

We carry on with our look at hands from this year's Corn Cairds. Unless otherwise stated these hands formed Stanza 6 of the annual friendly match between Éire and England (played in Limerick).

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 3♠; EW 2♥; NS 2♣; N 1♦; Par +140	
West North East South	
Pass 3♥ 3♠	
Pass 4♠ All pass	

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

West leads his singleton heart and East plays three rounds of the suit. On the third round South ruffs high with ♠ J. If West overruffs there is no defence with East West only able to take ♠ A. Instead West discards a minor suit card and declarer will lose a second trump trick. The third heart from East has promoted ♠ 10 to winning status.

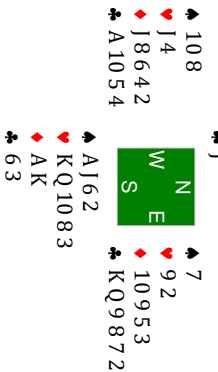
Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 3♥; NS 2N; NS 3♣; NS 2♦; NS 1♠; Par +140	
West North East South	
1N ¹ All pass	
1. 12-14.	

South doesn't have quite enough to double the opening bid (generally 16+hcps, sometimes a good 15). The contract will rest at the one level. Declarer is likely to lose eight tricks for two off though a diamond lead could see the contract fail by three tricks (when it might lose a spade, four hearts, a diamond and three clubs).

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Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul



NS 6♣; NS 6♥; NS 1N; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par +980

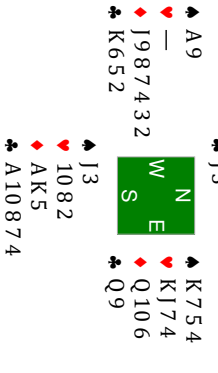
West	North	East	South
Pass	4♣ ¹	Dbf	1♥
Pass	4N ³	Pass	4♦ ²
Pass	6♥	All pass	5♦ ⁴

1. Raise to 4♥ + with a shortage in clubs (splinter bid).
2. Ace-showing cue bid.
3. Roman Key Card Blackwood ("RKCB").
4. 3 of the 5 "aces" (can't be zero because of earlier diamond cue bid).

A good auction to the top spot where North is able to show the shortage in the suit in which South is weak. At match pointed pairs it's often right to cash an ace against a small slam. Here that's right too and East has encouraged the lead of a club by doubling 4♣. Without the club lead declarer has an easy thirteen tricks (six spades, five hearts and two diamonds).

Of course, with South bidding one below the trump suit (5♦) as a response to RKCB, there's no possibility of asking for the trump queen before slam is reached. A risk has to be taken.

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Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul



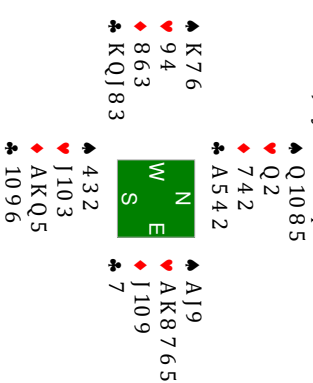
NS 3♥; NS 2♠; S 3♣; NS 1N; EW 2♦; N 2♣; Par +140

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

North has just 9 hcp but the majority of them are in the long suits (good for offence, i.e. playing the hand). Holding 11 cards in the two longest suits the North hand conforms to the Rule of 20. 4♥ is a good contract but the foul 4-0 heart break ensures the contract's demise. Declarer will lose two spades and two trumps (the club loser can be thrown on a top diamond).

Board 5

Board 6
East Deals
E-W Vul



EW 2N, EW 2♠; EW 2♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par -120

1 N ¹	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1. See text.		2 ♥	All pass

With the decent club suit it wouldn't be wrong to bid 2 ♣ instead of 1N with the West hand. The hand can be described as light for a two level response or heavy for a 1N reply. Choices. Whichever path West takes, the contract will rest in 2 ♥. The dynamic defence sees South cash three rounds of diamonds followed by ... a fourth round of the suit. Declarer ruffs in dummy with ♥ 9 and North overruffs with the queen. If declarer overruffs with ♥ K, that will promote a second trump for South (he would have naturally made ♥ J but now makes ♥ 10 too). With declarer having to lose a club that sequence of plays would see East defeated. No, declarer refuses to overruff ♥ 9. He throws the singleton club instead. Now, with the aid of the winning spade finesse, he'll make the contract losing just five tricks - three diamonds, the fourth diamond being ruffed and a trump

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Board 7

South Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 2♠; NS 3♦; EW 3♣; NS 1N; NS 1♥; Par +110

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

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

It would appear that declarer will make nine tricks - five spades and four clubs. But the defence has other ideas. North starts with a fourth best ♥ 5 and South plays three rounds of the suit, declarer ruffing the third round of the suit. A trump is lost to North's ace. North cashes ♦ A and plays a fourth round of hearts. South knows this card is a "winner" but brightly ruffs with ♠ J. This promotes a second spade for the defence - either declarer let's this card win or he overruffs. When he overruffs, ♠ 10 becomes a winner for North.

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Board 8

West Deals

None Vul

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

NS 4N; S 4♥; N 3♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; NS 1♠; Par +430

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	2 N ¹
Pass	3 N	All pass	

1. 19-20.

North might use Stayman but that tends not to happen in the modern game with the barren 4333 shape. Here, as is often the case, a major suit fit is not found but information is given needlessly to the opponents.

Declarer will make nine tricks (three spades, two hearts, three diamonds and a club) but there are chances for declarer to make a tenth. The defence cannot play on clubs without giving declarer a second club trick. Declarer can make a third heart trick by guessing to play ♥ 9 (hessing against ♥ 10); or that same third heart if West wrongly throws a heart (shouldn't because it's an important principle to keep the same length as dummy in a suit - also true of a suit concealed in declarer's hand though that's less easy to "see").

