Responder's 1st bid - commentary

Hand 1

North dealt and opens the bidding.
North has a 6-card suit and 15 points..
Open 1♥, planning to rebid in hearts.
South has 7 points and 4-card support for partner's major - bid 2♥.
North will either pass or raise hearts.
Play the contract as 2♥ by North. – East will make the opening lead and South will table his hand.
East might lead a trump, but a small card in either black suit works quite well.
Declarer will clear trumps in 2 rounds then finesse the diamond and take a diamond ruff, making 10 tricks for the loss of 2 clubs and a diamond.
Trick points – 120.

Hand 2

East dealt and opens the bidding.
East has 6-4 shape and 15 points.
Open 1♥, planning to rebid 2♦.
West has 9 points and responds 1♠ – his longest suit,
and East rebids 2♦ as planned.
West now knows that partner has 5 hearts and so corrects to 2♥.
South leads and West tables his hand.
South's lead is not easy. A diamond is probably the safest bet although a small club gives declarer an early decision to make.
Declarer will clear trumps and take finesses in both black suits. When the DQ establishes he should come to 11 tricks (150 trick points).

Hand 3

South dealt and opens the bidding.
South has 5-4 shape and 14 points so opens 1♣, planning to rebid 1♠.
North has 6 points and bids 1♦ - his cheapest 4-card suit.
South rebids 1♠ as planned.
North either passes or raises spades.
Play the contract in 2♠ by South.
West should lead ♦K and North will table his hand.
One way to play the hand would be to clear trumps and then attack the hearts.
Alternatively try to cross-ruff.
With an early lead towards the ♣T 11 tricks can be made as the clubs establish.

Hand 4

West dealt and opens the bidding.
With 5-4 shape and 14 points West open 1♣ planning to rebid in hearts.
East will respond 1♥, his cheapest 4-card suit and West will raise to 2♥.
South will lead ♦J and West will table his hand.
Declarer will plan to clear trumps then take his clubs.
A spade ruff will make the 10th trick.

Hand 5
North dealt and starts the auction.
With 14 points and 6 spades he will open 1♠, planning to rebid in spades.
With 7 points and no alternative bid South responds 1NT (the dustbin bid), and North rebids 2♠.
The contract is 2♠ by North.
East will lead his singleton ♣8 which West will take and return a club for a ruff.
East will continue with either ♥A or ♦T
When declarer gets in he should cross to dummy with a diamond and lead a small trump for the finesse.
It fails, but he can then clear trumps and take his winners for 8 or 9 tricks (60,90 trick points).

Hand 6
East dealt and starts the auction.
East opens 1♦, planning to rebid in either hearts or clubs.
West responds 1♠ (his longest suit) and East rebids 2♣.
West may or may not raise.
Play the hand in 2♣ by East.
South leads ♥J (the unbid suit).
Declarer clears trumps and leads towards the ♦K.
This play will bring home at least 9 tricks. It is possible to make 11 based on a cross-ruff (for 100 trick points).
Hearts make 10 tricks for 120 trick points and no trumps make 9 tricks for 100 trick points.

Hand 7
South dealt and starts the auction.
Open 1♥, planning to rebid in diamonds.
North will respond 1♠ and South will rebid 2♦.
North corrects to 2♥ – note that a 5-2 fit will normally play better than a 4-3 fit.
Contract – 2♥ by South.
West does not have an obvious lead. ♣6 or ♣4 (the unbid suit) may well be the best choice.
When declarer gets in with the 3rd club he should lead a top trump then a spade to set up a trick on table. He will then cross to the HQ, take the established spade, and return the diamond 9 (or 8) for a losing finesse, but he will then be able to clear the last trumps and take his established winners in diamonds, establishing 10 tricks but taking just 9 as the defence cash 2 clubs, a spade and a diamond (90 trick points).

Hand 8
West deals and starts the auction.
With 15 points and 6-4 shape he opens 1♠ hoping to rebid in diamonds.
With 8 points East must respond, but not strong enough for a change of suit at the two-level so it has to be 1NT.
West rebids 2♦ which East may or may not raise to 3♦.
Play the contract in 2♦ by West.
South must choose between ♥K, ♦8 and ♣6.
It makes little difference. Declarer can clear trumps and cash the diamonds losing just 2 aces for 100 trick-points.
Spades also makes 11 tricks for 150 trick-points.

Hand 9

North deals and starts the auction.
North has 5-4 shape and 15 points.
Open 1♣, planning to rebid in spades.
With 8 points South will respond 1♠ – his only 4-card suit.
North will raise to some number of spades.
Play the contract in 2♠ by South.
West does best to lead a trump (taking 2 for 1) but ♥9 would also be reasonable.
Declarer's initial thought will be to clear trumps and then take the clubs, but when the trump split becomes apparent, he must switch to plan B and try to make his trumps separately along with hearts and clubs and a couple of diamond ruffs.
If he gets it right, he can make 90 tricks for 90 trick-points.

