



Let's talk hands...

When you enter a room and hear
"You hold Ace 3rd, King Queen 5th..."
do you get interested?

♠AQ10xx

♥x

♦Qxx

♣Qxxx

LHO-Part-RHO-You

2♥ - DbI- 4♥ - ??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which bid do you choose?



♠AQ10xx

♥x

♦Qxx

♣Qxxx

LHO-Part-RHO-You

2♥ - DbI- 4♥ - 4♠

P - P - P

Result: PUSH. Both teams stopped in game. Bidding was identical at both tables.

Partner holds:

♠KJxx

♥Ax

♦AKJx

♣AKx

Do you agree with your bid?

Do you agree with partner's pass?

Partner's 5-loser makes game opposite a 9-loser hand... and slam opposite a 7-loser hand. Partner's minimum is a 12 HCP 7-loser hand. Your bids 4♠, 4N, 5♥, 5♠ all have flaws absent partnership agreement. Partner's control-rich hand could venture a 2nd bid.



♠AQxx

♥-

♦QJ

♣AKQ9xxx

RHO-You-RHO-Part

1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - P

4♥ - ?

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 2

♠AQxx

♥-

♦QJ

♣AKQ9xxx

RHO-You-RHO-Part

1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - P

4♥ - Dbl - P - 4♠

P - ??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 2

♠AQxx

♥-

♦QJ

♣AKQ9xxx

RHO-You-RHO-Part

1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - P

4♥ - Dbl - P - 4♠

P - 5♥ - P - 5N*

P - ??

- What does partner's bid mean?
- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 2

♠AQxx

♥-

♦QJ

♣AKQ9xxx

RHO-You-RHO-Part

1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - P

4♥ - Dbl - P - 4♠

P - 5♥ - P - 5N*

P - 6♠

* = Pick a Slam

- Do you agree with 6♠?
- What would you bid?



Hand 2

♠AQxx

♥-

♦QJ

♣AKQ9xxx

RHO-You-RHO-Part

1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - P

4♥ - Dbl - P - 4♠

P - 5♥ - P - 5N*

P - 6♠

* = Pick a Slam

Partner's Hand:

♠KJxx

♥x

♦Kxxx

♣10xxx

RESULT: Slam was worth **+13 IMPs**.
At IMPs we should chose 6♣, the safer slam. 4-4 ♠s made a 4-1 trump split a risk, but a ♣ ruff a greater one. In ♣ there are no ♠ or ♣ risks!



Hand 3

♠KJ

♥109865432

♦-

♣Q98

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4♠ - P - P* - ??

*noticeable hesitation

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 3

♠KJ

♥109865432

♦-

♣Q98

[LHO-Part-RHO-You](#)

4♠ - P - P* - 5♥

P - P - 5N - P

6♠ - P - P - ???

*noticeable hesitation

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 3

♠KJ

♥109865432

♦-

♣Q98

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4♠ - P - P* - 5♥

P - P - 5N - P

6♠ - P - P - Double

All Pass

*noticeable hesitation

- What does this double have going for it?
- Partner leads the ♣ J.
Dummy holds:
- ♠ xx
♥ KQ
♦ AJxxx
♣ Kxx
- How do you rate your chances?



Hand 3

♠KJ

♥109865432

♦-

♣Q98

[LHO-Part-RHO-You](#)

4♠ - P - P* - 5♥

P - P - 5N - P

6♠ - P - P - Double

All Pass

*noticeable hesitation

Dummy holds

♠ xx

♥ KQ

♦ AJxxx

♣ Kxx

Results: Declarer held ♣Axx (8♠s and 2♦s) and chose to rid the ♣ loser by a ruffing ♥ finesse. Partner won ♥A and returned a ♦ for you to ruff.
Down 1 was a top board. Whew!
The gain was not worth the risk. 4 making 6 or 7 was an average plus.



Both NV
IMPs

Hand 4

♠AKxx

♥x

♦KQJxx

♣QJx

You-LHO-Part-RHO

1♦ - 1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥

??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Both NV
IMPs

Hand 4

♠AKxx

♥x

♦KQJxx

♣QJx

You-LHO-Part-RHO

1♦ - 1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥

3♣ - P - 3♦ - P

??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Both NV
IMPs

Hand 4

♠AKxx

♥x

♦KQJxx

♣QJx

You-LHO-Part-RHO

1♦ - 1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥

3♣ - P - 3♦ - P

3♠ - P - 4♣ - P

??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?
- What does 4♣ mean?
- What are you thinking?



Both NV
IMPs

Hand 4

♠AKxx

♥x

♦KQJxx

♣QJx

You-LHO-Part-RHO

1♦ - 1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥

3♣ - P - 3♦ - P

3♠ - P - 4♣ - P

6♣!!

