

# **British Winter Sim Pairs**



**Thursday  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

Welcome to the British Winter Simultaneous Pairs, whether you are playing online or Face to Face. I sincerely hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert who, for this set of hands, is Paul Bowyer.

Simultaneous Pairs are a great opportunity to play against new opposition – all the pairs from the other participating Clubs from all over the country. It's always fascinating to see how your 'local' score in your own Club (against opponents whom you know) changes once all the national results are incorporated.

This is the start of the 2024 Simultaneous Pairs season, so it's a new year for prizes. Every host club will be entered in to a prize draw made at the AGM in November. So every participating club has a chance to win one of eight cash prizes of £200. The prize for the overall winners of each Sim Pairs is £100, and we wish you luck.

You can find all the full details, results and last year's prize winners at [www.ebu.co.uk/sims/](http://www.ebu.co.uk/sims/)

Blue points are awarded to the top third of the field but please don't be too impatient for the results! Provisional results will appear quickly but they won't be finalised, nor will the Master Points, until all the results are in and any score corrections have been made. This can take up to three weeks. It really helps us if you can keep your scorecard for that period.

Good luck and do enjoy your bridge.

Adrian Darnell, Chairman EBU

<p>♠ K864 ♥ 32 ♦ 1084 ♣ AK104</p> <p>♠ 93                      ♠ AJ52 ♥ AQJ6                  ♥ K105 ♦ 9753                    ♦ KQ2 ♣ Q65                    ♣ J87</p> <p>♠ Q107 ♥ 9874 ♦ AJ6 ♣ 932</p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Pass</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">1NT</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A fairly dull deal to start this set. Most pairs will surely play the East-West cards of this hand in 1NT, reached either via the simple weak no-trump sequence above, or via 1♣ – 1♥ – 1NT if playing a strong no-trump with five-card majors.</p> <p>With four heart winners, a couple of slow diamonds and a spade trick, it does seem that 1NT is going to record the requisite number of tricks. Indeed, if the defenders get it wrong and allow declarer a club trick before setting themselves up a spade winner or two, East may emerge with an overtrick, which should prove valuable at this form of scoring.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	1NT	All Pass																																			
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<p>♠ Q1098 ♥ A96 ♦ K876 ♣ J10</p> <p>♠ A6                      ♠ KJ2 ♥ KQ103                ♥ J542 ♦ 532                     ♦ J94 ♣ KQ73                 ♣ 864</p> <p>♠ 7543 ♥ 87 ♦ AQ10 ♣ A952</p>	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A second consecutive deal that may be played in 1NT after that bid opens and closes the auction. 1NT may well attract the ♠10 lead and now, with the spade finesse working, East-West can see three spades, three hearts and two clubs for an overtrick. However, North-South have plenty of time to switch to diamonds to take four diamonds and two aces to hold the contract tight. Variations are possible, however. Strong no-trumpers may well play in 2♥ on this deal, possibly via 1♣ – 1♥ – 2♥. Our old friend <i>Deep Finesse</i> tells us that seven tricks is the limit in hearts, but that is only if the defence cash three diamonds early and then duck a club in order to pave the way for a ruff. This is not easy to find, so many pairs in hearts will come to eight, or even nine, tricks. An extremely enterprising South may reopen the bidding with a take-out double after 1♣ – 1♥ – 2♥ when that comes back to him. If North-South are allowed to play in 2♠ they may record +110 points for a top score.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass																																						
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<p>♠ 3 ♥ AK96 ♦ 976 ♣ AKQ109</p> <p>♠ KQJ42                ♠ 765 ♥ None                 ♥ QJ7532 ♦ K1085                ♦ 32 ♣ J763                 ♣ 82</p> <p>♠ A1098 ♥ 1084 ♦ AQJ4 ♣ 54</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>With a combined 27 points and no real fit, most players will reach 3NT on this deal by one means or another. Some may respond 1♠ to 1♣ on that South hand, shortening proceedings (1♣ – 1♠ – 2♥ – 3NT) and silencing West. Bid this way, 3NT may attract an opening diamond lead from West, to that player's subsequent regret. Ten tricks are always makeable in 3NT but there are many possible twists in the play, and some may make 8, 9, or even 11 tricks. The scores could be varied on this one, if not the contracts.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	1♠	Dble	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass																													
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<p>♠ A932 ♥ K9642 ♦ 109 ♣ K2</p> <p>♠ J8                      ♠ K74 ♥ 875                    ♥ AQ103 ♦ AJ642                ♦ 83 ♣ Q97                 ♣ AJ85</p> <p>♠ Q1065 ♥ J ♦ KQ75 ♣ 10643</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>For the third time in four deals, we have the possibility of an auction that proceeds 1NT – Pass – Pass – Pass. <i>Deep Finesse</i> tells us that East can make eight (or even nine) tricks here after a spade lead, but that requires X-ray vision to achieve (win the second round of spades, play a diamond to the jack, a heart to the queen, a diamond to the ace, a club to the jack, the ♣A, a club to the queen and a heart to the Ten. South might split his diamond honours, but East can duck the queen leaving a tenace position there). Anyway, that's all fantasy; declarer may pursue another line of play and could end up with any number of tricks, including failing in his contract. What about North-South, though? Many will come back into the auction with those North cards (with 2♣ to show the majors?) and may locate the 4-4 spade fit. 2♠ doesn't fare well on repeated trump leads but may be allowed through otherwise and some North-South pairs may record 110 for an excellent match-point score.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass																																								
