



The Celtic Nations

Simultaneous Pairs



Fostering our Celtic links

Set C

Wednesday 6th December 2017

Hosted by:-

Northern Ireland Bridge Union

Commentary by Ian Hamilton

Northern Ireland Camrose International

1

♠ AK4
♥ Q4
♦ Q10
♣ AKQ842

♠ Q10986
♥ 6
♦ 876432
♣ 7

♠ J7532
♥ A2
♦ AKJ9
♣ 106

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	5	-	1
S	-	-	5	-	1
E	-	1	-	1	-
W	1	1	-	1	-

Some will open 3♥, others 4♥ with north's 8-carder, south often raising the lower pre-empt to game anyway. West could take his chances in defence against game, but often will bid his clubs, certainly at the 4 level, probably persuading south to bid 4♥, giving west another decision.

This wild hand is N/S's, despite the minority of HCP, and a fair range of scores are predicted. There could be those doubled in their heart contract N/S, and they should not be pressed to make eleven tricks. 5♣x can be held to seven or eight tricks, maybe for a bigger N/S score, and east fares little better in spades if he ever gets a chance to bid them.

2

♠ K85
♥ Q87643
♦ 102
♣ Q4

♠ A104
♥ AJ92
♦ Q4
♣ 10987

♠ Q63
♥ K105
♦ AK765
♣ A3

♠ J972
♥
♦ J983
♣ KJ652

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	4	3	2	4
W	2	4	3	2	4

It is hard to see anything other than 3NT by east after either a weak NT and Stayman, or following east's 1♦ opener.

On a club (indeed any) lead it is possible to make ten tricks without ceding a diamond, by setting up an extra club, leading to the spade queen and getting hearts right. Others will clear diamonds, squeezing dummy, and making nine tricks the limit.

I reckon only a minority will manage the 430 possible double dummy.

3

♠ K1087
♥ J73
♦ J643
♣ Q9

♠ Q63
♥ Q1094
♦ K8
♣ K732

♠ A54
♥ A85
♦ 10752
♣ J86

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	3	2	3	2	3
W	3	2	3	2	3

West's weak NT will usually be passed out. 5 card majors reach the same spot, west rebidding 1NT after 1♣-1♥. A few playing a 14-16 NT will over-stretch to game.

Declarer makes eight or nine tricks, depending on his play of the heart suit, best to play north for the knave, it possible to pick it up thrice guarded, which is not the case where south holds it. Declarer makes a long club unless the defence set him up a spade for his eighth or ninth trick.

4

♠ AJ43
♥ Q652
♦ J85
♣ J8

♠ K1072
♥ J1083
♦ K92
♣ 102

♠ Q986
♥ AK9
♦ A10
♣ A764

♠ 5
♥ 74
♦ Q7643
♣ KQ953

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	1	-	3	4	3
W	1	-	3	4	3

East's strong NT looks as if it will be passed out also, south shapely but too weak to act. Best is a low club lead, ducked, north switching to diamonds. Declarer could still make nine tricks by getting the majors right, but could easily manage only seven or eight, possibly fewer. Ten tricks could result when south leads a diamond, ceding a trick and a tempo.

Acol opens 1♠, and may find themselves too high in the suit when west raises. It is possible to pick up trumps for one loser, finesse hearts and get a club ruff in dummy, recording ten tricks, but there could easily be those making fewer, and getting a minus if in game.

I think I'd rather be in 1NT, as most souths will lead diamonds, 150 or 180 ending up on the card.

5

♠ AQ5
 ♥ 9654
 ♦ KQJ4
 ♣ KJ
 ♠ 10832
 ♥ J7
 ♦ 106532
 ♣ 92
 ♠ K976
 ♥ A1032
 ♦ A9
 ♣ Q54
 ♠ J4
 ♥ KQ8
 ♦ 87
 ♣ A108763

 Dealer: North
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4	2	3	1	2
S	4	2	3	1	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

This looks like 3NT by north after either his strong NT or 1♥ opener. East will usually lead a diamond. Upon winning his ace west can try to remove dummy's entry via a low heart lead. However, after a couple of diamonds are cashed west is still forced to give dummy a late entry upon winning his club queen.

