

This concludes our look at the 2016 Corn Cairdis Eire/England friendly event held in Limerick. Eire won the match by a small margin but the great spirit in which the match was played will always be more memorable. Four of the boards, as noted, relate to last week's workshop.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

	♠ A 9 7	
	♥ 8 5	
	♦ Q 10 7 6	
	♣ Q 9 5 3	
♠ 10 5 4		♠ 3 2
♥ A 10 4		♥ K Q 9 7 6 3
♦ 8 4		♦ A 9 3
♣ K J 8 7 4		♣ A 2
	♠ K Q J 8 6	
	♥ J 2	
	♦ K J 5 2	
	♣ 10 6	

EW 5♥; EW 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♦; EW 2♣; Par -450

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	3♦ ¹	Pass
4♥	All pass		

1. Natural game try. Can you help?

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

East doesn't have a big hand in terms of hcps but the very good 6card suit and two aces on the side makes the attempt to reach game attractive. Game try auctions tend to focus on the suits in which declarer could have two or more losers. That is why East bids 3♦, not 3♣ (only one potential loser in clubs, looking at East's hand).

West will accept the try as the doubleton holding is very useful. Declarer will make ten tricks by way of six hearts, one diamond, one diamond ruff and two clubs.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

	♠ A 7 3	
	♥ 7 6 3	
	♦ 10 9 8	
	♣ K 8 7 5	
♠ Q J 8 4		♠ K 9 6 5
♥ A Q 10		♥ 9 8 5 4 2
♦ 7 6		♦ A 2
♣ Q J 9 6		♣ 10 4
	♠ 10 2	
	♥ K J	
	♦ K Q J 5 4 3	
	♣ A 3 2	

EW 3♠; EW 3♥; NS 2♦; EW 1♣; Par -140

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
Dbl	Pass ¹	1♥	2♦
Pass ²	Pass	2♠ ²	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♠	All pass		

1. Might bid 1N or 2♦. Both have a preemptive effect though the hand is very flat for 2♦. Bidding 2♦ could get partner to overcompete.
2. See text.

When West makes a second round pass it is to say that he does not have four hearts. It's another example of bidding to the level of the fit. East's 1♥ bid promised just four hearts so West can only be sure of a seven card fit. That information is very useful for East. If West has only three hearts he must have four spades for the take out double. He competes to 2♠ feeling confident that an 8card 4-4 fit has been reached. North South up the ante by getting to 3♦. Now East West have a decision for which there can be no definitive answer. West, in the above auction, carries on to 3♠ because of the element of a double fit in the majors.

Bidding 3♠ is the winning, if lucky, decision. With the heart honours well placed in the South hand declarer will lose one spade, a diamond and two clubs.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ K Q 7 3
♥ 10 7 5
♦ A J 3
♣ 10 4 3

♠ 5
♥ A J 8 4 2
♦ 10 7 5
♣ A K J 6

♠ J 10 9 4
♥ 6 3
♦ K Q 8 4 2
♣ Q 9

♠ A 8 6 2
♥ K Q 9
♦ 9 6
♣ 8 7 5 2

EW 3♥; EW 4♦; EW 2N; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; Par -140

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥	All pass

A quiet auction where East, holding two doubletons in partner's suits, shows preference for the first suit. This is on the basis that the hearts will be at least as long, if not longer, than the club suit (and always 5+hearts and 4+clubs). The 5-2 fit provides a safer resting spot even the combined club holding has better quality.

It's just possible for declarer to make a staggering ten tricks given that both trump honours are on side - four hearts, two diamonds and four clubs. But making eight or nine tricks will be closer to the norm.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ 9 4
♥ K J 9
♦ 10 7 6 5 3
♣ J 6 3

♠ 10 5 3 2
♥ 10 7 5 3
♦ 4
♣ K Q 5 4

♠ A Q J 8 7 6
♥ Q 6 4 2
♦ 9 8
♣ 9

♠ K
♥ A 8
♦ A K Q J 2
♣ A 10 8 7 2

NS 4♦; EW 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♣; NS 1N; Par +130

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1 ♠ ¹	2 N ²
3 ♠ ³	Pass	4 ♠	Dbl ⁴
Pass	5 ♦	All pass	

1. Light but good suit and shape (and in 3rd seat too)
2. Both minors, at least 5/5 shape.
3. Supporting with support (can, as here, be shaded).
4. Extra values.

