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IMPROVE YOUR GAME

Practical Slam Bidding ebook

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MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BIG HANDS

INTRODUCTION

Slam bidding brings an excitement all of its own. The pulse quickens, adrenalin is pumping, it's all systems go. The culmination can be euphoria when you are successful, misery when the slam fails. The aim of this book is to increase your euphoria-to-misery ratio.

Of all the skills in bridge, experts perform worst in the slam area. You do not need to go far to find the reason: Lack of experience. Slams occur on about 10% of all deals. Compare that with 50% for partscores and 40% for games. No wonder players are less familiar with the big hands.

Half of the slam hands will be yours, half will go to your opponents. You can thus expect a slam your way about 5% of the time. That is roughly one deal per session. If you play twice a week, you can hope for about a hundred slams a year. Practise on the 120 deals in this book and study them, and you will have the equivalent of an extra year's training under your belt. Your euphoria ratio is then bound to rise.

How to use this ebook

This is not so much an ebook for reading pleasure as a workbook. It is ideal for partnership practice but you can also use it on your own.

For each set of hands, the dealer is given, followed by the vulnerability. You and partner are the East and West. If the dealer is North, East comes next; if the dealer is South, West is next. Your invisible North and South opponents pass throughout except when stated otherwise. If an action given to North or South becomes impossible because your bid is already beyond their stated action, assume that they pass.

To practice on your own, work in sets of five. Write down your actions for West for each of the five hands; then turn to East and write your responses; back to West and write down your rebids; keep going till you have completed the bidding for all five hands. Doing five at a time will minimise the memory effect of seeing 'partner's hand' as you go.

Bid the hands initially without any reference to the rest of the book. Write your bidding down so that you can discuss questionable actions with partner later, not with any acrimony but with the aim of improving partnership understanding for the future.

When the bidding is over, refer to the same number deal in the text. All deals come from actual play. The four hands are provided together with the source of the deal, the results at the table, the best contract based on teams' play, a suggested auction together with explanatory notes, and a rating for various contracts. Where the result obtained by the players is not obvious, a brief explanation of the line of play is given.

The most important rating is under the 'Award' heading. This judges the contract on a single dummy basis (considering only the East and West hands). Score above average on this rating and you are doing well. Space does not allow all contracts to be included. 'Games' means 'all sensible games'; likewise, 'small slams' means sensible small slams.

The 'Imps' rating provides the Imp score of the contract against the better score obtained by the players at the table. This is affected by the actual lie of the cards and sometimes good contracts can fail, inferior contracts may succeed. Match their score regularly and you are doing very well. Indeed, if you match the result of the worse score, you will be doing all right, given that the players are of international standard.

The 'Pairs' rating is the match point score you might expect out of ten in a field of competent players but not all experts. This is also based on the actual lie of the cards. Where a result is not reasonably clear-cut, a rating is given based on percentage of success expectancy.

The hands were chosen in sequence from the 1960 to 1963 world championship books. (NA = North America.) The deal was included if at least one side bid to a slam, or if neither side bid to slam but the slam was particularly good. Omitted were those with highly competitive auctions.

Happy slamming!



Slam Bidding Approach

There are two fundamental elements for your slam bidding: 1) estimating whether your hands are strong enough for a slam and 2) having the techniques to locate the necessary controls and trump honours.

For balanced hands or hands where no strong trump fit exists, point count is a good guide: about 33 points for a small slam, 37 or more for a grand slam. When a good trump fit exists, an opening hand facing an opener who makes a jump rebid will usually produce a slam. The losing trick count is a sound approach to judging slam potential when the partnership is known to have a good trump fit.

The Losing Trick Count (LTC)

What is the LTC?

A way of estimating the number of tricks your side will take in a trump contract. The great advantage is that it is significantly more accurate than point count.

When can I use it?

You need a good trump fit, at least eight cards together *OR* a self-sufficient trump suit at least six cards long.

What is the LTC formula?

There are two ways of using the Losing Trick Count. The first is used when your hand contains ruffing values:

METHOD A

COUNT YOUR LOSERS
ADD PARTNER'S LOSERS
DEDUCT THIS TOTAL FROM 24

The answer is the number of tricks you and partner will make most of the time in the agreed trump suit.