East does better to lead a spade. Now the defence can get two spades to go with their aces and club queen, beating 3NT one trick.

However, I can see few failing in 3NT, and most chalking up the overtrick, since the 5 card suit opening lead will look a more attractive proposition to east than a spade.

6

♠ Q4
 ♥ 10864
 ♦ Q109
 ♣ Q652
 ♠ A
 ♥ AKJ93
 ♦ J864
 ♣ 1098
 ♠ J109832
 ♥ A7
 ♦ AK743
 ♠ K765
 ♥ Q752
 ♦ K532
 ♣ J

 Dealer: East
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	2	1	3	2
W	5	2	2	3	2

East is only worth a 2♣ rebid over west's 2♥ response to 1♠, west probably trying 3♦ and east 3NT. Thus the club contract goes begging, not that 5♣ is an easy make, declarer needing to cross-ruff in setting up spades, and north making only two ruffs or equivalent.

3NT has nine apparent tricks if clubs are correctly guessed, but communications are ruined on a diamond (or spade) lead, meaning the defence should end up on top, the biggest issue being the club blockage.

4♠ is also scuppered by transportation problems, declarer unable to pick up the black suits without sustaining ruffs or getting forced.

There could be a lot of E/W minuses on this one.

7

♠ AKQ54
 ♥ AQ107
 ♦ K4
 ♣ Q3
 ♠ J109762
 ♥ K632
 ♦ 107
 ♣ 9
 ♠ 8
 ♥ 95
 ♦ A963
 ♣ AKJ1064
 ♠ 3
 ♥ J84
 ♦ QJ852
 ♣ 8752

 Dealer: South
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	2	1	-
S	-	2	2	1	-
E	-	-	-	-	1
W	1	-	-	-	1

West's hand isn't my idea of a vulnerable weak 2 or Multi in spades, but some will think otherwise, goading north into a double, conceivably a 3NT overcall, and a subsequent minus somewhere one way or other.

Where west passes north could open 2NT, maybe raised, or 1♠, east's 2♣ overcall being passed back to north, who will double. Now N/S's red suit contract could be at the 2 level, though north may decide to bid on.

Even 2♦ will often be beaten on three rounds of clubs ruffed with the 7, forcing the king, a trump coup on east now needed for success. 2♠ also looks difficult, but eight tricks are there on cross-ruff lines, despite the defence getting a diamond ruff. In reality most will be at the 3 level, trying to minimise undertricks, or in no trumps, beaten off the top by east's clubs.

8

♠ 1065
 ♥ K107
 ♦ 7643
 ♣ 764
 ♠ K983
 ♥ 52
 ♦ J1082
 ♣ KQ9
 ♠ 74
 ♥ 84
 ♦ AKQ5
 ♣ A10853
 ♠ AQJ2
 ♥ AQJ963
 ♦ 9
 ♣ J2

 Dealer: West
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	3	-	-
S	-	-	3	-	-
E	4	4	-	-	-
W	4	4	-	-	-

Love all usually means a lot of bidding, east opening 1♣ and south overcalling 1♥, west either supporting clubs or introducing spades. E/W's diamond fit probably never sees the light of day, but it matters not, ten tricks available in either minor.

South will bid up to at least 2♥ on his own, but few will get beyond the 3 level, where losing 100 in 4♥x is the theoretical par against the 130 available E/W. Those brave souls in 3♥ N/S actually manage a plus, the defence unable to get more than three minor suit tricks and the spade king.

9

♠ AKQ9
 ♥ Q1092
 ♦ Q86
 ♣ Q7
 ♠ 10754
 ♥ 76
 ♦ 952
 ♣ J843
 ♠ J82
 ♥ A84
 ♦ AJ73
 ♣ K65

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	3	4	4	4
S	2	4	4	4	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

3NT looks the spot, declared by north after either his strong NT or Acol 1♥, in this instance he rebidding 2NT over 2♦ and being raised to game.

