

Greetings!

Herewith find analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 9th July 2020, in the **Galway/CABAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

This week I have analysed eleven of the 21 hands....Boards 3,5,6,7,8,11,12,14,16,17,20. Each hand is analysed in the subsequent pages in this document. Note that in some cases the **Saints & Sinners** comments extend over several pages.

There are particularly detailed reviews/analysis of Boards 5,8, 17, 20. Lots of **Saint** and **Sinner** statuses awarded! And some good points re declarer play and defense are highlighted.

I have also included an analysis of a hand that was played on **Eamon Galligan's Irelands IMP Pairs** last **Sunday, 12th July**. An interesting practical example of a safety play...in a Slam!

And for the benefit of those who don't already know, a few words by way of explanation as to how this analysis is undertaken...

First, the results are downloaded from BBO...this cannot be done until Friday morning. The results include the contracts and results for each board. Remember that each set of hands is played simultaneously at all tables. The results also include access to a MOV file for each hand played (at all tables) which enables me to re-play, trick by trick (an exact re-creation) of how the hand was played. In that way I can observe the actions that constitute the rationale by which I award '**Saint & Sinner**' status.

Some statistics...This review contains the analysis of **11 hands**, played at **12 tables**, representing a total of **132 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **1,716 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **6,864 individual card plays** that are dissected!

Apologies for the delay in producing this week's analysis.


Paul J Scannell

13th July 2020

P.S. Are you aware that you can review your own results, and access MOV files which re-create the actual play of every contract played at your table...or indeed any table!

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

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

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 4♦; EW 1N; EW 2♣; EW 1♥; Par -420; EW 4♠

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 4♥; NS 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♠; EW 1♦; Par +420: NS 4♥

This hand will be played by N/S in hearts...the only question is at what level.. Note that declarer CAN make ten tricks.

Saints & Sinners

One pair overbid and reached a hopeless 6♥ which duly failed by THREE tricks. **Sinner** status awarded. Another pair contracted 5♥ which failed by one trick. Five pairs bid the heart game, two failing by a trick and one pair scoring eleven tricks. Seven pairs reached 3♥, one failing by one trick, and another making with an overtrick.

Double-dummy (i.e. seeing all four hands) the route to TEN tricks is straightforward. Win a spade or club lead in hand and lead a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and then play a second diamond to ♦ Q, West winning with ♦ K. Subsequently ruff a diamond in dummy and then lead a club from dummy playing ♣ 10 from hand if East plays low. Yes, the fortunate position of ♣ KQ lets the contract come home! Sometimes you need a little bit of luck. An alternative, and reasonable line is to finesse ♥ J after ruffing the third diamond. Unfortunately this line fails and declarer will likely lose two clubs. On the other hand if a club was led at trick one you should score ten tricks, losing a heart, a diamond, a club BUT being sure to negotiate a diamond ruff in dummy.

Sinners status to any **South** who declared 4♥ on the lead of ♦ 10 and did not let it round to their ♦ Q in hand. Win the diamond in hand with ♦ Q, play a diamond to dummy's ♦ A, return to hand with ♠ A and ruff a diamond in dummy. Now play hearts, finessing ♥ J when East produces ♥ 9. This will lead to ten tricks: 1 spade, 5 hearts, 2 diamonds, 1 diamond ruff, 1 club. Note that as mentioned in these columns on several occasions, the lead of a 10 MAY be from an interior sequence as is the case on this hand. And you can always ask your opponent about the lead of the 10

ne **Sinful** declarer used the entry to dummy via ♦ A to ruff a spade in hand. This is a hopeless line unless one defender holds a doubleton ♠ Kx and also means that you cannot also lead towards your ♦ Qxx as well as ruff a spade(s) APART from which when you get to dummy again and lead the winning ♠ Q a defender will ruff and may be doing so with a singleton or doubleton heart!

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

| | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|
| ♠ 10 8 4 | ♠ Q 7 6 5 2 | ♠ K J 9 3 |
| ♥ Q 5 4 3 | ♥ 10 2 | ♥ 9 |
| ♦ K 10 9 | ♦ A 2 | ♦ J 7 6 4 3 |
| ♣ 9 8 5 | ♣ J 7 6 3 | ♣ K Q 4 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ A | |
| | ♥ A K J 8 7 6 | |
| | ♦ Q 8 5 | |
| | ♣ A 10 2 | |

NS 4♥; NS 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♠; EW 1♦; Par +420: NS 4♥

Saints & Sinners (continued)

The only declarer to play the hand correctly was **Robert Delargy** who negotiated a diamond ruff in dummy BEFORE playing trumps. **Saintly** status awarded to Robert

Some declarers played a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and then finessed ♥ J. If West wins and returns a heart declarer SHOULD subsequently lose 2 diamonds and two clubs (unless a club was led at trick one) . Why bank all your chances on the heart finesse when you can have your cake AND eat it by ruffing a diamond first and then finessing in hearts!

The three declarers who bid 4♥ and scored ten tricks did so due to defensive errors. **No Saintly** status awarded to the declarers but **Sinner** status awarded to the respective defenders.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; EW 2♦; EW 2♣; Par +120; NS 2N

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♦; E 1♣; Par -90: EW 1N

E/W can make 1 NT...but the problem may be to stop at that level! If E/W play a weak NT which may include a five card major then that solves the problem...1 NT...passed out. The problem arises when East opens 1 ♠ and West responds at the two level rather than 1 NT, the latter also solving the problem. A diamond lead could see declarer score 3 hearts and 4 diamonds. Scoring seven tricks on a spade, or heart lead is more tricky and requires declarer to have good table presence and x-ray vision to appreciate that both black kings are precariously positioned! For example if declarer plays a spade to dummy's ♠ K then the defense can cash 4 spades and three clubs. *Double-dummy (i.e. seeing all four hands) declarer can concede three clubs (ducking each time) and thus establishing his CK. The defense can only cash 3 clubs and three spades.*

Saints & Sinners

One pair of international players reached 3 NT and declarer received the lead of ♥ 2 winning in hand with ♥ Q, Declarer now playing the hand wide open (i.e. both black Kings must score tricks) led a spade to dummy's ♠ K, South winning with ♠ A and perhaps dangerously cashing three more spade winners BEFORE switching to ♣ Q. If declarer held ♣ A then declarer could count nine tricks via 1 spade (in dummy), 3 hearts, 4 diamonds, 1 club. Better for South to switch to ♣ Q after winning ♠ A. As it was declarer was squeezed on the 3rd and 4th spades and had to discard a heart and a club. When South switched to ♣ Q, declarer rose, hopefully, with ♣ K which lost to North's ♣ A. Three more clubs were cashed for a four trick defeat!

