

Dunkeld café drive hand commentary by Liz McGowan

1		♠ T4	
		♥ —	
		♦ A98643	
		♣ AT976	
N / -			
♠ J75		♠ AK862	
♥ KQ875		♥ J6432	
♦ —		♦ J2	
♣ 85432		♣ J	
NSEW		♠ Q93	
NT 11 1		♥ AT9	
♠ 4 8-9		♦ KQT75	
♥ 3 10		♣ KQ	
♦ 11 0			
♣ 9 2			
			8 H C P 16
		6	10

An exciting hand to start. North has the perfect hand for a 2NT opener that shows a weak hand with both minors, popular in some European countries but not this one. If North opens 1♦ South may drive to the unfortunate slam; but pass may produce the same result. East-West will do well to find their save in 5♥.

2		♠ KJ53	
		♥ KQJT7	
		♦ —	
		♣ AQJ7	
E / NS			
♠ 7		♠ 964	
♥ 932		♥ A4	
♦ AT9		♦ KQ763	
♣ K65432		♣ T98	
NSEW		♠ AQT82	
NT 8 5		♥ 865	
♠ 12 1		♦ J8542	
♥ 11 2-1		♣ —	
♦ 6 6-7			
♣ 6 7			
			17 H C P 7
		7	9

Can North-South reach slam? After 1♥ - 1♠ - North is worth a splinter bid of 4♦ to show the shortage. South will not like his xxx in hearts, but he has good trump and club control so should at least make a try. Now the question is: can South make 12 tricks? You need to knock out the ♥A and take 2 diamond ruffs in dummy before drawing trump.

3		♠ AQT93	
		♥ K653	
		♦ Q2	
		♣ K9	
S / EW			
♠ K765		♠ 4	
♥ AT2		♥ QJ98	
♦ JT		♦ AK653	
♣ AQJ8		♣ 632	
NSEW		♠ J82	
NT 5 7-8		♥ 74	
♠ 7 5-6		♦ 9874	
♥ 4 9		♣ T754	
♦ 4 9			
♣ 4 9			
			14 H C P 1
		15	10

East-West have the high card points for game but not the luck. Perhaps a 1♠ overcall from North (or a bid that shows both Majors over a strong no-trump) will sound a warning. A good time to be pessimistic.

4 ♠ AQT
 ♥ —
 ♦ KJ9842
 ♣ A876

W / All

♠ K98 ♠ J7654
 ♥ KJ43 ♥ 75
 ♦ QT ♦ 753
 ♣ Q542 ♣ KT3

NSEW	
NT	10 3
♠	8-7 5
♥	10 3
♦	11 1
♣	9 4-3

♠ 32 14
 ♥ AQT9862 H
 ♦ A6 C
 ♣ J9 P
 11 4

Many players open every 11 count these days. I would not open this collection as West, but I suppose it might make life difficult for NS. South should probably blast 4♥ at the first available opportunity and North should know better than to argue.

5 ♠ KJ6
 ♥ KQ843
 ♦ T954
 ♣ 9

N / NS

♠ AT942 ♠ 73
 ♥ 962 ♥ AJ
 ♦ AQ8 ♦ 763
 ♣ 63 ♣ AK8752

NSEW	
NT	5 6
♠	4 8
♥	7 5
♦	6 6
♣	4 8

♠ Q85 9
 ♥ T75 H
 ♦ KJ2 C
 ♣ QJT4 P
 10 12
 9

After 1♣ – 1♠ – 2♣ West will do well to give up and watch partner struggle. It is tempting to bid 2NT, but even if North leads a low heart the rotten club break means 7 tricks are the limit. Unlucky – but at least if you go down you will not be alone.