An east club lead to the queen works best, threatening three tricks in the suit should east get in. This will almost certainly persuade declarer to finesse hearts twice through east for a possible tenth trick, in doing so protecting the club king.

Otherwise, declarer may lead towards the heart Q109 hoping to guess right, and cannot go wrong, ten tricks resulting when two hearts are added to three diamonds, four spades and a club.

I am betting on more 430s than 400s here, most easts leading a spade.

10

♠ 982
 ♥ 43
 ♦ KQ1093
 ♣ AQ8
 ♠ A73
 ♥ J10976
 ♦ 854
 ♣ K3
 ♠ KJ4
 ♥ K82
 ♦ 762
 ♣ J1072
 ♠ Q1065
 ♥ AQ5
 ♦ AJ
 ♣ 9654

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	4	1	4	3
S	3	4	1	4	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

At Teams north is certainly worth a raise of south's weak NT, a vulnerable game the prize. At Pairs it is less clear-cut, a plus all-important, so some will pass it out.

5 card majors have the same issues where south rebids 1NT after 1♣-1♦. Other souths will rebid 1♠ instead, and absent a heart stop, north give club preference. 2♥, FSF, works better, though north is barely worth this if played as game forcing. 2♣ will not score well.

Foresight is needed declaring no trumps on the heart lead, won by south. If diamonds are run immediately there is no south entry for the club finesse without clearing the opponents' hearts, though admittedly if he plays a spade east needs to pop up with the king, to return partner's suit. It is perhaps best to take the club finesse at trick 2, rather than risk a nasty guess later.

11

♠ AKJ10852
 ♥ QJ852
 ♦ 7
 ♣ 7
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ 4
 ♦ QJ109
 ♣ J109642
 ♠ 97
 ♥ A1097
 ♦ A542
 ♣ AQ8
 ♠ 63
 ♥ K63
 ♦ K8763
 ♣ K53

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	4	3	2
S	-	-	4	3	2
E	2	1	-	-	-
W	3	1	-	-	-

A 4♣ opener is best by north in 3rd seat, precise cards needed in south for a slam. This can be beaten on ace and two heart ruffs, should west lead the right minor at trick 3. However, this defence is far from obvious, the north five card heart suit on the side improbable from the defence's perspective.

Where north opens 1♠ and east doubles south probably tries 1NT and west 2♣. North could now bid his hearts, although again 4♣ looks more sensible.

There could be a fair few doubled in 4♣, and some making eleven tricks on the diamond ace lead, others getting only the 300 available from 5♣x. I bet few, if any, are beaten in 4♣. Of course 4♥ cannot be beaten, but this spot will be a rarity.

12

♠ 10874
 ♥ Q764
 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ 74
 ♠ Q532
 ♥ 102
 ♦ AQ9763
 ♣ 10
 ♠ KJ6
 ♥ KJ953
 ♦ 2
 ♣ KQJ9
 ♠ A9
 ♥ A8
 ♦ 854
 ♣ A86532

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	1	2	2	2
W	-	1	2	2	2

Presumably east's 1♥ will be overcalled 2♣. West is a bit thin for 2♦, but some will select this, and east try 2NT, as like as not playing there. It is perhaps better to double with the west cards, and east could leave this in, despite an originally passed partner opposite. His alternative is to rebid a major.

2♣x should go one light, scoring the magic 200. Neither 2♠ nor 2NT are simple to make. The latter could easily lose a spade, two hearts, a club and a couple of diamonds, whereas 2♠ needs to be played on cross-ruff lines to succeed. 2♥ is more straightforward.

E/W will do well to get a plus here, their best chance of doing so being in defence.

13

♠ AQ1096
 ♥ 86
 ♦ 3
 ♣ KQ1095
 ♠ K753
 ♥ 973
 ♦ K104
 ♣ J64
 ♠ 84
 ♥ J42
 ♦ AJ765
 ♣ A83
 ♠ J2
 ♥ AKQ105
 ♦ Q982
 ♣ 72

 Dealer: North
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4	2	4	4	3
S	4	2	4	4	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

N/S could get to 3NT should north get to show the black suits, easier in Acol, he opening 1♣ and bidding spades twice. Alternatively, game in either major could ensue.

