Stayman

Hand 1

With 13 points and 4-4-3-2 shape North will open 1NT.

Holding 4 cards in each major and sufficient points to force to game opposite any response South will search for a 4-4 major suit fit with 2♣.

North will show his 4-card major with 2♠, and South will raise to 4♠.

East should lead ♦Q (top of an honours sequence).

Declarer takes the first trick in hand and then runs the QJ of spades to clear trumps taking the third trick in dummy. He should then play low from the South hand to take the Heart finesse, following with the Ace, and then returning to hand with a Diamond to take the running finesse in hearts, throwing a club if the ♥K fails to appear.

Declarer will come 11 tricks if he gets everything right.

In 3NT declarer will do well to make 10 tricks as the opponents attack the minor suits.

Hand 2

East opens 1NT.

Assuming that South passes (2-level, vulnerable, and only a 5-card suit) West will bid 2♣ (Stayman) and East will respond 2♥.

West raises invitationally to 3♥, and (some might jump to 4) and East may or may not raise to game.

South will usually lead ♠Q – 2-card honour sequence against a trump contract.

Declarer takes ♠K and leads a small trump to the Queen assuming that North plays low, then returns a heart to North's Ace.

North returns a spade to dummy's Ace and declarer clears the last trump.

Declarer should now play on clubs

The standard play would be to finesse the ♣J which loses, but if declarer can find the play of low to the Ace followed by a small club return, then the ♣K will crash and declarer will be able to discard a diamond before establishing a trick from the KQ.

The usual result will be 9 tricks but 10 can be made at double dummy play.

Hand 3

South has 13 points and 4-4-3-2 shape. Open 1NT.

EW will remain silent throughout.

North has enough for game and a 4-card spade suit so bids 2♣ in search of a 4-4 spade fit.

With both majors South bids 2♥.

South shows his game-going balanced hand with no Heart fit by bidding 3NT, and North correct to 4♠ on the known spade fit.

West makes a 'nothing lead in a minor – ♣8 say.

Declarer attacks trumps but switches to Hearts when the trump split comes to light.

Declarer will come to 10 tricks losing just 1 Diamond, 1 Heart and 1 Spade.

Note that 3NT is doomed on a Diamond lead.

Hand 4

West opens 1NT.

With no long suits NS keep quiet – their hands are well suited to defence.

East would like to use Stayman with both majors, but he has nowhere to go facing a 2♦ response and so must pass. Final contract 1NT by West.

North has no obvious suit. My choice is ♥7 – longest suit but second from rubbish – note that the 4 would suggest an honour.
Declarer will probably duck once and then attack Spades, but unless South attacks Clubs he will be hard-pressed to make more 1 Heart, 3 Spades and 2 Clubs for 1 down, but then EW do only hold 19 points between them.
Note that EW can make 8 tricks in spades, but there is no safe way to search for it.

Board 5
North has an automatic 2NT opening bid.
EW will remain silent.
South has sufficient for game facing 20-22 points, together with a 4-card major. Bid 3♣ Stayman.
With both majors North bids 3♥ and South signs off in 3NT.
North must then choose between Pass and 4♠.
East must lead a club, my choice is the Q but some will prefer the 4 against no trumps.
Declarer has little trouble in coming to 10 tricks in either contract.
If he can find the play of ♥A followed by ducking a heart then he can come to 11 tricks in either contract.
Note that in this case there is no additional ruffing trick because of the equal length in clubs, and the fact that the hearts can be established.

Board 6
Not a Stayman hand.
East opens 1NT
With 5-4 in the majors West would invoke a garbage Stayman sequence but with a 5-card major and a 4-card minor this is a simple 'transfer and pass'.
Final contract 2♠ by East.
Declarer can make 8 tricks in spades, but he will have to catch the ♠T – not an obvious play.

Board 7
South opens 1NT and North with 11 points and a 4-card major bids 2♣.
South shows his Hearts and North bids 2NT showing his invitational values, no Heart fit, and 4 Spades by implication.
With a maximum and no fit South must raise to 3NT.
West will probably lead ♣8, his longest suit but promising nothing.
Declarer ducks the first Club, then attacks the solid Heart holding.
East will play his Ace either sooner or later and return a Club.
Declarer will now attack Spades – 9 is probably best.
He should come to 9 tricks – the only making game.

Stayman

Board 8

With 5-3-3-2 shape 1NT is the correct opening bid on this West hand.
North and South will pass throughout.
East does not have the eleven points necessary for a rebid in no trumps, but with 5-4 in the majors he has a safe escape from any response to the Stayman enquiry.
East bids 2♣ and West denies a 4-card major with 2♦.
2♥ by East now shows 5 Hearts and 4 Spades in a hand of less than invitational values, and with the known 5-3 fit West is happy to pass.
South probably leads ♦A and then switches to a black Jack – my choice is ♣J.
Declarer will attack trumps. In some continuations he will need to retain the ♥J on table as an entry to his Clubs.
Declarer should come to 8 tricks.

