Preference - Commentary

Hand 1

North opens 1♠, South responds 1NT and North rebids 2♥.

South should show preference to 2♠. This is a genuine preference bid preferring a known 5-3 fit to a possible 4-2 fit. It does not promise any additional strength although it could be as strong as 9 points.

NS can make 9 tricks in spades or 8 tricks in hearts.

Hand 2

East opens 1♠, West responds 1NT, and East rebids 2♥ showing at least 5-4 shape in the two suits and anything from 11 to 18 points.

West has a natural preference to 2♠, but he would in any case make this bid holding 9 points just in case partner has 17 or 18.

EW can make 8 tricks in any one of NT, spades or hearts.

Hand 3

South opens 1♥, North responds 1♠, and South rebids 2♦.

With a clear preference, the possibility of ruffing tricks in the short suit and a minimum responding hand North passes.

NS can make 8 tricks in hearts or spades or 9 tricks in diamonds, each for a score of 110. As it happens the best score is 130 when making 10 tricks in clubs which were never mentioned!

Hand 4

West opens 1♣, East responds 1♥ and Westh rebids 1♠.

Even on this minimum hand East has a clear preference to clubs.

With eighteen points West must bid again just in case East holds (7)8 or more, and 2NT describes his hand best in the context of the bidding so far. With a minimum hand and no obvious fit East will pass.

2NT makes 8 tricks (120 points)

EW can make 9 tricks in hearts (140 points) or clubs (110 points), but they are difficult contracts to find.

Hand 5

North opens 1♣, South responds 1♦ and North rebids 1♥. With 8 points South should show preference to 2♣, and with 18 points North must make a further bid – 2NT describes the hand best, which South will raise to 3NT.

3NT makes 9 tricks.

Amazingly 4♥ makes 10 tricks despite that trump holding in the West hand, but the important thing is to reach a game contract on 18 points facing 8.

Hand 6

East opens 1♠, West responds 1NT and East rebids 2♣.

West must keep the bidding open with 2♠ and East will make a further bid of 2NT promising 17 or 18 points, which West will raise to 3NT.

10 tricks in no trumps is the most likely result, although 11 tricks in spades score better.

Preference - Commentary

Hand 7

South opens 1♣, North responds 1♦ and South rebids 1♥.
South should raise to 2♥ (limiting his hand), and that will end the auction.
NS make 8 tricks in hearts – the optimum contract.

Hand 8

West opens 1♣, East responds 1♦ and West rebids 1♠.
With 8 points East should respond 2♣, but West has nothing extra and will pass.
EW can make 8 tricks in any one of clubs, diamonds or spades. 2♠ scores best but East must bid the clubs as he searches for a possible game.

Hand 9

North opens 1♠, South responds 2♣ and North rebids 2♦ (forcing facing the 2-level response).
South can now see the 5-3 spade fit in a 7-loser hand (or 12 points counting 1 for the doubleton) and so bids 4♠.
NS make 10 tricks in spades.

Hand 10

East opens 1♦, West responds 1♥ and East rebids 1♠.
With 9 points West must show preference to 2♦.
East will make a further bid of 3♣ promising 17 or 18 points and suggesting 5-4-3-1 shape, and West will probably choose 3NT as the final contract.
3NT makes 9 tricks provided that he ducks hearts twice.
Meanwhile 4♠ scores better making 10 tricks but it is rather precarious.

Hand 11

South opens 1♥, North responds 1♠ and South rebids 2♣.
North has a natural preference to 2♥ and South makes a further try with 3♦ suggesting 17 points and 5-4-3-1 shape, but North can only revert to 3♥.
3♥ making 9 tricks is the optimum score.

Hand 12

West opens 1♦, East responds 1♥, and West rebids 1♠.
With 3-2 shape and only 7 points East prefers the major and passes.
EW can come to 9 tricks in Hearts, or 8 in NT, S or D.

Board 13

North opens 1♥, South responds 1♠ and North rebids 2♦.
South has a clear preference to 2♥, but would try to find this bid in any case with 8 points.
North has nothing to add and 2♥ is the final contract.
NS can make 9 tricks in either hearts or spades.

Preference - Commentary

Board 14

East opens 1♠, West responds 1NT and East rebids 2♣.
West bids 2♠, preferring the 5-2 fit to the 4-3 fit, but also keeping the auction open with 8 points.
With 17 points East will bid again. 3♦ best describes the hand (5-4-3-1) and West will bid 3NT.
EW make 9 tricks in no trumps.

Board 15

South opens 1♣, North responds 1♠, and South rebids 2♣ (not strong enough to reverse).
North rebids 2♦ (3rd suit forcing), and North raises to 3♦.
3♦ makes 9 tricks, as does 2♠.
EW can make 8 tricks in hearts which makes 3♥ an excellent sacrifice.

Board 16

West opens 1♣, East responds 1♦ and West rebids 1♥.
East is far too good just to jump to 4♥.
4NT is possible, but when he finds two kings missing he is in something of a quandary.
The solution is to bid the fourth suit – 2♠-in this case – and then revert to hearts.
So, 2♠ from East which will elicit 3♣ from West after which 3♥ by East (a bid he could have made earlier, which sets the suit, is game-forcing and shows at least a slam interest.
Control-showing cue-bids will follow – 3♠, 4♣, 4♦ after which 4NT will locate the missing trump honour.
13 tricks in hearts are makeable, but it depends on catching the ♣K as well as a 3-2 trump split. 6♥ is the sounder contract.

Board 17

South opens 1♣.
If West remains silent then North bids 1♦ and South bids 1♥.
North might show preference to Clubs or might bid a natural 1-round force of 1♠. In either case NS finish in some number of Clubs.
More likely is that West intervenes.
Either 1♣, (1H), x, 2H, -, - 3♣
0r 1 ♣, (2♣), 3♣.
NS can make 10 tricks in Clubs or 8 tricks in Notrumps or Diamonds.
EW can make 7 tricks in Hearts.

Board 18

North opens 1♣, South bids 1♦ and North rebids 1♥.
With 3-2 shape and only 6 points South prefers the major and passes.
Hearts and Clubs make 9 tricks, Notrumps Spades and Diamonds make 8 tricks.