4♣ is very tricky on a diamond lead and continuation. Declarer needs to use heart entries to finesse the club 10 also trumps. If he plays three rounds of spades, then runs hearts west ruffs the fourth and exits a diamond, leaving two club losers. Few will succeed.

In 4♥ clubs must be tackled early, and the defence can make it mighty awkward by ducking the first club and leading spades at every opportunity.

3NT by south looks the spot to me, there being five hearts and three spade tricks, plus either a diamond on the lead, or a club, depending on the defence.

14

♠ A42
 ♥ KJ10
 ♦ QJ76
 ♣ K86
 ♠ 6
 ♥ Q98765
 ♦ 9543
 ♣ 105
 ♠ 53
 ♥ A4
 ♦ 102
 ♣ AQJ9432
 ♠ KQJ10987
 ♥ 32
 ♦ AK8
 ♣ 7

 Dealer: East
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	5	1	5	5
S	-	5	-	5	-
E	2	-	-	-	-
W	2	-	-	-	-

N/S should reach 4♠, whether south calls this immediately over east's 1♣, or is more restrained. Unless the defence grab their club trick early it will disappear on a dummy diamond, so 480 will score at some tables, assuming hearts are correctly guessed. Some easts could overtake the club 10, and try to cash the ace, with the same result.

East cannot make more than eight tricks in clubs should he elect to sacrifice, unless the defence seriously lose the plot, so there could be some losing 500 as E/W for a poor board.

15

♠ AK76
 ♥ KJ53
 ♦ 92
 ♣ Q93
 ♠ 3
 ♥ A762
 ♦ AKQ843
 ♣ K5
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ Q98
 ♦ J107
 ♣ J8764
 ♠ J108542
 ♥ 104
 ♦ 65
 ♣ A102

 Dealer: South
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	3	-
S	-	-	-	3	-
E	1	4	1	-	-
W	1	4	1	-	-

South isn't worth a Weak Two or Multi at adverse vulnerability, being sub-minimum with a poor suit, though some will disagree. N/S will find their spade fit anyway, north doubling west's 1♦ opener.

East isn't likely to support his partner very far so it is most unlikely they will get to the par spot of 4♦, over which N/S need to bid 4♠, and hope they aren't doubled.

Declaring spades N/S need to get hearts right to make nine tricks, which most will. E/W have no real guesses in the play of a diamond contract, east's heart queen scoring and the fourth heart ruffed in dummy.

Though E/W should win out here they may well not, the spade suit doing so.

16

♠ 52
 ♥ J10987
 ♦ 73
 ♣ 5432
 ♠ 109863
 ♥ Q4
 ♦ 105
 ♣ A876
 ♠ AKJ7
 ♥ 632
 ♦ AQ862
 ♣ 9
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ AK5
 ♦ KJ94
 ♣ KQJ10

 Dealer: West
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	-	2	-	-
S	2	-	2	-	-
E	-	2	-	4	1
W	-	2	-	4	1

South doubles east's 1♦, planning on rebidding no trumps as cheaply as possible, showing 18-20. However, things will take an awkward turn when west bids 1♠ and east jumps to 3♠.

Most will double again, maybe pushing west into 4♠, makeable so long as both top spades are not cashed before playing on diamonds, the suit ruffed good.

Most souths will take their chances in defence now, and some will be right when west fails to make ten tricks. Some could be doubled.

Theoretically, the winning action is to advance to 5♥x, the defence only able to get one club ruff and scoring merely 500.