At another table West became declarer in 1 NT and received the potentially costly (for the defense) lead of ♦ J. Declarer could have won in hand with ♦ Q and then run the ♦ 9 for at least seven tricks via 3 hearts and 4 diamonds but instead chose to play a spade to dummy's ♠ K and South's ♠ A. James Ward correctly refrained from cashing three more spade winners and switched to ♣ Q instead which declarer, with good table presence, refrained from covering whereupon James continued with ♣ J, declarer again refraining from covering. Now, with 1 spade and 2 clubs in the bag James cashed his three spade winners and continued with a club to partner's ♣ A thus defeating the contract by one trick. **Saintly** status to **James** and partner **Sheila**.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♦; E 1♣; Par -90: EW 1N

Saints & Sinners

At another table West became declarer in 2 NT after responding 2♦ to East's 1♠ opening over which East found a dangerous rebid of 2♥ (on a 3 card suit!). West concluded the auction with 2 NT. North led ♥2, declarer winning in hand and leading ♠10 and ducking to South's ♠J. South continued with ♣Q and then C♣J and a third club, declarer showing good table presence by not covering and thus establishing his ♣K as a winner. North, upon winning third club with ♣A continued with a heart. Declarer won the heart in dummy and should have taken stock... three hearts, at least three diamond and one club leaves declare needing just one more trick. Declarer could have cashed his red suit winners and the ♣K, seven tricks and then played a spade towards dummy's ♠Kxx, But on reflection declarer will discover that North started with 4 diamonds and presumably 4 hearts and 3 clubs in which case if he has ♠A then he can cash three tricks (1 heart, 1 diamond and ♠A) to go with the spade and three clubs the defense already have in the bag...And if South has SA the South will likely win the last two. Tricks. Declare would be wise to take his seven winners and concede one down. Declare didn't and cashed one heart and then played four rounds of diamonds leaving North on lead. North now found the continuation of a spade through dummy's ♠Kxx, South cashing three spade winners on which declarer injudiciously threw her ♣K instead of ♥5 thus promoting South's ♣10 to master status and declarer ended 3 down!

At another table West unwisely raised partner's 2♠ re-bid to 3♠ which duly failed by 2 tricks.

Sinner status to the East who responded 2♦ instead of 2♣ to partner's opening bid of 1♠.

Sinner status to the North, defending 3♠ who failed to ruff the fourth club with her ♠8 which would have forced declarer to overruff with ♠K and thus prevented her partner from subsequently being endplayed and forced to lead a spade from ♠AQ into declarer's ♠K5 and would have led to a two trick defeat instead of a one trick defeat

Saintly status to **John Fahy**, the only West to respond 2♣ over partner's opening 1♠. **Sinner** status to South at the same table for not drawing four round of trumps when given the opportunity and subsequently let declarer score a trick with ♠54 when South was holding ♠J9.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 6♣; S 5N; NS 5♥; N 4N; S 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +920: NS 6♣

I think one North (dummy) messaged '*Oh dear*' when partner wrapped up twelve tricks in 3♣.

6♣ is the top spot but many N/S partnerships will play in 3NT. South can score eleven tricks whereas North can be restricted to ten tricks based on a spade lead from West (with heart switch by East) and a heart lead from East followed by spade switch by West. Note that N/S have nine top tricks...so bonus marks, and perhaps saintly status, only for those who made more!

This one of those hands where North must use their imagination to visualise the shape and power of the hand that partner paints through their bidding and then appreciate the value of their own hand and how it can be used to supplement partner's big two-suited hand! If you can do that then you have a chance of reaching the top spot. if not 3NT will be your limit.

South will open 1♣ and over North's 1♠ will re-bid 2♥. NOW STOP for a minute ...2♥ is a **Reverse** and promises a hand with at least 5 clubs and 4 hearts and a minimum of 16 hcp. North should now realise that the partnership has at least 28 hcp, possibly more! Also, North knows that there is at least a nine card fit in clubs, North should be thinking of a slam and the only question is how to proceed. That is where **4th Suit Forcing** is a useful gadget. It is a CONVENTIONAL bid of the 4th (unbid) suit which asks partner to make another bid which further describes their hand. Here North could bid 3♦ over which South will bid 3♥. STOP...What is South's shape after they bid 3♥? South MUST be holding 5 hearts and therefore SIX clubs leaving two unknown cards. Why must this be South's shape. Because if he had only 5 hearts and 5 clubs he would have opened 1♥... Now, re-appraise the North hand. A super club fit (at least 6-4), a doubleton heart opposite partner's five card suit...but with at least two trumps to help establish South's secondary suit! And North holds the vital ♦ A and the useful ♠ K. the opponents are unlikely to be able to cash two top tricks on the opening lead. Can we start to imagine twelve tricks in a club contract? Good. Now you're on the way to becoming a good bridge player. Note how limiting it is to simply concentrate on your own hand without trying to visualise partner's hand as reflected by their bidding. Simply potting 6♣ would not be unreasonable. Over partner's re-bid of 3♥ then surely 4♣ is ongoing and suggesting a slam. Note also the relative uselessness of 4NT by South...given the spade void any responses by North will be clouded in the lack of knowledge as to whether the response include ♠ A which is of limited value to South. Not one N/S pair reached 6♣. One pair bid 5♣ and another languished in 3♣.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 6♣; S 5N; NS 5♥; N 4N; S 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +920: NS 6♣

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **North**, declaring 3 NT, who received a spade lead to West's ♠ A who continued a spade through declarer's ♠ KJ10. Declarer could have taken the free finesse and claimed eleven tricks even if the finesse lost but instead rose with ♠ K. At this point declarer could have continued with ♠ J (or ♠ 10) and still claimed eleven tricks but instead cashed all her clubs and the two top diamonds before playing hearts FROM HER HAND...and deservedly ended up with only ten tricks! After cashing the clubs declarer could have played a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and taken the heart finesse for an eleventh trick.

Another North, declaring 3 NT, also received a spade lead and won with ♠ 10 when West (**Sinner** status awarded) failed to rise with ♠ A and return the suit! **Double Sinner** status also awarded to the same West for discarding a heart from ♥ KJ8 despite declarer showing a five card suit! A third **Sinner** status to the same West who subsequently discarded ♥ J. If declarer cashed ♥ A, felling West's now singleton ♥ K declarer could have entered dummy via ♦ A and led dummy's last heart and finessed against East's ♥ 1042 to claim THIRTEEN tricks!

Saintly status to **Kathleen O'Connell**, the only declarer to avail of the entries in the North hand to take the heart finesse...it deserved to work... for her!

Saintly status also to **Mary Muldoon** who showed her shape and strength by opening 1 ♣ and re-bidding hearts TWICE. **Sinner** status to partner for leaving her in 3 ♥ instead of at least bidding some game.

Saintly status to the other **Souths** who opened 1 ♣, including...**James Ward**..although he is duly chastised for passing partner's 3 ♣ bid instead of bidding 3 ♥. Double sinner status to partner for not recognising Jame's reverse and thus pushing on to some game!. Also raised to **Saintly** status...**May O'Sullivan**. **Ann Roche** for making a jump raise to 3 NT And to **Robert Delargy** and **Kay Scarry** but who made an unnecessary 3♥ jump rebids when 2♥ would have sufficed.