The second approach is used when one hand has a long strong suit and the other hand has no known ruffing values (either no support or perhaps a 4-3-3-3 pattern).

METHOD B

If you are the one with the long, strong suit

COUNT YOUR LOSERS
DEDUCT PARTNER'S WINNERS
DEDUCT THIS ANSWER FROM 13

OR

If partner has the long strong suit

ASSESS PARTNER'S LOSERS
DEDUCT YOUR WINNERS
DEDUCT THIS ANSWER FROM 13

The answer is the number of tricks you can expect to win playing in the trump suit.

Counting Your Losers

The maximum number of losers in a suit is three. Look at just the top three cards in each suit and count the ace, king or queen as a winner. Count a loser for each of the ace, king or queen you are missing in a three-card or longer suit.

3 losers	J 8 7	J 8 7 4	5 4 3 2	9 7 6 4 2	8 6 5 4 3 2
2 losers	A 5 4	K 7 6 2	K 9 6 4 3 2	Q 10 7 5 4*	Q J 8 4 3 2*
1 loser	A K 5	A K 3 2	A Q 7 6	K Q 4	K Q 8 4 3 2
No loser	A K Q	A K Q J	A K Q 2	A K Q 4 3	A K Q 5 4 2

*Axx is clearly better than Qxx. Where your suit is headed by the queen, count 2 losers if you have the jack or 10 as well, but count 2½ losers for suits headed by Q-9-8 or worse. If the suit contains the A-Q or K-Q, the queen counts as a full trick. If your Q-x-x or longer is in partner's long suit, you may count the queen as a full trick.

Counting losers in short suits

Doubletons A-K = no loser, A-Q or K-Q = 1 loser, A-x or K-x = 1 loser. Others = 2 losers.

Singleton Ace singleton = no lose All others = 1 loser

Void No loser

Examples

♠	A Q 6 2	1 loser	♠	K Q 9 6 2	1 loser
♥	J 4	2 losers	♥	A 9 8	2 losers
♦	K 7 3	2 losers	♦	K 7	1 loser
♣	K 9 4 2	2 losers	♣	8 6 3	3 losers

♠	Q 8 4 3	2 ½ losers	♠	K Q 9 6	1 loser
♥	Q 7 5 4 2	2 ½ losers	♥	A 9 8	2 losers
♦	A K	0 losers	♦	K Q 5	1 loser
♣	J 9	2 losers	♣	10 9 4	3 losers

From these examples you can see that a minimum opening bid without much shape has around seven losers.

ASSESSING PARTNER'S LOSERS OR WINNERS

Count a minimum opening hand (13-15 points) as 7 losers. For each 3-point range better than this, deduct one loser. For each 3-point range worse than this, add a loser. Thus—

7-9 points	9 losers	2 winners
10-12 points	8 losers	3 winners
13-15 points	7 losers	4 winners
16-18 points	6 losers	5 winners
19-21 points	5 losers	6 winners

Play partner-with-an-opening-hand-or-better for 7 losers or fewer.

Play partner-below-opening-values for 8 losers or worse.

As long as you and partner have a decent trump fit :

- If partner opens and you have 7 losers, game should be a good bet.
- If partner has an opening hand and you have 5 losers, slam should be investigated.

If the loser count indicates that you have 12 or 13 tricks potential, do not bid a slam without making sure first that the opponents cannot cash two quick tricks against a small slam. A loser count of 12 indicating 12 tricks potential is little comfort if they cash two aces. For a grand slam, you need trick potential of 13 (or more!) and all the aces plus the K-Q of trumps. If all of that is present, bid the grand slam.

WHY DEDUCT FROM 24?

Maximum losers in one suit = 3. Maximum losers in your whole hand therefore = 12. So, maximum losers in the two hands = 24. What accounts for the difference between the maximum losers possible and the actual losers? The tricks you will win. The LTC is a quick way of counting tricks, quicker than actually counting the aces, kings and queens and cards beyond three in each suit.

EXAMPLES

WEST	EAST
♠ A Q 5 4 3	♠ K 8 7 6 2
♥ A Q 7	♥ 3
♦ 9 8 4	♦ 7 3
♣ 9 6	♣ A 7 5 4 2

WEST	EAST
1♠	4♠ Pass

West is minimum, 7 losers. East has superb support and 7 losers. $7 + 7 = 14$. $24 - 14 = 10$ tricks.

