

Greetings!

Herewith find analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 23rd July 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

This week I have analysed 17 of the 24 hands: 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,11,12,13,16,17,19,20,21,23,24
This was more than I intended to review but some were so interesting that I couldn't let them pass without a comment! Some hands are analysed in more detail than others.

Please note that in some cases the **Saints & Sinners** comments extend over several pages.

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...late on Thursday night or early on Friday morning. The downloaded content includes 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 **17 hands**, played at **12 tables**, representing a total of **204 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **2,652 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **10,608 individual card plays** that are dissected! Just for info!

Paul J Scannell
28th 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

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

NS 2N; NS 2♥; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +120: NS 2N

N/S will probably play 2♥.

Saints & Sinners

Venial Sinner status awarded to the **East** who played ♣ J from J1062, when partner lead ♣ 8. East should play the lower of touching cards in third seat. The play of the ♣ J denies the ♣ 10! **Sinner status** to partner, West, who had two opportunities to find the spade switch through dummy's ♠ K83, and failed to do so, resulting in declarer scoring 10 tricks! Note that declarer had already shown up with ♥ K, ♣ AK...and was playing on diamonds! And had stopped in 2♥! **Major Sinner status** to East who watched declarer discard ♠ 9 on dummy's ♦ J and then played low when declarer played a small spade from dummy, allowing declarer to score with his then singleton ♠ J. TEN tricks to declarer!

Sinner status to the **East** who did not cash her ♠ A after declarer played on diamonds to set up a discard of his second losing spade on dummy's ♦ J, declarer duly making 9 tricks instead of 8!

Saintly status to **John Fahy** who was able to discard a losing diamond on dummy's ♠ K and then guessed to rise with ♦ K from hand after leading ♦ J from dummy. Nine tricks to declarer.

Venial Sinner status awarded to West for rising with ♥ A on first round of the suit thus presenting declarer with two entries to dummy. West should have played low...apart from anything else, East may have held a singleton ♥ K!

Sinner status to the **West** who lead a spade at trick one and saw partner win with ♠ Q but who then continued with a second spade after winning first heart with ♥ A (another **Sin**) to continue with a second spade when she should have known that declarer held ♠ J...Why So? Because partner won the first spade with ♠ Q...DENYING ♠ J. **Sinner status** to East who rashly rose with ♦ A when declarer, having discarded a diamond on ♠ K then led ♦ J from dummy. East should play low and let declarer guess!

Sinner status to East at another table who also rashly rose with ♦ A after declarer had eliminated spades and clubs and therefore was known to hold 2 spades, 5 hearts, 3 clubs and hence 2 diamonds still in hand (one having been discarded on ♠ K! *Counting, counting...all the time!*

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 2N; NS 2♥; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +120: NS 2N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At two tables N/S reached 3♥, in both cases after East opened the bidding with 1♣. At one table South overcalled 1♥, West Passed and North raised to 2♥. After East Passed South made a **Game Try** by bidding 3♦ (I have extra values and if you can give me some support in diamonds 4♥ might be a possibility) which North declined with his sparse values in particular with ♠K sitting UNDER the opener. Super subs (**liv2006 & 0 Nu**) made no mistake in the defense and held declarer to eight tricks and a one trick defeat.

At the other table East also opened 1♣ and here South made a Takeout Double (not recommended with only 2 spades!). West could have hit the jackpot by showing her 4 spades but instead bid 1NT which was passed (Perhaps North should have Doubled 1NT) around to South who found a bid of 2♥. This bid, opposite a partner who has Passed TWICE, should show a stronger hand...overcalling 1♥ at first opportunity being a much better option! But the 2♥ bid by South pails into insignificance when compared with East's extraordinary bid of 3♣ after both West and North Passed South's 2♥. Note...East has a mere 11hcp in a relatively flat hand and with only 4 clubs!!!. This contract could have been Doubled and gone for a significant penalty. **Most Major Sinner Status** awarded to **East**. However, East's bacon was removed from the slicer when North competed with 3♥. **Sinner** status to E/W who had a chance to find their spade fit at the one level!

Sinner status to **declarer** at the same table who gained access to dummy's two winning diamonds in the later stage of the play, on the latter of which she could have discarded a losing spade and thus made her contract but instead led ♠K from dummy and lost two spade tricks added to the two diamonds and ♥A. The same declarer rashly used ♣Q early in the play instead of winning with ♣AK in hand and thus preserving ♣Q as an entry to dummy to play diamonds from dummy. Instead, she ended up playing diamonds from hand! Additional **Sinner** status to the aforementioned **East** who should have ducked the second diamond, partner having won the first round of the suit with ♦Q. If declarer plays another diamond then East can win with ♦A and exit on her fourth club, declarer having to ruff and lead a spade towards dummy, East then scoring two spades. By winning the second diamond East enabled declarer to gain access dummy via a third diamond, and as outlined above, declarer could have discarded one of her two losing spades on dummy's fourth diamond. Careless by East!

Board 1
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ J 9	♠ J 9
♥ K 9 8 5 2	♥ K 9 8 5 2
♦ K 7 5	♦ K 7 5
♣ A K 9	♣ A K 9



NS 2N; NS 2♥; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +120: NS 2N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to **Bridie & Frankie** who made no mistakes in defending 2♥. **Bridie** found the lead of a small diamond to partner's ♦ A who returned a diamond to declarer's ♦ K. Bridie duly won her ♥ A, cashed the ♦ Q and switched to a spade, Frankie cashing ♠ Q and ♠ A to hold declarer to eight tricks!

Saintly status to **Margaret & Kevin**, defending 2♥ by South, who also claimed their five tricks and gave declarer no chance for an overtrick

Saintly status to **Mary & Phil**, also defending 2♥ by South, who cashed the first four tricks (spade lead to East's ♠ Q and ♠ A followed by small diamond to West's ♦ Q and a second diamond to East's ♦ A...and with ♥ A still to come, declarer could only muster eight tricks!

Saintly status to **Anne & Frank**, also defending 2♥ by S, who also claimed five tricks.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

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

W 3N; W 3♠; EW 4♦; E 2N; E 2♠; W 2♥; W 3♣; E 2♣; E 1♥;
Par -400: W 3N

3 NT can be made by West...but only eight tricks are available to East as long as N/S defend accurately. Note that the East hand is too strong for a Weak 2 ♦ opening and qualifies for a 1 ♦ opening by virtue of the 'Rule of 20'...add the value of your hcp to the length of your two longest suits, and if it totals 20 then open with a bid at the one level...Here 1 ♦ is fine.

Sinner status to the three E/W partnerships that failed to reach game.