Sinner status tp all **Souths** who opened 1 ♥ instead of 1 ♣. **Saintly** status to all those Souths who opened 1 ♣ and re-bid hearts, preferably twice showing 6/5 distribution AND a strong hand.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

| | | |
|--------------|---|---------------|
| ♠ Q | ♠ A K J 2 | ♠ 8 7 4 |
| ♥ A K J 10 7 | ♥ Q 8 6 3 2 | ♥ 9 |
| ♦ A 10 7 5 | ♦ Q | ♦ K J 6 4 3 2 |
| ♣ 8 6 3 | ♣ Q J 7 | ♣ A 9 5 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;"> W N E S </div> | |
| | ♠ 10 9 6 5 3 | |
| | ♥ 5 4 | |
| | ♦ 9 8 | |
| | ♣ K 10 4 2 | |

EW 6♦; NS 3♠; EW 2N; EW 1♥; NS 1♣; Par -800; NS 6♠×-3

N/S may buy a spade contract if E/W don't steal a diamond contract. Note that E/W can make 6♦!

Saint & Sinners

Several **Sinners** and few **Saints** on this hand. **Absolute Sinner** status to all the **Norths** who made a takeout double on the hand after West opened 1♥. Pass is the correct bid!

Absolute Sinner status also to the **West** player who bid hearts **THREE times** and never mentioned diamonds! Diamonds should have been bid at the second opportunity.

Sinner status to the **West** player who opened 1♥ and rebid 2♥ instead of the more correct 2♦ thus offering partner a choice between the two red suit whilst also showing a 5♥/4♦+ distribution/shape.

Sinner status also to the **East** player who passed her partner's opening bid of 1♥. A response of 1NT should see the partnership find their diamond fit. Note that when East bids 1NT West knows that the opponents have at least a nine card spade fit!!! Listen to the bidding...and count, count, count... all the time!

Sinner status to the **East** player who initially bid 1NT over North's double of partner's opening bid of 1♥ and then failed to raise West's rebid of 2♦. **Sinner** status to the **South** who failed to find a bid of 2♠ in the pass out position holding nine cards in the black suits opposite partner's initial takeout double of 1♥.

Saintly status to **Carmel Moraham** who raised her partner's 2♦ rebid. **Saintly** status to **Maura** for rebidding 2♦ and not 2♥. But Maura earns **Sinner** status for cashing too many trumps instead of winning the second trump in dummy and running ♥9 and making eleven tricks despite losing a heart to North's ♥Q. Declarer ended up with only ten tricks.

Board 8West Deals
None Vul

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ J 10 | ♠ A Q 6 4 | ♠ K 7 5 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ 3 2 | ♥ A J 10 6 5 | ♥ Q 9 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ Q J 10 9 3 2 | ♦ — | ♦ 8 7 6 5 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ A 7 4 | ♣ 8 6 3 2 | ♣ K | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | | | N | | W | | E | | S | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ 9 8 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ K 7 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ A K | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ Q J 10 9 5 | | | | | | | | | | |

N 5♥; S 4♥; NS 3N; N 5♣; NS 3♠; S 3♣; EW 2♦; Par +450: N 4♥+1

N/S can make game in NT, hearts, and clubs. However in the case of 5♣, North needs to be at the helm.... a spade lead from West defeats 5♣. Also, note that 3NT will only succeed on very careful play that involves creating a second spade trick to add to 5 hearts, 2 diamonds! Leading ♠2 from dummy and covering West's ♠10 with SQ will eventually see dummy's ♠9 promoted to winner status.

Note also that the play of the heart suit might be dictated on whether or not West opens the bidding with a weak 2♦ which might suggest finessing against East for the missing ♥Q.

If West opens the bidding with 2♦ (weak) then North might Double for takeout or simply overcall 2♥. The former bid gets all three suits in play whereas an overcall of 2♥ indicates at least a five card holding and also leaves the option of getting the other suits into play later in the auction.

If North overcalls 2♥ then South will have a natural raise to the heart game. East may support partner's diamonds but E/W need to be careful not to overbid which could lead to a substantial penalty. NOTE the vulnerability!

4♥ by North on a diamond lead is virtually fool-proof. Win in dummy being careful to discard a spade (NOT a club!) from hand. **Sinner** status to those declarers who discarded clubs on ♦AK. A finesse of ♥J into East protects North's ♠AQ. Declarer can subsequently draw trumps and play on clubs.

Upon drawing trumps declarer should play on clubs forcing out the ♣A and ♣K and establishing the remaining clubs as winners. One **Sinful** declarer cashed an unnecessary fourth heart BEFORE starting on the club suit and ended up being short-trumped after East won the first club and played a third diamond, forcing declarer to ruff with her last heart and then losing the lead to West's ♣A. But our International West failed to cash his winning ♦Q and continued with ♠J (his partner had switched to a spade earlier in the play!), declarer winning with ♠A and then cashing winning clubs to scamper home with ten tricks! If declarer had not played the fourth heart then she would have been in control, could ruff the third diamond and safely establish clubs whilst still holding a trump!

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

N 5♥; S 4♥; NS 3N; N 5♣; NS 3♠; S 3♣; EW 2♦; Par +450: N 4♥+1

Saints & Sinners

Nine N/S pairs played in a heart contract, eight reaching game and one playing in 3♥. Two declarers failed including the 3♥ contract! All the rest scored ten tricks with one exception who scored twelve tricks! One N/S pair declared 2♣ making ten tricks. Another N/S pair failed in 3NT and THREE E/W partnerships played a diamond contract one suffering the maximum penalty of in 5♦x-3, another in 4♦x-2. **Sinner** status to the N/S that failed to double 5♦.

At one table North opened 1♥, South bid 2♣ and North erred by bidding 2♥ (**Sinner** status awarded) instead of bidding 3♣. South raised to 4♥. East led ♠3, declarer won, played a heart to dummy's ♥K, cashed two top diamonds discarding clubs (**Sinner** status) from hand instead of spades. Declarer then led a heart and rose with ♥A and continued with a club with absolutely no chance of gaining access to dummy's clubs because of the earlier club discards from hand! East won with ♣K and played ♥Q, drawing dummy's last trump and then continued with a third diamond declarer ruffing in hand. Declarer played her last club as East discarded a diamond and West erred by ducking (**Sinner** status awarded). West should have been counting the clubs and known that declarer did not have any more and therefore could never get to dummy's winning clubs. Ducking gave declarer an extra trick that she was not entitled to. West won the next club and played a spade to North's ♠A. East won the setting trick with ♠K.