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<p>♠ 7643 ♥ AK ♦ AQJ6 ♣ 1065</p> <p>♠ Q9                      ♠ A52 ♥ 63                        ♥ 10754 ♦ 852                        ♦ K973 ♣ QJ9873                ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ KJ108 ♥ QJ982 ♦ 104 ♣ AK</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Three game contracts are available to North-South on this deal, and few will avoid playing in one of them. Most will, in all probability, find the 4-4 spade fit and reach 4♠ where ten tricks are likely, losing two trumps and a diamond. True, <i>Deep Finesse</i> tells us that an overtrick is available in 4♠ but that involves playing a spade to the king on the first round of the suit, not a natural play at all. If declarer does find this line, he can play another trump, take the ♦A on a diamond switch and then throw all of North's diamonds on his heart winners. Played by South, this line is impossible on a diamond lead, note. Played by North, this line is possible but exceedingly unlikely. Played in no-trumps, declarer has to set up three diamond winners early and then guess spades correctly.</p>		West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass	Pass	4♠	All Pass																											
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<p>♠ K8764 ♥ 7 ♦ 97 ♣ AKQ96</p> <p>♠ QJ532                      ♠ 109 ♥ A6                         ♥ Q43 ♦ KQ106                     ♦ 8432 ♣ 72                         ♣ J853</p> <p>♠ A ♥ KJ109852 ♦ AJ5 ♣ 104</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>North-South can make 4♥ on this one and probably most pairs will get there. After a 1♥ opening bid and a 1♠ overcall, North may pass, hoping for a juicy vulnerable penalty. In this regard he isn't wrong, as East-West can be taken for 500 in 1♠ doubled with North-South unable to make more than 420 in hearts. However, South's hand is unsuitable for a reopening take-out double, so the bidding may well proceed along similar lines to those proposed above. After the ♦K lead, South should lose two trumps and a diamond for ten tricks. If West neglects to cash the ♦Q when on lead with the ♥A, it will disappear on dummy's black suit winners.</p>		West	North	East	South				Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass	Pass	Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass	4♥	All Pass																											
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<p>♠ AQJ10942 ♥ None ♦ 9 ♣ J9864</p> <p>♠ 75                         ♠ 3 ♥ A1098                    ♥ KQ643 ♦ Q1065                    ♦ AJ3 ♣ KQ5                      ♣ A1073</p> <p>♠ K86 ♥ J752 ♦ K8742 ♣ 2</p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td></td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4NT*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A difficult to predict competitive deal. After two passes it seems normal to open with a red-blooded 4♠ on that freak 7-5 North hand, and that might win the coconut. If North does play in 4♠ then the only lead to beat it is a trump; West can take the first round of clubs and play another trump, cutting down on North's ability to ruff his club losers on table. On any other lead North can make seven spades, two ruffs in dummy and the long club in hand when the suit proves to break 4-3.</p> <p>The modern style is to double 4♠ on those East cards as a sort of two-way effort. West passes if he can see nothing better, or bids if he thinks his side can make a contract. Here, 4NT shows two places to play and the further bid of 5♦ shows diamonds and hearts. A fanciful auction? Maybe. We shall see.</p>		West	North	East	South					Pass	Pass	4♠		Dble	Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass	5♦	Pass	5♥	Pass	All Pass																							
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<p>♠ Q42 ♥ Q962 ♦ AK7 ♣ J93</p> <p>♠ AK8                      ♠ J3 ♥ None                      ♥ A75 ♦ 9853                      ♦ J10642 ♣ Q87654                  ♣ AK2</p> <p>♠ 109765 ♥ KJ10843 ♦ Q ♣ 10</p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A good hand for a match-point pairs competition. North-South can make eight tricks in hearts or spades, maybe more if the defenders don't get things right. Meanwhile, East-West can make 4♦, losing just three trump tricks. How should the bidding go? Well, the auction above is not so fanciful after a weak no-trump from North and a run-out to 2♥ from South, via a transfer. West should clearly come back into the auction now and it's just a matter of how high each side should bid. With deals like this there are usually scores on both sides of the scoresheet with made contracts (3♥ by North-South and 4♦ or 4♣ by East-West) scoring well above average.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass	3♦	3♥	Pass	Pass	4♦	All Pass
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
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Dble	Pass	3♦	3♥																		
Pass	Pass	4♦	All Pass																		