6 ♠ Q854
 ♥ K952
 ♦ A6
 ♣ QJ2

E / EW

♠ AJ3 ♠ K9
 ♥ AJ4 ♥ T8763
 ♦ KJ742 ♦ QT85
 ♣ 87 ♣ T9

NSEW	
NT	7 5
♠	8 4
♥	4 9
♦	4 8
♣	8 4

♠ T762 12
 ♥ Q H
 ♦ 93 C
 ♣ AK6543 P
 14 5
 9

A partscore struggle. The par contract is 3♠-1 by North-South, but it is hard to see how to get spades into the auction. South might open a 'modern' pre-empt of 3♣ to put pressure on West – and might even make it – the winning defence of a low spade to organise a ruff, then a diamond switch, is not exactly obvious.

7
S / All

♠ 96
♥ JT83
♦ J987
♣ 643

♠ 875
♥ 74
♦ QT32
♣ KJ82

♠ KQT4
♥ 62
♦ K65
♣ AQ75

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	7 5	♠ AJ32	♥ AKQ95	♦ A4	♣ T9
	♠ 6 5				
	♥ 9 4				
	♦ 6 7				
	♣ 5 8				

2
H
C
P
14
18

This one might be fairly flat. There are 9 tricks in hearts, hard to see any more or less. Some may get too high if North makes an imaginative pre-emptive raise. or East-West might get into trouble if the auction starts normally: 1♥ – Pass – Pass – Dbl. Competing too far may achieve the dreaded -200.

8
W / -

♠ 8
♥ KT98652
♦ AKQJ
♣ 6

♠ QJ532
♥ A
♦ T952
♣ J83

♠ AKT964
♥ J3
♦ 4
♣ AQT4

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	5 8	♠ 7	♥ Q74	♦ 8763	♣ K9752
	♠ 2 11				
	♥ 9 3				
	♦ 9 4				
	♣ 5 7				

13
H
C
P
14
5

Whatever North does, East should insist on playing in spades – they are not called the Boss Suit for nothing. Those who reach 6♠ are entitled to feel unlucky – the club finesse is a favourite after North opens the bidding. If North-South overcompete to 6♥ West should try to silence partner by doubling.

9
N / EW

♠ KT76
♥ K
♦ AQ865
♣ A42

♠ 8432
♥ T743
♦ J32
♣ KT

♠ QJ
♥ AQJ98
♦ KT94
♣ 93

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	8 1	♠ A95	♥ 652	♦ 7	♣ QJ8765
	♠ 9 1				
	♥ 6 6				
	♦ 8 5				
	♣ 12 1				

16
H
C
P
13
7

The computer Double Dummy Analysis tells us that North-South can make 6♣ here, but nobody is going to bid that. It also tells us that North-South cannot make 3NT, but some will if East leads a low heart... The most interesting game contract is 4♠.

10 ♠ QJ9
 E / All ♥ J98
 ♦ AK
 ♣ A9542

♠ T ♠ K543
 ♥ AKQ73 ♥ T62
 ♦ T874 ♦ J962
 ♣ JT8 ♣ KQ

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣	HCP
NT	7 6	A8762	54	Q53	763	15
♠	9 4					10
♥	6 7					9
♦	5 8					6
♣	9 4					

A light 1♥ opener in 3rd seat (what would you like partner to lead?) gives North a problem with no good solution. Double works best here, better than a 2-level overcall on this skinny club suit. It does not work so well if partner bids diamonds, but it does not do to be too pessimistic.

11 ♠ Q43
 S / - ♥ T2
 ♦ QJT8742
 ♣ 7

♠ J5 ♠ K982
 ♥ AJ5 ♥ KQ643
 ♦ AK96 ♦ 53
 ♣ 6543 ♣ KJ

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣	HCP
NT	5 8-6	AT76	987	—	AQT982	5
♠	7 6-4					13
♥	4 8-7					12
♦	8-7 5-4					10
♣	8 5					

Another board where East-West have the HCP values for game, but no game makes. When the computer tells you that one partner can make more tricks than the other it is time to look at the opening lead. North can lead a diamond against a heart contract and regain the lead with a club ruff to give partner a second ruff.

