeds as follows:

West	North	East	South	
	1♥	Pass	1♠	
2♣	2♥ <sup>1</sup>	4♣	?	<sup>1</sup> Promises 6 hearts, 12+ HCP

Evaluate your next bid:

HCP: Your 12 combines with partner for an estimated 24 to 26 HCP.

WP: The ♦K J is poorly located, is an undesirable combination, and should be devalued by 2 points (½ of a trick). As a result, working points = 22 to 24 WP

X: WP is one step higher than the baseline value (19 to 21) resulting in a count of X = 14 tricks

SST: The opponents appear to have at least a nine-card fit and your small clubs suggests your partner has a club void. The short suit total is 0 for partner's void plus your two-card diamonds.

SST = 0 + 2 = 2

LW: Available tricks can be calculated as: 14 – 2 = 12 tricks.

The opener will need three of the missing four keycards for a comfortable small slam. You may have problems if North has any of the following hands:

- ♠x x x   ♥K Q J 10 x x x   ♦A Q x   ♣—
- ♠x x x   ♥K Q x x x x x   ♦A Q J x   ♣—
- ♠A Q   ♥K J x x x x x   ♦Q x x x   ♣—
- ♠A Q x   ♥Q J x x x x   ♦A x x   ♣x

The safest contract is 4♥ and you are likely good for 5♥ if the opponents compete further.

**Example 4**      ♠K J 9 5 3   ♥A J 2   ♦Q 4   ♣J 6 2

You open and the auction proceeds as follows:

West	North	East	South	
	1♠	2♣	2♠ <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Minimum raise
3♣	?			

Your partner has a minimum hand with 5 to 9 HCP and 3+ spades (you expect a cuebid of 3♣ with a stronger hand). Evaluate your next bid:

HCP: Your 12 HCP with partner's estimated values are 17 to 21 HCP.

WP: The ♣J has no value. The ♦Q will only be useful if South has a supporting honor (such as J x x or K x) and its value should be reduced by half. Hand value is: 15 to 18 WP.

X: A WP of 15 to 18 is one step lower than baseline:  $X = 12$  tricks

SST: The opponent's club raise suggests your partner has a doubleton club at worst. The short suit total includes partner's two clubs plus your doubleton diamond for an  $SST = 2 + 2 = 4$

LW: Available tricks can be estimated as:  $12 - 4 = 8$  tricks.

The safest decision is to pass and allow your partner to make the final decision.

### Example 5

Your partner opens and you cuebid<sup>12</sup> after a 2♣ overcall. Opener declines the invitation rebidding 3♠. East passes and leaves you with a decision:

West	North	East	South	
	1♠	2♣	3♠ <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Limit raise or better
Pass	3♠	Pass	?	

---

<sup>12</sup> The cuebid supports opener's suit with 10+ HCP. Responder may also have a strong hand without the ability to splinter.



Assume opener has a minimum hand with 10 to 11 WP. Evaluate the following hands as responder:

- i. ♠A Q 8 ♥K 9 8 7 ♦J 10 7 3 ♣6 2

This hand is a minimum and South should pass.

- ii. ♠A Q 8 ♥K J ♦10 9 7 3 ♣K 8 7 2

The hand has an extra king for a total of 13 HCP. The spade honors are nice while the distribution and location of honors in the outside suits is flawed. The ♥K is in a short suit and the ♣K is in the enemy suit. The four-card club suit also poses a problem. West's failure to raise suggests a poor club holding with 0 to 2 cards. East will recognize the potential shortness and lead the ♣A followed with a low club and a ruff (the low club is suit preference asking for a diamond return). South's hand should be devalued a full trick to 10 working points.

As a result, WP = 20 to 21, with a baseline value of 13 tricks.

If North's short suit is not hearts, the SST = 4 and the trick count will be  $13 - 4 = 9$ .

South should pass.

- iii. ♠A Q 8 ♥K J 10 3 ♦K 9 8 7 ♣7 2

Shortening the club suit and moving the ♣K to diamonds allows the declarer to control the minor suits. The high cards don't require a downgrade and working points can be estimated as 23 to 24 WP (opener is 10 to 11). This is one step above the baseline with a count of 14 tricks.

Your partner opened 1♠ (promising a five-card suit) and must have a doubleton in one of the other suits. If the short suit is not clubs (odds of 2:3), the SST will be 4 with a projected trick count of  $14 - 4 = 10$ . A contract of 4♠ may come down to a good guess (or a defensive error) and could be down 2 on a bad day.

iv. ♠A Q 8 ♥K Q 10 3 ♦A K 9 8 7 ♣7

Removing one club and adding the ♦A and ♥Q has significantly improved the value of this hand. Opener's 10 to 11 plus your 18 yield 28 to 29 WP. This is three steps higher than the baseline with a count of 16 tricks. The opener's doubleton is unlikely to be in clubs and you can be confident the combined hands will have an SST no worse than 3.

The projected trick count is:  $16 - 3 = 13$

Slam has a good chance providing your side has the necessary controls.

### IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

The LW function requires a fit with *useful* distribution. A hand of 4=3=3=3 opposite 4=3=3=3 has no distributional values. A similar problem occurs with mirror distributions like 5=3=3=2 opposite 5=3=3=2. Hands like this require an extra complement of high cards to make their contracts.

### WORKING POINTS

The value of high cards depends upon how and where they are located:

1. A long side suit capable of taking tricks adds value to your WP total<sup>13</sup>.
2. Values in the opponents' suit are wasted and your partner will have less<sup>14</sup> than you hope for.
3. Having three cards in a suit bid by your right hand opponent and then raised is not good news. Any values you or your partner have in that suit will be compromised<sup>15</sup>.
4. Values in complementary short suits tend to be wasted (A K opposite Q J can only take 2 tricks).

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<sup>13</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 143.

<sup>14</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 101.

<sup>15</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 53.

## SHORT SUITS

1. A partner with a six-card suit is guaranteed to have an SST of 4 or smaller<sup>16</sup> because the flattest distribution will be 6322.
2. A hand that opens a five-card major will have at least one doubleton (the flattest possible hand is 5332). When partner rebids your short suit, you can be certain the opener's short suit is elsewhere and the worst case SST can be determined. Say your partner opens 1♠ and rebids 2♥:

West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♣	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

With hearts as your short suit:

♠A 10 8 ♥K J ♦K 9 7 3 2 ♣8 7 2

you can be certain partner has a short suit in diamonds or clubs and your SST = 4, or better. The value of the ♥K and ♥J improves opposite partners' 4+ card heart suit because your partner is more likely to have supporting honors there.

## TRICK COUNT

1. Successful hand evaluation requires good judgement. There is no single shortcut that works everywhere. The Law of Total Tricks is better left to your opponents.
2. A hand with a combined 22 to 24 WP and an SST of 0 has a count of 14 tricks (impossible in practice).
3. Judgement is the hidden variable and is always a necessary component. The LW function may lead you astray if you do not correctly account for first and second round controls.
4. When you hold a nine-card fit the opponents will *always* have an eight-card fit or better. This has little or nothing to do with the number of tricks you can take. When playing in their best suit the number of tricks available to both sides is primarily a function of distribution and HCP. The number of trumps held by each side is a secondary issue<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 233.

<sup>17</sup> Lawrence and Wirgren, *I Fought the Law of Total Tricks*, page 110.

**QUIZ 1****COMPETITIVE BIDDING**

What action should West take after this bidding?

West	North	East	South	<i>E – W vulnerable</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠	
2♣	2♠	3♦	3♠	
?				

With this hand:

1. ♠J 5 2 ♥3 ♦K 10 7 6 ♣A Q J 9 7  
 a) Pass   b) Dbl   c) 3NT   d) 4♣   e) 4♦

Determine South's best rebid given the following bidding:

West	North	East	South	<i>All vulnerable</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠	
2♣	2♠	3♣	?	

With the following hands?

2. ♠A Q 6 3 2 ♥J 8 ♦A Q J ♣K J 3  
 a) Pass   b) Dbl   c) 3♦   d) 3♥   e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣   g) 4♦   h) 4♥   i) 4♠   j) 4NT
3. ♠A Q 6 3 2 ♥J 8 ♦A Q J ♣A 8 3  
 a) Pass   b) Dbl   c) 3♦   d) 3♥   e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣   g) 4♦   h) 4♥   i) 4♠   j) 4NT
4. ♠A K 6 3 2 ♥2 ♦A K 10 8 5 ♣A 8  
 a) Pass   b) Dbl   c) 3♦   d) 3♥   e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣   g) 4♦   h) 4♥   i) 4♠   j) 4NT

What is South's best rebid following this bidding?

West	North	East	South	<i>None vulnerable</i>
	1♦	3♣	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Negative
Pass	3♠	Pass	?	

5. ♠K Q 7 3 ♥A J 10 7 2 ♦9 4 ♣9 4  
 a) Pass    b) Dbl    c) 3♦    d) 3♥    e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣    g) 4♦    h) 4♥    i) 4♠    j) 4NT

What is South's best rebid with the following bidding?

West	North	East	South	None vulnerable
	1♦	3♣	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Negative
Pass	3♥	Pass	?	

6. ♠K Q 7 3 ♥A J 10 7 2 ♦9 4 ♣9 4  
 a) Pass    b) Dbl    c) 3♦    d) 3♥    e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣    g) 4♦    h) 4♥    i) 4♠    j) 4NT

Given the following bidding, what is North's best rebid?

West	North	East	South	None vulnerable
	1♦	3♣	Dbl <sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup> Negative
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	
5♣	?			

7. ♠A 10 ♥K 8 5 3 ♦K Q 8 6 ♣J 9 2  
 a) Pass    b) Dbl    c) 5♦    d) 5♥

8. ♠A 10 ♥K 8 5 3 ♦A Q 9 8 6 2 ♣2  
 a) Pass    b) Dbl    c) 5♦    d) 5♥

Given the following bidding, what is South's best rebid?