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
12	-	-	2	2	-	
9      13	-	-	2	2	-	
6	4	4	-	-	3	
	4	4	-	-	3	

<p>♠ Q104 ♥ 754 ♦ 976543 ♣ J</p> <p>♠ 972                      ♠ A653 ♥ 1062                      ♥ QJ9 ♦ AQ10                      ♦ KJ82 ♣ A1085                      ♣ 63</p> <p>♠ KJ8 ♥ AK83 ♦ None ♣ KQ9742</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This is a part-score deal with North-South doing best to play the hand in clubs. However, it's possible that North-South play in 1♥ via the auction above. After 1♣ gets passed around to him, East should certainly protect the auction with a take-out double and South may try 1♥ to see if his side has a fit there. Nope, North has nothing and 1♥ ends proceedings. <i>Deep Finesse</i> says seven tricks in hearts is the limit on the North-South cards but there are twists and turns in the play – West must lead a trump (or an unlikely diamond) to hold the contract to seven tricks, otherwise South will rack up a score of +110 to match those in clubs. Variations? Well, some Easts may open that horrible 11-point hand, leading heaven knows where.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass	Pass	Dble	1♥	All Pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
	Pass	Pass	1♣														
Pass	Pass	Dble	1♥														
All Pass																	

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
3	3	-	1	-	-	
10      11	3	-	1	-	-	
16	-	1	-	1	1	
	-	-	-	1	1	

<p>♠ A4 ♥ A1087 ♦ AK10 ♣ Q932</p> <p>♠ 632                      ♠ KJ109 ♥ 63                      ♥ Q92 ♦ 76543                      ♦ J92 ♣ AK6                      ♣ 1084</p> <p>♠ Q875 ♥ KJ54 ♦ Q8 ♣ J75</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A combined 26 points and a 4-4 fit suggests that North-South should reach 4♥ on this one. Those playing four-card majors and a weak no-trump should bid as above, strong no-trumpers may open 1NT and get there via Stayman. Is 4♥ going to make, however? Well, it has two sure club losers and a certain spade loser – unless East sees fit to lead one at trick one. Therefore, it all boils down to how declarer handles the trumps. It's a classic two-way finesse with a <i>Find the Lady</i> problem. Lucky players will cash the ♥A and run the ♥10; unlucky players will lead to the ♥K and run the ♥J. <i>C'est la vie</i>. Bashers who lay down the ♥A and ♥K hoping the queen will fail, by the way, and will deserve to do so.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
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HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
17	4	2	4	3	3	
7      7	4	2	4	3	3	
9	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