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

WEST	EAST
1♠	1NT
4♠	Pass

West had 5 losers. East's 1NT reply, 6-9 points, figures to hold two tricks.

5 losers minus 2 winners = only 3 losers in total, i.e. 10 tricks. This is a good example of how Method B operates.

WEST	EAST
♠ 3	♠ 8 7 6 4
♥ A Q 7 5 3	♥ K 8 6 2
♦ A Q 9 8 4	♦ 7 3
♣ 9 6	♣ K 8 7

WEST	EAST
1♥	4♥
4♥	Pass

West has 5 losers. East's 6-9 raise is usually 9 losers or 2 winners.

Whichever method you apply comes out at 10 tricks. $5 \text{ losers} + 9 = 14$. $24 \text{ minus } 14 = 10 \text{ tricks}$. Using Method B : $5 \text{ losers minus } 2 \text{ winners} = 3 \text{ losers only}$, so 10 tricks. Note that if West bid an invitational 3♥ or a 3♦ trial bid. East would reject either invitation.

WEST	EAST
♠ K 8 6 4	♠ A Q 9 7 5 3
♥ 7 5 4	♥ A K 3 2
♦ K 4	♦ A 3
♣ A 9 6 3	♣ 5

WEST	EAST
Pass	1♠
3♠	6♠ Pass

West's 3♠ shows a maximum pass with spade support.

West's failure to open indicates worse than 7 losers. Since West will be just below opening strength, except 10-12 points and so 8 losers. East has 4 losers. $4 + 8 = 12$. $24 \text{ minus } 12 = 12 \text{ tricks}$, indicating strong potential for a slam. East has one of those rare hands where it is not necessary to ask for aces (aces in three suits and singleton in the other suit means the opponents cannot cash the first two tricks). As the loser count indicates 12 tricks, East can simply bid the slam. Although a grand slam might be possible (give West two hearts and three diamonds), be satisfied to reach a good six opposite a passed hand.

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

WEST	EAST
1♥	4NT
5♠	7♥ Pass

On hearing 1♥. East counts losers because of the good support.

East has 4 losers. $4 + \text{the } 7 \text{ for West's opening} = 11$. $24 \text{ minus } 11 = 13 \text{ tricks potential}$. East checks up on aces. East knows that there are no aces missing and is staring at the K-Q of trumps. Therefore East knows enough to bid the grand slam. Since the king and queen of trumps are an essential ingredient for bidding a grand slam, it is worthwhile for you and partner to adopt Roman Key Card Blackwood (see later).

One huge benefit is that you can use the Losing Trick Count even if partner has never heard of it. The LTC is not a convention but simply a better means of valuing hands where a trump fit exists. As long as you know partner's approximate point count, you can apply the LTC.

SYSTEM METHODS

You and partner should bid the test hands using your regular methods. It is not possible to cater for every system. In giving example auctions, the system adopted will be 5-card majors, strong 1NT. While there are plenty of pairs playing 4-card majors, the majority of pairs in world championships play some system revolving around 1♥ and 1♠ openings promising at least a 5-card suit.

Similarly while the weak 1NT is popular, a strong 1NT opening has more adherents on a global scale. Extended Stayman and transfers will be used if needed. More information on these can be found in the *Guide To Better Duplicate*, available at www.ronklingerbridge.com.

To show a strong hand with trump support, the Jacoby 2NT and splinters are used.

Jacoby 2NT after a major suit opening

Responder is showing 13+ HCP (or an excellent 12 count), 4-card or longer support and no singleton or void. With only 3-card support, choose a change of suit. With 4+ trumps and a singleton or void, choose a splinter response (see later). Opener's first duty is to show a singleton or void by bidding a new suit at the three level:

1♥ : 2NT
?
3♣/3♦/3♠ = singleton or void

1♠ : 2NT
?
3♣/3♦/3♥ = singleton or void

There is one exception to this. Opener's jump to 4-minor shows a strong 5+ suit (source of tricks). K-Q-x-x-x or better in the minor bid.

1♥ : 2NT
?
4♣/4♦ = strong second suit

1♠ : 2NT
?
4♣/4♦ = strong second suit

With no singleton or void, opener bids 4-Major if minimum.

