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On **Board 1** E-W have 15 top tricks but, even so, getting to the grand slam with confidence may not be easy.

♠ AQ9	<i>North</i>	♠ KJT83
♥ KQJ32	<i>West</i>	♥ A8
♦ AK2	<i>East</i>	♦ QJ84
♣ 96	<i>South</i>	♣ AT

East opens 1♠, West bids 2♥ (let's say it is game-forcing), now what should East rebid?

- If East bids No Trump, he may choose to show his (slight) extras by jumping to 3NT, thereby giving West a severe headache. West will now have no way to agree Spades and get into a **Roman Key Card** sequence.
- Or East could rebid 3♦ which, as is generally played, shows extra values and/or extra distribution. That will work better, now West can support Spades and later launch into Roman Key Card. When East shows three Key Cards, East can count 12 tricks and can be pretty sure there's a 13th somewhere. He'll bid 7NT, of course, not 7♠.

But, our suggestion to West is to bid the **Jacoby 2NT** at his first turn. Sure, it's supposed to show 4-card support, but let's not be too fastidious. West's hand is so strong that he can afford to take charge. And by so doing, there's no chance of East making an unfortunate rebid before West has had a chance to support Spades.

System Note: The standard responses to the Jacoby 2NT are not particularly effective. If you'd like to invest some time in learning a **better method**, visit our web-site.

On **Board 7** we revisit the theme of "super-accepts". East holds this hand:

♠ KQ3 ♥ A832 ♦ A98 ♣ K95

East opens a 15-17 INT, and West responds 2♦, transferring to Hearts. With that four-card support for Partner, East would normally be expected to make some sort of super-accept, by-passing 2♥ in some way or other, committing his side to the three-level.

But is that really such a great idea? Sure, in terms of HCP East is non-minimum, and he has good controls, *but* the

hand is square and it is direly deficient in Tens. So, our suggestion is that East does *not* super-accept, but instead bids a pedestrian 2♥. The two points we are making here are: (a) it's not always a good idea to super-accept just because you have four of Partner's suit; (b) the squareness and tenlessness (two words that miserably fail the Spellchecker test) of the actual East hand are a reasonable excuse to go low with 2♥ only.

P.S. We are delighted to report that 2♥ makes 8 tricks and that those who super-accept will go minus ☺

P.P.S. For a good **super-accept method** follow the link.

Board 11 was a thing of beauty. You are West, and get bounced into a poor 4♥ contact after North preempts with 2♠ and South raises to 3♠. North leads the ♠A and you ruff the second round in Dummy. What next, Mr West?

None Vul		
	♠ AT8542	
	♥ Q74	
	♦ T4	
	♣ 87	
♠ J7	<i>North</i>	♠ 3
♥ JT63	<i>Declarer Dummy</i>	♥ A95
♦ A986	<i>South</i>	♦ KQ75
♣ KQ6		♣ A9432
	♠ KQ96	
	♥ K82	
	♦ J32	
	♣ JT5	

You must assume trumps are 3-3, but even then you are in danger of losing **trump control**. For example, if, at Trick 3, you cash the ♥A and exit a Heart, the defense will return a Spade, ending your hopes.

The somewhat brilliant solution is to lead the Heart Nine from Dummy! The defense wins that, and makes you ruff another Spade with the ♥A, but now you are in the driver's seat. You get back to hand with a minor suit, lead the ♥J to knock out the remaining high trump, ruff the Spade return in hand, draw the last trumps, and cash minor suit winners. 10 tricks. What a lovely deal!

P.S. Opposite North's **Weak Two**, some Souths might bid 4♠, based on the 10-card fit. But 4♠ doubled is too expensive, and, as on Board 7, the squareness of the hand suggests caution.

Board 13

	♠ A7 ♥ Q763 ♦ 5 ♣ KQJ973	Both Vul
♠ JT8 ♥ 984 ♦ Q864 ♣ A62	North West East South	♠ 9643 ♥ T2 ♦ AK973 ♣ 54
	♠ KQ52 ♥ AKJ5 ♦ JT2 ♣ T8	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♣	1♦ ^A	Dbl ^B
2♦ ^C	2♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

A. It would be most timorous for East not to overcall 1♦. "Phooey!" to the HCP requirements for a vulnerable overcall, a suit that good needs to be bid. If East is derelict in his duty, West will presumably lead the ♠J against 4♥, allowing Declarer to make 12 tricks.

B. The style nowadays is for South's Negative Double to show *both* majors. The corollary is that 1♥ or 1♠ here does not guarantee a 5-card suit.

C. With a weak hand and a known 9-card fit, West might be tempted to preempt with 3♦. But not too tempted we hope. West has a square hand, which usually means less offense (see also Boards 7 and 11) ... West has the ♣A (more defense) ... and E-W are vulnerable. Those factors should persuade West to dial down to a simple 2♦ raise.

As we said, probably a flat board, nothing 650's on the score-sheet, unless East is having a bad day.

North's choices are:

- 2♥? No, the suit is poor and so are the chances of finding South with three Hearts.
- 2NT? Shows 11-12, though people have been known the stretch a bit with the right kind of hand. The ♣T is a nice card, but the Hearts are hollow, we just don't think the hand is good enough.
- 2♠? That's our choice, playing in the known 5-2 fit, keeping things low, and going for a plus score rather than a speculative Heart or NT contract.

2♠ makes a lucky 10 tricks, but in NT it's only 7 or 8 tricks (depending upon how soon West shifts to Hearts).

Board 22

	♠ AQJ643 ♥ 52 ♦ T ♣ AKQ2	E-W Vul
♠ T7 ♥ Q93 ♦ Q973 ♣ 8543	North West East South	♠ K982 ♥ 86 ♦ J854 ♣ T76
	♠ 5 ♥ AKJT74 ♦ AK62 ♣ J9	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	??		

North could bid 3♠ here (it's forcing), but what is she then supposed to do when South bids 3NT? ... she could bid 6♥ or 6NT (either of which would be a complete shot in the dark) ... or she could bid 4♣ but who knows where that will lead? We don't like any of these bids, and suggest that North takes the bull by the horns and bids 4NT, which is Roman Key Card for Hearts.

Let's say that N-S are playing 1430 responses. That being so South responds 5♦, confirming to North that they have all the Key Cards. Now, North might try 5NT, the King Ask. Hopefully, N-S use the Specific King method, and North is hoping that South will bid 6♠, allowing her to bid 7♠. But, no, the response is 6♦, and that allows North to bid 6NT. True, North would have been most disappointed if South held the ♥Q as well as that ♦K. However, with North's Spades protected from the opening lead, 6NT is the perfect spot. But we don't claim that it was a perfect auction, merely a practical one.

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Board 15

	♠ 86 ♥ K8532 ♦ Q9 ♣ AJT3	N-S Vul
♠ A532 ♥ J96 ♦ 832 ♣ K62	North West East South	♠ K9 ♥ AQT7 ♦ J765 ♣ 975
	♠ QJT74 ♥ 4 ♦ AKT4 ♣ Q84	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	??		