<p>♠ KJ65 ♥ AJ2 ♦ 93 ♣ A754</p> <p>♠ A842                      ♠ 93 ♥ Q86                        ♥ K1074 ♦ AQ104                     ♦ K652 ♣ J9                            ♣ Q62</p> <p>♠ Q107 ♥ 953 ♦ J87 ♣ K1083</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>8</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>6</td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	13		N	1	-	-	-	-	13	8	S	1	-	-	-	-			E	-	3	2	1	1		6	W	-	3	2	1	1	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Another probable 1NT – Pass – Pass – Pass auction (see Boards 1, 2, 4 and 20). On a spade lead the defenders can always make three spades, one heart and two clubs, forcing West to finesse the ♥10 for his contract. After a low club lead, to the ♣10 and the ♣J, declarer has a club trick and a little more elbow room. He has more time to play on hearts and may make overtricks if he takes advantage of the favourable layout of the heart suit. One spade, three hearts, four diamonds and a club make nine. A score of 150 to East-West is sure to be an excellent match-point score for their side.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	1NT	All Pass		
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<p>♠ AJ9 ♥ 1076 ♦ K752 ♣ K103</p> <p>♠ K                              ♠ 754 ♥ 53                             ♥ KQ42 ♦ AQ1083                     ♦ 96 ♣ QJ874                      ♣ 9652</p> <p>♠ Q108632 ♥ AJ98 ♦ J4 ♣ A</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>5</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>12</td><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	11		N	-	1	4	5	4	12	5	S	-	1	4	5	4			E	1	-	-	-	-		12	W	1	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥?</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>With every card lying well for them (the ♠K, the ♦A and the two heart honours) North-South have an easy time in making eleven tricks in spades. Should they bid 4♠? Of course! Why not? The auction above is not unreasonable. East may choose to respond 1♥ to his partner's 1♦ opening bid (it's not unreasonable) and South has an obvious 1♠ overcall. North's 2♦ bid is designed to say that he has spade support and more than a mere courtesy raise, allowing South to jump to game. The play should provide few problems.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1♦	Pass	1♥?	1♠	2♣	2♦*	Pass	4♠	All Pass			
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<p>♠ A874 ♥ KQJ53 ♦ J ♣ K83</p> <p>♠ K53                            ♠ J96 ♥ A8                             ♥ 9642 ♦ A8542                        ♦ Q3 ♣ J75                            ♣ 10642</p> <p>♠ Q102 ♥ 107 ♦ K10976 ♣ AQ9</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>3</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>11</td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	14		N	3	4	4	3	4	12	3	S	3	4	4	3	4			E	-	-	-	-	-		11	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>North-South have a combined 25 points and no real fit, so should reach 3NT fairly comfortably. The above auction is reasonable enough with North lacking the values to show his spades on the second round. West has an awkward lead against the no-trump game – a diamond is unlikely to be profitable after South has bid the suit; indeed, repeated diamond leads may allow South to get both hearts and diamonds going for a possible eleven tricks. Best is a passive club lead, but West may be swayed by the fact that no one has bid spades. A low spade lead run round to the ♠Q would open up a frozen suit and get declarer off to a flying start. Eleven tricks would become very likely now. 660 to North-South is sure to score well above average with 630 being the most common score.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass	
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<p>♠ AJ1098 ♥ 10 ♦ Q8654 ♣ 32</p> <p>♠ Q64                      ♠ 3 ♥ 9842                      ♥ AK75 ♦ J92                         ♦ A103 ♣ Q106                      ♣ AJ975</p> <p>♠ K752 ♥ QJ63 ♦ K7 ♣ K84</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> </table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>A part-score battle where the deal belongs to North-South in spades. In fact, as <i>Deep Finesse</i> solemnly informs us, game is available as ten tricks can be made in 4♠ if declarer does everything right. Mind you, 4♠ is no thing of beauty as it requires North to take the right view in trumps as well as relying on a favourable diamond split.</p> <p>Should South double East's opening bid of 1♣? It's not exactly classic but, on the other hand, he does have both majors and it pays to get into the auction at match-point pairs. If South does double, North is not going to allow East-West to steal the deal below the four-level. If East doubles 2♠, as in the auction above, that might induce North to take the right view in trumps and rack up ten tricks. +170 should score well for North-South.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			1♣	Dble	Pass	2♠	Dble	Pass	3♣	3♦	Pass	3♠																																
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<p>♠ None ♥ QJ1063 ♦ K87 ♣ KJ543</p> <p>♠ AK108                      ♠ QJ9643 ♥ K94                         ♥ 2 ♦ 104                         ♦ AQ5 ♣ Q986                      ♣ A107</p> <p>♠ 752 ♥ A875 ♦ J9632 ♣ 2</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♥*</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A comfortable game for East-West, with 4♠ having 11 available tricks, losing just one heart and one club. Any guess in clubs is likely to be resolved immediately as South probably will lead his singleton at trick one, setting up three club winners for declarer.</p> <p>Indeed, if North fails to lead a heart when declarer has drawn trumps and played on clubs, East can get his heart away and make twelve tricks (six spades, three clubs, two diamonds via the finesse and a diamond ruff on table).</p> <p>In the auction above, incidentally, 2♥ shows, in the modern style, hearts and a minor. With only a long heart suit North would have bid 2♦ to show a hand with a six-card major.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	1NT	2♥*	4♠	All Pass																																				