Nine E/W partnerships reached 3 NT...but only seven made the contract. One of the two that failed did so because the hand was '**wrong-sided**', i.e. played from the wrong side of the table. A careful study of the hand above will confirm that 3 NT is vulnerable on a heart lead if played by East. This is what happened at one table where international players **David & Rory** found the killing defense. David kicked off the defense with ♥ 5, declarer playing low from dummy. Rory made the key play of ♥ 9...which won the trick and confirmed that declarer did not have ♥ J. Rory continued with ♠ 3, declarer rising with ♠ A from hand and playing on diamonds, David winning the second round with ♦ A. David now continued with ♥ 6 and the defense took three more heart tricks to beat the contract by one trick.

Note that the key play to this successful defense was Rory's play of ♥ 9 at trick one. Many less experienced defenders might play ♥ Q in which case declarer will then have a heart stopper (♥ K10 sitting over South's ♥ J76) and a way to nine tricks via 2 spades, 1 heart, 5 diamonds, 2 clubs (finessing against South's ♣ Kxxx if necessary). And note that playing the ♥ 9 does not cost N/S...if declarer has the ♥ J then he cannot be stopped from making a heart trick. But North takes comfort from South's lead of ♥ 5 which suggests a 4 card (maybe 3 card) suit INCLUDING an honour which must be ♥ J. There are other lead styles for 4 or 3 small cards!

Saintly status to **David & Rory**

Thinking, thinking... all the time... Well, maybe thinking when not counting!

At the other table, West, declaring 3 NT on a heart lead simply had to play on diamonds for nine tricks but switched to clubs after two rounds of diamonds when South ducked with ♦ A. Declarer duly finished two tricks short! Will credit the lapse to her first time playing in this tourney!

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 3♠; EW 4♦; EW 4♣; Par -630: EW 3N+1

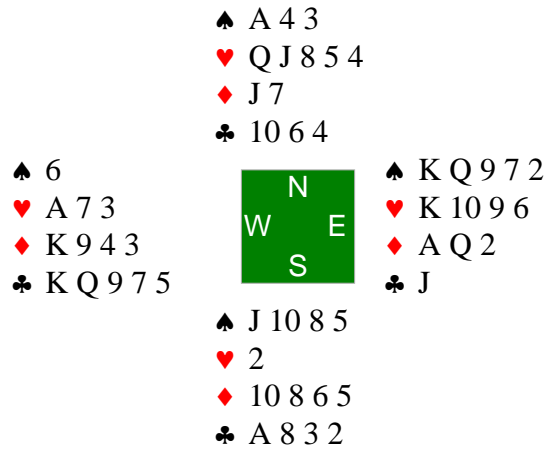
3 NT by E/W should be a common contract with declarer making 9 or 10 tricks. Various routes to take...diamonds can produce 4 tricks if declarer finesses ♦ 9 on third round. Also, the lucky ♣ 1064 in North hand means that clubs can also produce 4 tricks. At least 1 spade...and the hearts are good for three tricks. But there are also options for declarer to go astray and some may leave a trick behind!

Saints & Sinners

Sinful East who snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. Declarer forgot that ♣ 97 were winners (North had discarded ♣ 10 on third diamond) and then calamitously exited with ♦ 9 to South's ♦ 10 and ended up one down instead of making +1... Concentration is vital, be it as declarer or defender.

Sinners Two, one on each competing side! West declared 3 NT on the lead of ♥ 5, dummy's ♥ 10 winning the trick. Declarer erred by playing on diamonds first and thus using up one of only two entries to the West hand. Declarer should have played on clubs, South ducking the first round. Declarer can then play a diamond to dummy's ♦ K (forgoing the option to score 4 diamond tricks) in order to play clubs from dummy. Declarer should have taken stock after winning the first heart ... 1 spade, 3 hearts, 3 diamonds, 2 clubs, gives nine tricks! Set up the club tricks whilst still holding a diamond and heart entry to her hand with at least two club tricks to score. The bonus comes when ♣ 10 falls on the third club! What actually happened was declarer played three rounds of diamonds, North discarding ♣ 4 on third round. Inexplicably (maybe declarer thought ♦ 9 was a winner) declarer played a fourth diamond to South's ♦ 10. South now switched to a small club (despite West having opened 1 ♣, declarer winning perforce with dummy's singleton ♣ J. Declarer now played a heart to her ♥ A and continued with ♣ K from hand, South winning with ♣ A. South then played her last club, giving declarer access to three club winners and believe it or not declarer could now score all remaining tricks by squeezing North who is trying to hold on to ♠ A, ♥ QJ8 with dummy holding ♠ KQ, ♥ K10 and with North and dummy to make two discards on declarer's winning clubs. Declarer cannot be stopped from making ♠ KQ or ♥ K10 as last two tricks. Work out what happened that allowed North to win the last two tricks with ♠ A and ♥ Q! **Sinner** status awarded to **West** and **South**.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul



EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 3♠; EW 4♦; EW 4♣; Par -630; EW 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the West who did not realise that his ♣ 97 were winners and blew the chance to score ELEVEN tricks and ended up with ten!

Sinner status to the E/W pair who languished in 2♠ instead of 3NT. Or they could have taken a huge penalty by Doubling North's off-centre 2♥ Weak Jump Overcall.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

		♠ A J 10 7 6												
		♥ 6 5												
		♦ A K 10 4												
		♣ 6 3												
♠ 8			<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 30px; height: 30px;"> <tr><td></td><td style="font-size: 0.8em;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="font-size: 0.8em;">W</td><td></td><td style="font-size: 0.8em;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="font-size: 0.8em;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S			♠ K 4 2
	N													
W		E												
	S													
♥ 10 9 8 4 3 2					♥ Q 7									
♦ 9 8 5					♦ Q 2									
♣ J 8 7					♣ A K 10 9 5 4									
		♠ Q 9 5 3												
		♥ A K J												
		♦ J 7 6 3												
		♣ Q 2												

NS 4♠; NS 4♦; NS 1N; NS 1♥; EW 1♣; Par +620: NS 4♠

N/S can make 4 ♠...but declarer can go astray by finessing a diamond into East's ♦ Q2. And East needs to be careful in the defense. Two top clubs leave East with several options, none very appealing.

This contract may make as a result of defensive mistakes rather than inspired declarer play!

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to all Easts who switched to ♦ Q (or ♦ 2) after cashing two top clubs or upon winning with ♠ K. All players sitting as East should have counted their own hcp and that of dummy! Nothing left for partner to hold ♦ K or ♦ A! *Counting, counting ...all the time!*

Saintly status to **Monica Power**, one of only two Wests who didn't **give** declarer the contract by switching to a diamond either after two top clubs or on winning with ♠ K. Monica returned a spade after winning with ♠ K and now declarer had to find his own way home.

Unfortunately, Monica had started, as did several others, with three rounds of clubs thus handing declarer, **Rory**, a ruff and discard. Rory correctly discarded a diamond from hand whilst ruffing in dummy with ♠ 9. Rory then finessed a spade into Monica's ♠ K. Monica at this juncture found the safe return of a spade leaving Rory to still find his way home....he still needed to avoid a diamond loser. Rory drew trumps and then considered his options.

