Board 1a
North Deals
None Vul

```
                              ♠ Q 4
                              ♥ Q 9 8 6
                              ♦ K Q J 5
                              ♣ A 7 6
        ♠ K 10 8 6                         ♠ A 9 3 2
        ♥ 7 4 2             N              ♥ K 3
        ♦ A 9 2          W     E           ♦ 8 4 3
        ♣ J 10 4            S              ♣ K 9 3 2
                              ♠ J 7 5
                              ♥ A J 10 5
                              ♦ 10 7 6
                              ♣ Q 8 5
```
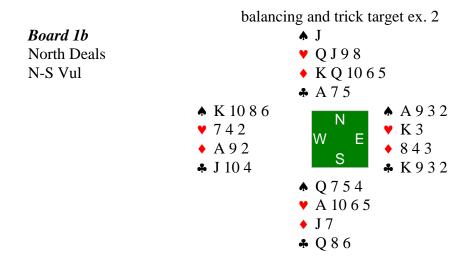
NS 3N; NS 3♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♠; Par +400: NS 3N=

With the auction going

N	E	S	W
1♦	P	1♥	P
2♥	P	P	?

Knowing that NS should be limited to about 22 to 23 HCPs between them with at least 8 ♥, W "borrowed" a K from the value that he expected E was likely holding, giving him a hand that would have been good enough to consider acting over 1 ♥ the last round, W balanced with 2 ♠ 2 ♠ ended the auction, and N led the ♦ K.

If the ♥ A behind the K, declarer would have to lose at least 2 ♥, 2 ♦, ♣ A, and possibly the ♣ Q and a trump trick. So, the chance of making 8 tricks in 2 ♠ was not particularly good.

But declarer paused and consider what NS might be able to make in ♥. In defense, if the ♥ A was behind the K, the defense could take at most 2 top ♠, ♦ A, and at best 2 ♣ tricks. So, NS would be able to make +110 in 2 ♥ in worst case.

After winning the ♦ lead with the A, declarer's best MP line was actually to start immediately with running the ♣ J. The idea was to find out immediately whether the ♣ Q was finessable, and how many tricks EW and NS might have to lose in their respective contracts of 2 ♥ or 2 ♠.

Once the ♣ Q location was known, the next thing was to find out where the ♥ A was. If both the ♣ Q and ♥ A were offside, declarer should play the ♠ A, and a low ♠ to hand and finesse the 8. Declarer might end up losing 7 tricks (2 ♥, 2 ♣, 2 ♦ and a ♠), but in that case, NS would be making 9 tricks in ♥. But if it turned out both the ♥ A and ♣ Q were onside, declarer had to be able to finesse against the ♣ Q again, after drawing two rounds of trumps ending in hand to limit the losers to 2 ♦, ♥ A, ♣ A and one trump trick.

Board 1b
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ J
♥ Q J 9 8
♦ K Q 10 6 5
♣ A 7 5

♠ K 10 8 6
♥ 7 4 2
♦ A 9 2
♣ J 10 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 9 3 2
♥ K 3
♦ 8 4 3
♣ K 9 3 2

♠ Q 7 5 4
♥ A 10 6 5
♦ J 7
♣ Q 8 6

NS 4♥; NS 4♦; NS 1N; EW 1♠; N 1♣; Par +500: EW 4♠×−3

N opened 1 ♦. E passed, and S bid 1 ♥. After W passed and N's 2 ♥ was passed back around, W decided to balance with 2 ♠. N competed to 3 ♥, and E, forgetting that partner might have already balanced 2 ♠ based on his value, and looking at favorable vulnerability, foolishly pushed on to 3 ♠. Knowing partner had to be short in ♠, S bid an enterprising 4 ♥, hoping to stampede EW into panicking and sacrificing in 4 ♠. The tactic succeeded and E continued onto 4 ♠. S doubled, ending the eventful auction,
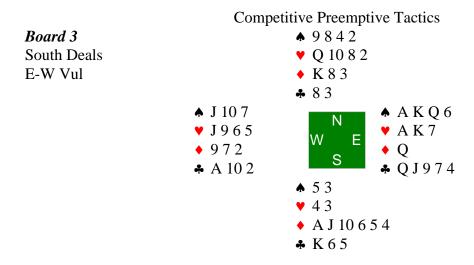
The ♥ Q was led. How should W planned to approach this hand from a MP perspective?