Sinner status to all declarers who discarded clubs from hand on dummy's ♦AK

Saintly status to **Retsea (Kathleen)** who received ♠3 lead from East (**Sinner** status to West who played ♠J thereby denying ♠10). Kathleen played a heart to dummy's ♥K and cashed two diamonds discarding spades from hand. She then finessed ♥J into East who continued with a spade to declarer's ♠A. Now declarer drew West's last trump and then played a club. The defense was all over. East won with ♣K, continued with a diamond which declarer ruffed before continuing with another club establishing three winners in dummy...and with two clubs in hand to access dummy! Very well played.

Saintly status also to **Frankie (Petbar)** who played the hand in a similar fashion although she received the beneficial lead of ♣K followed by a spade switch.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

N 5♥; S 4♥; NS 3N; N 5♣; NS 3♠; S 3♣; EW 2♦; Par +450: N 4♥+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

One declarer received a diamond lead and promptly discarded two spades from hand before taking an unnecessary spade finesse into East's ♠ K. Declarer subsequently failed to find ♥ Q and was on target to lose two clubs tricks and thus come up one trick short in her contract. (The ♠ Q could have been discarded on dummy's long club!). West subsequently saved declarer's bacon by overtaking partner's ♣ K with her ♣ A and thereby collided the defense's two club winners into a single trick! **Sinner** status to **Declarer** and **West**.

Saintly status awarded to **Patricia Eames** who made no mistake in the play after receiving ♣ K lead followed by a spade switch. **Sinner** status to the West who played ♠ J instead of ♠ 10!

Exalted Saintly status to **Philomena Geraghty** who received the lead of ♣ K followed by switch to ♠ 3. Winning in hand with ♠ Q, Philomena, perhaps conscious of West's opening 2♦, cashed ♥ A and continued with ♥ J intending to finesse against East. East covered with ♥ Q, declarer winning in dummy with ♥ K. Philomena now had eleven tricks in hers sights by simply playing a third heart to hand and then continuing with a club to establish dummy's winners on which she could discard her losing spades. However Philomena's exalted status lost a little of its gloss when she continued with ♣ Q from dummy enabling East to ruff with ♥ 9 thus restricting declarer to ten tricks.

Supreme Exalted Saintly status to **Murt Scarry** who received ♠ 3 lead, cashed ♥ A, continued with ♥ J, covered by East's ♥ Q. Winning in dummy declarer cashed ♦ AK discarding spades from hand before playing a club toward ♣ 8632 in hand, West erred by rising with ♣ A, crashing his partner's ♣ K. West could have saved a trick by giving her partner a ruff but instead continued with ♠ J. Declarer won drew last trump and claimed eleven tricks. **Sinner** status to West.

So, why was it a mistake for West to rise with ♣ A? How could West have known that declarer had to have four clubs? **Counting, counting...all the time.** Opening lead of ♠ 3 indicates East with four spades, confirmed when declarer wins first trick with ♠ Q and subsequently discards two small spades from hand. So, declarer now marked with 4 spades, as well as 5 five or 6 hearts (East may have held only two). Declarer is known to have a void in diamonds and therefore must have at least 3 clubs (if holding six hearts) or four clubs if only holding five hearts! Easy-peasy!

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 3N; EW 3♥; EW 4♦; EW 3♣; Par -620; EW 4♠

Board 11

South Deals
None Vul

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

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

4 ♠ should be reached by E/W. But 3 NT can also make...Most Wests will open 1 ♠ (**Rule of 20**...add your HCP to the combined length of your two longest suits and if it totals 20 then you have a 1 level opening!) and E/W will reach 4 ♠. But some Wests may choose to Pass in which case North will open 1 ♥ and again E/W should reach 4 ♠. If East overcalls 1 NT then West should transfer (bid 2 ♥) and re-bid 3 NT and again E/W should reach 4 ♠ although some might end up in 3 NT. If not playing 'Transfers' opposite a 1 NT overcall then West should simply bid a 'Forcing' 3 ♠ which East will raise to 4 ♠. Alternatively, if East makes Takeout Double then West should bid 3 ♠ (allowing for partner to have made a 'light' Takeout Double although some may raise directly to 4 ♠).

Saints & Sinners

Three E/W partnerships reached a NT contract, two playing in 2 NT with each making nine tricks. The other pair played in 3 NT after North opened 1 ♥, East overcalling 1 NT and West raising to 3 NT without showing her five card spade suit. **Sinner** status to West. Declarer (East) won the second heart trick and then cashed five spades. Declarer then led a diamond from dummy, North followed with ♦ J having already discarded a heart, diamond, and a club on dummy's spades. Declarer scorned the obvious finesse (who had opened the bidding and is much more likely to hold not only the ♦ K but also the ♣ K?) and then finessed a club into North who won with ♣ K, cashed two hearts and ♦ K. **Sinner** status to East.

Sinner status to the West who in response to partner's Takeout Double of North's opening 1 ♥ bid simply bid 1 ♠. West should have bid 3 ♠, propelling the partnership to 4 ♠ or 3 NT.

Sinner status also to the West who bid 2 ♣ (presumably Stayman) in response to East's 1 NT overcall of North's opening bid of 1 ♥. There is no point in bidding Stayman when you hold FIVE spades and North has already shown five+ hearts! Simply transfer or bid 3 ♠. And don't pass partner's 2 NT response to 2 ♣. East has already shown a strong NT. With 11 hcp you should be in game!

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| ♠ A 9 8 6 2 | ♠ 10 3 | ♠ K Q 4 |
| ♥ J 5 | ♥ A Q 7 6 3 | ♥ K 9 |
| ♦ 8 2 | ♦ K J 6 | ♦ A Q 9 3 |
| ♣ A Q 6 5 | ♣ K 10 8 | ♣ J 9 7 2 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ J 7 5 | |
| | ♥ 10 8 4 2 | |
| | ♦ 10 7 5 4 | |
| | ♣ 4 3 | |

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

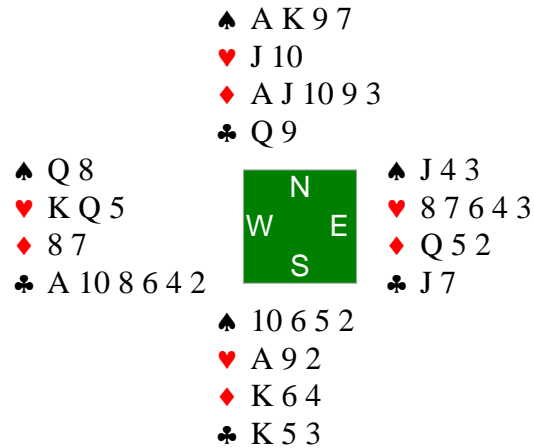
Saintly status awarded to **Mary (mary1moyla)** who bid 3♠ over partner's 1NT overcall of North's 1♥ opening bid.

Perfect sequence from **David & Rory**. David overcalled North's 1H with 1NT. Rory transferred with 2H and then raised David's 2S bid to 3NT which David converted to 4S. **Two Saints**.

