

Hand Analysis for the 2010 Annual
NVBA Life-Master/Non-Life-Master game
Complements of Bobby Gookin

1. Assuming N opens 1C and S responds 1S, W has an opportunity to muddy the waters with a diamond preempt. 3D is safe, after which N should **not** bid 3S, but simply pass. S will double, and NOW N can bid 3S, which S will of course raise to 4, and take the obvious 11 tricks.
2. Although most E's will open 1C, it is not recommended. Here, opening will probably propel E-W into the theoretically makable, but likely to fail, 4S. N must be careful not to get too frisky with his 2-suiter.
3. As frequently happens, bold bidding is rewarded here, as both 3N and 4S come home, thanks to the friendly diamond split. That said, it is not unreasonable for the N-S auction to go 1D-1S-2D-P.
4. An opening bid of two or three diamonds could easily provoke N into getting overboard, thanks to E's majors. Here is another example of how important it is to put pressure on the opponents whenever possible.
5. N-S easily make 5S, unless E-W can negotiate the club ruff. That will not happen at Trick 1, and kudos to any E's who win a trump finesse and play Ace and another club!
6. All roads lead to 3N, and the number of tricks taken by declarer will vary with the skill of the players, but almost certain to be between 8 and 10.
7. The Card Gods again beam down and smile at overbidders; slam might not be reached at all, yet 13 tricks are easy, thanks to all finesses working.
8. If he persists in the bidding, N will be highly disappointed with dummy. Best scores will go to the E-W's who get to double a frisky N.
9. W will always be declarer in some high-level black-suit contract. N must get a diamond on the road pronto, or even 6C will score.
10. N can easily get to high, as wastage and duplication of this magnitude is hard to diagnose. With 25 HCP, 9 solid spades, and a singleton, 4S has no play.
11. Pure luck decides whether 12 tricks come home in spades; those opening the W hand 1D and having E respond 1S are vulnerable to the club lead, while those opening 1N will wrap up 12 tricks.
12. While 12 tricks come home in NT, most W's will open 2N and declare heart games, whether or not they look for slam. The club ruff on opening lead holds declarer to 11 tricks.
13. E should double N's opening bid, be it 1D or 1N. W will introduce spades, and the friendly lie allows E-W to bid as much as they are likely to want to, since 9 tricks are easy.
14. E-W will normally play 4S, and declarer will have no reason to make a fancy play in trumps, so 10 tricks will be the most common result.
15. Although 12 tricks are possible, bidding slam is not, and declarer will likely lose at least 2 tricks unless N holds his cards out over the table!
16. Neither side will want to bid much here, with E-W likely to make 3H, even though careful defense can hold declarer to 8 tricks.
17. After E opens 1H, he is likely to play 4H. With careful play, 11 tricks come in. Declarer must not touch trumps too early.

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18. This board will produce a wide range of scores - competing to 5C will get most of the matchpoints for E-W, even though making it by dropping the CK will be rare.
19. Slam can be made here, but my guess is that few if any will bid it and fewer will make it. 650 in hearts will be the most common result.
20. Another slam, this one easy to make, but again difficult to bid. Even without E's preempt in spades, reaching the laydown 7H is not trivial, and 1460 will be a good score for N-S.
21. N's 2N opener will go for naught, as the best S can do is transfer to spades and pass. E should not be tempted into the auction by the colors, even though 140 E-W is the par.
22. If E-W use a weak bid showing both majors, they can reach 4S; failing that, S will open 3C and N will bid 3N, needing to find nothing more than 7 clubs to the king. 400's will be plentiful.
23. Whatever N does, E should bid 1N. If N opened, S now has a coin-flip double. The fact that double works so poorly suggests that maybe N should not have opened!
24. If W opens 2S, S declares 2N and gets 120. If W opens 1S, E bids 1N and W rebids 2S after S's double. Best scores go to the N-S pairs who end up defending doubled E-W contracts.
25. S opens 1N and usually plays it there; if N has rose-colored glasses and invites game, and S decides to accept, E-W will get an undeserved zero, thanks to the very friendly layout for N-S!
26. N-S will usually reach 4H despite a spade preempt by W. The best E-W can do now is -500 in 4S, but neither E nor W should bid 4S.
27. N should open 2H; this will get E to double, and now a raise to 3H by S will win the board, since W will probably bid 4D, which is too high. Note neither E nor W can double 3H!
28. If E opens 1S in 3rd seat, S bids Michaels, N asks for a minor, and S plays a diamond contract. The 2-2 split allows 5D to make, but most will play a partial. The uppercut stops 4H from making.
29. E opens 1D and rebids 2N, and should play it there for 8 tricks. If N opens 1C, E doubles and rebids 1N over W's 1S, for the same 120.
30. Excellent bidding will get N-S to 6H, which fails only because diamonds are 5-0. Sympathy goes to those in 6H going down. E can push to 5C but no higher.
31. Another good slam, but this one makes. Flannery 2D by S easily gets N-S to 6, but even if S opens 1H, N will bid 1S, S will bid 2S, and N should now bid 4D, a splinter, which S loves!
32. Slams often come in pairs, and here is another - 6N should be the common contract, and 12 tricks can be quickly claimed. The vulnerability prevents E from being much of a nuisance.
33. No one can make much here, and best scores will go to those who stay low or whose opponents get reckless.
34. The W hand is too good to open 1N, but even if W sees that, game is VERY lucky to make, and should not be reached. Even with diamonds 2-2, 3N still needs either 4-4 hearts or a club hook.
35. The most boring hand of the set - all N-S pairs will reach 3N, and most, if not all, will take 10 tricks.
36. Another nice hand for the optimists; 3-3 spades with the Jack onside, 3-3 clubs with the Queen onside - why not bid 3N with your 14 opposite 9!!