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<p>♠ 10 ♥ KJ95 ♦ QJ63 ♣ 10953</p> <p>♠ 8432                      ♠ AQJ95 ♥ Q103                      ♥ 642 ♦ 1098                      ♦ K75 ♣ KQJ                        ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ K76 ♥ A87 ♦ A42 ♣ A876</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A part-score battle where East-West would be well-advised to withdraw gracefully early in the piece. With the cards lying as they do, North-South can take seven tricks against a spade contract, so even 2♠ by East would be booked for the kiss-of-death match-point score of -200.</p> <p>Strong no-trumpers may open 1NT on the South cards and play there. After a spade lead, South can make eight tricks by taking both red-suit finesses. With hearts 3-3 declarer can make one spade, four hearts, two diamonds and a club.</p> <p>Where South opens 1♣ things get more interesting. North responds 1♦ or 1♥ according to taste, East is likely to overcall 1♠ and the auction may proceed as above. Ten tricks in clubs or an unlikely nine tricks in hearts should score well but that may depend on how many scores of 200 are conceded by East-West.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	1♠	1NT	2♠	3♣	All Pass																																	
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<p>♠ 865432 ♥ K ♦ 9764 ♣ 104</p> <p>♠ 10                      ♠ AKJ7 ♥ AQ1063                ♥ 987 ♦ J                            ♦ K102 ♣ AQJ962                ♣ K83</p> <p>♠ Q9 ♥ J542 ♦ AQ853 ♣ 75</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>With its 6-5 pattern, that's an awkward West hand opposite a weak no-trump. Maybe it's best to treat it as a 5-5 hand and transfer into hearts and then bid a game-forcing 3♣. When East jumps to 4♥, showing a lack of interest beyond game, West should probably call it a day.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> points out smugly that both 6♣ and 6♥ are makeable. Sure they are, but only if you can see all four hands. Against a slam, South is likely to cash the ♦A and now declarer (East, remember) has to cash the ♥A, cross to hand and run the ♥9. In your dreams...</p> <p>Many pairs will make twelve tricks in game, though. South has no reason to cash his ace against a modest 4♥ and now dummy's diamond will disappear rapidly on the ♠AK. If East runs the ♥9 he can pick up trumps for one loser and make two overtricks in 4♥.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass																										
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<p>♠ 1093 ♥ KQJ10 ♦ J9 ♣ A1062</p> <p>♠ A754                      ♠ J62 ♥ 8762                      ♥ 5 ♦ 53                            ♦ AQ10762 ♣ J98                        ♣ K53</p> <p>♠ KQ8 ♥ A943 ♦ K84 ♣ Q74</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A deal where the auction is far from clear. What should you do with that East hand? Some will pass, some will try 1♦, some will prefer to pre-empt with a weak 2♦ – if playing that method. If East passes, South should open 1NT and North-South should reach 4♥ via a Stayman sequence. If East opens 2♦, the bidding might proceed as above, although some will double on the South cards. After an opening 1♦... who knows?</p> <p>4♥ is thin but the adverse cards lie very well for North-South. True, trumps are splitting 4-1 but, against that, clubs are 3-3 with the king (and jack) well placed. The ♦A is also where you need it to be, and it is possible to play spades for just one loser. Ten tricks should arrive in one way or another.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			2♦*	Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass																									
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<p>♠ 109 ♥ J87 ♦ Q8652 ♣ J42</p> <p>♠ J763                      ♠ KQ54 ♥ K62                        ♥ Q93 ♦ 104                        ♦ J73 ♣ K963                      ♣ A85</p> <p>♠ A82 ♥ A1054 ♦ AK9 ♣ Q107</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A part-score deal where there may be a struggle for match-points at a low level. Some may open that South hand with a strong no-trump and play there. A spade lead should hold South to seven tricks and a score of 90; a club lead and return may well allow a valuable overtrick and a fine score of 120.</p> <p>Where South opens 1♥, as many will, that will be passed to East. It looks right to protect the auction here – double is possible but 1NT (showing 11-13 or thereabouts) looks more normal. That can be beaten easily enough if North-South play five rounds of diamonds, but that defence may not be obvious. Some will be allowed to make the hand, scoring 90 their way, most will fail for 100 to North-South. That will be better than allowing South to make 110 in 1♥ or 120 in 1NT plus one but will lose to 1NT just making by South. Anyone reaching 2♠ and making it as East-West is sure to score well.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				1♥	Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass																														
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<p>♠ 2 ♥ 982 ♦ AJ64 ♣ J9652</p> <p>♠ AK108                  ♠ Q643 ♥ 7543                    ♥ AK106 ♦ 973                      ♦ Q5 ♣ Q7                      ♣ 1083</p> <p>♠ J975 ♥ QJ ♦ K1082 ♣ AK4</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> </table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>Yet another hand that may be played in 1NT after the mundane auction of 1NT – All Pass. However, South may regret opening the hand at all if East-West cash four spades and four hearts, landing South with the dreaded score of -200.</p> <p>Some Easts may open that 11-point hand in third seat and steal the deal in something or other, maybe 3♥. This can make, although declarer has to drop the ♥QJ in order to do so.</p> <p>Other Easts may pass on the first round but come back into the auction after 1NT comes back to them. Some might try 2♣ to show both majors, if those are their methods, and play in two of a major, scoring 110 or 140. This may appear a triumph but that may depend on how many scores of 200 are conceded by North-South in 1NT down two.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>						
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT						