Sinner status to the East who simply raised partner to 3♠ after North doubled West's opening bid of 1♠! East is holding 15 hcp and partner has opened the bidding!

And **Sinner** status to the West player who having passed, simply responded 2♠ when partner doubled North's 1♥ opener, raised by a cheeky South to 2♥. 3♠ (or even 4♠) is the minimum bid that West should be making.

Board 12
 West Deals
 N-S Vul



NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 4♦; S 2♣; NS 1♥; N 1♣; Par +630: NS 3N+1

Sainrts & Sinners

Mortal Sinner status to the **West** player who opened 1 ♣ and despite hearing partner Pass three times re-bid his flimsy six card suit all the way to the five level where he was doubled and suffered a well deserved 1100 penalty and the loss of 13.38 IMPs. And all this on a hand where only three N/S pairs bid and made game!

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Board 14
 East Deals
 None Vul

| | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|
| ♠ 8 7 2 | ♠ A 10 9 | ♠ K Q J 4 3 |
| ♥ A Q 2 | ♥ J 8 | ♥ K 4 3 |
| ♦ J 9 3 | ♦ 10 8 5 4 | ♦ K Q 6 2 |
| ♣ K J 4 2 | ♣ A 8 7 3 | ♣ 5 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ 6 5 | |
| | ♥ 10 9 7 6 5 | |
| | ♦ A 7 | |
| | ♣ Q 10 9 6 | |

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

E/W should reach 4 ♠ which can fail...but some pairs may reach 3 NT...which can also fail!

Saint & Sinners

Saintly status to **Anne Hallinan & Mary O'Flynn** who defeated 3 NT by West who ignored the known 5-3 spade! Mary led ♦ 4 and South rose with ♦ A and switched to ♣ 9 (I would prefer ♣ 10), declarer playing ♣ J, North winning with ♣ A and continuing the suit. The defense soon collected 1 spade 1 diamond and 3 clubs defeating the contract by one trick.

At another table North led ♣ 3, South playing ♣ Q and declarer winning with ♣ K. Declarer played on spades North winning the second round with ♠ A...and then committed the error of continuing with a small club where North should have known that declarer had ♣ J... Why so? Because South played ♣ Q at trick one thereby denying possession of ♣ J!!! If North finds the diamond switch then South can win and continue the club attack, N/S eventually taking 1 spade, 1 diamond, 3 clubs. **Sinner** status to **North...**and to **West** for ignoring the 5-3 spade fit.

12 Easts played 4 ♠ with ten making their contract when the killing opening lead was not found.

One declarer made only nine tricks when **Kay Scarry** found the killing lead of ♦ A followed by a second diamond. **Murt** made no mistake by rising with ♠ A on first round and giving his partner the diamond ruff for the setting trick. Note that if Murt ducks one round of spades then as long as declarer plays a second top spade South is denuded of trumps and can no longer score a diamond ruff. **Saintly** status to **Kay & Murt**. I'm not always in favour of the lead of an Ace but you can't argue with success!

At another table declarer failed in the same contract by two tricks! The defense started in the same way via ♦ A and another diamond, South subsequently scoring the diamond ruff. But here declarer carelessly played three rounds of hearts BEFORE drawing all trumps and so North secured a ruff with ♠ 10. **Sinner** status to East. **Saintly** status to **Patricia Eames** and her partner **Stayyman60**.

Board 14
 East Deals
 None Vul

| | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|
| ♠ 8 7 2 | ♠ A 10 9 | ♠ K Q J 4 3 |
| ♥ A Q 2 | ♥ J 8 | ♥ K 4 3 |
| ♦ J 9 3 | ♦ 10 8 5 4 | ♦ K Q 6 2 |
| ♣ K J 4 2 | ♣ A 8 7 3 | ♣ 5 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ 6 5 | |
| | ♥ 10 9 7 6 5 | |
| | ♦ A 7 | |
| | ♣ Q 10 9 6 | |

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

E/W should reach 4 ♠ which can fail...but some pairs may reach 3 NT...which can also fail!

Saint & Sinners

Sinner status to the TWO **Norths** whose partners led ♦ A and another diamond and where they failed to rise with ♠ A on first play of the suit and give partner a diamond ruff.

Venial Sinner status to the South who led ♦ A at trick one but then switched to a heart...

Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

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

♠ 3 2
♥ K J 10 8 5
♦ J 9
♣ 10 8 4 3

EW 4♠; EW 3N; W 4♣; W 2♥; EW 3♦; E 3♣; Par -420: EW 4♠

Board 16

West Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 5N; EW 4♠; EW 4♥; EW 5♦; EW 2♣; Par -660: EW 3N+2

Some E/W partnerships will rest in 3 NT, very precarious given the thinness of the club suit but which makes because the clubs are 'blocked'. Other partnerships may arrive in 4 ♠. Note that after West opens 1 ♦ he has a natural **'Reverse'** bid of 2 ♥ (showing 5 diamonds, 4 hearts and 16+ hcp) over partner's. Partner cannot Pass a Reverse Bid by opener. In this instance East, with his 10 hcp can re-bid 3 NT.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the THREE Norths who led ♣ 9 from a holding of ♣ KJ10954. These Norths would do well to study honour leads, in particular **'interior honour sequences'**. The recognised standard lead from this holding is ♣ J. Partner will never recognise your holding if you lead ♣ 9 which is more likely from top of nothing or a doubleton.

Saintly status to **Frankie McGreevy** who correctly led ♣ J from ♣ KJ10954.

Sinner status to the North who signaled with ♣ 5 when partner found the opening lead of ♣ A. South continued with ♥ 6, declarer winning in dummy with ♥ A. Declarer continued with dummy's ♠ A followed by a spade to her ♠ K and a third spade to South's ♠ Q on which North discarded ♣ 9...not the ♣ J or ♣ 10 which might have persuaded South that North held ♣ K. South continued with another small heart and declarer wrapped up ten tricks when a club continuation to North's ♣ K and a third club which South could ruff would have seen the contract defeated. South's heart continuation doesn't look hopeful (North had discarded a heart on the third spade) and perhaps she should have played a second club after winning ♠ Q despite the lack of a strong, encouraging signal from North.

Saintly status to **Mary Moyle** and **Kevin Moylan** who bid the NT game impeccably. Mary opened 1 ♦ and Kevin responded 1 ♠. Mary 'reversed' with 2 ♥ and Kevin, with his 10 hcp, bid 3 NT. A friendly spade led saw dummy's ♠ 10 score the opening trick. Kevin played a diamond to hand and then led ♥ Q, South covering with ♥ K. Kevin now rattled off dummy's remaining diamond winners, discarding two clubs and a spade from hand. South felt the pressure and made a fatal discard of a heart and eventually Kevin reeled off twelve tricks including 3 spades, 5 diamonds and 4 hearts. **Saintly** status conferred on Kevin.