W was understandably quite unhappy with partner's stubborn and foolish action, basically hanging him for balancing 2 ♠, an unfortunate action, There appeared to be no possible way to avoid losing at least 2 ♥, 2 ♦ and the ♣ A. And there might also be the possibility of losing at least one more trick to the ♣ Q, as well as a possible trump loser. That would result in down 4 doubled for -800. In any case, declarer had no way of conceding less than -300, losing to all the other tables, where NS did not get to game.

While it might not really make a big difference, W had to assume that NS could make 4 ♥, and that a few (maybe one or two) NS actually got to play 4 ♥, MAKING.

So W won the ♦ A, ruffed his ♥ loser, and played the ♠ A. If nothing good happened in trumps, W led a low ♠ and planned on finessing the 8 as a safety play. With at least now one trick to lose in ♠, W needed N to have the ♣ Q.

When the A dropped the J from N, W lead a low ♠ to finesse the 8. Knowing he would not have to lose a trump trick, W should next led a ♣ to dummy's K. With S holding ♥ A and ♠ Q, it was not possible for N to have an opening bid with the ♣ A. So, W's objective became making sure of 4 trumps, a ♥ ruff, the ♣ K and ♦ A, for his 7 tricks, to limit the loss to -500.

There might be a chance to go -300 if N had the ♣ Q. But if the ♣ finesse lost to the Q, a ♣ back to N's A, two ♦ winners cashed, might allow S to pitch away his ♣, and declarer would no longer score the ♣ K.

Competitive Preemptive Tactics

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

```
              ♠ 9 8 4 2
              ♥ Q 10 8 2
              ♦ K 8 3
              ♣ 8 3
♠ J 10 7              ♠ A K Q 6
♥ J 9 6 5      N      ♥ A K 7
♦ 9 7 2     W   E     ♦ Q
♣ A 10 2       S      ♣ Q J 9 7 4
              ♠ 5 3
              ♥ 4 3
              ♦ A J 10 6 5 4
              ♣ K 6 5
```

EW 5♠; EW 4♥; EW 5♣; EW 1N; NS 1♦; Par −650: EW 4♠+1

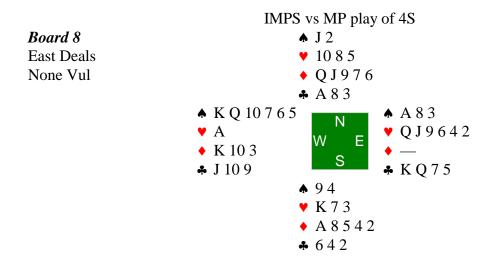Take full advantage of the vulnerability, S opened in first seat with 2 ♦. What should N do?

Say N raised to 4 ♦. E would probably have to double with such a good hand.

Now, W had little choice but to take out to 4 ♥, ending the auction.

No doubt W was not particularly thrilled with his contract when N led the ♦ K, and down came that 21 HCP dummy. It was obvious from the go that NS might have trouble making even 2 ♦. EW would have been better off doubling 4 ♦ and collect a likely penalty of 300 or more. As NS were unlikely to be going plus too often at the other tables, going down in 4 ♥ for a negative score would not result in too good a MP result. The trick target, like it or not, had to be 10 tricks. The ♦ continuation forced dummy to ruff with the ♥ 7. Unlike the outstanding trumps split no worse than 4-2, it would be difficult to limit the trump losers to 2. Even then, having lost a ♦, if the ♣ finesse was off, only one trump loser could be affordable. So, declarer had to hope that the ♣ finesse would work.

After ruffing ♦ continuation, declarer immediately ran the ♣ Q. If the ♣ finesse lost, N would force dummy again with another ♦, and declarer would have no way to avoid losing at least two trump tricks. The finesse worked, and the finesse was repeated. That also came off, and declarer next cashed the two top ♥ in dummy. When S followed to both trumps, S's distribution was either 2-2-6-3, 1-3-6-3, or 0-4-6-3, assuming S started with 6 ♦ for the 2 ♦ preempt. Since W still had a losing ♦ left in hand that had to be discarded on dummy's ♠, W assumed S to have 2-2-6-3,

4 rounds of ♠ took care of W's ♦ loser, and W made his 10th trick with either the ♣ A, or one of his remaining trumps after N used a trump to ruff the ♣ A.