A hand involving some high level decision making. South is able to introduce his minors with 2N and can follow up to show a big hand by doubling 4 ♠. Bidding 5 ♦ with the North hand is normal though Pass would be a great call. East West will have done well in the auction if North South continue to 5 ♦ - 4 ♠ could fail by three tricks provided the defence doesn't get too busy by playing on hearts (and because declarer is likely to take a losing spade finesse).

5 ♦ shouldn't make but here's a far-fetched scenario. East cashes ♠ A and switches to a trump. Declarer wins in dummy, plays three rounds of hearts (ruffing the third round high), plays to ♦ 10 and ruffs the spade loser. Now a small club is played from dummy. West can win but is endplayed - forced to either give a ruff and discard or play a club into ♣ A10.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ A K 9 7			
♥ 10 5 4			
♦ 5			
♣ K Q J 3 2			
♠ 10 6 5 3 2	W	N	♠ Q J 8 4
♥ A 9			♥ 6
♦ K J 10 3		E	♦ Q 9 8 7 6
♣ 8 4	S		♣ 10 7 6
♠ —			
♥ K Q J 8 7 3 2			
♦ A 4 2			
♣ A 9 5			

NS 6♥; NS 5♣; NS 2N; NS 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +1400: EW 6♠×-6

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

All pass

1. Ace-showing cue bid.
2. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
3. 1 or 4 of the 5 "aces".

It doesn't do any good to pussy foot around with the South hand. Responder starts with a game forcing jump to 2 ♥. North is able to agree the suit cheaply and that allows an exchange of cue bids (yes, South could [should?] have bid 3 ♠ to indicate the void).

Usually Roman Key Card Blackwood and voids are not a good mix. But they can work well when a player already has an idea of the location of the aces. Here North's reply shows one ace and South is aware that it is the ace of spades from the earlier bidding. That means ♥ A is missing so South signs off in the small slam.

There's nothing to the play. Just knock out the trumps and claim.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ K 9 6 4			
♥ A Q 5 2			
♦ J 5 2			
♣ 4 2			
♠ J 8 2	W	N	♠ Q 10 3
♥ 9 8 7 6			♥ J 10 3
♦ 10 8		E	♦ 9 4
♣ K Q J 3	S		♣ A 9 8 6 5
♠ A 7 5			
♥ K 4			
♦ A K Q 7 6 3			
♣ 10 7			

NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 2N; NS 1♣; Par +420

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	5 ♦	All pass	

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

South shows a long diamond suit with a good 15-bad18 hcps when he jumps to 3 ♦. That bid precludes his holding 4spades. With 4spades he would otherwise bid a simple 1 ♠ or jump to 2 ♠, the latter being a reverse which gets over the strength. North bids his spade suit even though partner has denied 4cards there. By bidding spades North is highlighting the club weakness, a weakness that may put paid to 3N as a resting place.

South cannot bid 3N with his holding so retreats to 4 ♦. North has nothing in reserve so merely raises to game. Spot on. 5 ♦ makes with the loss of two clubs. There is no play for 6 ♦ and 3N is hopeless. For once the correct match pointed pairs contract is 5-of-a-minor.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ Q 9 8 7 5 2
♥ 9 3 2
♦ K 5
♣ J 7

♠ A 10 4 3
♥ K J 8 6
♦ A 9 6 2
♣ 2

♠ K
♥ A Q 7
♦ Q J 4 3
♣ Q 10 9 8 6

♠ J 6
♥ 10 5 4
♦ 10 8 7
♣ A K 5 4 3

EW 5♥; EW 4N; EW 5♦; EW 3♣; EW 1♠; Par -650

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

West might pass on the first round with the dreaded 4441 hand with minimum values. But it's more fun to act quickly. West starts with a middle-from-three-touching-suits 1 ♥. When he shows his second suit (diamonds) East places him with 5hearts and 4diamonds. He may well leap to what he believes to be a 5-3 fit heart game.