Board 16

West Deals

E-W Vul

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------|---|----------|---|
| ♠ A 10 | ♠ 6 5 | ♠ K J 9 8 3 | | | |
| ♥ A 10 4 2 | ♥ 7 5 | ♥ Q J 3 | | | |
| ♦ A K Q 10 2 | ♦ 9 6 3 | ♦ J 5 | | | |
| ♣ 6 3 | ♣ K J 10 9 5 4 | ♣ Q 8 2 | | | |
| <table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 100px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> | | | N | W E | S |
| N | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | |
| S | | | | | |
| ♠ Q 7 4 2 | ♠ Q 7 4 2 | ♠ K J 9 8 3 | | | |
| ♥ K 9 8 6 | ♥ K 9 8 6 | ♥ Q J 3 | | | |
| ♦ 8 7 4 | ♦ 8 7 4 | ♦ J 5 | | | |
| ♣ A 7 | ♣ A 7 | ♣ Q 8 2 | | | |

EW 5N; EW 4♠; EW 4♥; EW 5♦; EW 2♣; Par -660: EW 3N+2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the East who transferred to spades opposite partner's 1 NT opening and then raised to 3 ♠...WRONG. This promises six spades. East should simply have rebid 3 NT over West's 2 ♠. West can then Pass or convert to 4 ♠ in accordance with his spade holding. Declarer received the highly unorthodox lead of CK (**Sinner** status awarded to North) followed by ♣ 9 which South won perforce. South switched to a diamond...and West should have stopped to take stock. Declarer should recognise that he needs to be able to finesse in hearts as well as take care of trumps. Declarer won the diamond in dummy with ♦ J and finessed ♠ 10 which won. Declarer had won a battle but was about to lose the war! Stranded in hand after cashing ♠ A declarer resorted to playing a heart towards dummy and the ♥ J lost to South's ♥ K...a trick that South should not have been able to win. Declarer also lost a trick to South's ♠ Q and the contract failed. Back to South's switch to a diamond...declarer should win in hand and play ♠ A and then lead ♠ 10. overtaking with dummy's ♠ J and finesse. Even if it loses declarer still has ♦ J to gain access to dummy to play a further spade(s) AND to finesse against South's ♥ K. Contract made!

Saintly status to all Wests who rebid 2 ♥ over partner's 1 ♠ response. Sinner status to the West who re-bid 2 NT with a doubleton small club instead of 2 ♥ which more accurately describes her hand.. 3 NT made when North led ♣ 9 and declarer played low from dummy and South rose with ♣ A, thus producing a stopper in the suit where none existed. Declarer made 10 tricks.

Saintly status to **Kay and Murt** who defeated 4 ♠. **Kay** led ♣ A and then switched to a heart. Declarer won in hand and cashed ♠ A and then finessed ♠ 10 into South who won with ♠ Q, played a club to **Murt's** ♣ K who returned a club for South to ruff.

Sinner status to the declarer in 4 ♠ who received three rounds of clubs, winning the third round with ♣ Q when South discarded a diamond. Declarer played three rounds of spades South winning the third round with ♠ Q. South switched to a small heart. Declarer now has two ways home: 1) let the heart round to hand and draw remaining trump and then cash diamond winners discarding remaining hearts, OR, 2) Win with ♥ A and play diamond to hand and draw last trump and then cash diamond winners discarding losing hearts from hand. Both roads lead to ten tricks. Declarer did neither. She rose with ♥ A and then played diamonds from the top and eventually lost a ruff to South, the setting trick.

Board 17
North Deals
None Vul

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ Q 8 4 2 | ♠ K 7 5 | ♠ J 10 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ A 8 | ♥ 9 5 | ♥ 10 6 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ A K J 4 2 | ♦ 8 | ♦ Q 10 9 7 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ A 8 | ♣ K Q 6 5 4 3 2 | ♣ J 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> | | | | N | | W | | E | | S | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ A 9 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ K Q J 7 4 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ 6 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ 10 7 | | | | | | | | | | | |

EW 2♠; NS 2♥; EW 3♦; NS 3♣; EW 1N; Par -100; NS 3♥×-1;
NS 4♣×-1

Sparks will fly! N/S can make 3♣ or 2♥ but can be defeated in 3♥ although the defense to that contract is not straightforward. At most tables North will probably open 3♣. Some South's might bid 3♥ (not recommend) in which case West can make a takeout DBL. If North Passes East will bid 4♦. So, expect various contracts ranging from diamond part-scores (or even game level) by E/W or heart contracts by N/S. Maybe even some NT adventures by E/W.

Saints & Sinners

At one table North opened 1♣. Sinner status awarded. At two other tables North passed as dealer. **Sinner** status awarded. At all other tables North opened with the standard 3♣ bid.

Sinner status to the **Souths** who bid 3♥ on a six card suit despite knowing of the 7-2 club fit!

Most Wests made a Takeout Double at their turn to bid and Easts bid 3♦. Two Wests tried 3NT which failed by three and two tricks respectively. **Sinner** status to the West who failed to cash their seven tricks and accept defeat and duly lost an extra trick in what was obviously a hopeless contract.

Sinner status to the three **Wests** who made a takeout double of 3♣ by N or 2♥ by South and heard East make a minimum response of 3♦ over which the three errant Wests jumped to 5♦ instead of making an invitational bid of 4♦ which promises a strong hand. With a goodish hand, e.g. 10+ hcp East could make a jump response in response to partner's takeout double...so the Wests were warned!

Sinner status to the **West** who made a simple overcall of 3♦ over North's 3♦ opening. The West hand is too good for a simple 3♦ overcall, in particular where North has opened with a pre-emptive 3♣. Partner could be sitting with a moderate hand and E/W could miss game. As it turns out this declarer was the only one to make a diamond contract, scoring exactly nine tricks.

Board 17
 East Deals
 None Vul

| | | |
|---------------|--|-----------------|
| ♠ A 9 3 | ♠ Q 8 4 2 | ♠ K 7 5 |
| ♥ K Q J 7 4 2 | ♥ A 8 | ♥ 9 5 |
| ♦ 6 5 | ♦ A K J 4 2 | ♦ 8 |
| ♣ 10 7 | ♣ A 8 | ♣ K Q 6 5 4 3 2 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ J 10 6 | |
| | ♥ 10 6 3 | |
| | ♦ Q 10 9 7 3 | |
| | ♣ J 9 | |

NS 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♦; EW 3♣; NS 1N; Par +100; EW 3♥×-1;
 EW 4♣×-1

Saints & Sinners

At SIX tables N/S reached a heart contract, 4 times at the 3 level and twice at the 4 level.

At four tables the final contract was doubled, twice at the 3 level and twice at the 4 level.

The latter two failed by one trick whereas the former two contracts were successful.

As the list of makeable contract above suggests...a heart contract can be held to 8 tricks. However the defense is far from obvious and requires a different sequence of plays by West depending on the line of play adopted by declarer.