A successful finesse in EITHER hearts or diamonds would see him home. But would he guess right in terms of which suit to finesse? Rory took a better line...he **combined his chances**'. He cashed the top honours in the suit with the most cards (diamonds) and if the ♦ Q failed to drop he would then finesse in hearts! Here both roads lead to home. **Saintly** status to **Rory** as well.

See next page for description of another interesting tussle between declarer and defender in respect of this challenging hand.

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

N 4♠; S 3♠; NS 1N; EW 1♥; W 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +420; N 4♠

Note carefully that 4♠ should only make if North is declarer. The reason for this is that East cannot lead a club without conceding a trick (declarer rises with dummy's ♣ Q and loses no club. Played by South a club lead will ensure that East scores ♣ K and the defense will also score a diamond, a heart and a spade or a second club. 4♠ can be made by South IF West leads a heart but should fail on a minor suit lead. It is also possible that West may enter the bidding and could get their fingers burnt!

Saints & Sinners

The hand was played in spades at NINE tables with game being reached on six occasions. Of these, only two made ten tricks,,one when North declared (they play a Multi 2♦ opening which enabled North to become declarer) and at the other table ♥ A was led. **Saintly** status conferred on both declarers (**Sean Glynn** and **Mairead Watters**) for bringing home their contract.

At one of the other four tables where 4♠ was contracted West led ♣ 5 and declarer could never recover. **Saintly** status to **Retsea (Kathleen)**

At another table E/W combined to defeat 4♠ played by South. **Kevin Moylan** led ♣ 5 and that ensured that the defense accrued four tricks! **Saintly** status to **Kevin** for his killing lead.

At the third table where 4♠ failed, West led ♦ K...**Saintly** status awarded to **Bridie Redahan**.

At the fourth table where South declared 4♠ West made the unfortunate lead of ♥ A (♦ K is a safer lead). Now declarer has a chance because the losing diamond can be discarded on ♥ K. West switched to ♦ K at trick two, declarer winning with dummy's ♦ A. Declarer should now cash ♥ K, discarding the losing diamond from hand and then ruff a diamond in hand before leading ♠ Q, trapping West's ♠ K. After drawing trumps declarer can play a club to dummy's ♣ A and then return a club toward ♣ Q87 in hand. This will see declarer score 6 spades, 1 heart, 1 diamond 2 clubs...Sadly, declarer lost her way and failed to cash ♥ K at trick three whilst, discarding her losing diamond and instead led ♠ A thus conceding a trick to West's ♠ K and subsequently also losing 1 diamond, 1 heart, 2 clubs and ending 2 down. **Sinner** status to South.

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

N 4♠; S 3♠; NS 1N; EW 1♥; W 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +420; N 4♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

When you find yourself in a hole, stop digging! And don't panic!

At one table West found himself in 4♥x after overcalling South's opening bid of 2♠ with 3♥, North bidding 3♠, and East, perhaps not looking at the vulnerability, raising partner to 4♥ which North Doubled. North kicked off the defense by cashing his three Aces (West making the good play of unblocking ♦K on North's ♦A to create an extra entry to dummy should it be needed) and continuing with ♣3. Declarer won ♣K and led ♥8 and made an error in following with ♥10 from hand, North winning with ♥J. North continued with another diamond, declarer winning in hand with ♦Q and then cashing ♠K and ruffing his losing spade with dummy's ♥3. Now declarer led ♥9 and when South showed out the folly of West's earlier play of ♥10 struck home...declarer could not overtake with ♥A or ♥Q without promoting North's ♥7 as a third trump trick for North, something he could have done if he hadn't squandered the ♥10 on the first round of the suit!

But, if declarer stopped to think he could have worked out the solution...let the ♥9 run to North and if North wins with ♥K then win the diamond return in hand with ♦10 and cash ♥AQ drawing North's ♥7. And if North ducked ♥9 then declarer could play a diamond to ♦10 in hand and then cash ♥A and concede a heart to North's ♥K.

But., declarer must have suffered a panic attack when South showed out on the second heart because he rose with ♥A, thus promoting North's ♥7 into a third trump winner for the defense.

The result was a three trick defeat with a score of -800 instead of two down and a loss of -500! Costly mistake by West. **Sinner** status awarded.

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

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

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

What should be a fairly standard 3 NT by E/W...but with a couple of variations in the play which will likely see a range of different results!

The list of makeable contracts suggests that E/W can score eleven tricks in 3 NT

Saints & Sinners

Three declarers received the opening lead of ♥ J. **Monica Power** recognised that it was probably from a doubleton and therefore placed the ♥ Q with North and she made the good play of rising with ♥ A (**Saintly** status awarded) and thus preserving the option of finessing against North's HQ later in the play. However, she tarnished her Saintly status later in the hand when forced to discard a heart from dummy and she discarded ♥ 2 instead of ♥ 10. This left the heart position blocked, ♥ 10 opposite ♥ K9 meant she could no longer finesse the ♥ 9. Discarding ♥ 10 would have resolved that problem. The defense came to her aid when South led ♥ 5 at a later stage of the play and North, not keeping an eye on the hearts already played, covered ♥ 10 with ♥ Q and thus gave declarer access to ♥ K AND ♥ 9. If North did not cover then ♥ 10 would have won the trick but ♥ K would have remained stranded in dummy and with no means (other than the defense) of declarer getting access to it because all other entries to the East had already been played! **Sinner** status to North.

Saintly status to **Margaret Forde** who also received the lead of ♥ J and correctly rose with ♥ A. **Sinner** status to the **South** who won the third spade at trick nine, partner showing out having discarded a spade earlier in the play, who then thoughtlessly returned the ♠ 8 and gave declarer access to her hand which contained three otherwise isolated winners whereas if South had played a diamond, putting declarer in dummy, North would have scored the last two tricks with ♣ K8 sitting over dummy's ♣ Q7.

Sinner status to the North's, who discarded clubs, in two cases with East's five card club suit clearly visible on the table and thus enabled declarer to score twelve tricks!

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 4♥; N 2♠; EW 3♣; NS 1N; S 1♠; NS 1♦; Par -300: N 4♠×-2

E/W should reach 4♥. Note that depending on bidding system either West or East may become declarer. West will be at the helm where E/W are not playing 'transfer' bids over 2 NT openings or 2 NT rebids. West should have a better chance of recognising the right play to bring home ten tricks whereas with East as declarer it is best to view it as a **Dummy Reversal**, i.e. the East hand is regarded as 'dummy'.

Simply put, declarer should avoid taking a finesse in spades or diamonds and rather set up the club suit in the West hand, or by ruffing the club losers with East's top trumps. Note that ♥ J is the only trump honour that is missing.

