

Timely Team Tactics

→ Bidding when your team has most (23⁺) of the points:

Bid aggressive marginal vulnerable games. At matchpoints, bid games that are more likely to make than not. At a team game, however, bid thin vulnerable games optimistically.

Bid the safest (most likely to make and least likely to go down two) game. With a nine card fit in a minor-suit and attractive shape, consider the crispy clean 5C or 5D bidding card.

→ Bidding when both teams have about half of the points:

Once you think you have a positive score coming, be happy. Be leery of bidding or doubling to get a larger plus score. While getting a larger plus score might gain an IMP or two, converting a plus score into a minus score loses several IMPs.

If the opponents bid a game, avoid sacrificing unless you will save hundreds of points. The disaster to avoid is to convert a plus score (from beating the game) into a minus score.

→ Declaring a contract that seems likely to make:

Ask yourself, “what can go wrong?” A 4-1 split in a key suit, perhaps? Know the best play for the required number of tricks in that key suit.

→ Declaring a contract that seems likely to fail:

Take a chance (such as a desperation finesse) to make the contract.

As Declarer in 6 NT at a team game, you have many top tricks and entries in the other three suits. Losing one trick in the shown suit is fine, but if you lose two tricks, the contract will fail. You may lead from either hand at any time.

How would you ...

Ensure four tricks against a 4-1 split?

Suit 1 J 3 2



A K 9 5 4

Ensure three tricks against a 4-1 split?

Suit 2 A K 3 2



J 9 8 7

Ensure three tricks against a 4-1 split?

Suit 3 K J 3 2



A 9 5 4

Ensure four tricks against a 4-0 split?

Suit 4 A 10 5 4



K 9 8 3 2

Ensure four tricks against a 4-0 split?

Suit 5 K 4 3 2



A J 9 8 7

Ensure four tricks against a 4-0 split?

Suit 6 K J 8 3



Q 9 5 4 2

Ensure four tricks against a 4-0 split?

Suit 7 Q J 5 4



A 9 6 3 2

Deal 1
North Deals
None Vul

Minors Require Care

♠ A Q
♥ 9 7 2
♦ Q 10 9 2
♣ A K 8 5

♠ J 9 7 3 2
♥ 10 5 4
♦ J 8 7 6
♣ 9



♠ 10 6 5 4
♥ K J 6 3
♦ 5
♣ Q J 7 6

15
7 2
16

♠ K 8
♥ A Q 8
♦ A K 4 3
♣ 10 4 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	4 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Lead: ♠ 3

Bidding: Prudent Opener preserves the game bonus by rejecting Responder's slam invitation.

Play: Top tricks are 2S + 1H + 3D + 2C = 8 tricks. As you cash a high Club, notice the drop of the Club Nine. Play Clubs properly to get three tricks.

[Cross to Dummy to lead a Club. Cover RHO's Club.]

Play LHO for long Diamonds.

Where and How High

Deal 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 10 7 6 2
♥ K Q 9 5
♦ A 8 6 4
♣ 3

♠ A Q 9 5 4
♥ 7 4 3
♦ 10 7
♣ A 6 2

♠ 3
♥ A 2
♦ K Q J 2
♣ K J 9 7 5 4



9
10 14
7

♠ K J 8
♥ J 10 8 6
♦ 9 5 3
♣ Q 10 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	5 ♣	Pass

Pass

5 ♣ by East

Lead: ♥ J

Bidding: 5C is more likely to make than 3NT.

Play: After you learn about the Club loser, you need a desperation finesse to discard the Heart loser.

Deal 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

Hands Mesh Well

♠ 3
♥ A J 10 7
♦ A 9 6 4
♣ J 5 3 2

♠ 8 6 4 2
♥ 4
♦ Q 10 7 5
♣ Q 9 7 6



♠ K Q J 9 7
♥ 8 3 2
♦ K J 8 3
♣ 10

10
10 4
16

♠ A 10 5
♥ K Q 9 6 5
♦ 2
♣ A K 8 4

6 ♥ by South
Lead: ♠ K

Bidding: There are many sane paths to bid slam. Most start with Responder bidding 3S to show a singleton Spade.

Play: Ruff two Spades, then draw trump. Cash the Club Ace - the Club Ten drops. Play safely to ensure three Club tricks.

[Cross to Dummy with diamond Ace. Lead a Club. Cover RHO's Club.]

Do You Feel Lucky?

Deal 4
West Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q 7 4
♥ K J
♦ Q 10 8 7
♣ 10 9 8 4

♠ A K 10 9 6
♥ 10 8 3
♦ K 6
♣ Q J 2

♠ 8 5 3 2
♥ 7 6 4
♦ A J 4
♣ A K 3



8
13 12
7

♠ J
♥ A Q 9 5 2
♦ 9 5 3 2
♣ 7 6 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

4 ♠ by West
Lead: ♣ 10

Bidding: You are willing to bid a marginal game, especially when vulnerable.

Play: After you learn about the Spade loser, you need a desperation finesse in Diamonds to discard a Heart loser.