Board 9

Once again 1NT is the correct opening bid on 12 points and 5-3-3-2 shape.
(Some would make an exception with a decent 5-card major, but this suit is far from decent.)
For me East's suit does not warrant a 2-level overcall vulnerable.
Holding a 4-card major and 11 points South will bid 2♣.
North denies a major with 2♦ and South bids 2NT suggesting 11 or 12 points.
North with a minimum should pass.
East must choose between ♥T (top of an interior sequence in his longest suit) and ♣Q (top of a 3-card honours sequence.
On the Club lead the defence can take the first 6 tricks if they get it right (4 Clubs and 2 Aces) to take the contract 1 down.
My choice was the Heart lead. If declarer ducks then the defence can take a further 6 tricks as above by switching to a Club. If declarer takes the first trick then he can cash 4 Spades but must then exit with a Diamond after which West can cash his last Spade and return to partner with a Heart holding declarer to 6 tricks for down 2.
But doesn't East wish he had overcalled – he can make 10 tricks.

Board 10

Balanced hand and 14 points – East opens 1NT.
NS remain silent.
With 12 points and a 4-card major West bids 2♣.
East shows his 4-card Heart suit and West bids 2NT promising 11 or 12 points, 4 Spades, and less than 4 Hearts.
With a maximum East will raise to 3NT.
South makes the obvious lead of ♥5.
South sets about setting up tricks in Diamonds and then Spades.
He should come to 10 tricks with the help of the Club finesse.

Stayman

Board 11

With 16 points in a 4-4-3-2 shape South opens 1 of his major.

North will not stop short of game, but first he must leave room to find a suit fit. 2♦ is the only option.

South rebids 2NT showing 15+ points in a balanced hand and denying 4 Hearts (with 4-4 in the majors he would have opened 1♥).

(A slightly more advanced option would be to rebid 3NT showing a minimum in the 15-19 range in a game-forcing situation – rebid in notrumps facing a 2-level response).

North must raise 2NT to 3NT .

West will choose between the ♥3 and the ♥J.

Declarer wins, take 4 Diamonds, and leads towards his Clubs in hand.

Played by South there are 11 tricks available but North can be held to 10 tricks on a club lead.

Board 12

EW will pass throughout.

North is too strong for 2NT so starts with 2♣.

I relay with 2♦ on this South hand but with a good 10 points (look at the 9s and 10s) some authorities will insist of some type of positive.

In either case North will rebid at the lowest level in notrumps

Facing a relay response this would show 23 or 24 points and would not be forcing.

Facing any kind of positive response, it will be game-forcing with at least 23 points.

South should now forget all about Blackwood and the like.

With two balanced hands slams should be judged quantitatively. He can see a total of at least 33 points and simply bids 6NT.

12 tricks are available in every strain except diamonds, but notrumps clearly scores best for 1440.

Board 13

North and East pass. South opens 1NT.

North has only 8 points but with 5-4 in the majors he starts with 2♣. South bids 2♠ and North passes.

East does not have an obvious lead, but North's bidding suggests both majors so a minor suit seems reasonable – perhaps the ♦5 or ♦7.

Declarer should attack trumps and then hearts being careful to retain an entry in the North hand, and should have little difficulty in coming to 9 tricks.

Stayman

Board 14

East and South pass.

West opens 1NT and East responds 2♣.

West bids 2♠, East raises invitationally to 3♠ and with a maximum West bids 4♠.

North has no obvious lead. The most effective is ♦A but you could hardly blame him for starting with a trump or a club (which, as it happens, gives away an immediate trick).

Declarer will make 10 tricks losing just 2 diamonds and a heart.

Board 15

South, West and North all pass and East opens1NT.

West bids 2♣ and East responds 2♠.

West raises to 3♠ to show a fit and invitational values, and with his maximum East will bid the game – 4♠.

South probably leads Ace and another club for the lack of anything better.

Declarer starts on trumps, but when the 10 falls on the first round he should play to catch North's J.

A heart finesse, a second club and a diamond ruff should be sufficient to bring in 10 tricks.

Board 16

West opens 1NT, East bids 2♣ and West rebids 2♥.

East raises invitationally to 3♥ and most Wests will accept the invitation and raise to 4♥ (with a non-minimum, and those 2 tens don't do any harm).

North will start with either the ♠T or Ace and another club.

Declarer will have little difficulty in reaching 10 tricks by clearing trumps and then repeating the diamond finesse, losing just a club and 2 spades.