1♥ : 2NT
4♥

1♠ : 2NT
4♠

With a strong opening hand and no singleton or void, opener bids 3NT with a 5-3-3-2 or 5-4-2-2 and rebids the major with a 6+ suit.

After opener's jump to 4-major (weak opening, no short suit), responder will often pass. If wanting to bid on, responder can cue bid or ask for aces / key cards.

After opener's 4-minor reply, responder can sign off in game, make a cue bid or ask for aces / key cards. If responder signs off, opener may still push on.

After opener's 3NT or rebid of the major, showing extra values in each case, responder may sign off if minimum, bid a new suit as a cue bid or ask for aces / key cards.

After opener's 3-level bid showing a singleton or a void, responder may bid game with a minimum if opener's short suit has been a disappointment. With extra values or with nothing wasted opposite the short suit, responder may bid a new suit (cue bid), bid opener's major at the three-level with no convenient cheaper cue bid, or simply ask for aces / key cards.

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

WEST	EAST
1♥	2NT
3♣	4NT
5♠	7♥ Pass

3♣ = singleton or void in clubs

Knowing West can ruff East's club losers, East can bid grand slam after locating three aces with West.

The jump-raise of opener's suit (1♠ : 3♠ or 1♥ : 3♥) is used as a limit raise, around 10-12 points and eight losers.

Jacoby 2NT after a major suit opening

Responder has 13+ points with 4+ support for opener's suit, no 4-card major and no singleton or void. Opener bids a singleton at the 3-level, 3NT to show a minimum balanced hand, 4-Major with a 6-5 pattern or repeats the minor with no shortage and a strong hand (or not so strong a hand but with 5+ in the minor and some reservations about 3NT).

If opener has repeated the minor, bids at the 3-level are stopper bids angling for 3NT.

With other strong balanced hands, responder can change suit or respond 3NT which shows 16-18 points and a 4-3-3-3 pattern with stoppers in the unbid suits, whether the opening was a major or a minor.

Splinter bids after a major suit opening

A jump-response of 4-minor or 1♠ : 4♥ or 1♥ : 3♠ is a splinter, showing a singleton or void in the suit bid, 4+ support for opener's suit and usually 12+ HCP. With excellent support, 10-11 HCP is acceptable. The hand will have at worst seven losers and more commonly six.

Opener should discount the value of a king, queen or jack opposite the singleton suit ('duplication' and hence wasted values most of the time). With a subminimum opening or a hand that has fallen below 13 HCP after deducting the discounted values, opener should sign off in 4-Major. With a strong opening after discounting or even a modest opening with, an idea holding in responder's short suit, opener should head for slam, either with a new suit (cue bid) or asking for aces / key cards.

Responder's splinter indicates sufficient high card values for game. If opener can visualize two useful ruffs in responder's hand, that should be enough to bring the tally from ten tricks to twelve. Ideal holdings opposite the short suit are x-x-x, x-x-x-x, A-x-x or A-x-x-x and J-x-x or J-x-x-x has very little wasted. Poor holdings are K-x-x, Q-J-x (deduct three points for each of these holdings), K-Q doubleton (almost wholly wasted), A-x or x-x (only one ruff available opposite a singleton) or a singleton opposite responder's short suit.

The location of the short suit can make a vast difference:

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

WEST	EAST
1♥	4♣
4NT	5♠
6♥	Pass

4♣ = singleton or void in clubs.

6♥ should be an easy make, but suppose the hands were:

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

WEST	EAST
1♥	4♣
4♥	Pass

4♣ = singleton or void in clubs.

With such wasted clubs, West signs off and East does not have enough extra to justify going further. On a spade lead, 5♥ could be in jeopardy.

Splinters after a minor suit opening

1♣ : 3♦ / 3♥ / 3♠ and 1♦ : 3♥ / 3♠ show opening values, 5+ support for opener's minor and a singleton or void in the suit bid. Splinters after a minor suit opening are not common since responder will tend to show a major before supporting a minor. 1♦ : 4♣ is also a splinter but even rarer as it bypasses 3NT.

After 1♥ : 3♠, you are not looking to play in 3NT but after a splinter response to a minor suit, 3NT is within opener's field of choices. With a moderate opening and a double stopper (or potential double stopper) in responder's short suit, opener will usually choose 3NT.

