

01/18/11 Barometer Game

Board 24
West Deals
None Vul

	♠ K 2	
	♥ A J 7	
	♦ A K Q 7 5	
	♣ A 6 2	
♠ A 7 6	□	♠ 9 3
♥ K 9 8 6 5		♥ 4 3
♦ 10 6 2		♦ J 9 4 3
♣ J 7		♣ K Q 8 5 4
	♠ Q J 10 8 5 4	
	♥ Q 10 2	
	♦ 8	
	♣ 10 9 3	

NS 6♠; NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	2 NT	Pass	4 ♥ ¹
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

1. Texas -- 6+ S; 5+ total points

4 ♠ by North

GIB software bid the hand as above. If you play Jacoby and not Texas, then the auction might be 2NT - 3♥; 3♠ - 4♠, to the same effect. Some Norths would open 2♣, planning to rebid 2NT to show a slightly stronger hand, given the fifth diamond. After 2♣ - 2♦; 2NT, the auction should proceed the same. If you permit a 2♠ response on this hand, then the auction should be 2♣ - 2♠; 2NT - 3♠; 4♠. GIB easily made 12 tricks on this hand, as should every declarer in spades. The slam is slightly less than 50%, and hard to bid, even if you wanted to swing. If West leads a heart, declarer should finesse. This is matchpoints, where every trick counts. Playing the ace not only guarantees a heart loser, it virtually assures the opponents will get a third round ruff, if one is available (as it is here). If the lead is a stiff, so be it. On a club lead, pop the ace and take your pitches before leading trumps. Four Norths played in spades, making 480, 480, 420, 170.

Paul Wendt pointed out this deal, which assured another 64% win for him and Nate Glasser. They defended 3NT, which might result from an auction such as 2♣ - 2♦; 3♦ - 3♠; 3NT. On this auction, North's 3♦ is poor - it throws all the notrump systems out the window, for a small chance of a diamond slam. With that suit, South might still persist in spades, even suspecting a singleton opposite.

As Paul pointed out, if East leads a club at 3NT, for maximum tricks, declarer must duck one round and win the second. (This is standard procedure in this case, but you have to get it right.) Alternatively, if East tries a heart lead, declarer must play *small* from South and win with the *ace* in North, to preserve a sure entry to the spade suit. South establishes spades, and then forces an entry in hearts - likely ducking one club to isolate East, when the opponents switch. 5 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds and 1 club is 11 tricks, except that the defenders take three first. [It makes no difference with so many tricks, but note the simple squeeze against East in the minors, North having all diamonds, and South having the lead with the ♣10 in hand - East is powerless as South cashes out.] - Pete Matthews