Hand 10

East deals and starts the auction.
With 14 points and a 7-card suit he will open 1♣ planning to rebid in clubs.
West will respond 1♥ and East will respond 2♣ or 3♣.
West might rebid 2♥, and the auction will finish in 2♥ or 3♣ for now.
Play the contract in 2♣ by East.
South has a difficult choice of lead – ♠7 might be as good as anything.
Declarer will start by clearing trumps. Provided that he leads towards the ♠K at some point he can come to 10 tricks for 80 trick points.
Hearts make 8 tricks for 60 trick-points, and no trumps make 9 tricks for 100 trick-points.

Hand 11

South dealt and starts the auction.
With 14 points and a 7-card suit he opens 1♦ planning to rebid in diamonds.
North will respond 1♠ and South will rebid some number of diamonds.
Play the contract in 2♦ by South.
West leads ♣6 suggesting not much of a holding in the suit.
Declarer can take 7 trumps and 2 spades off the top, but that's as far as it goes.
9 tricks in diamonds scores 60 trick-points.
Alternatively, NS can make 7 tricks I spades, but EW can make 9 tricks in hearts – you did well to keep them out.

Hand 12

West dealt and starts the auction.
With 12 points and 5-4 shape West opens 1♠ hoping to rebid in diamonds.
East responds 1NT - too good to pass, no better bid - and West rebids 2♦.
East must correct to 2♠. A 5-4 fit must be better than a 4-2 fit.
Against 2♠ by W North will lead ♣Q.
With both red kings lying right and with help of a diamond ruff declarer can come to 10 tricks, but he will have to lead towards the ♦K at an early stage.
10 tricks in spades will earn a trick-score of 120.

Hand 13
North dealt and starts the auction.
With 16 points and 5-4 shape he will open 1♦ planning to rebid in clubs.
South will respond 1♥ – cheapest 4-card suit – prefer a major to a minor, and South will rebid 2♣.
South should correct to 2♦.
East leads ♠4 or ♠3 – the unbid suit.
Declarer will have little trouble in taking 10 tricks (80 trick-points) for the loss of just a diamond and 2 hearts, though he must get the trumps out early to avoid a club ruff.

Hand 14
East dealt and starts the auction.
With 14 points and 5-4 shape he will open 1♥ hoping to rebid in clubs.
With not enough to change suit at the 2-level West must respond 1NT, and East will rebid 2♣.
West must show preference to hearts.
South has no obvious lead. To be honest there is an argument for any one of the 4 suits, and in practice it will make little difference, but ♠A or ♦4 seem the most likely.
Declarer will clear trumps and cash his clubs, taking 8 tricks (60 trick-points) for the loss of 1 spade, 2 trumps and 2 diamonds.
However, if NS get into the bidding, then they can make 9 tricks in spades for 90 trick-points their way.

Hand 15
South dealt and starts the auction.
South has 14 points and 5-4-4 shape, so opens 1♠ planning to rebid in clubs or hearts.
With 9 points and 2 5-card suits North bids 2♦ or 2♣ (rule of 14).
Over 2♦ he will bid 2♥, and South will give preference to 2S.
Over 2♣ North must choose between 2♥ and 3♣, after which 2♥ will lead to 2♠ and 3♣ may well be passed out.
Play the contract in 3♣ or 2♠ by North.
Depending on the bidding East will lead ♦4 or ♥5.
With the club finesse working it is possible to make all 13 tricks in clubs for 140 trick-points.
Alternatively, 11 tricks can be made in spades for 150 trick-points, provided you can get a spade ruff in early.

Hand 16
West dealt and starts the auction.
With 14 points and 5-4 shape he starts with 1♠ hoping to rebid in diamonds.
East responds 2♦ (10 points and a 4-card suit – rule of 14), and West bids 3♦.
East may prefer 3♠ (5-3 fit) to 3♦ (4-4 fit).
With no ruffing values to go with his 3-card spade suit 3♦ is the better contract.
Play the hand in 3♦ by East.
South will probably choose between HA and C5 – the club works better – though there is something to be said for a trump lead.
9 tricks are available in diamonds – 8 tricks in spades – both for 60 trick-points.
Meanwhile EW can make 8 tricks in hearts.

Board 17
North dealt and starts the auction.
With 18 points and 5-4 shape he opens 1♠, planning to rebid in hearts.
South and West will pass leaving a final contract of 1♠ by North.
East will probably lead CA, although DQ is a reasonable alternative.
With no early entry to dummy declarer must clear trumps from the top, eventually taking his hearts, being careful to keep an entry to hearts in dummy.
He should come to 8 tricks for a trick-score of 60 although he can make 10 tricks in hearts!

Board 18
East dealt and starts the auction.
With 12 points and 5-4 shape he will open 1♣ hoping to rebid in hearts.
West responds with 1♦ and East rebids 1♥ as planned.
West must correct to 2♣ on the known 5-3 fit.
East bid clubs first and will be declarer.
South leads ♠A which North should encourage.
When declarer gets in he can clear trumps and cash his diamonds for 8 tricks (40 trick-points).
EW can also make 7 tricks in hearts or no trumps, but NS if they ever get in can make 8 tricks in spades.