17

♠ KQJ65
 ♥ Q10
 ♦ A954
 ♣ 102
 ♠ A7
 ♥ 62
 ♦ QJ103
 ♣ Q9753
 ♠ 1084
 ♥ 875
 ♦ K8
 ♣ AKJ64
 ♠ 932
 ♥ AKJ943
 ♦ 762
 ♣ 8

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	3	2	1
S	-	-	3	2	1
E	3	-	-	-	-
W	3	-	-	-	-

This is another competitive board, north's 1♠ overcalled 2♣. South could bid his hearts, alternatively support spades if a known 5 carder. West likely supports clubs to the 4 level, knowing of at least a ten card fit.

Both sides may get overboard, since the 3 level is the limit for both sides. However, south will make 4♥ with an overtrick should the defence try to cash two clubs. Maybe west should lead a diamond instead, as it may be hard for east to divine that south has only one club.

It is easy to let 4♠ home too, the defence needing to play two rounds of hearts early on, not obvious, or switch to the diamond king after the first club, equally so.

18

♠ 9743
 ♥ AQ103
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ Q43
 ♠ K862
 ♥ 7
 ♦ A82
 ♣ AK862
 ♠ J105
 ♥ J84
 ♦ J10643
 ♣ J7
 ♠ AQ
 ♥ K9652
 ♦ 975
 ♣ 1095

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	2	-	1
S	-	-	2	-	1
E	2	3	-	1	-
W	2	3	-	1	-

E/W could be passed out in 2♣ where east responds 1♦ and corrects 1♠ back to clubs. Where east passes south protects with 1♥, likely buying it at the 2 level with north's support.

2♣ looks hopeless, but after ruffing the second heart declarer can play a club to north's queen, ruff the heart return low and duck a diamond. No defence stops him pulling trumps and enjoying east's diamonds.

Those playing hearts will nearly always be held to eight tricks when the club queen gets ruffed away.

This hand shows the value of responding to a one level bid on nearly anything, here E/W possibly stealing N/S's part-score, at worst at the cost 100. Granted, it can get the partnership too high sometimes.

19

♠ 642
 ♥ AK92
 ♦ J54
 ♣ 987
 ♠ 9
 ♥ QJ107643
 ♦ Q962
 ♣ 3
 ♠ A873
 ♥ 85
 ♦ AK73
 ♣ AQ2
 ♠ KQJ105
 ♥
 ♦ 108
 ♣ KJ10654

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	1	-
S	1	-	-	1	-
E	-	3	4	-	1
W	-	3	4	-	1

Despite the lack of controls it is worth opening the south hand 1♣, though today it may backfire when west pre-empts with 3♥ and east bids game. North will surely double this unbreakable spot, it simply losing three trumps. If south takes out the double he can get badly beaten in a black suit contract, though it may well succeed in a profitable sacrifice.

4♠x gets forced even should south get his diamonds away after a heart lead, eight tricks the limit. It needs a non-heart lead to get 500.

5♠x looks better, indeed makes ten tricks on a heart lead. However, where west leads his singleton he gets a spade ruff, a four trick set, and 800 on the card.

Fun and games predicted.

20

♠ J6
 ♥ K72
 ♦ A862
 ♣ QJ86
 ♠ 94
 ♥ Q109
 ♦ J1054
 ♣ 9743
 ♠ Q102
 ♥ AJ64
 ♦ Q73
 ♣ 1052
 ♠ AK8753
 ♥ 853
 ♦ K9
 ♣ AK

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	2	3	5	3
S	3	2	1	3	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Most will end up in 4♠ by south after he opens the suit and north is able to bid at the two level, maybe 2NT best. Some norths will declare 3NT, held on a heart lead.

Defending 4♠ the spotlight is on west to find the heart lead. Where he does so 4♠ can go light, so long as east doesn't furnish the ace on air. On a club lead declarer makes eleven tricks whether he plays spades from the top or leads to the queen. On a diamond lead to the king he needs to cash top trumps and unblock clubs to equal this.

How many wests will find the lead?