The simple line is to win at first opportunity and play a club. Regain the lead and play another club and then cross-ruff the hand ruffing the three remaining clubs with the ♥ AKQ ultimately losing only 2 clubs and ♥ J. Note that if N/S switch to trumps then West's long clubs can still be established as winners

Problems will arise when declarer starts taking finesses in spades and/or diamonds and trying to establish side suit tricks in the East hand!

Saints & Sinners....(lots of the latter and very few of the former!)

Sinner status to the E/W partnership who need to confirm their arrangements re 'transfers' over 2 NT and ended up in the hopeless 3 NT after West thought he had made a 'transfer' to hearts which was declined by East. 3 NT suffered a two trick defeat. Perhaps West should have bid 4♥.

At one table West found an imaginative opening of 2♥ (Weak) and East, not surprisingly, found it difficult to settle for anything less than 6♥ which was not a success. **Sinner** status to East.

At another table West Passed and North opened 2♦ (Weak) over which East bid 3 NT, West now bid 4♥ and East rashly jumped to 6♥ which went 3 light. **Sinner** status to East.

Sinner status to the West who transferred with 3♦ over partner's opening 2 NT and then passed 3♥. The West hand with a 6 card suit, a side suit of 5 cards, and two singletons, is well worth a raise to 4♥.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 4♥; N 2♠; EW 3♣; NS 1N; S 1♠; NS 1♦; Par -300: N 4♠×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Eight pairs reached 4♥ with 1 making 11 tricks, 4 making 10 tricks and 3 failing by 1 trick. At one table, East, declarer after a transfer bid by partner, won the soft spade lead and without giving things too much thought cashed three hearts, ruffed a spade and then led a diamond to his ♦ A, forgoing a finesse of ♦ Q or even ♦ 10. Declarer then led ♦ 9, discarding a club from dummy, and let it run to North's ♦ J who continued with a spade to declarer's ♠ A. Declarer, with no entry back to hand, now led ♦ Q to repeat the 'ruffing finesse'. Note that even if South covered with ♦ K, thereby promoting the ♦ 10, declarer had no way back to his hand to cash the diamond winner! In practice, the ♦ Q lost to North's ♦ K and declarer had no way of avoiding the loss of two club tricks for one down. Sinner status to East for not planning a considered line of play. For example, if declarer had won the spade lead and continued with ♦ A followed by ♦ Q (or ♦ 10) and played for a ruffing finesse with South to hold either ♦ K OR ♦ J then there would have been considerable merit in such a play BECAUSE declarer could re-enter his hand with a trump to repeat the finesse and then re-enter his hand for a third time to cash the winning diamond if the double finesse was successful via a third trump. But cashing the trumps BEFORE broaching the diamond play was pointless. Played in that fashion would have earned declarer Saintly status (even though it would have been unsuccessful). **Sinner** status to East.

At another table, West declared 4♥ on a diamond lead. Winning in dummy with ♦ A, declarer made a super start by playing a club at trick 2, South winning with ♣ A and playing another diamond, declarer ruffing in hand. Declarer now completed a super start to the play of the hand by leading a second club, North winning with ♣ K and perhaps divining declarer's plan, switched to a trump, declarer winning in dummy with ♥ A. Declarer now has the contract in sight. Did you spot dummy's clubs at this point... ♣ J86. And already played are ♣ A,K,10,9 meaning that ♣ Q is the only high club left. All declarer needed to do was cash two more top hearts, drawing the opponents trumps in the process, and then ruff a diamond (or spade) in hand and lead ♣ J (or ♣ 8), losing to South's ♣ Q and then claim!!! Sadly, declarer erred by leading a third diamond which South ruffed with ♥ J and then followed with another heart. But, declarer was still on target to make the contract, winning the trump in hand and with all defenders trumps now gone. declarer could have entered dummy with a spade or diamond ruff and ruffed the third club establishing ♣ J8 as winners. But declarer entered dummy with a diamond ruff and fatally took the spade finesse snatching defeat from the jaws of victory! For so much of the hand this declarer was in control and on her way to victory. A pity. **Sinner** status for lack of concentration but with **Saintly** recommendation for good thoughts!

Board 8West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 4♥; N 2♠; EW 3♣; NS 1N; S 1♠; NS 1♦; Par -300; N 4♠×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the E/W Pair who bid 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ (on a four card suit!) - 3♥ (a positive bid with 1 hcp!) - 4♥. East should re-bid 2NT or even open 2NT, system permitting.

Declarer received the lead of ♦ J (unusual choice by North) but which surely declarer should have considered as a singleton, despite which declarer finessed ♦ Q which won. Declarer now played three rounds of trumps. Declarer next played ♦ A and ♦ 9 on which South showed out. And suddenly the contract was doomed. Declarer ruffed the diamond in hand and then took the spade finesse, losing to South's ♠ K and the defenders duly cashed 3 clubs. **Sinner** status to **West**.

Sinner status to the South at one table who made several defensive errors that handed declarer the contract on a plate! South was not aided by partner who found the lead of ♠ 2 (from ♠ J92) declarer rising with ♠ A and following with ♠ 10 from hand. When North led a second spade she played ♠ 9 instead of ♠ J, South rising with ♠ K which declarer ruffed thus establishing dummy's ♠ Q as a winner. South rose with ♠ K because of doubt as to the the location of ♠ J...North fully at fault for that! Holding two cards of equal rank always clarify that position for partner by leading the HIGHER card. South also ruffed in with ♥ J when declarer led a diamond from dummy, declarer having previously shown out on an earlier lead of a diamond from dummy thus confirming that North held a controlling ♦ K. South should NOT have ruffed in. **Sinner** status to declarer for not playing on clubs earlier in the play.

Saintly status to **Bridie Redahan** who made no mistake in the play and recognised that her two remaining clubs were winners after South and North, helped declarer by establishing the club winners instead of trying to force declarer by playing on spades and diamonds! **Sinner** status to N/S.


Sinner status to the declarer who took an unnecessary diamond finesse after the opponents had started the defense with two round of clubs. Declarer had plenty of time to test the clubs whilst keeping the diamond finesse in reserve.

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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


EW 4♠; W 4♣; EW 3♦; E 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♥; Par -620: EW 4♠

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

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

A nothing board...it would seem! Likely to be played in 1 NT by South and with N/S not finding their spade fit. Surprisingly the list of makeable contracts does not include 1 NT by N/S but does suggest that E/W can make 1 NT with their combined 23 hcp.

Saints & Sinners

Eight N/S pairs played 1 NT, four making and four failing. Two E/W pairs played a NT contract, both making.

At one table where South declared 1 NT on a diamond lead, declarer beat East's ♦ Q with ♦ K and then cashed a top spade noting West's ♠ J, entered dummy with a diamond and led a spade, finessing ♠ 10 into West's ♠ Q. If West's ♠ J is a singleton then East will always come to a spade trick and declarer cannot score four tricks in the suit. The only line for four tricks is to cash ♠ AK and hope that West has a doubleton ♠ QJ! It's another story if South holds ♠ AK109!