HCP		Makeable contracts					
6	11		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9		N	3	4	-	-	-
14		S	3	4	-	-	-
		E	-	-	3	2	-
		W	-	-	3	2	-

<p>♠ 763 ♥ 93 ♦ KJ95 ♣ QJ108</p> <p>♠ Q104                  ♠ A852 ♥ AQJ1085            ♥ K ♦ Q                      ♦ 108764 ♣ K97                  ♣ A42</p> <p>♠ KJ9 ♥ 7642 ♦ A32 ♣ 653</p>	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>With a combined 25 points it looks likely that East-West will play this one in game, probably 4♥ but maybe 3NT. The latter has nine top tricks (one spade, six hearts and two clubs) but 4♥ is sure to make more as the spade honours are lying favourably.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> points out that 3NT can be held to nine tricks as North-South can take three diamonds and a spade. However, if they plug away in clubs, overtricks are likely. Similarly, in 4♥ Declarer can win the club lead on the table and play a spade at trick two. This way he can set up three spades, six hearts and two clubs for an overtrick.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
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HCP		Makeable contracts					
7	11		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
14		N	-	-	-	-	-
8		S	-	-	-	-	-
		E	1	2	5	4	3
		W	1	2	5	4	3

<p>♠ AQ7 ♥ 42 ♦ KJ832 ♣ QJ2</p> <p>♠ 1032                  ♠ J98 ♥ 1087                  ♥ A653 ♦ 9765                  ♦ A ♣ 864                    ♣ AK953</p> <p>♠ K654 ♥ KQJ9 ♦ Q104 ♣ 107</p>	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Some variation is possible on this part-score deal with North-South doing best to play in 3♦ and record nine tricks for +110. Some Souths will double East's opening bid of 1♣, which is far from ridiculous with 4-4 in the majors. Now North might respond with something strong, and force the bidding to game. However, nothing makes North-South's way as there are four top losers in a suit contract and a club leads hold no-trumps to seven tricks.</p> <p>If South passes 1♣ then North has to find a bid in the protective position. A bid of 1NT may secure the auction, although South may apply Stayman, risking going overboard.</p> <p>Of course, East may feel that this hand belongs to his side. If he forges ahead with a second bid, he will find out that it very much isn't. Just look at those West cards!</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			1♣	Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
		1♣	Pass										
Pass	1NT	All Pass											