12 ♠ AQ985
 W / NS ♥ 983
 ♦ 732
 ♣ AK

♠ KT ♠ 763
 ♥ AT2 ♥ 54
 ♦ AJ95 ♦ KT864
 ♣ T432 ♣ Q75

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣	HCP
NT	7 6	J42	KQJ76	Q	J986	13
♠	10 2					12
♥	11 2					5
♦	5 8					10
♣	7 5					

A weak 1NT opener from West might buy the contract. North should really pass with the flat 5=3=3=2 distribution, and a spade lead lets 1NT make. South might venture 2♥ in 4th seat at different vulnerability, but it feels wrong when vulnerable against non-vulnerable.

13 ♠ AKT965
 N / All ♥ 74
 ♦ 63
 ♣ 762

♠ Q3 ♠ J84
 ♥ AT9862 ♥ Q5
 ♦ 85 ♦ AT42
 ♣ AJT ♣ 9843

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	6 6	7 2	KJ3	KQJ97	7 H C P 15
♠	8 4				
♥	5 7				
♦	8 5				
♣	6 7				

A model weak 2 opener for North. South has no Aces and no particular fit, so should take no action. Bold Wests re-open the auction with 3♥, likely regretting their bravery when 7 tricks are the limit. Seems that for East-West to-day “the happy card is Green”.

14 ♠ 9
 E / - ♥ KT532
 ♦ J94
 ♣ QT73

♠ AKQ ♠ JT875432
 ♥ 764 ♥ A9
 ♦ T862 ♦ A
 ♣ KJ6 ♣ 82

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	2·3 10	6	QJ8	KQ753	6 H C P 12
♠	2 11				
♥	8 5				
♦	9 4				
♣	8 4				

An interesting choice of opening bid for East. I could not bring myself to pre-empt with two side Aces, so I would open 1♠ and rebid 4♠, rather to partner’s surprise. North-South cannot profitably compete with the Boss suit, so this should be a flat board.

15 ♠ AJ65
 S / NS ♥ KJ854
 ♦ K5
 ♣ 63

♠ 93 ♠ KQ
 ♥ Q973 ♥ A2
 ♦ QJ6 ♦ 432
 ♣ K742 ♣ QJT985

NSEW		♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	6 6	T8742	T6	AT987	12 H C P 8
♠	11 2				
♥	9 4				
♦	9 3				
♣	6 7				

A 2♣ overcall over North’s 1♥ opener might make it hard to reach spades, especially when West raises. As a Passed Hand South should have the confidence to bid 2♠, knowing such enterprise will not be punished by partner. North is worth a raise, but the partnership might miss game this time.

16 ♠ Q8
 ♥ AT63
 W / EW ♦ AT43
 ♣ 743

♠ T974 ♠ AJ652
 ♥ Q92 ♥ J4
 ♦ QJ98 ♦ 5
 ♣ K9 ♣ QT862

N		S		E		W	
NT	7	6					
♠	5	8					
♥	9	4					
♦	8	5					
♣	5	7					

♠ K3 10
 ♥ K875 H
 ♦ K762 C 8
 ♣ AJ5 P
 14

At Match Pointed Pairs a 1NT contract rarely scores as well as Two of a Major. But weak no-trumpers have no way to reach 2♥ unless South decides to upgrade. Which might lead to an even worse score if you reach the non-making heart game. Some Wests will open, propelling you too high by a different route.

17 ♠ QJT2
 ♥ 864
 N / - ♦ K864
 ♣ T8

♠ K76 ♠ A83
 ♥ AKT7 ♥ J92
 ♦ T932 ♦ AQ5
 ♣ AQ ♣ J975

N		S		E		W	
NT	2	11					
♠	3	10					
♥	1	12					
♦	2	11					
♣	3	10					

♠ 954 6
 ♥ Q53 H
 ♦ J7 C 12
 ♣ K6432 P
 16 6

If East opens 1NT there is a good case for a simple raise to 3NT, giving no information away. Even if West uses Stayman the contract and opening lead will be the same. This time all the finesses work, and you have little choice but to take them.