IMPS vs MP play of 4S

Board 8
East Deals
None Vul

North:
♠ J 2
♥ 10 8 5
♦ Q J 9 7 6
♣ A 8 3

West:
♠ K Q 10 7 6 5
♥ A
♦ K 10 3
♣ J 10 9

East:
♠ A 8 3
♥ Q J 9 6 4 2
♦ —
♣ K Q 7 5

South:
♠ 9 4
♥ K 7 3
♦ A 8 5 4 2
♣ 6 4 2

EW 6♠; E 6♣; EW 5♥; W 5♣; EW 2N; EW 2♦; Par −980: EW 6♠=

W opened 1 ♠,and E responded 2 ♥, If 2 ♥ set up a game force, W probably just rebid 2 ♠.
Otherwise, W would have to jump with this hand to 3 ♠.

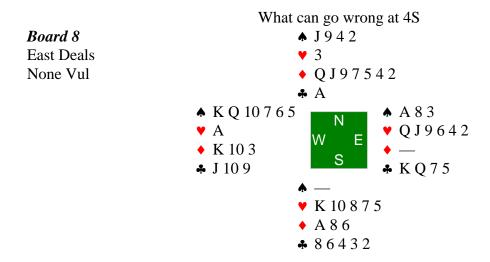Assuming 2 ♥ had established a game force, E could afford to try with 3 ♣. W showed the ♥ A,
and E conformed ♠ with 3 ♠.

Since W had bypassed ♦ on the previous round of bidding, W could now afford to cue bid 4 ♦
on the way to 4 ♠. Know that the ♦ control was probably wasted, E might just decide to quite at
4 ♠.

The ♦ Q would probably be the most logical lead from N.

With the ♦ Q lead, this hand presented a classic variation in declarer approach between
matchpoints and IMPs.

For IMPs, the correct play on the ♦ Q lead was to pitch a small ♥ from dummy, allowing the
♦ A to score, but setting up the K in the process. As soon as declarer gained the lead, the ♦ 10
would be ruffed in dummy, followed by 3 top trumps. Even if trumps were 4-0, declarer could
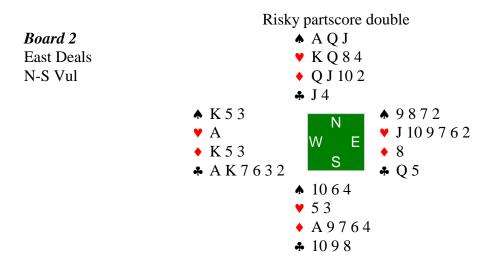not lose more than the ♦ A, ♣ A and a trump. That ensured 10 tricks in 4 ♠ over 90+% of the
time.

But declarer could not afford the luxury of that safety play at MP. If trumps were 2-2, or 3-1, and
the defense could be persuaded to take the ♣ A earlier, declarer might make 12 tricks. So,
declarer should ruff the ♦ in dummy, and tried a low ♣ to the J, hoping to coax the defense to
take the A (in case the J might be singleton). If the ♣ J was ducked, declarer ruffed a second ♦,
back to hand with ♥ A, then ruffed the ♦ K with the ♠ A. A ♥ruff took declarer back to hand to
draw two more round of trumps with the KQ. When trump broke 2-2, declarer conceded another
♣ for 12 tricks.

What can go wrong at 4S

Board 8

East Deals

None Vul

```
              ♠ J 9 4 2
              ♥ 3
              ♦ Q J 9 7 5 4 2
              ♣ A
♠ K Q 10 7 6 5          ♠ A 8 3
♥ A                     ♥ Q J 9 6 4 2
♦ K 10 3        N       ♦ —
♣ J 10 9      W   E     ♣ K Q 7 5
                S
              ♠ —
              ♥ K 10 8 7 5
              ♦ A 8 6
              ♣ 8 6 4 3 2
```

EW 4♠; E 2♥; NS 3♦; EW 2♣; W 1♥; Par −300: NS 5♦×−2

So, what could go wrong had declarer played 4 ♠ the same way against the ♦ Q lead at IMPs as he did with his play for the most number of possible overtricks as his preferred approach for the best MP result?