Saintly status to **Mary Muldoon** who found herself in 2 NT after partner made a Takeout Double of South's 1 ♦ opening. North led ♦ A and continued with a second diamond to dummy's ♦ Q and South's ♦ K. At this point N/S can take four spade tricks to defeat the contract, but not unreasonably South continued with ♦ 10, Declarer then took the next seven tricks via 3 clubs and 4 hearts to land her precarious contract.

Saintly status also to **Anne Killilea** who scampered home with seven tricks to claim her 1 NT after the opponents cashed four spades and two top diamonds.

Absolute Sinner status to the E/W pair (West primarily at fault) who allowed declarer to make 1 NT. West, having inexplicably won North's earlier lead of ♥ 10 with her ♥ K instead of ♥ J, found herself on lead at trick 11 with ♦ 6, ♣ K10 and, knowing that declarer held ♦ 10, led ♣ 10 and with partner holding ♣ AQ9 the suit was effectively blocked and West, winning the second club performace had to lead ♦ 6 to South's ♦ 10 at trick thirteen. So, why should West have led ♣ K instead of ♣ 10. Firstly the suit will likely be blocked (as happened) but more importantly South, who opened 1 NT 12-14) had already shown up with ♠ AK, ♥ Q, ♦ K and therefore could NOT hold ♣ A. So West SHOULD have known that partner held ♣ A and should simply have hoped that partner also held ♣ Q. Certainly if West wins the second club she knows that she will be conceding the last tricks to South's D10. *Counting, counting...all the time!*

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Absolute Sinner status to the West player, defending 1 NT by South, who, having won a trick with ♠ Q, cashed ♦ J (establishing declarer's ♦ 10) and could have continued with another diamond establishing her ♦ 7 as a winner but instead fond the play of ♥ K from ♥ KJ6 which led to South scoring ♥ Q for his seventh trick. Leading ♥ 6 from ♥ KJ6 allows for partner holding either ♥ A or ♥ Q (or both!) and certainly ensures that that declarer with ♥ Q95 CANNOT score a trick which they should never get!

Sinner status to another West who also came down to ♦ 7, ♣ K10 with declarer known to hold the winning ♦ 9, and with declarer also having shown up with ♠ AK, ♥ Q, ♦ K, elected to play the losing diamond instead of ♣ K and another club to East's ♣ AQ.... *Counting, counting...all the time!*

Sinner status to the West who overcalled South's 1 NT with 2♦ on a five card suit headed by the ♦ J!!!. It deservedly failed.

Sinner status to the ♦ pair who contracted 3♥ which failed by one trick.

Board 12

West Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 6♦; EW 5N; EW 5♥; W 3♣; E 2♣; EW 1♠; Par -920; EW 6♦

It mightn't be scientific but it got them to the top spot...6♦...see **Saints & Sinners** below. Yes, 6♦ makes but I suspect that most E/W pairs will reach 3 NT played by West. N/S could get into trouble in a spade contract...adverse vulnerability means that 2 down (Doubled) will be costly...and anything worse could be catastrophic given that most E/W partnerships will only reach 3 NT (400+) whereas 2♠x-2 by N will produce +500 for E/W.

6♦ is not a good contract and only makes due to the fact that North has a doubleton ♥K2 AND that the ♣K and ♣Q are in separate hands (okay, would also be fine if North holds both).

Saints & Sinners

On the basis that you can't argue with success **Saintly** status to **East** for 'gashing' 6♦ despite the fact that partner has suggested some wasted spade values by virtue of her 2 NT rebid after North had bid spades. It is a miraculous contract which cannot be touched. But the play is not easy. Note that declarer must finesse in hearts (once) and clubs (twice) so needs to use dummy's limited entries wisely. Our 'expert' from Sweden made no mistake. Ruffing North ♠A in hand declarer played a diamond to dummy and lead a heart to ♥Q and then returned to dummy with another diamond and led another heart, North's ♥K popping up nicely, declarer winning with ♥A. A third trump saw declarer in dummy again to lead ♣10 to South ♣K. And suddenly South realised that she was endplayed. A spade would be won with dummy's winning honour, a heart would be won by dummy's ♥J leaving declarer to discard his losing heart on dummy's ♠K. South chose to return a club which was into declarer's ♣AJ. Well played and **Saintly** status to '**0 nu**' who not only bid the slam but also brought it home!

Sinner status to the **West** who had opened 1 NT and then Passed partner's FORCING 3♦ which she bid over North's 2♠

Various Wests declared 3 NT making between 9 - 12 tricks. One North paid a small (-500) price for going 2 down in 2♠x. Note the adverse vulnerability. **Sinner** status to the East player who rose with ♣A on first round when declarer led a club from hand. Ducking would have seen declarer fail by another trick and suffer a -800 penalty!!! **Sinner** status to East.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

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

This will probably be a competitive hand with E/W able to make 2 ♠ or 2 ♦ and where N/s can make 1 ♥ or 3 ♣.

Saints & Sinners

An area of confusion for less experienced players is the **'Double'**. Is it Takeout or is it Penalty? Indeed the confusion is not always limited to less experienced players! It is worthwhile having a discussion with your regular partner and agree some CLEAR ground rules. One simple rule is that a Double of a suit (except where Doubling a conventional bid, e.g. Stayman or a Transfer bid) at the first opportunity is 'Takeout'.

At one table East opened 1 ♣, South overcalled 1 ♥, West passed and North bid 2 ♥ which East Doubled. This is for **Takeout** and West should bid her diamonds. The Double should show a strong hand with a shortage in hearts...East's hand is ideally suited. At the table West, perhaps not fully understanding East's double, Passed and declarer duly clocked up nine tricks for a score of +870 and 13.91 IMPs. **Sinner** status to West.

Sinner status to the **West** who left partner in 1NTx instead of bidding 2 ♦ which makes.

Absolute Sinner status to the **N/S** pair who let East make 3 NT+2. South led a small heart and the defense should have cashed the first five tricks. Instead, declarer won the second heart with dummy's ♥ Q and then rattled off six diamond tricks and subsequently four club tricks (poor discarding by N/S) to complete an outrageous 'steal' of eleven tricks.

Three E/W pairs declared 2 ♠, all making with one adding an overtrick.

Seven N/S pairs declared a heart contract, with one pair allowed to play in 1 ♥ which made. **Sinner** status to E/W for not reaching a spade or diamond contract.

One N/S pair reached 3 ♥ and **Saintly** status is awarded to the E/W defenders, **Bridie & Mary** who took the first six tricks via two top clubs, 2 club ruffs by West and 2 top diamonds to defeat the contract by 2 tricks!