In fact East West have arrived in a so-called Moysian fit. This is a 4-3 fit named after an American player, Sonny Moysie, who advocated playing in them for good match point scores. Good scores hopefully but scary contracts too.

Here Sonny would be very pleased as it's possible to make eleven tricks in hearts for a score that will beat those in no trumps. In practice ten tricks in hearts will be more normal (two spades, a spade ruff, four trumps and three diamonds). That will beat those who are held to nine tricks in no trumps.

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ J 8 5 4
♥ Q J 8
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ 8 6

♠ A K Q 10 6 3
♥ 10 3
♦ A 9
♣ Q J 2

♠ 9 2
♥ A 6 2
♦ K J 10 8
♣ K 10 9 3

♠ 7
♥ K 9 7 5 4
♦ 5 3 2
♣ A 7 5 4

EW 5♠; EW 4♣; EW 2N; EW 3♦; EW 1♥; Par -450

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♥ ¹	Pass
4 N ²	Pass	5 ♣ ³	Pass
6 ♠	All pass		

1. Ace-showing cue bid.
2. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
3. 1 of the 5 "aces".

When West bids 4N, holding no control in clubs, he is relying on partner holding the ace or king. A reasonable assumption given the 2 ♣ bid. This is an enterprising contract which sadly fails when the trumps break 4-1. Declarer cannot avoid losing tricks to ♠ J and ♣ A.

Had the trumps been more benign the only lead to give a problem would be a heart. Then declarer would have to take a winning finesse of ♦ J. On the third diamond ♥ 10 could be discarded. Oh well, that's a bit academic now.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ A 10 5 4							
♥ J 6 4							
♦ 6 5 3							
♣ A 6 5							
♠ K 7 6 2	<table><tr><td>N</td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>S</td></tr></table>	N	E	W	S	♠ Q J 9 3	
N	E						
W	S						
♥ Q 8 7 2		♥ K 9					
♦ 4		♦ A K J 10 8					
♣ 9 7 4 2		♣ 10 8					
		♠ 8					
		♥ A 10 5 3					
		♦ Q 9 7 2					
		♣ K Q J 3					

EW 2♠; NS 2♥; NS 1N; NS 2♣; Par -100: NS 2N×-1; NS 3♣×-1;
NS 3♥×-1

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	All pass		

With the spades breaking 4-1 this contract will be touch and go. Let's say South starts with three rounds of clubs. Declarer ruffs and advances ♠ Q, taken by North. A diamond is returned with East going up with the ace. Declarer cashes ♠ J to get the bad news. He continues with a second top diamond, throwing ♣ 9, and ruffs a diamond. Now a heart is played to ♥ K and South's ace. South exits with a small heart, taken with the queen. Declarer has a trump left in each hand so is able to ruff in each hand. That brings the total to eight tricks - three trumps, two diamonds, two diamond ruffs and a heart winner. There are other variations on what is not a straightforward hand. A "small" contract but one with some complexity.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

♠ AKQ95							
♥ Q9732							
♦ AJ8							
♣ —							
♠ 4	<table><tr><td>N</td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>S</td></tr></table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 1086	
N	E						
W	S						
♥ KJ84		♥ 106					
♦ 64		♦ K5					
♣ QJ9874		♣ AK10652					
♠ J732							
♥ A5							
♦ Q109732							
♣ 3							

S 6♦; NS 5♠; N 5♦; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; NS 1N; Par +800:
EW 7♣×-3