After ruffing the ♦ Q lead, declarer played a ♣ to his J. N won the A, and returned a ♥. Winning with the A, declarer proceeded to try to ruff his other two ♦. Unfortunately, when he tried to get back to his hand with either a ♣ or a ♥ ruff, N would win the trick with one of his trumps, and returned a either a trump or a low ♦ to lock declarer back in dummy. Declarer then had no way of getting off dummy without promoting one of N's remaining trump for down 1.

Had declarer ducked the initial ♦ lead, unless NS started with one hand holding no ♥, and could get an immediate cross ruff going, once declarer got on lead, the ♦ 10 would be ruffed with dummy's 8, and declarer drew trumps with the A, K, Q. The most declarer would lose after that would be the outstanding high trump (assuming one defender held J9xx) and the ♣ A.
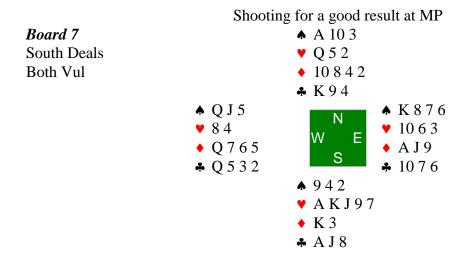
Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A Q J
♥ K Q 8 4
♦ Q J 10 2
♣ J 4

♠ K 5 3
♥ A
♦ K 5 3
♣ A K 7 6 3 2

```
      N
   W     E
      S
```

♠ 9 8 7 2
♥ J 10 9 7 6 2
♦ 8
♣ Q 5

♠ 10 6 4
♥ 5 3
♦ A 9 7 6 4
♣ 10 9 8

EW 1N; NS 2♦; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; Par +90: NS 2♦=

The auction went

E	S	W	N
P	P	1♣	X
P	1♦	X	2♦
P	P	X	XX
2♥	P	3♣	P
P	3♦	X	P
P	P		

W led the ♣ A from AK and the dummy came down. Dummy followed with the 4 and E with the 5 to the A. How should W continue?

It was highly unlikely that E would have the ♦ A. And if so, EW was bound to beat 3 ♦ X anyway. The only other chance was to get E in to give W a ♥ ruff. So, W continued with the ♥ A, and then underled his ♣ K, hoping partner had the ♣ Q that would cash, or a singleton ♣. E happily gave W a ♥ ruff, and in due time, W took the ♦ K for the crucial setting trick and +200. What happened if E DID NOT have the ♣ Q, and could not ruff the ♣ 2 when W underled his ♣ K? Well, S would end up make 10 tricks in 3 ♦ X for 870. However, as long as S making 3 ♥ X for 670, EW were not getting any MPs. So, W had nothing to lose by underleading is ♣ K.

Shooting for a good result at MP

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

♠ A 10 3
♥ Q 5 2
♦ 10 8 4 2
♣ K 9 4

♠ Q J 5
♥ 8 4
♦ Q 7 6 5
♣ Q 5 3 2

N
W E
S

♠ K 8 7 6
♥ 10 6 3
♦ A J 9
♣ 10 7 6

♠ 9 4 2
♥ A K J 9 7
♦ K 3
♣ A J 8

NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 2♠; NS 2♦; NS 2♣; Par +620: NS 4♥=

S opened 1 ♥. With EW passing, N raised to 2 ♥. S made a help suit game try with 3 ♣. Trying to create an unusual MP result, N deliberately underbid his hand and retreated to 3 ♥, in spite of his K94 ♣ holding, hoping that the 3-3-4-3 distribution might be a problem for 4 ♥.

Against 3 ♥, W led the ♠ Q. Declarer won the ♠ A, and tried a ♦ to the K, hoping that the finesse is offside. Unfortunately, the finesse was onside, and the defense took their two ♠ tricks before exiting a ♦ back to declarer;s K.. After three rounds of trumps, declarer realized that if the ♣ Q was onside, every declarer in ♠, be it a partscore or game, would have make 10 tricks.

So, needing a top, declarer instead led the ♣ J from dummy, to try a backward finesse, playing W for the ♣ Q, and E for the ♣ 10. When that came off, all the NS in 4 ♥ would likely have gone down if they took the normal (and correct percentage) ♣ finesse, while all the NS in 3 ♥ might have landed only 9 tricks.