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

	♠ Q 9 6 2										
	♥ Q J 8										
	♦ Q J										
	♣ A 7 3 2										
♠ A J 10 8 5 4	<table border="1"><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		♠ 7 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 9 6 3		♥ K 7 5									
♦ 3 2		♦ K 8 6									
♣ J 4		♣ Q 10 9 6 5									
	♠ K										
	♥ A 10 4 2										
	♦ A 10 9 7 5 4										
	♣ K 8										

NS 6♥; NS 5N; NS 5♦; NS 3♠; NS 3♣; Par +980: NS 6♥

Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul


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

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

Board 16

West Deals

E-W Vul

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

E 4♠; W 3♠; EW 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; Par -300; NS 5♣×-2

Another one of these curios where a contract can make from one side of the table but can be beaten if played from the other side! On this hand you will note that 4♠ CAN make if played by East whereas it can be defeated if played by West. The heart suit is the core of the issue. If West is declarer and North leads a heart then South can win with ♥ J, switch to a diamond, North winning with ♦ A who then finds the heart continuation...and in a flash N/S have scored four tricks. Played by East, South cannot lead a heart and if he leads a diamond then North can only lead a heart once, declarer eventually discarding dummy's third heart on ♣ A in hand.

So, I would expect 4♠ to be made most of the time and that few North's will find the killing opening lead of a heart. Note that N/S have a good 'Save' in 5♣ which is only two light. Difficult to bid.

Saints & Sinners

Unanimous! One of the few boards that was played in the same denominations, spades, at all tables! **Sinner** status to the two E/W pairs who failed to bid game. Also, good to see that eight Wests chose to open with 1♠ as opposed to only 3 that pre-empted with 3♠...and one West opening with a very top-heavy 2♠ ...way too strong for a Weak 2♠

Saintly status to the two Easts, **Margaret Forde** and **Monica Power**, who bid 2♣ over partner's 1♠ opening, subsequently raising to the spade game. This East hand is a classic example of the '**delayed game raise**' type, whereas a direct raise to 4♠ would be made on a weaker hand with good distributional values. The **delayed game raise** shows opening values with trump support.

Sinner status also to the **West** who got overly excited when partner raised her opening 1♠ to 4♠ over which West bid 4NT. 5♠ duly failed. West needs East to hold too many specific cards for 6♠ to make.

Exalted Saintly status to **Liam Faherty**, who found the killing defense with an opening lead of ♥ 6 (M.U.D ...Middle up Down from three small cards). And **Saintly** status to partner **John Fahy** who won the first trick with ♥ J (NOT the ♥ Q) thus confirming possession of ♥ Q and ♥ A. John didn't panic and switched to ♦ 6 (also M.U.D) for Liam to win with ♦ A and continue with ♥ 7. Nice defense.

Board 16
 West Deals
 E-W Vul

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

E 4♠; W 3♠; EW 2N; NS 3♣; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; Par -300; NS 5♣×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Exalted Saintly status to **Marie Killilea**, who also found the killing defense against 5♠ by West with an opening lead of ♥ 6 (**M.U.D** ...**M**iddle **U**p **D**own from three small cards). Partner, **Moya MacEoin**, (**Saintly** status awarded) conscious of the fact that the opponents were a level too high cashed the ♥ A at trick two and the defense subsequently scored the setting trick with ♦ A.

Sinner status to the **North** who lead ♠ 7. This is not a recommended lead because you may help declarer to 'find' a missing honour (K or Q) in particular where partner may have Qxx and declarer may have a seven card suit AJxxxxx - Kx (or KJxxxxx - Ax) and might otherwise play for the outstanding trumps to break 2-2. The lead of a singleton trump 'finds' partner's Qxx and solves declarer's potential problem.

Board 17
North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 4♥; EW 4♦; EW 4♣; EW 1N; Par +100; EW 5♣×-1; EW 5♦×-1

An interesting hand where N/S can make 4♥ but where E/W have good Saves in either minor suit. Expect a variety of contracts and results.

Saints & Sinners

At five tables N/S played in 4♥, four declarers making the required ten tricks. At another five tables E/W played a club contract, one at the four level and the others at the five level.

Sinner status to the E/W partnership that reached 4♠ which went four down, but were fortunate that their opponents didn't Double. **Sinner** status also awarded to N/S.

Sinner status to the N/S pair who allowed their opponents to play in 4♣ with 4♥ on for N/S. Perhaps just as well that N/S did not Double 4♣ as that contract can make! **Sinner** status to declarer (East) for not making 4♣. Leading ♣9 from dummy forces North to split her honours and if not then declarer can run the ♣9 and thus limit trump losers to one trick. Contract making.

Sinner status to the N/S pair who allowed their opponents to play in 5♣ UNDOUBLED

Saintly status to **Pat Ward** who found the excellent defense of a small heart lead and followed up with a second heart after winning with ♦K thus depriving declarer of three diamond ruffs with dummy's trumps! Declarer, **David Walsh**, countered this defense by immediately playing on spades with two trumps still in dummy for access to the established spade winners. David was assisted by West's free-bid of 3♠ during the auction. When West played ♠10 on first round David covered with ♠K, losing to East's ♠A, BUT with two spade tricks now available after forcing out the SQ. **Saintly** status also awarded to **David**

Saintly status also to **John Fahy, Moya MacEoin, Enda Glynn**, all of whom brought home 4♥ by negotiating diamond winners in dummy and also creating the winning trick with a spade where West had either bid the suit or shown the suit via a negative double.

Sinner status to the South, declaring 4♥ who lost track of the hearts and failed to overtake dummy's ♥K with ♥A in hand during the latter stage of the play and subsequently forced herself with an unnecessary ruff in hand and as a result never scored a spade trick.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

NS 4♥; EW 4♦; EW 4♣; EW 1N; Par +100; EW 5♣×-1; EW 5♦×-1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Exalted Saintly status and **Serious Sinner** status to two players at one table. The former goes to **Maragret Forde** who made 5 ♣xx (Yes, REDOUBLED!). and the latter goes to **South** who fatally (for the defense) discarded two diamonds instead of throwing hearts, a suit in which declarer was already known to be void, resulting in -800 instead of +100 for E/W!


Sympathy extended to **Frank Reynolds** who was declaring 5 ♣ which was Doubled by North, who received heart lead and continuation. Declarer ruffed the second heart and then entered dummy with a diamond and led ♣ 9, North covering with ♣ J, declarer winning with ♣ Q. At this point Frank should have felt quite happy...as would I if I was East. A second diamond to dummy would leave declarer picking up North's ♣ K and twelve tricks looked like a real possibility. Alas, North ruffed the second diamond and suddenly the potential twelves tricks had slumped to nine. Tough!

No sympathy for the other East, also declaring 5 ♣x who gained access to dummy and lead ♣ 5, North following with ♣ 3 and declarer winning with ♣ Q and no chance to recover, ultimately failing by two tricks. **Sinner** status awarded to **East** who should have led ♣ 9 instead of ♣ 5.

