

Larry Cohen Opening Leads at Laguna Wood

1

♠ 65
♥ AKQ107
♦ KQ
♣ K865

♠ AKJ82
♥ 92
♦ 32
♣ QJ109

♠ 1043
♥ 543
♦ 8765
♣ A32

♠ Q97
♥ J86
♦ AJ1094
♣ 74

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥
2 ♠	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening Lead: ♠ 3

East leads LOW from 10xx in partner's suit. After cashing a second spade, West knows to shift and the ♣ shift beats the contract.

2

♠ 1098743
♥ K1098
♦ 4
♣ 87

♠ KJ
♥ J32
♦ QJ1062
♣ KJ6

♠ Q65
♥ A5
♦ A53
♣ AQ432

♠ A2
♥ Q764
♦ K987
♣ 1095

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening Lead: ♥ 4

Prefer majors to minors when on lead. The opponents won't have lots of hearts on this auction (but might have lots of either minor).

3

♠ KQ
♥ A9
♦ K6
♣ KQJ10976

♠ 762
♥ K74
♦ J98743
♣ A

♠ 3
♥ Q86532
♦ 1052
♣ 832

♠ AJ109854
♥ J10
♦ AQ
♣ 54

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening Lead: ♥ 4

West leads a heart, his best chance.

4

♠ KQ109
♥ 543
♦ J10
♣ KQ97

♠ 87542
♥ AKQ8
♦ 6
♣ A62

♠ J
♥ J109
♦ A9854
♣ 8543

♠ A63
♥ 762
♦ KQ732
♣ J10

Dealer: West
E-W VulnerableH

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening Lead: H5

North should lead a trump, since he anticipates declarer will ruff spades in dummy. Only a trump lead beats it.

<-Makeable contracts->

C	D	H	S	NT
=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	1 1
S	-	-	-	1 1
E	1	-	1	- -
W	1	-	1	- -

Best Opening Leads:
 vs North 1N: Any Card
 vs South 1N: Any Card
 vs North 1S: Any Card
 vs South 1S: Any Card
 vs East 1H: H-762
 vs West 1H: H-543

1
 ♠ AQJ1095
 ♥ 8
 ♦ 94
 ♣ AQJ5
 ♠ 6
 ♥ AK64
 ♦ K1062
 ♣ K1097
 ♠ 74
 ♥ J10975
 ♦ AJ53
 ♣ 63
 ♠ K832
 ♥ Q32
 ♦ Q87
 ♣ 842

Dealer: North
 Neither Vulnerable
 West North East South
 1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠
 Dbl 4 ♠ Pass Pass
 Pass
 Opening Lead: ♥ J

The defense leads and continues hearts. Declarer trumps high (saving the ♠5). He draws 2 rounds of trump ending in dummy (saving a second dummy entry). He takes a club finesse and then crosses in trumps to repeat the finesse.

2
 ♠ J972
 ♥ Q103
 ♦ 107
 ♣ QJ105
 ♠ A10
 ♥ AK986
 ♦ K84
 ♣ A42
 ♠ 864
 ♥ 542
 ♦ AQJ3
 ♣ 863
 ♠ KQ53
 ♥ J7
 ♦ 9652
 ♣ K97

Dealer: East
 N-S Vulnerable
 West North East South
 Pass Pass
 1 ♥ Pass 2 ♥ Pass
 4 ♥ Pass Pass Pass
 Opening Lead: ♣ Q

Declarer has to lose 2 clubs and at least 1 heart (needing a 3-2 break). The spade loser can go on the diamonds. After winning the ♣A, declarer must play ace, king AND ANOTHER trump. If he doesn't play the third trump, North can ruff the 3rd diamond and declarer never gets the 4th diamond.

3
 ♠ AQ4
 ♥ 432
 ♦ QJ86
 ♣ KJ6
 ♠ J9762
 ♥ Q10
 ♦ A52
 ♣ 984
 ♠ K103
 ♥ J975
 ♦ 94
 ♣ 10753
 ♠ 85
 ♥ AK86
 ♦ K1073
 ♣ AQ2

Dealer: South
 E-W Vulnerable
 West North East South
 1 NT
 Pass 3 NT Pass Pass
 Pass
 Opening Lead: ♠ 6

Declarer has 6 top tricks and can knockout the ♠A to get 3 more. He can't afford the ♠Q at trick one. If it loses (as it does), the spade continuation sets him. He plays LOW from dummy and can't be defeated.