HCP		Makeable contracts					
13	16		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
0		N	1	3	1	3	1
11		S	1	3	1	3	1
		E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ KJ3 ♥ Q42 ♦ AK9632 ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ AQ8765      ♠ 10 ♥ 65            ♥ KJ98 ♦ J10            ♦ 854 ♣ J65            ♣ KQ732</p> <p>♠ 942 ♥ A1073 ♦ Q7 ♣ A1084</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		13		N	-	4	4	-	4	8	9	S	-	4	4	-	4			E	1	-	-	-	-			W	1	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠*</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>3NT makes for North-South on this deal, but the problem is in bidding it. After West opens 2♠ (or, perhaps, a multi-coloured 2♦) North has a clear-cut overcall of 3♦. South has three very useful cards now with the ♦Q likely to fill in partner's suit. A bid of 3♠ asks North to bid 3♠ if he can stop the spades and that gets the job done.</p> <p>There are greater problems after West opens 2♦ (multi) and an overcall of 3♦. Now West's suit is undeclared, so it isn't so easy for South to find an accurate bid. If South closes his eyes and punts 3NT he will do well.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	2♠*	3♦	Pass	3♠*	Pass	3NT	All Pass	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																															
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<p>♠ 7 ♥ AK7 ♦ Q976532 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ AQJ6432      ♠ 109 ♥ 3                ♥ J108654 ♦ None            ♦ KJ ♣ Q8742        ♣ A109</p> <p>♠ K85 ♥ Q92 ♦ A1084 ♣ J63</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>5</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>5</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		12		N	-	4	-	-	-	9	9	S	-	4	-	-	-			E	5	-	1	5	2			W	5	-	1	5	2	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td>5♦?</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Well, who knows what will happen on this one? The West cards are uncannily similar to the North cards of Board 7 with a similar opening bid problem. Here, though, West is not vulnerable and is first in hand. There is a case for passing, hoping to come in later and fooling the opponents but the more forthright 4♠ seems more sensible. That may well win the coconut and should make easily enough. If West takes the right view of the cards, he can make eleven tricks for a fine match-point score of 450 points.</p> <p>North-South do best to advance to 5♦ over 4♠, but should they? Bidding on that North hand after 4♠ has been opened on the right seems a random punt, but dummy is a goldmine. Declarer can make ten tricks after two rounds of spades by means of an endplay – ruff the second spade, cash the ♦A and then three rounds of hearts. Now the stage is set; North puts East on lead with the master trump and that player can do little but cash the ♣A and concede the rest.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	4♠	5♦?	All Pass	
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<p>♠ 864 ♥ Q3 ♦ QJ32 ♣ AJ107</p> <p>♠ J75            ♠ KQ32 ♥ AK2           ♥ J10984 ♦ AK975        ♦ 10 ♣ K6            ♣ Q84</p> <p>♠ A109 ♥ 765 ♦ 864 ♣ 9532</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>8</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		10		N	-	-	-	-	-	18	8	S	-	-	-	-	-			E	2	3	5	5	3			W	2	3	5	5	4	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>An easy and obvious game to East-West with 4♥ and 3NT both possible final contracts. <i>Deep Finesse</i> points out that ten tricks are available in no-trumps and eleven in hearts, but this involves dropping the ♥Q doubleton. However, this may well happen.</p> <p>Against 3NT by West, North may elect to lead the ♣J, won by the ♣K. If South holds up the ♠A for two rounds the hand looks difficult, but what does the defence do after a third round of spades? If they clear the clubs, declarer can't afford the heart finesse and may just play for his contract by laying down the ♥AK...</p> <p>In 4♥, declarer doesn't know spades are 3-3. East may play to ruff a club on table and then cash the ♥AK. Playing this way he may emerge with eleven tricks.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass#	2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass		