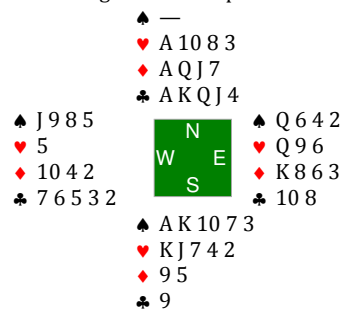
West	North	East	South
		1♣	1♦
1♥	1♠	2♣	2♠
5♣	5♠	All pass	

More high level action with North South, holding the boss suit, coming out on top. 5♠ will make comfortably with North able to set up his partner's diamond suit. There should be at most two losers - one heart and ♦ K.

6♦, by South, makes because West is unable to lead a heart at trick one. That allows declarer to get the trumps drawn before throwing the heart loser on the fifth spade. On a club lead declarer should play 6♦ carefully and reject the diamond finesse. Ruff the club and play ace and another diamond. Now the contract is safe. Had declarer taken the club ruff and come to hand to take a losing diamond finesse he would have failed with either ♥ K set up as a winner or West able to be given a spade ruff (a major suit needed to provide an entry to the South hand).

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs



NS 7♥; NS 6N; N 6♣; NS 4♠; NS 5♦; S 5♣; Par +1510

West	North	East	South
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass	3 ♥ ²
Pass	4 ♣ ³	Pass	4 ♠ ³
Pass	4 N ⁴	Pass	5 ♥ ⁵
Pass	6 ♥	All pass	

1. Fourth suit forcing.
2. Showing 5/5 majors.
3. Ace-showing cue bid.
4. Roman Key Card Blackwood.
5. 2 "aces" without the queen of trumps.

There may be some ambiguity about the 4 ♣ bid which implicitly agrees the hearts as trumps. Why hearts? Well, if North wanted to agree spades he could have bid a simple 3 ♠ instead, a bid that is game forcing. You may ask why 4 ♣ would not be interpreted as natural. First, if North had such a great hand based on clubs, he may have jumped to 3 ♣ on the first round; and, secondly, failing that, he could have jumped to 4 ♣ over 2 ♥.

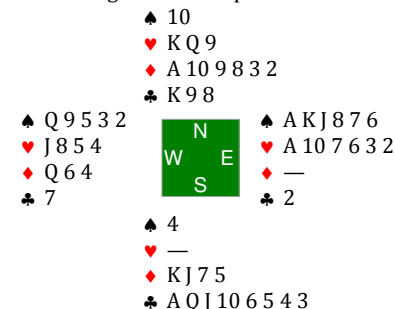
A little like Board 5, North uses RKCB though he holds a void. That works all right because he already has a count on partner's response including ♠ A (4 ♠ cue bid). When partner also confirms ♥ K (but no queen of trumps) North contents himself with 6 ♥.

Declarer is likely to get the trumps wrong by cashing them from the top but he should make twelve tricks. The diamond lead is most threatening but declarer wins with ♦ A, draws two rounds of trumps and plays top clubs. The diamond loser can be discarded along with two spades. It remains to ruff one spade in dummy to claim the contract.

Twelve tricks by way of four hearts, two spades, a spade ruff, a diamond and four clubs.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs



NS 6♦; EW 5♥; EW 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +100; EW 6♥x-1

West	North	East	South
Wolff - USA	Mari - France	Hamman - USA	Chemla - France
Pass	1 ♦	2 ♦	2 ♥
4 ♠	4 N	5 ♠	6 ♣
Pass	6 ♦	6 ♠	7 ♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

A gem. This is Board 52 of the 1980 Olympiad between France and USA, one of the highest quality long matches ever played.