4
 ♠ KJ9
 ♥ 864
 ♦ QJ109
 ♣ Q107
 ♠ 1062
 ♥ J9
 ♦ AK8542
 ♣ A4
 ♠ A743
 ♥ AK
 ♦ 73
 ♣ K8652
 ♠ Q85
 ♥ Q107532
 ♦ 6
 ♣ J93

Dealer: West
 Both Vulnerable
 West North East South
 1 ♦ Pass 2 ♣ Pass
 2 ♦ Pass 2 NT Pass
 3 NT Pass Pass Pass
 Opening Lead: ♥ 5

Declarer has 7 top tricks. He should test diamonds with the ace and king. If they split, he concedes a diamond and has an overtrick. When they don't split, he tries clubs and the 3-3 split sees him home. Ducking a diamond first is wrong, because it puts all the eggs in that one basket.

Throw-in Play at Laguna Woods Larry Cohen

1

♠ A765
 ♥ AK
 ♦ J52
 ♣ AJ102

♠ Q108
 ♥ 98764
 ♦ K76
 ♣ 98

♠ J9
 ♥ QJ105
 ♦ A1098
 ♣ 763

♠ K432
 ♥ 32
 ♦ Q43
 ♣ KQ54

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening Lead: ♥ Q

After a normal Stayman auction, East leads the ♥Q. If declarer starts diamonds, he should lose 3 tricks in that suit. Instead, he should draw 2 trumps, eliminate the clubs and hearts, and throw the defense in with the 3rd spade to break diamonds.

2

♠ 532
 ♥ KQ10
 ♦ AJ94
 ♣ 762

♠ A1094
 ♥ 8765
 ♦ 3
 ♣ AQ95

♠ KQJ876
 ♥ 943
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J84

♠
 ♥ AJ2
 ♦ KQ108765
 ♣ K103

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		2 ♠	3 ♦
4 ♠	5 ♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening Lead: ♠ A

East opens 2♠ and after South's overcall, West bids a LAWful 4♠S. North guesses to bid 5♦ against which the ♠A is led. Declarer ruffs, draws trumps (while stripping spades in the process) and cashes three hearts ending in dummy. When he plays a club and East plays low, South inserts the ♠10 and claims (if East played the jack, South would cover with the king and also have a claim).

3

♠ 3
 ♥ 9765
 ♦ AQJ
 ♣ J10986

♠ KQ98
 ♥ A4
 ♦ K7642
 ♣ 43

♠ AJ10765
 ♥ K3
 ♦ 1095
 ♣ A5

♠ 42
 ♥ QJ1082
 ♦ 83
 ♣ KQ72

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening Lead: ♥ Q

After a straightforward auction, South leads the ♥Q. Declarer should not play diamonds himself. He can guarantee the contract by drawing trump, stripping the hearts and exiting with Ace and a club. When the defense has to break diamonds, declarer is sure not to lose 3 tricks in the suit (just cover any card South plays).

4

♠ KQJ10
 ♥ J876
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J986

♠ 5
 ♥ 432
 ♦ AJ10987
 ♣ K43

♠ A432
 ♥ AQ9
 ♦ KQ65
 ♣ A2

♠ 9876
 ♥ K105
 ♦ 43
 ♣ Q1075

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
2 ♦	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	6 ♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening Lead: ♠ K

After West's weak 2♦, East can explore for slam with 2NT. West can show his club feature and East has no reason to use Blackwood--he just jumps to slam. Declarer wins the ♠A, ruffs a spade and draws trump while also stripping the black suits. He leads a heart from hand and covers anything North plays to claim his contract.

1

♠ 42	♠ K986
♥ QJ873	♥ 109
♦ Q92	♦ K54
♣ K73	♣ 9862
	♠ AJ103
	♥ A652
	♦ J103
	♣ 105

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening Lead: ♥ 10

West must cover the ♣ 10. East must cover the ♠ Q. West should not cover the first diamonds.

2

♠ AQ62	♠ J3
♥ 10983	♥ A7654
♦ 4	♦ AK3
♣ K963	♣ Q82
	♠ K54
	♥ K
	♦ QJ10876
	♣ AJ4

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	2 ♦
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening Lead: ♦ Q

If/when dummy's ♥ 10 is played, North must not cover. South must cover the ♠ J. On declarer's low club lead, South must play low.

3

♠ A	♠ Q643
♥ QJ109872	♥ 654
♦ 65	♦ AK3
♣ Q108	♣ A53
	♠ K875
	♥ A
	♦ 10982
	♣ K964

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening Lead: ♠ J

If/when declarer leads spades from dummy, south plays low. On declarer's ♥ Q lead from hand, North must play low. When a low club is led from dummy, South must play low to give declarer a guess.

4

♠ 1042	♠ K653
♥ 10984	♥ 762
♦ 5432	♦ QJ9
♣ 96	♣ 875
	♠ A87
	♥ KJ5
	♦ K106
	♣ KJ104

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	3 NT
Pass	6 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening Lead: ♥ 10

East must not cover the first spade honor from dummy. East must split his diamond honors if dummy leads low. Still, with a proper view, declarer can endplay East.