21

♠ K74
 ♥ AQ8
 ♦ A1096
 ♣ J85
 ♠ A8
 ♥ KJ62
 ♦ QJ7
 ♣ KQ74
 ♠ 32
 ♥ 943
 ♦ K52
 ♣ A10963
 ♠ QJ10965
 ♥ 1075
 ♦ 843
 ♣ 2

 Dealer: North
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	3	-
S	-	1	-	3	-
E	3	-	1	-	-
W	3	-	1	-	-

West might double south's 2♥ transfer over north's weak NT, risking east bidding 3♥ over 2♠ rather than 3♣.

As #18, I would respond 1♠ to north's 1♦ with south's cards, rather than pass, west on firmer ground doubling, north supporting spades. E/W should find their club fit.

It should be clear to south to advance to 3♠, knowing of the nine card fit. The Law of Total Tricks - the sum of both sides longest fits - suggests there is safety at the level of your fit, and is correct here. There are 18 total tricks, and both sides have a nine card fit.

3♠ makes when a diamond gets set up, though a west heart switch needs run to the 10. Declarer eliminates spades and diamonds in 3♣, a heart end-playing north. Should south ever lead a heart it must be run to the 9.

22

♠ J943
 ♥ 6542
 ♦ A97
 ♣ K3
 ♠ AKQ75
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ KQJ53
 ♣ 9
 ♠ 10
 ♥ A987
 ♦ 1082
 ♣ Q10752
 ♠ 862
 ♥ J103
 ♦ 64
 ♣ AJ864

 Dealer: East
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	5	2	4	3
W	2	5	2	4	3

West has an awkward hand to handle, probably best being the low approach, opening 1♠, and rebidding 3♦ over east's 1NT, leaving east to attempt to sign off in 3NT. Some wests will now show their 5th diamond via 4♦ and play in 5♦, by far the easiest game, a spade ruffed in dummy and only losing to the trump ace, and the club one, unless it escapes, pitched on a heart.

Defending 3NT south may lead a club and north return the 3 to the 10 and knave. Now, unless the club ace is taken it may never score, declarer able to make an overtrick when the J10 of hearts fall, with east having the diamond 10 as an entry. However, this may be far from obvious to east, who could easily go light, never mind rack up the overtrick.

23

♠ AKQJ108
 ♥ 86
 ♦ K763
 ♣ 3
 ♠ 62
 ♥ AQJ42
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ KQ54
 ♠ 7
 ♥ 953
 ♦ A954
 ♣ J9862
 ♠ 9543
 ♥ K107
 ♦ J108
 ♣ A107

 Dealer: South
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	4	1
S	-	1	-	4	1
E	4	-	3	-	-
W	4	-	3	-	-

We may well have spades out-bidding hearts or clubs again, N/S maybe getting as high as 4♠ should north follow the dictum that "if partner raises your 6 card suit, bid game". However, by no means all will make the ten tricks possible when west's diamond queen proves doubleton, and east has the 9.

However, the auction could peter out at a lower level at some tables unless west introduces his second suit.

Those managing to declare clubs E/W have just about the entries to pick up hearts and score ten tricks. This is a great result if at the 4 level, might not be a duck if at the 5 level, as there will be those N/Ss who will have bid and made the spade game.

24

♠ QJ9752
 ♥ 1042
 ♦ 75
 ♣ 62
 ♠ 84
 ♥ AKQ965
 ♦ 42
 ♣ 1084
 ♠ 106
 ♥
 ♦ Q863
 ♣ AKQJ753
 ♠ AK3
 ♥ J873
 ♦ AKJ109
 ♣ 9

 Dealer: West
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	3	-
S	-	1	-	3	-
E	3	-	1	-	-
W	3	-	1	-	-

West has a proper Weak Two or Multi, if played, east wisest to pass 2♥ or bid his void over the Multi. This will make it difficult for N/S to get to their spade part-score, south far more likely to bid 3♦ than double 2♥.

Where west passes east could open 3NT, showing a solid minor and little else, doubled by south, west removing to 4♣. Now N/S could find their way to 4♠.

Any east who is peeking leads a club to west's 10, and 4♠ is defeated after three top hearts. The rest of the world lead a top club, and declarer can succeed by ruffing the diamond suit good when trumps prove to be 2:2.