West	North	East	South	East – West vulnerable
	Pass	1♥	2♣	
2♥	3♣	3♦ <sup>1</sup>	?	<sup>1</sup> Natural

9. ♠A Q J ♥K 10 ♦9 ♣A Q 9 6 5 4 3  
 a) Dbl    b) 3♣    c) 3♦    d) 3♥    e) 3♠  
 f) 4♣    g) 4♥    h) 4♠    i) 4NT    f) 5♣

What is South's best rebid with the following bidding?

West	North	East	South	<i>All vulnerable</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥	
Db1 <sup>1</sup>	Rdbl <sup>2</sup>	3♣	?	<sup>1</sup> Shows 4 cards in both unbid suits <sup>2</sup> Support double (3 hearts)

10. ♠ — ♥A K Q 5 3 2 ♦10 5 ♣K Q J 8 7
- a) Db1    b) 3♣    c) 3♦    d) 3♥    e) 3♠
- f) 4♣    g) 4♥    h) 4♠    i) 4NT    j) 6♥

### DISCUSSION 1                      COMPETITIVE BIDDING

1. After two passes South opens 1♠, and you make a vulnerable overcall of 2♣. North raises spades and your partner bids 3♦. South rebids 3♠ leaving you with a decision. Evaluate the hands as follows:

HCP: You have 11 HCP. East is a passed hand and will have a maximum of 11. Introducing a new suit after an overcall shows a minimum of 9 which gives your partner a range of 9 to 11. Partnership values are 20 to 22 HCP.

The opponents have a range of 18 to 20 HCP. South made a third seat opening and could be light on high-card values.

WP: Your partner failed to raise clubs and introduced diamonds. Club length is a plus, it can be developed and used for discards. The ♣K is missing and the ♣Q can be downgraded a point to compensate. WP = 19 to 21

SST: You have 3 spades and 1 heart. Your partner's failure to raise clubs suggests 0 to 2 clubs. This constitutes a third short suit and allows you to reduce your SST by 1.

$$\text{SST} = 3 + 1 - 1 = 3$$

X: Your WP of 19 to 21 falls on the baseline and has a count of 13 tricks.

LW: Subtracting the short suit total from X yields:  $14 - 3 = 11$  tricks.

## Discussion 1, Question 2 *continued*

Don't let the vulnerability stand in your way, a contract 4♦, (e), has a good chance of succeeding. Allowing the opponents to play 3♠ will be a poor result for you even if they are down 2 tricks. They might also make their bid. Your nine-card fit in diamonds means the opponents have at least one short suit of two cards (or fewer). A second short suit will bring their SST to 3. A singleton heart in your hand also suggests they have a second fit (improving their WP). Holding 17 to 19 WP (one step below baseline) they have a count of 12 tricks. Subtracting an SST of 3 places them with 9 tricks.

### 2. Your hand can be evaluated with the bidding as follows:

HCP: North failed to make a limit raise and will have no more than 9 HCP. This places your side with a maximum of 27 HCP. If partner has a minimum of 5 your range is 23 to 27 HCP.

West made a vulnerable overcall at the two level and should have an opening hand. This leaves East with 0 to 5 and West with 12 to 17 HCP.

WP: West's two-level overcall suggests most of their strength is on your left. The kings and queens are at risk and the likelihood they will win tricks is smaller. Reduce their value a full trick to 15 points. If you give North an average value of 7 pts your estimated total becomes 22 WP.

SST: As the opponents have bid and raised clubs it is reasonable to assume they have an eight-card fit, and North has a doubleton club. With your doubleton heart the SST becomes 4.

X: Our estimated 22 WP is one step above the baseline and has a count of 14 tricks.

LW: Subtracting the short suit total from X is:  $14 - 4 = 10$  tricks.

Game is not a guaranteed proposition and may require strong declarer play to make it. Given the value of a vulnerable game, it is correct to bid 4♠, (i).

Consider your next decision if the opponents continue:

West	North	East	South	<i>All vulnerable</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠	
2♣	2♠	3♣	4♠	
5♣	Pass	Pass	?	What is South's best call?

Having made the decision to play in 4♠ earlier the opponents are applying pressure again.

Your partner's final Pass should lead you to believe there are no extra values (a singleton or void in clubs is unlikely). The opponents have 17 to 21 HCP and will need very good distribution to make their contract. It is unlikely you can make 5♠ and you must double, (b), to get your best score.

3. The club honors in this hand have been improved and this changes the evaluation:

HCP: Same as before, North - South have 23 to 27 (average of 25).  
East with 0 to 5 and West with 12 to 17 HCP.

WP: Replacing ♣K J 3 with ♣A 8 3 changes the balance in your favor. West's values remain a threat in hearts and diamonds and the hand should be devalued ½ of trick to 23.5 WP.

SST: There is no change here and the estimated SST is 4 tricks.

X: The step above baseline is 22 to 24 for a count of 14 tricks.

LW: Subtracting an SST of 4 yields a trick count of 10.

Working Points of 23.5 are at the top of the range and good declarer play may yield an extra trick. Bid 4♠, (i), with this hand. Defending 5♣ remains a better option if the opponents decide to force you.