

39.2024 – What to Open?

1. Dealer North Nil Vul

How do you plan to bid this Hand?

NORTH
5
643
2
AKQJ8652

You are opening bidder. The options seem to be:

Open 3NT

Open 1C

Open 3C

Open 4C

3NT OPENING: The text-book opening seems to be 3NT. So long as your Partner contributes 1 Trick, you should be home

Key risks are:

- EW run a suit before you get to 9 Tricks

- as the North Hand has no entry cards, if South has no Clubs, you will never get to your Hand

1C OPENING: If you open 1C, then you will probably get to 3NT, but the key risk is EW find their best lead to put you down. You might also find Slam if Partner has a good Hand

3C OPENING: If you open 3C, the key risk is Partner passes with enough Tricks to make 3NT. Should South convert to 3NT with the Hand below? It is unclear, but probably South should

4C OPENING: If you open 4C, you shut out 3NT, but South could bid 5C or 6C with 3 – 4 Aces and Kings (perhaps using Ace/King asks before, such as RKCB)

This was the full Hand:

	NORTH	
	5	
	643	
	2	
	AKQJ8652	
WEST		EAST
92		AJ876
J1052		Q97
AK109875		J3
-		1074
	SOUTH	
	KQ1043	
	AK8	
	Q64	
	93	

All the options above have their merits

Given EW are Not Vul, West should bid 3D over 1C or 3C, and 4D over 3NT or 4C, and if NS get to 5C, then East should bid 5D

At the Club, the Hand was played 6 times for the following results:

CONTRACT	BY	LEAD	TRICKS	NS RESULT
3NT	N	AS	5	-200
5C	N	7H	11	+400
4D	W	5S	10	-130
5Dx	W	5S	10	+100
3C	N	4C	11	+150
3NT	S	AD	10	+430

Here the results are all over the place. 3NT by S cannot be beaten, nor can 5C by either North or South

3NT by North can be beaten if the lead is SA and on seeing Dummy East switches to DJ (or East starts with DJ)

3C by North scores reasonably, as does 4D by West or 5D by EW

What would I do? Open 4C, South should raise to 5C, and if EW bid 5D, then South should Double

MORAL OF THE STORY

These highly distributional Hands allow for big bids, especially when NV. All Players should do so here

Ian Morison

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Penrith wins!