Sinner status to the **South**, defending 5 ♣, who discarded a diamond on declarer's ♣ A, despite holding four hearts, a suit in which South knew declarer to be void. The contract went one light but could have suffered a two trick defeat.

At another table East opened 1 ♦ and subsequently found himself declaring 6 ♦x which went two light. Again, if diamonds had behaved, and with South holding a doubleton, then the contract could have made by ruffing second heart, cashing ♦ Q and playing a second diamond to dummy and then leading ♣ 9...but sadly for declarer that was not to be. **Saintly** status to **East** for good declarer play.

Board 18
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 5♣; NS 2N; NS 2♦; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; Par +600: NS 5♣

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

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

North can make nine tricks in hearts, whereas South can be held to seven tricks. E/W can make eight tricks in spades or diamonds.

If N/S declare this hand in a heart contract declarer may find it beneficial not to cash more than one top trump, which will expose the 5-0 break. And it will make a big difference (negatively for declarer) if ♥ J is cashed first. West will subsequently be able to ruff in on a club with ♥ 10 and then play another trump, drawing two from N/S for West's single trump! Cash ♥ A or ♥ K or ♥ Q, leaving ♥ J97 sitting OVER West's ♥ 1065 and then proceed on a diamond and club cross ruff being sure to ruff a club in the North hand first.

Saints & Sinners

Ten N/S pairs played a heart contract, five at the four level, two failing by three tricks and three failing by one trick. Five other N/S pairs played in 2♥, all but one making the contract, two with overtricks.

Absolute Sinner status to the **East** who declared 2♠ and went three down where the contract can make! South opened 1♣, North responded 1♦, East overcalled 1♠ which was Passed around to North who bid 1NT. East, perhaps rashly, bid 2♠. South led ♥ K which declarer ruffed. Based on North's 1♦ bid, the layout of the diamond suit is clear for four tricks...a small diamond to dummy's ♦ A and then follow with ♦ J and letting it run.

So, all that needs to be done is play three rounds of spades and keep fingers crossed that the suit breaks 3-3. Note that when you don't draw trumps in a situation like this you often end up losing several ruffs to both opponents! At this table declarer, oblivious to North's bidding, unbelievably took a first round finesse of diamond ♦ J to North's ♦ Q. Suddenly the hand went seriously downhill for declarer who ended up losing FOUR trump tricks (two club ruffs to North and 2 diamond ruffs to South with ♦ 2 and ♦ 6!!! 2♠ failed by three tricks when it could have made!

Absolute Sinner status to the **West** who made an outrageous overcall of 1♥ (Vul v Non-Vul) with ♠ 87, ♥ 106532, ♦ AJ52, ♣ 43. It mightn't have cost on this hand but that kind of overcall will lead to grief down the road, in particular with partner who will begin to lack trust in your bids!!!

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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



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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Absolute Sinner status to **North**, declaring 2♥, and who has lost the first three tricks to ♠ AK and a third spade ruffed by West who then cashed ♦ A and continued with a diamond which is ruffed in the South hand. Declarer cashes ♥ A on which East shows out.

STOP...and take stock!

Form a plan on the basis of what you know at this point in the play. You have lost four tricks, you have 2 in the bag. Only six more needed. Continue with two top clubs ending in dummy and ruff a club with ♥ 7. Now cross-ruff diamonds and clubs, scoring all the remaining tricks and making 2H♥+1.

So, what actually happened? Declarer drew two more rounds of trumps, played a club to ♣ K and cashed ♥ J, drawing West's last trump, played a club to ♣ A and then lost the last two tricks to East's ♣ Q and ♦ 10. One down, needlessly!

Just because you can draw trumps doesn't mean that you should! Sometimes there is better use to which they can be put!

Sinner status to any declarer who failed to make nine tricks in a a heart contract!

Board 20

West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 6♥; NS 5♠; NS 4N; NS 3♣; NS 1♦; Par +1430: NS 6♥

What an awkward hand. So many different scenarios. If West passes as dealer what should North do? And where does it leave North if West opens 2♦ (Weak)? And then how does South respond? Sometimes bidding systems do not provide the answer as to how to reach the optimum contract. In such situations different options will be taken by different players.

The North hand makes the grade as a one level opener...**Rule of 20**. The question is what should one open? Some Norths will open 1♥ and re-bid 2♥ unless partner bids 1♠. Others will be keen to get the two suits into play and will opt to open 1♠ and re-bid 2♥.

But, whatever option you choose you cannot argue with success. 6♥ is a makeable contract (careful play required) whereas only eleven tricks can be made in spades.

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status is conferred on **Liam Faherty & John Fahy** who landed in the top spot via the following auction: 1♥ - 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♦ - 3♠ - 6♥. As I said, you can't argue with success. I would have difficulty re-bidding 2♠ opposite partner's 2♣. I would simply re-bid 2♥. Note also that the contract is 'lucky'...spades break 3-3 and hearts break 3-2...and hence all roads lead to Home!

Saintly status also to **Rory & David** where Rory (North) was faced with an opening bid of 2♦ (Weak) by West. Rory found the solution of bidding 4♦ (**Leaping Michaels**, showing both majors. 4♣ would show clubs and a major). David was now faced with a problem as to how to proceed, knowing that Rory was at least 5/5 in the majors and where, from David's perspective, a slam was a possibility. But how to decide the denomination and level? David bid 5♦, a cue-bid and Rory bid 5♥. David agonised for a while and eventually Passed, perhaps reasoning that Rory, with a good hand would have bid 6♥ over his 5♦

Sinner status to the **North** who Passed after West opened 2♦ (Weak) and then simply bid 2♥ in response to partner's Takeout Double. At the very least North should have bid 4♥. Also, I would not have chosen a Takeout Double as my preferred option in the South seat holding one six card suit and two doubletons in the unbid suits! 2NT would have been my choice with 3♣ as an alternative.

Board 21
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K 2	♠ A Q 10 4 3		♠ 9 8 5
♥ A K Q 9	♥ 10 6 3		♥ 8 5 4
♦ 9 8	♦ 10 7 4 3 2		♦ A J 6 5
♣ A 10 9 4 3	♣ —	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; margin: 0 5px;"> N W E S </div>	♣ K Q 2
	♠ J 7 6		
	♥ J 7 2		
	♦ K Q		
	♣ J 8 7 6 5		

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

Another hand where **'right-siding'** the contract is vital. 3 NT by West will make whereas a spade lead by South can lead to defeat of 3 NT by East. The 4-3 heart fit can produce 10 tricks if played by West whereas 4♥ by East can be beaten if South leads a club and North switches to a diamond after ruffing the opening lead.