Later splinters

Opener may make a splinter rebid via an unnecessary jump after a one-level response or by a jump in a new suit after a two-level response. Thus, 1♦, 3♥ would be taken as a splinter (as 2♥ is strong and forcing). Likewise, 1♠ : 2♥, 4♦ would be a splinter as 3♦ would be strong and forcing.

A delayed splinter by responder (e.g., 1♠ : 2♣, 2♠ : 4♦) shows a good hand with a shortage in the suit bid but only three trumps.

Roman Key Card Blackwood

One great advantage of RKCB is that you discover not just how many aces partner has but also whether the partnership holds the king and queen of trumps.

There are five key cards, the four aces and the king of the agreed trump suit. If the trump suit has not been specifically agreed, the last suit bid before 4NT is taken as the relevant trump suit for RKCB.

In reply to 4NT:

- 5♣ = 0 or 3 Key Cards
- 5♦ = 1 or 4 Key Cards
- 5♥ = 2 Key Cards but no queen of trumps
- 5♠ = 2 Key Cards plus the queen of trumps
- 5NT = 5 Key Cards, no queen of trumps
- 6♣ = 5 Key Cards plus the queen of trumps

5NT and 6♣ are extremely rare responses. When they occur, partner should have enough information to make a sensible decision. Replies of 5♥ and higher indicate also whether the trump queen is held. The 5♣ and 5♦ responses do not include information about the trump queen.

After the reply to 4NT, a bid of 5NT asks for kings outside the trump suit. The replies are standard, 6♣ = 0, 6♦ = 1, 6♥ = 2 and 6♠ = 3.

If the reply to 4NT was 5♣ or 5♦, the cheapest non-trump bid asks whether partner holds the queens of trumps. In reply, cheapest bid = No, next higher bid = Yes. For example, if spades are trumps:

WEST	EAST
...	...
4NT	5♣
5♦	?

5♦ = 'Do you have the queen of trumps?'

5♥ by East = 'No, I don't.'

5♠ by East = 'Yes, I do.'

If you know the partnership must hold at least ten trumps, give the reply that shows the trump queen. The chance of no loser with ten trumps, give the reply that shows the trump queen. The chance of no loser with ten trumps missing the queen is good, within the 78%-89% range.

If the reply to 4NT was 5♣ or 5♦, you can almost always tell from the earlier bidding whether partner has the lower or the higher number of key cards. If you cannot tell, assume the worst and sign off in the agreed suit. After the signoff over 5♣ or 5♦, partner will:

Pass = lower number of key cards (you are probably in deep trouble)

Cheapest bid = higher number of key cards but no trump queen

Next cheapest bid = higher number of key cards plus the trump queen

For example, if hearts are trumps:

WEST	EAST
...	...
4NT	5♣
5♥	?

5♥ = Signoff, assuming East has 0 key cards

Pass by East = 0 key cards

5♠ by East = 3 key cards, no ♥Q

5NT by East = 3 key cards + the ♥Q

If 3 key cards (5♣) or 4 key cards (5♦) is not enough for the slam, one might surmise that the 4NT ask was probably misguided.

A weak hand, known to be below 10 HCP (a 1NT response or a simple raise to the two-level or a negative response to a demand opening) cannot use 4NT asking. A bid of 4NT by a known weak hand is a slam suggestion indicating that the weak hand's cards are all working.

After the reply to 4NT, a new suit bid which is not the trump queen ask is an asking bid for your holding in that suit bid other than the ace. These are known as Control Asks and the answers are:

- Step 1 = no king, no queen
- Step 2 = queen, but no king
- Step 3 = king, but no queen
- Step 4 = king + queen
- Step 5 = king + queen + jack

A 5NT ask for kings or a Control Ask is looking for a grand slam and promises that no key cards are missing and that the trump queen is held.

If on the bidding a singleton or void is possible, the replies to the Control Ask are:

- Step 1 = no king, no queen
- Step 2 = queen, but no king
- Step 3 = king, but no queen
- Step 4 = singleton
- Step 5 = king + queen
- Step 6 = void

Strategy for small slams

Assuming the values for a small slam are present:

1. If two key cards are missing, stop out of the slam.
2. If one key card is missing, but the trump queen is held, bid a small slam.
3. If one key card *and* the trump queen are both missing, bid six with any ten trumps or with nine trumps including the jack. Stay out of the slam with nine trumps if you are not holding the jack or with fewer than nine trumps.