- Partner holds:

♠xxx

♥xxxx

♦Ax

♣AK10xx

By bidding 6♣ you pick up **13 IMPs** against the 9th seed in the Vanderbilt!

Strain before game, game before slam.

Partner could hold no values in ♥, but must hold controls in both minors.

3♦ is a cue bid in search of 3N initially, NOT an attempt to play in ♦s.

Opponents stopped bidding at the 2-level – infer they hold 8 ♥s. Partner has 3 ♥s.



Hand 5

♠843

♥QJ108432

♦6

♣A9

Part-RHO-You-LHO

P - 2♣ - ??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 5

♠843

♥QJ108432

♦6

♣A9

Part-RHO-You-LHO

P - 2♣ - 4♥ - 5♥

P - 6♥ - P - 7N

P - P - ??

- Do you agree with 4♥?
- What are opponents doing?
- What are your likely bids?
- How can you help partner?
- The 4♥ preempt compressed their slam exploration.
- Not doubling 6♥ denies 1st round ♥ control.
- What call do you make?



Hand 5

♠84

♥QJ108432

♦6

♣A93

Part-RHO-You-LHO

P - 2♣ - 4♥ - 5♥

P - 6♥ - P - 7N

P - P - Dbl - P

P - P

Partner held:

♠Q10

♥765

♦10972

♣8542

RESULT: Down 1 Doubled for +200 is **top board.**

Doubling 7N is a Lightner Double - asks partner to lead something other than ♥s - Dummy's 1st bid suit ♣s.

With any other lead declarer makes 7NT Doubled.



Hand 6

♠Kxx

♥KQxxx

♦xx

♣Kx

Part-RHO-You-LHO

1♣ - P - 1♥ - P

2♦ - P - 2N - P

3♥ - P - ??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What do you think of the 2N bid?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Both Vul
IMPs KO

Hand 6

♠Kxx
♥KQxxx
♦xx
♣Kx

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?

[Part-RHO-You-LHO](#)

1♣ - P - 1♥ - P
2♦ - P - 2N - P
3♥ - P - 4♣ - P
4♠ - P - ???



Both Vul
IMPs KO

Hand 6

♠Kxx
♥KQxxx
♦xx
♣Kx

Partner's Hand:

♠A
♥A10x
♦AQx
♣A109xxx

[Part-RHO-You-LHO](#)

1♣ - P - 1♥ - P
2♦ - P - 2N - P
3♥ - P - 4♣ - P
4♠ - P - 4N - P
5♣ - P - 5N - P
7♥!!

The opening lead is the ♠ J.

- What are your chances?
- What is the best line of play?



Both Vul
IMPs KO

Hand 6

♠Kxx
♥KQxxx
♦xx
♣Kx

Partner's Hand:

♠A
♥A10x
♦AQx
♣A109xxx

[Part-RHO-You-LHO](#)

1♣ - P - 1♥ - P
2♦ - P - 2N - P
3♥ - P - 4♣ - P
4♠ - P - 4N - P
5♣ - P - 5N - P
7♥!!

Results: 7♥ making 7 for a **push**.
They aren't the 9th seed in the
Vanderbilt for nothing! Opponents
took 11 rounds of bidding to reach
the grand slam.



Both Vul
IMPs KO

Hand 7

♠10xxx
♥J9xxx
♦10xxx
♣ -

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?

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2N - P - ??



Hand 7

♠10xxx

♥J9xxx

♦10xxx

♣ -

[Part-RHO-You-LHO](#)

2N - P - 3♣ - P

3♦ - P - ??

- What is partner's likely holding?
- What are your likely bids?
- Which one do you choose?



Hand 7

♠10xxx

♥J9xxx

♦10xxx

♣ -

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2N - P - 3♣ - P

3♦ - P - 3♠*-P

4♥ - All Pass

*Smolen

Partner Held:

♠AQ

♥A10x

♦AK9xx

♣K10x

- The opening lead is the ♠J.
- What are partner's chances?



Hand 7

♠10xxx

♥J9xxx

♦10xxx

♣ -

[Part-RHO-You-LHO](#)

2N - P - 3♣ - P

3♦ - P - 3♠*-P

4♥ - All Pass

*Smolen

Partner Held:

♠AQ

♥A10x

♦AK9xx

♣K10x

Results: We played 4♥ +5 they played 3♥ +5. **+12 IMPs.**

Not playing Puppet Stayman helps!!
Smolen shows a 4 card major and 5 or more in the other major. Partner valued playing strength from distribution accurately. 9 losers opposite 4 or 5 losers will make a 10 trick game. Chances of an 8 card fit in 1 of 3 suits exceed 85%.



Themes

- Put yourself in partner's shoes. Picture partner's hand.
- How does each bid change your thinking?
- What options do you have and which bids are more flexible?
- At some point, bidding turns from HCP and distribution to tricks. Are you counting?
- Good bidding is about thinking, not gadgets.