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Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 4♦; EW 2N; EW 3♣; EW 1♥; Par -620			
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦ ¹	1♥	Pass	3♥ ²
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All pass		

1. See text.
2. Preemptive (2♦ would show a good raise).

It's a brave bidder who starts the West hand, which contains 21hcps, at the 1level. That said three-suited and semi-three-suited (i.e. 5440/4441 and 5431 hands) are notoriously difficult to bid. Were West to start with 2♣ the auction would quickly arrive at the 3level (after 2♣ - 2♦ ; 3♦) with West having shown just one suit to date.

The play in 4♠ is difficult but was written up in the Times as having happened at one table. South led a heart, taken by North who returned the suit. Declarer took the king and successfully finessed ♣J. Now two top spades were cashed before the two top clubs were made (North correctly refusing to ruff with the master trump). The club loser was ruffed to hand and ♥8 ruffed in dummy. Declarer got off play by cashing ♦A followed by a low diamond. That luckily lost to ♦K and now declarer could not be prevented from making a trick - either with his remaining trump or ♦J.

Playing in 1♦* might not have been more rewarding. But it would have been easier.

**dependent on North not making a light overcall.*

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Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 3♦; N 1♥; EW 1♠; Par +120			
West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
	Dbl	Pass	1♠
Pass	1N ¹	All pass	

1. Double then a minimum no trump bid shows 16-18 (immediate 1N is [11]12-15).

If East starts with his own suit (♥J, top of an interior sequence) declarer will have easy route to eight tricks. He can take a losing diamond finesse but will make four diamonds, two hearts and always a club and a spade. East's best lead is a club and now declarer will struggle to make seven tricks though it is possible.

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Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

E 3 ♠; NS 3 ♥; W 2 ♠; NS 1N; EW 2 ♦; E 2 ♣; W 1 ♣; Par -100;			
NS 4 ♥ x-1			
West	North	East	South
Pass	2 ♥	Dbl	1 ♥
3 ♠	All pass		3 ♣ 1
1. Natural game try.			

Although South makes a try for game West has more than enough to compete with 3 ♠ once partner has shown some spade length with the takeout double. Obviously West hopes East has four spades and here (as usually) that's the case.

North South can make nine tricks (losing two spades, a diamond and a club) so West can fail by up to two tricks (i.e. losing 50 or 100 compared to losing 140 when 3 ♥ is played) and may still get a reasonable score. Of course declarer will set his sights high but making nine tricks, in practice, appears elusive* - declarer is likely to lose one heart, two diamonds and two clubs. An added complication will occur if the defence starts with two rounds of hearts. That has the effect of seemingly cutting declarer off from the diamond winners.

*a club lead from North definitely beats 3 ♠ though there is a complex line to nine tricks on any other lead.

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Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 2N; NS 2 ♥; NS 1 ♠; EW 1 ♦; NS 1 ♣; Par +120			
West	North	East	South
Pass	1 N ¹	Pass	2 ♦ ²
Pass	2 ♥	All pass	
1. 12-14.			
2. Transfer showing 5+hearts.			

[Follow up to last week's workshop]

East leads ♦ A. East receives a discouraging card from partner. He switches to a neutral club. Declarer wins in hand and runs ♥ 10. It seems unlikely that the defence will make another heart and the minors will only give East West one more trick (♦ K) so West will want to develop spade tricks. We talk about never underleading a side suit aces *at trick one*. But here we're not looking at trick one. Try the effect of West switching to ♠ 2.

Declarer will surely play ♠ 10. East wins and back comes a spade. Shortly thereafter East receives a spade ruff. Seemingly out of nothing, Declarer has been defeated by one trick with the defence taking two spades, a spade ruff, a trump and two diamonds.

Without the dynamic switch to a small spade by West the contract would have made.

Board 13

North Deals
Both Vul

♠ K 7																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
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EW 3♠; NS 3♥; EW 3♦; N 1N; EW 1♣; Par -140

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Dbl	3♥
3♠	4♥	All pass	

East's early intervention on minimal values has bounced the opponents into a non-making game contract. Without East's double it may have been possible for North South to stay in 2/3♥ though East should still make a delayed entry to the auction if it goes 1♥ - 2♥ - Pass by North South.

With the diamond finesse failing, North will lose four tricks - two spades, a heart and that diamond. With North holding ♠K doubleton, 3♠ will make even if the defence is able to organise a club ruff (that will set up a club to discard a diamond).

Board 14

East Deals
None Vul

		♠ J92			
		♥ 96			
		♦ 10965			
		♣ K1074			
West	♠	A10	N	♠	KQ63
	♥	QJ10532		♥	K874
	♦	Q84		♦	A
	♣	J2		♣	9865
		E			
		S			
		♠ 8754			
		♥ A			
		♦ KJ732			
		♣ AQ3			

EW 4♥; EW 1N; EW 1♣; NS 1♦; Par -420

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

1. Preemptive (2♣ would show a better raise).

East would not be worth a 3♥ bid in a non-competitive auction but, in order to show the heart support, he makes the stretch bid of 3♥. 3♥ will not have been made without 4hearts so, though a little light, West jumps to game knowing of the ten card fit. Further, with North South announcing at least nine diamonds between them, West knows at least a couple of diamonds can be ruffed in the dummy.

4♥ turns out to be a fine spot with East's ♦A singleton an unexpected bonus. North is likely to lead a diamond so declarer plays three rounds of spades immediately, throwing one club. Now a trump is led. The defence takes ♥A and a club but East West make eleven tricks for plus 450 to them. Yes, a club would have held declarer to ten tricks but making game will always be good.