25

♠ J10
♥ 1065
♦ AJ1094
♣ 753

♠ K972
♥ K43
♦ 832
♣ K94

♠ AQ64
♥ QJ72
♦ 5
♣ AJ82

♠ 853
♥ A98
♦ KQ76
♣ Q106

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	3	-	3	5	1
W	3	-	3	4	1

East is strong enough to raise to 3♠ when west responds 1♠ to his 1♣ or 1♥. The alternative 4♦ splinter is excessive. West looks to have just enough to advance to game. Where east makes a simple raise E/W may well languish in part-score.

Declaring spades a little care is needed should the defence start with two rounds of diamonds. Declarer cannot pull trumps and knock out the heart ace or he loses a diamond. He needs to play a heart to the king, risking an adverse ruff, before ruffing a second diamond, pulling trumps and clearing hearts.

Indeed eleven tricks are there on this line, it needing an opening club lead and continuation by north to take three defensive tricks in this nice play hand, declarer lucky the side suit breaks 3:3, and trumps behave.

26

♠ J5
♥ QJ85
♦ 10653
♣ 976

♠ 10874
♥ K107
♦ A2
♣ KQJ10

♠ A32
♥ A63
♦ QJ98
♣ A52

♠ KQ96
♥ 942
♦ K74
♣ 843

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	4	3	4	4
W	4	4	3	4	4

East gets to play 3NT whether he opens a strong NT or an Acoll 1♦. South is best to lead a heart, but could lead a spade in the strong NT sequence, it being unclear which major west holds. In Acoll west will have responded 1♠.

The spade lead just could result in eleven tricks, should south cover the diamond queen, but the vast majority will make either nine or ten depending on their play of the diamond suit.

27

♠ J62
♥ A104
♦ KJ74
♣ Q83

♠ 973
♥ QJ2
♦ Q108
♣ AK52

♠ 84
♥ K98653
♦ A
♣ J1096

♠ AKQ105
♥ 7
♦ 96532
♣ 74

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	4	-	2	-
S	-	4	-	2	-
E	1	-	3	-	-
W	1	-	3	-	-

South is a bit too weak to open but gets to show his spades later when east responds 1♥ to west's 1♣, or west's 2♥ completion of east's transfer over a weak NT comes round.

E/W are likely to bid as far as 3♥ with nine trumps (see #21), but may well get out-bid by N/S's spades. Where they get to declare hearts there are an easy nine tricks, losing just a club, trump and two spades.

On the normal heart lead south's spade spot also makes nine tricks, assuming two diamonds are lost. It takes an improbable diamond lead and two ruffs to take five defensive tricks.

It looks like the spade suit could be the winner again, though they may need to be at the 3 level.

28

♠ AQJ92
♥ Q5
♦ KQ6
♣ A32

♠ K73
♥ 963
♦ 932
♣ J654

♠ 108
♥ K108
♦ J105
♣ K10987

♠ 654
♥ AJ742
♦ A874
♣ Q

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	7	6	7	6
S	3	7	6	7	6
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Finally, we have a slam, though it is on decidedly thin values. However, with club shortage and trump support opposite a 5 carder some will get to 6♠. It is easier in Acoll, when north rebids his 15-19 NT over south's 2♥.

Some will have an easy ride on a low club, the queen scoring. A trump finesse, club ruff and another trump finesse let declarer cash the heart ace then run black suit winners, making thirteen tricks when diamonds are 3:3 (as here) or if there is a red suit squeeze. Where east makes a passive lead two clubs cannot be ruffed, but hearts ruff good after a finesse.

So top score should be 6♠+1, those in NT having to be satisfied with a rather lucky twelve tricks. Most will only be in game on this last of a set with a lot of part-score battles. It is hoped they were enjoyed.

Ave HCP	N 9.82	S 10.04	E 10.18	W 9.96	Balanced	N 12	S 13	E 11	W 17
Voids/singletons	N 2/9	S 1/14	E 1/11	W 0/10	7+ suit	N 1	S 0	E 3	W 0