

Board 17
North Deals
None Vul

39 Results

♠ A Q J 6 2
♥ 4 2
♦ Q 5
♣ 8 5 4 2

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

♠ 7 5 4 3
♥ A Q J 7 3
♦ 10
♣ J 9 3

E 6♦; E 4N; W 4♦; EW 4♣; E 2♥; W 1N; W 1♥; Par -920

West	North	East	South
	<i>Jim</i>		<i>Pete</i>
	Pass	Pass	2♥
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
5♦	All pass		
5♦ by East			
Lead: ♠ 4			
Made 7 — EW +440			

In the common game, ours was the most common of the 39 different scores on this board. 382 tables did this, scoring 77% for East-West, as most pairs did not make game. Only ten pairs bid and made a diamond slam, two of them doubled.

Playing with one of my partners, it would be normal to open 2♠ as North (not vulnerable). Intending to save, but wanting a heart lead, I would bid 3♥. This would let West make a takeout double. [3 NT would be to play, two down on the ♥ 4 lead, ♠ 7 return and ♥ 2, of course.] East should choose between 3 NT and 5♦. A 3♠ cue bid might get to slam, but also might wrong-side the final contract - and slam fails if hearts are 6-1. The worst game result when East declares is when South cashes the ♥ A against 5♦, still 61%. Slamming is trying to win the board twice.

Jim and I play disciplined weak two bids. While North's spade suit is chunky, it would be better with the nine or ten instead of the six. No such qualms in third seat: 2♥ should be automatic, NV with a 4-card side suit.

West got amazingly lucky, probably by being chicken: he bid his good club suit. When East scraped up a 3♦ bid, West had no trouble jumping to game. Against a slam, I would have made the correct matchpoint lead of the ♥ A. It was not so easy here, since they did not try for slam. At matchpoints, you often have no idea how many tricks you need to play for.

The normal 3♦ overcall by West would pave the way for showing clubs later, but wrong-side any diamond contract. East would have to shoot out 3 NT to make a game, not so easy with a stiff club. 3 NT was bid and made only 103 times.

Of course, West could jump in at 4 NT, showing two places to play (usually minors). That would be quite an overbid, but effective this time.