Strategy for grand slams

Assuming the values for a grand slam are present:

1. If you hold ten or more trumps together, you should hold between you all five key cards but need not have the trump queen.
2. With nine trumps or fewer, you need all five key cards plus the queen of trumps.
3. If you can count thirteen tricks, bid seven. With thirteen winners in top cards, bid 7NT. With a strong trump suit and no losers in the first three rounds of any suit, bid seven. You may need to check via a Control Ask to ensure that there is no loser in the first three rounds of a suit outside trumps.

Cue Bidding

There are various styles of cue bidding. When cue bidding is used in a recommended auction in this book, the first round of cue bids may be first or second controls. This allows the partnership to ascertain quickly when a suit lacks 'control'.

Bypassing a non-trump suit denies control in that suit. 'Control' in this sense is used to mean 'with first- or second-round control'. When the partnership has control in a suit, the opponents cannot quickly cash the first two tricks in that suit (although you could suffer from a first or second round ruff in that suit). We have found this style of cue-bidding ('multi-cues') highly effective.

After cue bidding has commenced, a bid of 4NT is still RKCB. A common scenario is to start with a round of cue bidding to ensure every suit outside trumps is controlled and then to launch into RKCB to make sure the partnership has enough key cards.

Where a cue bidding sequence has started at the three-level, a bid of 3NT is used as a temporising bid, often with the aim of allowing partner to make a cheap cue bid of 4♣. Where 3NT is available, a cue bid of 4♦ or 4♥ indicates control in that suit only. For example:

WEST	EAST
1♠	2NT
3♠	4♦ ...

2NT Jacoby agreed spades as trumps. 3♠ showed extra length in spades and extra values and no singleton, no void. East's 4♦ shows the ace or king of diamonds (2NT denied a singleton or void) and no ace or king in hearts or in clubs. With club control, East would bid 4♣, not 4♦ and with diamond *and* heart control, East would temporize with 3NT. This style also works very well, particularly when responder is known to hold a weak hand such as a negative response to a 2♣ opening.

A cue bid in the splinter suit by the splinter bidder shows a void.

The 5NT grand slam trump ask

Where cue bidding has gone beyond 4NT so that RKCB is not available, a bid of 5NT indicates grand slam aspirations and asks for the trump holding. A jump to 5NT by a very strong hand after a genuine suit bid is also asking for partner's trump holding. When playing pairs, the 5NT ask for kings (when 4NT has been used) or the 5NT trump ask (when 4NT has not been used) sometimes has 6NT in mind rather than for grand slam purposes.

The 5NT trump ask is seeking the A, K, Q of trumps. The replies are:

Bidding the agreed trump suit = no A, no K, no Q.

The other replies show:

- Step 1 = queen of trumps only
- Step 2 = ace or king of trumps only
- Step 3 = K-Q or A-Q in trumps
- Step 5 = A-K in trumps
- 7♣ = A + K + Q in the trump suit

Before invoking 5NT, you need to be sure that you can handle a reply that takes you beyond six of your trump suit. Either that reply will be enough for you to bid seven or you are confident that 6NT will be all right. This is especially important when the trump suit is a minor.

Hands 1-40

1. Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

South overcalls 2♥ (weak)

♠ 10 8 5
♥ A 10 7
♦ 10 9 7 3
♣ J 8 4

WEST	EAST
♠ A 7 3 2	♠ J 9 6
♥ Q 8 5	♥ - - -
♦ A J 8	♦ K Q 5 2
♣ K 9 3	♣ A Q 7 6 5 2

♠ K Q 4
♥ K J 9 6 4 3 2
♦ 6 4
♣ 10

Best: 5♣

W	N	E	S
	No	1♣	2♥
Dbl (1)	No	3♣ (2)	No
3♥ (3)	No	4♥ (4)	No
6♣	No	No	No

(1) Negative, 4+ spades, 6+points

(2) Not enough for 3♦ as West may have a weak hand

(3) Asking for a heart stopper

(4) Void or singleton in hearts

Contract	Award	Imps	Pairs
5♣	10	-11	3
6♣	8	0	10
3NT(W)	4	-12*	7

*Assuming you mispick the heart position 1 time in 3 to go three down.