Note that declarers in 3 NT should play the heart suit by cashing two top hearts first and then enter dummy to lead the third heart towards ♥ Q9 and then deciding whether to finesse if South follows low or play for the drop! And attention should have been paid to the cards North played on the first and second rounds of the suit! See below for further discussion re play of the heart suit. Note also that even a single heart discard by North reveals the layout of the suit for declarer! And in this case declarer cannot go astray because South's ♥ J will appear on round three forcing declarer to win with ♥ Q as North follows unless they have previously discarded a heart!

Saints & Sinners

Double Sinner status to the East who: 1) responded 1 NT instead of 1♦ to West's opening bid of 1♣. A response of 1 NT to an opening bid of 1♣ is very specific. It shows 4+ clubs and 8-10 hcp and no other biddable suit! East earns the second **Sinner** status for not making 3 NT. On the lead of a small club declarer should realise that she has 4 clubs tricks, 3 hearts, 1 diamond with possibilities in hearts, spades and diamond for a ninth trick. Taking a first round finesse of ♥ 9 was not the right option. This particular combination (♥ AKQ9 - ♥ 854) can produce 4 tricks whenever the suit breaks 3-3, OR where either opponent holds a doubleton ♥ J10, OR where North holds a singleton ♥ J or ♥ 10, OR where North holds a doubleton ♥ Jx or ♥ 10x and where declarer guesses to finesse the ♥ 9 on the third round of the suit, i.e. cash two top hearts first before deciding what to do on round three. A first round finesse of the ♥ 9 is a very poor option by comparison with the above and declarer paid the price!

Sinner status to any declarer who did not cash two top hearts before leading the third heart towards ♥ Q9!

Board 21
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued).

Sinner status to the West who rebid 2♣ over East's 1♦ response, instead of rebidding 1♥ or even 1NT.

Sinner status to the East who Passed partner's **Reverse Bid** of 3♥ after South raised North's 1♠ overcall to 2♠. East must make some bid...5♣, 4♥ or even 3♠ spring to mind. West is showing a hand with 16+ hcp!

Sinner status to the West who let the opponents play in 2♠ after opening 1♣ and where his partner had bid 2♦ over North's 1♠ overcall! East is showing 9+ hcp and West should know they have a combined strength of 25+ hcp! West should have taken **SOME** action over South's 2♠.

Sinner status to the West who re-bid 2♣ in response to partner's Negative Double of North's 1♠ overcall. West should have bid 2♥ showing her strength and 5-4 shape. East's negative Double of North's 1♠ might have been based on a heart suit that could not otherwise be bid, i.e. may only have 4 hearts, where bidding 2♥ would show 5+ hearts.

Sinner status to the East who simply bid 2♣ over North's 1♠ overcall of West's opening bid of 1♣. Yes, this sequence is awkward without modern bidding gadgets (well, they're not really that modern!) like '**Negative Doubles**'. A bid of 2♦ or even an old-fashioned **Sputnik Double** would be better.

Board 22
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 1N; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; EW 1♣; Par +90; NS 1N

Board 23
South Deals
Both Vul

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

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

West will need to show good restraint to produce a positive result on this hand. I suspect that many will overbid. 3♠ is the limit and will require careful play by declarer to make that contract. At many tables South will open 1 NT (12-14). West will make a Penalty Double (16+ hcp) and at this point the bidding may diverge depending on what North does. Those playing **Extended Helvic** will PASS commanding South to '**Re-Double**' if East Passes. North will then bid 2♣ showing clubs and hearts and South will bid 2♥. East may bid 2♠ at some stage in the auction and if bid at first opportunity, where it may indicate weakness, West will need to exercise restraint!

N.B.

Partnerships who do not already have an agreement should discuss their defense to a Penalty Double of their 1 NT opening.

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to **Kevin & Margaret** who had an intelligent auction. South opened 1 NT (12-14), **Kevin** made a Penalty Double, North Passed and **Margaret** bid 2♠ which Kevin raised to 3♠ and all Passed. Remember that if East had values (7-9 hcp) and wanted to advance the auction they could bid 3♠ at first opportunity. A bid of 2♠ shows a weaker hand.

Sinner status to any East who did not bid 2♠, irrespective of whether North bid or Passed over West's Penalty Double of South's 1 NT. Remember that West is showing a hand with 16+ hcp. East has a good five card suit and finesses into the North hand should mostly be successful!

Sinner status to the West who made a Takeout Double of South's opening 1♦ and then bid 3 NT over East's 1♠ response. A reminder of NT overcalls outlined in a previous edition of this article. A direct overcall of 1 NT shows a Strong NT (15-18); a re-bid of 1 NT AFTER making a takeout Double shows 19-21 hcp; a re-bid of 2 NT AFTER making a Takeout Double shows 22+ hcp

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to all **West**s who jumped to game (3 NT or 4 ♠) in response to East's minimum bid in spades after West made a Penalty or Takeout Double of South's opening bid.

Sinner status to the **East** who Passed partner's Penalty Double of South's 1 NT. Bidding 2 ♠ would be the more cautious action. West might not have been quite as strong! Note the makeable contract list above suggests 1 NT by South can make!

Board 24
 West Deals
 None Vul

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

EW 6♥; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 2N; NS 2♦; Par -500; NS 6♠×-3

An interesting hand that again illustrates the virtue of sometimes playing in a 4-4 fit rather than a 6-4 fit. In that scenario the six card side suit offers the potential of discards whereas if the six card suit is trumps there are no discards available on the four card side suit! On this hand 6♥ can make but only eleven tricks are available with clubs as trumps. Note that West's two losing diamonds can be discarded on East's long clubs and East's losing diamond can then be ruffed with West's fourth trump, thus giving twelve tricks in a heart contract! But, reaching 6♥ is virtually impossible, apart from which 6♠ is always a good 'Save'.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the two E/W pairs that failed to bid game, one playing in 3♥ and the other in 3♣.

Sinner status to the **East** player who bid 2♥ over North's 1♠ overcall after West opened 1♣. 2♥ should show 5+ hearts. Many experienced partnerships use Double by East in this situation as showing 4 hearts whereas a bid of 2♥ shows 5 or more.

Saintly status to **Robert & Noelle** for bidding 4♠x making nine tricks and scoring +7 IMPs

Saintly status to the three E/W pairs, **Pat & Carmel, Bridie & Frankie**, and super subs **Live2006 & 0 nu**, who reached 4♥ rather than 5♣, all making 12 tricks and scoring a useful +3.18 IMPs

Sinner status to the two **Norths**, defending 5♣, who failed to cover ♠Q and allowed declarer to discard the losing diamond from the East hand and thus make an impossible twelve tricks.

Sinner status to the **East** player who used Stayman opposite West's 1NT (15-17) opening and then Passed partner's 2♥ response. The East hand, with super trump support, a singleton spade and a six card club suit is worth an immediate raise to game opposite West's 2♥ response.