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<p>♠ 9872 ♥ 972 ♦ QJ976 ♣ 2</p> <p>♠ Q3 ♥ None ♦ AK8542 ♣ QJ963</p> <p>♠ K105 ♥ AKQJ43 ♦ None ♣ A1054</p> <p>♠ AJ64 ♥ 10865 ♦ 103 ♣ K87</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A horrible misfit of a hand where East-West will be glad to emerge with a plus score. After 1♥ – 2♦ East has to find a rebid. He does best to try 3♥, which will at least keep his side out of trouble. If he chooses to make a high reverse of 3♣ it isn't clear where the auction is headed; I can see many ending in the 50-50 club slam, defeated by the ♠A lead and the position of the ♣K.</p> <p>Note that West has a real problem after 1♥ – 2♦ – 3♥. Nowadays, 4♣ would be read as a cue-bid, agreeing hearts, so West has to bury his five-card suit. "Not every bid is a cue-bid", said an erstwhile partner of mine, haughtily, after bidding 4♣ on a similar hand to West's some time ago. True, but this one definitely is, and East-West are sure to play in a slam of some sort if West does bid 4♣.</p>		West	North	East	South				1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass		3♥	Pass	4♦	Pass		4♥	All Pass																												
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<p>♠ Q1083 ♥ Q862 ♦ J108 ♣ K4</p> <p>♠ A9 ♥ A9 ♦ K7643 ♣ 9762</p> <p>♠ KJ764 ♥ 10754 ♦ AQ9 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ 52 ♥ KJ3 ♦ 52 ♣ QJ10853</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>East-West have 25 points and can make game in three strains. No one plays in 5♦ at match-point pairs, so that is an unlikely spot, even though <i>Deep Finesse</i> says that West can make twelve tricks. (That's "can", note, not "should"). Most will play in 3NT giving North an opening lead problem. The highly speculative ♣K works best, but who is going to do that? Now declarer is likely to funk the spade finesse and grab his nine top tricks (two spades, one heart, five diamonds and one club). After a heart lead, say, declarer has more time and may take the spade finesse, making an overtrick for a decent match-point score.</p>		West	North	East	South					Pass	Pass	Pass		1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass		2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass		3NT	All Pass																							
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<p>♠ QJ7 ♥ None ♦ K107 ♣ AKJ10963</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ AK8 ♦ AQJ6432 ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ A94 ♥ 1097543 ♦ 98 ♣ 85</p> <p>♠ K86532 ♥ QJ62 ♦ 5 ♣ Q7</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>3♦</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A very difficult hand to judge in the bidding and a very difficult hand to predict. 4♥ is a reasonable spot for East-West, but the 4-0 trump split and the position of the ♦K makes that a non-starter. 5♣ for North-South looks attractive at first glance but that can always be beaten via the ♦A, the ♠A and a spade ruff.</p> <p>The only making game for either side is 4♠ and the only route I can find to that is shown above. Whether that happens often (or at all!) is something we will only discover with time.</p> <p>After the ♥A lead, declarer can ruff and play a trump. East ducks the ace of trumps and wins the next trump to play a heart, but the ♥Q J combination prevents the defence from taking more than one spade, one heart and one diamond.</p>		West	North	East	South		1♦	2♣	Pass	2♠		3♦	4♠	All Pass																																		
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