In a nutshell, the winning defense was not found at any table where hearts were contracted.

Sinner status to both Easts for failing to bid 4♦ in response partner's Takeout Double. However, a redeeming **Saintly** status to **Margaret Treacy** defending 3♥x who led ♦A and continued with ♥A and another heart and then won ♣A, cashed ♦K and found the switch of ♠Q...unfortunately partner did not have ♠A let alone ♠AJ or ♠AJ10. Nonetheless it was a thoughtful play.

Sainly status to **Enda Glynn**, sitting West and also defending 3♥x who cashed ♦K at trick one and then switched to ♠2, declarer winning in hand with ♠A. Declarer played a club towards dummy, North rising with ♣A and continuing with ♠4, declarer winning in dummy with ♠K. Declarer now led ♣K, followed by ♣Q which South ruffed with ♥10, declarer overruffing with ♥J and North winning the trick with ♥A. North now cashed ♠Q and then continued with ♥8, West winning and then ruffing her losing diamond in dummy, nine tricks now secured.

Sinner status to declarer who should have ruffed her losing diamond at trick three as there are other layouts where E/W could have negotiated ♣A and club ruff and also deprived declarer of a diamond ruff in dummy leading to a possible two trick defeat! Declarer is always guaranteed a club trick, unless East or West have singleton and the defense can negotiate a club ruff. Better to secure the diamond ruff while it is still available...the club trick can wait!

Board 17
 East Deals
 None Vul

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

NS 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♦; EW 3♣; NS 1N; Par +100; EW 3♥×-1;
 EW 4♣×-1

Saints & Sinners

So, what is the defense to hold West to eight tricks? It took me a while to work it out and here it is...North leads a spade.

1) If declarer wins in hand and plays a diamond North wins and continues with another spade which declarer must win in dummy and declarer...

a) plays a heart, then North wins and plays another heart and E/W will subsequently score 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 1 club

b) plays a top club, North can duck, win either a club, spade or heart continuation and exit with ♥ A and another heart, South being careful to cover dummy's ♥ 9 with their ♥ 10. Again E/W will score the same 5 tricks.

2) If declarer wins in hand with ♠ A and plays a top heart West wins and continues with another spade.establishing a spade winner for the defense. Declarer must win the second spade in dummy and...

a) plays a top club which West ducks but then wins either the second club or a spade continuation and duly plays another heart depriving declarer of a diamond ruff and E/W will subsequently score 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 1 club.

3) If declarer wins in dummy with ♠ K and...

a) plays a diamond then North can win and play ♥ A and another heart and with ♠ K already played that kills dummy's clubs once North ducks the first round.

b) plays a heart then North can win and play another heart and with ♠ K already played that kills dummy's clubs once North ducks the first round.

The essence of the defense lies in the need for E/W to score a spade trick whilst also removing the ♠ K which is a potential entry for access to dummy's club winners. And all the time E/W have also to ensure that declarer cannot ruff the losing diamond in dummy.

An intricate defense and series of counter-measures. As one of my regular partners is wont to say...'It's difficult!'

Board 18
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

♠ —
♥ A 9 5 4 2
♦ K Q 10 2
♣ A Q 7 5


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

Board 19
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 2♥; EW 3♣; EW 1N; EW 2♦; S 1♠; Par -110; EW 3♣

Board 20
 West Deals
 Both Vul

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

EW 6♣; EW 4♠; EW 4♦; NS 2♥; Par -1100; NS 6♥×-4

Yes, E/W can make 6 ♣ but most partnerships will do well to reach 5 ♣. And then declarer will need to be careful with the play, in particular coping with the 4-0 trump break. The bidding is the issue! Most Wests will open 1 ♦, North will pass and most Easts will also pass although some may bid 1 NT which will be music to West's ears. South will bid hearts at some level. And now the bidding reverts to West. West in this situation should DOUBLE which is TAKEOUT, i.e. a strong hand with a shortage in hearts. East may come to light if North passes and will bid clubs at the lowest level. South may bid hearts again and West can invite the club game (showing a VERY strong hand) or if South has already bid 4 ♥ then West may simply bid 5 ♣. Note that West requires very little in East's hand for 5 ♣ or even 6 ♣ to make!

Saints & Scholars

Saintly status to the three E/W pairs (**David & Rory, Enda & Sean, Kevin & Mary**) who all reached 5 ♣. One made twelve tricks, one made eleven tricks and one **Sinful** declarer fell from grace by making only ten tricks after ruffing the ♥ A, cashing ♣ A and then playing a club to ♣ Q in hand and ruffing a second losing heart with dummy's last trump. All was well up to this point but declarer went astray by cashing two top spades and then playing a third spade which South won. South cashed the ♥ K and North subsequently scored the setting trick with ♣ J. Declarer was guilty of playing too fast and not working out the consequence of his sequence of plays...losing a spade and also a heart as well as ♣ J. After ruffing the second heart in dummy declarer should cash two top diamonds and then lead ♦ J from dummy...if North covers then declarer ruffs in hand, cashes ♣ K and then plays a spade to dummy's ♠ A and leads a winning diamond, discarding his losing heart irrespective of whether North plays low or ruffs in with his ♣ J. Note that declarer still has ♠ K to access dummy for the last diamond on which he will discard his losing spade!

Also, note that when declarer leads ♦ J from dummy he can still discard his losing heart even if North does not follow with ♦ Q. Similar continuation as outlined above will still see declarer make eleven tricks. From the outset East needs to be aware of his potential losers in hearts and spades and needs to address a solution that will enable him to reduce the total losers in those suits. Dummy's diamond suit must be part of that solution!

Board 20

West Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 6♣; EW 4♠; EW 4♦; NS 2♥; Par -1100; NS 6♥×-4

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to **Marion Donlon & Anne Killilea** who doubled 4♥ by south and defeated it by two tricks to score +500. Marion led ♦ A, followed by ♦ K with Anne showing her doubleton. Marion continued with ♠ K and then played a third diamond which Anne ruffed. The defense subsequently scored a trick with ♠ A.

Sinner status to the South who made a takeout double with the South hand after West's opening 1♦ was followed by two passes. The South hand is not suited to a takeout double and South should simply bid hearts perhaps at the three level. East's pass indicates that North has some values. As it turned out North responded 1NT over which South overreached by bidding 4♥. **Sinner** status to West who passed South's double instead of showing his strong hand by Redoubling. West did come to life eventually and doubled 4♥ but then made the wrong defensive plays and let declarer out for a one trick defeat by leading ♠ K before switching to ♣ A which South ruffed and away went the defense's diamond ruff

Sinner status to the West at another table who defended similarly and also failed to score a diamond ruff by East. It cannot cost to cash a top diamond and get a signal from East indicating a doubleton (or singleton!) or three or more diamonds.

Sinner status to the East who failed to bid 4♣ after partner made a Takeout Double of South's 3♥ jump over west's opening 1♦. Fortunately (for the defense) the defenders managed to score their five tricks and so defeat the contract by a single trick!