18 ♠ 9762
 ♥ T732
 E / NS ♦ Q64
 ♣ 76

♠ QT3 ♠ KJ5
 ♥ 865 ♥ AQ4
 ♦ J8532 ♦ A
 ♣ A9 ♣ Q85432

N		S		E		W	
NT	7	6					
♠	6	6					
♥	6	7-6					
♦	6	7-6					
♣	4	9-8					

♠ A84 2
 ♥ KJ9 H
 ♦ KT97 C 16
 ♣ KJT P
 15

East opens 1♣ and South will likely overcall 1NT. If this is passed round to East it should be tempting to rebid 2♣ - defending 1NT will not be much fun, and a club lead will not incommode declarer. Some Norths may try to improve the contract by using Stayman, but two of a Major scores better only when it makes.

19 ♠ AQ5
♥ Q4
S / EW ♦ AQJ43
♣ JT2

♠ K98432 ♠ J7
♥ 8 ♥ A9653
♦ K7 ♦ 9862
♣ Q853 ♣ A4

NSEW		♠ T6	16				
NT	10 3	♥ KJT72	<table border="1"> <tr><td>H</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td></tr> </table>	H	C	P	7
H							
C							
P							
7							
♠	6 7	♦ T5					
♥	10 3	♣ K976					
♦	9 3						
♣	9 4						

Another weak 2♠ opener, the suit is just good enough. I expect North will overcall 2NT and South will show the heart suit. After which North will be rather pleased to find that 3NT is a fortunate make.

20 ♠ J74
♥ KT84
W / All ♦ J95
♣ KQ6

♠ QT963 ♠ K5
♥ Q975 ♥ 32
♦ 86 ♦ KT742
♣ 73 ♣ AT94

NSEW		♠ A82	10				
NT	10 3	♥ AJ6	<table border="1"> <tr><td>H</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td></tr> </table>	H	C	P	16
H							
C							
P							
16							
♠	8 5	♦ AQ3					
♥	10 3	♣ J852					
♦	8 5						
♣	10 3						

North-South have the values for 3NT and are likely to make at least 9 tricks one way or another. If West leads the Ten of spades declarer should assume that is not from KQT and play low from dummy. You can either win the Ace right away, blocking the suit, or hold up, leaving East on lead at trick two.

21 ♠ A532
♥ AJ76
N / NS ♦ A
♣ K642

♠ KQT87 ♠ J964
♥ Q53 ♥ K9
♦ 743 ♦ KQJ92
♣ QT ♣ 75

NSEW		♠ —	16				
NT	8 3	♥ T842	<table border="1"> <tr><td>H</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td></tr> </table>	H	C	P	5
H							
C							
P							
5							
♠	6 7	♦ T865					
♥	12 1	♣ AJ983					
♦	8 5						
♣	12 1						

Although 12 tricks can be made this is not a slam you want to be in. You need a good view in hearts and clubs, and you need to take two ruffs in whichever hand is dummy. If you reach game in hearts and make 12 tricks that should score very well without the extra pressure of trying to make slam.

22 ♠ AJ63
♥ JT9
E / EW ♦ 8732
♣ J7

♠ 42 ♠ KQT98
♥ AQ75 ♥ 642
♦ J65 ♦ AKT
♣ A932 ♣ K8

NS	EW	♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	2	11-10	75		
♠	2	10	♥ K83		
♥	2	11-10	♦ Q94		
♦	4-3	9	♣ QT654		
♣	4	9-8			

7
H
C
P
7

Another thin 3NT. It makes easily if you finesse the Ten of spades, less easily if you do not. But you have a third club stopper if South leads one, and the 3=3 heart break will come to your rescue.

