

**Board 9**

North Deals  
None Vul

	♠ 9 3 2		
	♥ 4		
	♦ A J 9 7 6 5 4		
	♣ 8 4		
♠ 10 6 4		♠ A J 7 5	
♥ Q J 6		♥ A 10 9 3	
♦ K Q 8		♦ 3	
♣ Q J 6 2		♣ A K 7 3	
	♠ K Q 8		
	♥ K 8 7 5 2		
	♦ 10 2		
	♣ 10 9 5		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	3 ♦	Dbl	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

**Auction Commentary:** East has a PERFECT 3-suited Takeout Double, holding 4 cards in all the other suits. Advancer doesn't have a major to bid but holding a NT shape and a double stopper in the ♦ suit, bids 3 NT.

**Opening Lead:** 7 ♦

**Planning the Play:** Declarers in NT count winners, not losers :) You need 9 tricks to make your contract. Sure tricks are: A♠, A♥ and the top 4 ♣s. That is only 6, and you need 3 more.

How many ♦s do you expect in the North hand? With a preempt at the 3-level, there are 7 pieces over there. You have 3 ♦s, and dummy has 1, which means that South has 2 ♦s. If you win the first trick with a ♦ honor, and you try the ♥ finesse, there is a good chance that South has the K♥ (since North preempted). If you allow South to gain the lead while they still have a ♦ in their hand, you're toast! Declarer needs to make a "Hold-Up" play here. Letting South win the first ♦ trick, then return a ♦, South will then be void in ♦s! So when you lose the finesse to South with the K♥, South will have to return something other than a ♦! (That got scary for a second!) You're going to make 1 ♠ trick, 3 ♥ tricks, 1 ♦ trick and 4 ♣ tricks - making 3 NT nicely.

Remember: Before you play to the first trick always look if there is a finesse to take and which is the dangerous opponent. If the finesse was into the LHO you would win the first trick to protect the 2nd diamond stopper. However, here we know the finesse is into the RHO and a "Hold-Up" play is mandatory.

**Board 10**  
 East Deals  
 None Vul

♠ 6 4 3 ♥ J 10 9 5 ♦ 10 6 3 ♣ 10 5 3	♠ 5 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ Q 5 4 2 ♣ K 9 7 4 2	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span style="margin-bottom: 5px;">N</span> <span style="margin-bottom: 5px;">W</span> <span style="margin-bottom: 5px;">E</span> <span style="margin-bottom: 5px;">S</span> </div>	♠ K J 10 9 8 ♥ 7 4 2 ♦ K J 8 ♣ A 6
	♠ A Q 7 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ A 9 7 ♣ Q J 8		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Dbl
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

**Auction Commentary:** When the Takeout Doubler ignores partner's suit, and rebids 2 NT, opener shows a balanced 19-21 HCP hand, and a stopper in the opener's suit, of course. *(Whenever one of us bids some amount of NT after the opponents bid a suit(s), we promise that we are not afraid of that suit!)* Advancer adds their 5 HCP, plus 1 for the length in the ♣s, and finds enough to go to game.

**Opening Lead:** 3 ♠ (When you choose partner's suit to lead, you show partner if you have a doubleton by leading high-low. Leading low here either shows a singleton 3 ♠, or you have 3 or more pieces in the suit.) This does not promise an honor. Partner needs the count to know how many cards declarer has in the suit led.

**Planning the Play:** Declarer counts winners, and finds 5 sure winners. The ♠ lead promises that you'll win both your A♠ and your Q♠, so that is 6 winners. That long ♣ suit is the key to the kingdom! Remember to start setting up the ♣ suit right away, while you still have winners in all the other suits. You will make 2 ♠ tricks, 3 ♥s, 1 ♦ trick, and 4 ♣s. 3 NT making 4. Well done!

The Big Double! Too strong to overcall...

**Board 12**  
West Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ 8 7		♠ K J			
♥ A Q J 8 6		♥ 10 9 2			
♦ A J 7		♦ 9 8 2			
♣ A 5 2		♣ Q J 10 9 3			
♠ A Q 10 6 5 2	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W   E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W   E	S	♠ 9 4 3
N					
W   E					
S					
♥ 5 3		♥ K 7 4			
♦ K 4 3		♦ Q 10 6 5			
♣ 6 4		♣ K 8 7			

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♠	Dbl	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

**Auction Commentary:** North is short in RHO's ♠ suit, but the hand is too strong to just overcall in ♥s. Advancer will get a better picture of North's hand if North starts with a Takeout Double. South will bid 3 ♦, expecting to play the hand there, but will "wake up" when North changes the advance to their own suit. This means North has a hand that was too strong to simply overcall, and none of South's values are wasted in the ♠ suit. South knows game is likely and bids 4 ♥.

**Opening Lead:** K♠ (top of partner's suit)

**Planning the Play:** Before we play we must decide which is the Master Hand- the hand we want to make the "good hand". North's hand. We look at our hand and then see if dummy can help us. there are 2 ♠ losers, 2 ♦ losers (but we see partner can help with one of those, holding the Q-T with our J♦), and 1 ♣ loser. This is too many losers. What's possible?

On the 3rd ♠ North must ruff high with the Ace or Q or J ♥s as LHO showed a doubleton. Draw trumps finishing in the dummy to take a finesse. If West holds the K♦, we can try a finesse. Since EW are vulnerable, the West's preempt should be sound, with 2 top honors (or 3 of the top 5), and the hand should have a few more points. So it's possible that the K♦ is there. When we try this finesse, since we own the QJT♦, we can lay the Q♦ on the table and plan to duck the A♦ if lefty doesn't produce the K♦. (It's okay to risk the Queen here, because even if the finesse loses to RHO, we have then promoted both the JT♦.)

In this hand, we were lucky with ♦s twice -- the K♦ is "on side," so the finessing will be successful, and the ♦s split 3-3! Turns out our 4th ♦ will be a place to discard a losing ♣. Our 4 heart contract will make 5!