Saintly status to **John Fahy** for making a Takeout Double of South's 1♥ overcall and raising East's 2♣ response to 4♣. Difficult for Liam to visualise a hand opposite his own that could produce eleven let alone twelve tricks. **Saintly** status awarded to him for his declarer play.

Saintly status to **Sheila Baynes** who took a different route with the West hand and managed to bid her three suits, the last one via a bid of 3♣. Perhaps East should have raised to 4♣ after this very strong bidding by West which clearly show a 4-0-5-4 distribution. **Sinner** status to South for making a meek 1♥ overcall instead of a jump to 3♥ showing her concentrated strength.

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

| | | |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| ♠ A K 9 8 | ♠ J 7 6 | ♠ 10 3 2 |
| ♥ — | ♥ Q J 2 | ♥ 7 6 4 |
| ♦ A K J 10 8 | ♦ Q 3 2 | ♦ 9 7 |
| ♣ A 9 4 2 | ♣ J 10 8 3 | ♣ K Q 7 6 5 |
| | <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;"> N W E S </div> | |
| | ♠ Q 5 4 | |
| | ♥ A K 10 9 8 5 3 | |
| | ♦ 6 5 4 | |
| | ♣ — | |

EW 6♣; EW 4♠; EW 4♦; NS 2♥; Par -1100; NS 6♥×-4

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly & Sinner status to Margaret Treacy who wasn't going to sit on the sidelines with her strong hand. She opened 1♦ and partner actually responded 1NT over which South bid 3♥ (good bid). Margaret could have made a Takeout Double but began to show her shape with a bid of 3♠ perhaps forgetting that partner has already denied four spades by their initial response of 1NT! This passed round to South who must have found some extra values that they felt weren't represented in their original bid of 3♥. South now bid 4♥ and should have been Doubled for a -500 penalty. However Margaret battled on and was on the verge of hitting the jackpot if she could find the right bid...5♣ which would have found the actual magic fit but would also have given partner a choice of contracts! Unfortunately Margaret re-bid her diamonds and duly suffered a one trick defeat!

Absolute Sinner status to the West who opened 1♦ which was passed to South who overcalled 1♥. This West then rejected the obvious (and highly descriptive) Takeout Double showing a strong hand with a heart shortage. She also rejected the bid of 1♠ (showing at least 5 diamonds and 4 spades) and even the bid of 2♣ which would show at least 5 diamonds and 4 clubs. Instead, she made the very poor bid of 2♦ denying spades and clubs! And when North bid 2♥ West Passed with her very strong hand when E/W could have made any of the following contracts: 6♣, 5♣, 4♠, 4♦

Absolute Sinner status also to the West who bid her five card diamond suit THREE times and never mentioned her spades or clubs!

Absolute Sinner status to the West who opened 1♦ and re-bid 3♦ over South's 2♥ overcall and then doubled 3♥...and failed to give partner a diamond ruff thus letting 3♥x make for a score of 730 to N/S and a loss of 13.46 IMPs to E/W instead of a score of +200 and +2.15 IMPs to E/W.

Board 21
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 3N; EW 2♠; EW 3♣; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -400; EW 3N

Ireland's IMPs Pars - 2020-07-12

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| ♠ J 5 4 3 2 | ♠ J 5 4 3 2 | ♠ J 5 4 3 2 |
| ♥ Q 10 8 4 | ♥ Q 10 8 4 | ♥ Q 10 8 4 |
| ♦ 9 8 6 | ♦ 9 8 6 | ♦ 9 8 6 |
| ♣ 4 | ♣ 4 | ♣ 4 |

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| 3 ♣ | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♦ | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| 6 ♥ | All pass | 4 ♥ | Pass |

6 ♥ by East

South leads ♠ 2.

Did you count your top tricks? 3 spades, 2 diamonds, 3 clubs...and hopefully four hearts.

Note that you do not need to make five heart tricks. But you certainly **cannot afford to lose TWO heart tricks!**

But can you guarantee to make FOUR heart tricks?

Do you know your safety plays?

This is a classic one...

When the competition was played eleven pairs bid to 6 ♥ played by East. One pair bid to 6 NT, also played by East. All twelve declarers failed to make the small slam.

Would you have fared better?

Study the hand, in particular the play of the heart suit.... When you think you have solved the problem move to the next page to see if you would have got it right.

Ireland's IMPs Pairs - 2020-07-12

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------|-----|---|-----------|--|
| ♠ 10 8 7 6 | | | | | | |
| ♥ 3 | | | | | | |
| ♦ Q 4 | | | | | | |
| ♣ J 9 7 6 3 2 | | | | | | |
| ♠ — | <table border="1" style="background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> | N | W E | S | ♠ A K Q 9 | |
| N | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | |
| ♥ K 9 5 | | ♥ A J 7 6 2 | | | | |
| ♦ K 10 7 5 2 | | ♦ A J 3 | | | | |
| ♣ A K 10 8 5 | | ♣ Q | | | | |
| ♠ J 5 4 3 2 | | | | | | |
| ♥ Q 10 8 4 | | | | | | |
| ♦ 9 8 6 | | | | | | |
| ♣ 4 | | | | | | |

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | 2 ♣ | Pass |
| 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| 3 ♣ | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| 4 ♦ | Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass |
| 6 ♥ | All pass | | |

6 ♥ by East

Opening lead is ♠ 2.

The heart suit is the one that needs to be handled with care and it only requires that the suit break no worse than 4-1 or 1-4.

This particular layout, ♥ K9x opposite ♥ AJxxx (or ♥ A9x opposite ♥ KJxxx) offers a **'Safety Play' whereby declarer can guarantee not to lose two tricks in the suit.**

1) Cash the ♥ A

2) lead a small heart towards dummy's ♥ K9...

a) **if South shows out** rise with ♥ K and then finesse ♥ J, subsequently conceding ONE trick to North.

b) **if South follows with a low heart** then cover with dummy's ♥ 9. If North also follows then the hearts are breaking 3-2 and if North holds ♥ 10x or 10xx or ♥ Qx or ♥ Qxx you will lose that trick **but that is the only trick you lose. BUT** if South holds four hearts then the ♥ 9 will win the trick and you then cash ♥ K and subsequently only lose one trick to South's ♥ Q. Needless to say if South plays ♥ 10 or ♥ Q on the second trick you win with ♥ K and then continue with ♥ 9, losing only one trick at most.

Easy-peasy...when you know how. The twelve declarers who failed to make their contract forgot the **Golden Rule** of IMPs Pairs...make your contract! And sometimes you need to know your **Safety Plays** and be alert to the need to use them! Those declarers that made 6 ♥ scored +980 which converted to +9.71 IMPs whereas those that failed scored -50 which converted to -5.29 IMPs....That's a swing of exactly 15 IMPs.