23 ♠ AJT
♥ A76432
♦ 7
S / All ♣ 753

♠ K843 ♠ Q2
♥ K ♥ T985
♦ QT43 ♦ 86
♣ K964 ♣ AJT82

NSEW	♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	6	7		
♠	7	6		
♥	8	5		
♦	8	5		
♣	4	9		

♠ 9765 ♠ 9
♥ QJ ♥ H
♦ AKJ952 ♦ C
♣ Q ♣ P
11 13

If the bidding starts 1♦ – 1♥ – 2♦ – East might consider a takeout double. The delayed double usually shows a heart shortage but might be quite a lot stronger. I can see no other way to reach 3♣, the only available 9-card fit and the last making spot.

24 ♠ AQJT865
♥ AK
♦ 4
W / - ♣ QJ6

♠ K7 ♠ 2
♥ T8742 ♥ 53
♦ K9 ♦ A87653
♣ 7542 ♣ K983

NSEW	♠	♥	♦	♣
NT	11	0		
♠	12	0		
♥	9	4		
♦	7	6		
♣	7	5		

♠ 943 ♠ 17
♥ QJ96 ♥ H
♦ QJT2 ♦ C
♣ AT ♣ P
6 10

A so-so slam that needs two finesses, or a helpful lead. If you make 12 tricks in 4♠ that should score well enough. You cannot bid every slam that makes – if you try you will bid a whole lot that do not make.

25 ♠ J84
♥ QT63
♦ 9
♣ K8742

N / EW

♠ KQT53
♥ K872
♦ 5
♣ AJ3

NSEW

NT	4	9
♠	3	10
♥	6	6
♦	4	8
♣	5	8

♠ A9
♥ J954
♦ KQ643
♣ 95

♠ 762
♥ A
♦ AJT872
♣ QT6

6	H	11
13	C	
	P	
	10	

East-West should reach 4♠ one way or another. On more than half of your suit contracts you should not start by drawing trump. Here you need to ruff your losing hearts in dummy. North may lead trump, or ruff in on the second heart and lead trump, but then you make 4 trump in hand, 2 clubs, the ♦A, two top hearts and one ruff.

26 ♠ A65432
♥ K3
♦ Q96
♣ K2

E / All

♠ KJ9
♥ 75
♦ AT43
♣ AQ94

NSEW

NT	7	6
♠	9	4
♥	4	8
♦	8	5
♣	4	8

♠ T87
♥ A94
♦ KJ75
♣ T75

♠ Q
♥ QJT862
♦ 82
♣ J863

12	H	6
14	C	
	P	
	8	

East may be tempted to open a weak 2♥ in spite of the shortage of HCP: the suit is good enough and the 6-4 distribution gives good playing strength. North will insist on playing in spades where there are exactly 9 tricks – can you push them too high?

27 ♠ Q93
♥ K
♦ KT8
♣ QJ9632

S / -

♠ JT52
♥ Q5
♦ A92
♣ AK87

NSEW

NT	2	10
♠	5	8
♥	1	11
♦	3	10
♣	7	6

♠ 8764
♥ J87
♦ QJ7
♣ T54

♠ AK
♥ AT96432
♦ 6543
♣ —

11	H	11
14	C	
	P	
	4	

Everybody's 4♥ contract. Might be played by West after a transfer sequence, or East may just blast it. Many will start trump by leading towards the Queen, creating an extra loser on this occasion. With 9 trump there is a good case for laying down the Ace to drop any singleton honour – a variation on "9 never".

28 ♠ Q54
 ♥ KJ62
 ♦ T2
 ♣ J763

W / NS

♠ KJT76
 ♥ T7
 ♦ 95
 ♣ KQT5

NSEW	
NT	4 9
♠	3 10
♥	7 5
♦	3 10
♣	2 11

♠ A98
 ♥ Q9843
 ♦ J863
 ♣ 4

♠ 32
 ♥ A5
 ♦ AKQ74
 ♣ A982

9

7
H
C
P
7

 17

East-West have the values for game here, but which game? In 3NT on a heart lead you have to take the right view in clubs. In 4♠ you can discard the heart loser, but North ruffs and you have 2 more trump losers, so need to take the right view in clubs. In 5♣ North ruffs the third diamond with his potential trump trick – and now you need to guess spades to make. Good luck with all the guesses..