Source: 1960 Olympiad: France vs. North America. 6♣ both tables. NA South led ♠K. After trumps and diamonds ending in dummy, East led a spade to the 9.+920. The French South led a heart. East ruffed, drew two rounds of trumps, ending in dummy, heart ruff, diamond to the jack, heart ruff, diamond to the ace, low spade to the 9 and queen. South returned a spade, ducked to the jack.+920. If South plays a heart instead of a spade back, the slam is defeated.

2. Dealer East : Both vulnerable (1960 Olympiad)

Best: 4♥

♠ 10 6 5
♥ K 5 2
♦ K J 5 4 2
♣ Q 3

W	E
	1♥
3♥	4♥*

*Enough opposite 10-12, 8 losers

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

France 4♥ +650: NA 6♥ -200

Contract	Award	Imps	Pairs
4♥	10	0	10
3NT	6	-1	4
6♥	2	-13	0

♠ K J 8 4
♥ 6
♦ 8 7 3
♣ 8 7 6 4 2

With the spade finesse losing and North able to overruff the fourth spade, 6♥ should fail.

3. Dealer West : N-S vulnerable (1960 Olympiad)

Best: 6♣

♠ 8 4 3 2
♥ K J 5 2
♦ J 10
♣ 9 6 5

W	E
1♣	2NT(1)
4NT(2)	5♥(3)
5NT(4)	6♣(5)

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

France 6NT -50: NA 6NT -50

- (1) Jacoby, game force in clubs
- (2) RKCB
- (3) 2 key cards, no ♣Q
- (4) Asking for kings
- (5) No kings outside trumps

♠ 10 7 6 5
♥ 7 6
♦ K 9 8 6 4 3
♣ 7

Contract	Award	Imps	Pairs
6♣(W)	10	+14	10
6♣(E)	8	+7	8
6NT	7	0	2
Games	5	+10	7

6♣ by West is cold. After trumps, cash spades, finesse ♦Q and ruff the third diamond, then lead a heart to the 10, end playing North. 6♣ by East is cold on a non-heart lead and will fail on a heart lead.

If West opens 2NT, East could bid 3♣, W 3♥, E 4♣ natural, W 4♦ cue, E 4♠ cue, W 4NT RKCB etc., landing in 6♣ by East.

4. Dealer West : Both vulnerable (1960 Olympiad)

Best: 5♣

North bids 1♠

♠ K 7 5 4 3 2
♥ A 10 6 3
♦ Q 8
♣ A

W	N	E	S
1♦	1♠	2♣	No
2♦(1)	No	5♣(2)	End

France 6♣, spade lead, +1370
NA 6♣X, heart lead, -200

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

- (1) Not enough for 2♥
- (2) Even opposite 2 or 3 aces, slam could fail.

Very hard to avoid 6♣. 3NT would fail on a spade lead.

♠ Q 10 8
♥ J 9 7 5
♦ 9 6 4 2
♣ 8 5

Contract	Award	Imps	Pairs
5♣	10	-12	9
3NT	7	-17	3
6♣	5	-14*	2

*Assuming 6♣ has 25% success

5. Dealer West : E-W vulnerable (1960 Olympiad) Best: 6♦

♠ 8 5 4 2
♥ Q 9 6 3
♦ J 7
♣ J 4 2

W	E
1♥ (1)	2♣
2♦	4♦ (2)
4♥ (3)	4NT(4)
5♥ (5)	6♦

WEST	EAST
♠ Q 9 7	♠ A
♥ A J 5 4 2	♥ K 10 7
♦ A 10 5 4 2	♦ K Q 9 8
♣ ---	♣ K Q 9 8 3

♠ K J 10 6 3
♥ 8
♦ 6 3
♣ A 10 7 6 5

France 6♦ +1390; NA 6♦ +1390

6♥ and 3NT would both make.

- (1) Everyone opens these today
- (2) Game force, slam interest
- (3) Cue bid
- (4) RKCB
- (5) 2 key cards, no ♦Q. Do not show a void in reply to RKCB.

Contract	Award	Imps	Pairs
6♦	10	0	7
6♥	8	+1	10
5♥	5	-12	4
5♦	4	-13	0
3NT	3	-13	2

-end of Part I-