Beginners’ Lesson 5 (Option A): Balanced Hands

**Board 1**
North Deals: None
None Vul
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠

North’s 1 NT shows 12-14 HCP and a balanced hand. South has 10 HCP which is not enough for game so should pass (South needs 11-12 HCP to invite game).

The ♠ Q lead is the top of a sequence.

Declarer plays on the club suit by leading towards K♥ then a small club back to the Ace. Now lose a club to set up the last two clubs.

**Board 2**
East Deals: E-W Vul
N-S Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ 4

East’s 1 NT promises a balanced hand with 12-14 HCP. West knows that East has at least two hearts and therefore they have a heart fit so should bid 4♥.

Lead of a small spade promises an honour.

Declarer draws trumps then plays the K♥ which promotes the Q and J. This means a club can be discarded on the J♥.

**Board 3**
South Deals: E-W Vul
N-S Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ 4

West opens 1 NT. East bids 3♥ showing exactly a 5-card suit and opening hand. This is forcing and West, with 4 hearts, knows they have very good fit, so bids 4♥.

Lead of a small spade promises an honour.

Declarer should draw trumps, then lead a small club to the AQ in East’s hand. When North plays low, play the Q♠ hoping the K♠ is in North’s hand.

**Board 4**
West Deals: Both Vul
Both Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ K

South does not like being in notrumps due to their singleton, so bids 2♠ to be in a better contract. North must pass as South’s bid is a weakness takeout. After North wins the Ace♥, play a small spade towards the AQ♠. If East plays low, play the Q♠. When this holds, play the A♥ then target the diamonds. Start with A♥, then K♥ then a small diamond.

**Board 5**
North Deals: K Q 10
N-S Vul
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ 5

North knows they do not have a spade fit so rebids 2 NT promising 18-19 HCP. South with 8 HCP, has enough to bid to game.

Lead of a small club promises an honour.

Declarer plays on spades to knock out the Ace and thereby promote three spade tricks.

**Board 6**
East Deals: E-W Vul
N-S Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ Q

West rebids 1 NT showing 15-17 HCP. East knows partner has at least 2 spades so bids 2♠ as they have a fit. This is a weak bid, so West must pass as 1 NT.

On the lead, Declarer plays low from West (dummy), hoping the K♠ is in North’s hand and then Q♠ becomes a winner. Now play trumps.

**Board 7**
South Deals: K 7 4
Both Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ 4

North rebids 1 NT (15-17 HCP) and South bids 4♥ as they know they have a fit.

Lead is ♠ 2 from longest and strongest suit.

Declarer should draw trumps first, then play on clubs by starting with the entry) then plays K♥ to knock out the Ace and thereby promote three club tricks.

**Board 8**
West Deals: East Vul
None Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♠ 4

East and West know they have enough for game.

Lead is a small heart from the longest and strongest suit.

Declarer wins ♥ K (keeping the ♥ A as an entry) then plays ♥ K and ♥ J.

**Board 9**
West Deals: East Vul
Both Vul
Pass
Pass
Pass
Pass
Lead: ♥ 2

Now declarer can cross to the ♥ A and play the rest of the club suit.

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