The auction above is taken from the match. The official commentary read:

"Hamman trotted out a worthy Michaels cue bid. Chemla cuebid [2 ♥] to show his diamond fit and Wolff leapt to 4 ♠. Mari had a very good hand on the bidding and tried to show it with 4N [*not some sort of Blackwood*]. Hamman sandbagged with 5 ♠, hoping to buy the contract at the 6level. Chemla brought out his secret weapon over 5 ♠ and Mari converted 6 ♣ to 6 ♦, the agreed trump suit. Hamman followed through with 6 ♠ as he had planned and this put Chemla on the spot. He had a shrewd idea of the devious approach taken by Hamman and he was unwilling to double and collect what promised to be a small penalty at best and an unbearable tragedy at worst. Besides, if he bid the grand, Hamman might be forced to save, or he might guess the wrong lead. Hamman knew his position was precarious but he was unwilling to take out unilateral insurance when his opponents were guessing at the 7level. No coward he - double!"

... and yes, Hamman chose the wrong lead. Knowing of his side's massive spade fit he put the opponents with more hearts. That thinking was correct but ♥ A did not stand up whereas ♠ A would have done.

As this was a teams competition we have to consider the other room too. There the USA collected 200 points from 6 ♠x. That converted to a loss of 19imps, just 1 imp short of the margin by which USA lost the eighty board match.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

<p> ♠ A Q 8 6 5 2 ♥ — ♦ K 8 6 ♣ J 10 9 2 </p>			
<p> ♠ K 7 ♥ K 9 8 ♦ Q 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ A 5 </p>	<p> N W S E </p>	<p> ♠ J 9 4 ♥ Q 10 7 4 ♦ 5 2 ♣ Q 8 6 4 </p>	
<p> ♠ 10 3 ♥ A J 6 5 3 2 ♦ A J ♣ K 7 3 </p>			
<p>NS 4♠; S 3N; NS 3♥; N 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♦; Par +620</p>			
West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			

South's second round bid of 3 ♣ is a subtle way forward. He has enough to force to game but how to do this? By bidding a new suit at the 3level (3 ♥ would be invitational but not forcing). North may raise the clubs* and South can show his meagre support of spades at this point. North, with 6spades, will be happy.

Only a small club from East can legitimately stop declarer making eleven tricks. That doesn't mean that making eleven tricks will be normal as declarer will have to have second sight to make that number. After, say, winning the heart lead in dummy he'll have to take a spade finesse of ♠ Q before trying to ruff the diamond loser. If he doesn't do that East will ruff in on the third diamond. There is no entry to dummy to pick up West's ♠ K. If you missed that play don't be disheartened. You'll be in good company.

**or he could try 3N or bid 3 ♦ to suggest something in diamonds for no trumps. That said, his 6/4 shape looks better suited not to play in no trumps.*

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

24thAugust2016 SupervisedPairs

<p> ♠ J 9 7 2 ♥ 8 7 ♦ A 9 8 6 ♣ Q 9 3 </p>			
<p> ♠ Q 6 4 ♥ K 10 6 ♦ 10 4 2 ♣ K J 10 2 </p>	<p> N W S E </p>	<p> ♠ K 10 3 ♥ A J 9 ♦ K Q 7 3 ♣ A 6 5 </p>	
<p> ♠ A 8 5 ♥ Q 5 4 3 2 ♦ J 5 ♣ 8 7 4 </p>			
<p>EW 5N; EW 5♣; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♦; Par -460</p>			
West	North	East	South
		1 ♦	Pass
1 N	Pass	2 N	Pass
3 N	All pass		

West is top of his range for the 1N 6-9 hcp call. He also has three tens but that positive note is countered by the hand's barren 4333 shape.

South might start with a 4th best lead of a small heart. That does declarer no harm (initially he had a two-way finesse now rendered unnecessary). He can try ♥ 10 from dummy with impunity. When it holds, a diamond is played to ♦ K*. It holds too and a club finesse can be taken. That loses but declarer ought to come to at least nine tricks - one spade, three hearts, two diamonds and three clubs.

*it pays to know your opponents. A crafty South will duck ♦ K though holding ♦ A. Now if that thought crossed your mind you will have something else to consider.