

Greetings!

Herewith find analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 20th August 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

This week I have analysed 17 of the 24 hands: 1,3,4,6,7,8,9,11,12,15,16,17,19,20,22,23,24
Hands vary in term of complexity and each reflects specific points of interest and learning that I couldn't let pass without a comment! Some hands are analysed in more detail than others. See in particular Boards #3, #8 and #17 which have been given extensive treatment.

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 **13 tables**, representing a total of **221 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **2,873 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **11,492 individual card plays** that are dissected! Just for info!

Apologies for the delay. This week's analysis took a lot of time to produce!

Should you wish to receive a copy of future editions of my analysis directly in your inbox then send an email, with your name, to: paulscan@iol.ie

Paul J Scannell
27th August 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

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

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

N/S can make 2 ♠. E/W can make 3 ♦ but will need to find the diamond finesse against South's ♦ A1032. A simple route to eight tricks in spade...cash two top spades and then simply play on hearts creating a second heart trick to add to 5 spades, ♥ A and ♦ A.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the North who failed to make 2 ♠ due to not setting up a second heart trick.

Sinner status to the three E/W pairs who overbid to 5 ♣. A contract at the five level with balanced / semi-balanced hands usually demands a combined holding of circa 28-29 hcp.

If North opens or subsequently bids spades, then E/W should settle for a minor suit contract.

If North opens a Weak 2 ♠ then East should Pass (hand is too weak for a Takeout Double). West is best positioned to make a Takeout Double


Sinner status to the **West** player, who in response to partner's opening 1 NT, bid 2 ♠ **AND DID NOT ALERT THE BID**. North should have Doubled 2 ♠ anyway to indicate her spade suit.. South led a diamond and declarer duly scrambled nine tricks. **CONVENTIONAL BIDS MUST BE ALERTED**.

If E/W reach a N/T contract and where North has bid spades then E/W should make six tricks!

At another tables East opened 1 ♦, West bid 2 ♣ and North bid 2 ♠. East, with a minimum opening should have Passed but actually bid 2 NT which partner raised to game. This contract failed by two tricks although **Sinner** status is awarded to ♠ for leading the confusing ♠ 9 rather than the standard ♠ 7 (lowest card from a holding of three cards headed by an honour).

Sinner status to **South** at another table where North opened 2 ♠ (Weak) and East subsequently declared 3 NT. **South's sin**...she correctly led ♠ 7, North playing ♠ J and declarer winning with ♠ Q. When South subsequently won ♦ A she now played ♠ 9 instead of ♠ K which effectively **BLOCKED** the suit!!! North can win with ♠ A and continue a spade to South's ♠ K who then cannot play another spade!!! South should have exited on ♠ K and then continued with ♠ 9 leaving North on lead to cash three more spades!

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 5♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +630: NS 4N

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Another part-score hand where 3♠, 2NT, and 2♥ are the limits for E/W. N/S can make 2♣ or 2♦. A special word about the diamond layout. Note that if N/S do not open the suit then E/W cannot make even one diamond trick. With the South holding you need to be on very safe ground (i.e. be sure that you know partner holds ♦AJx) before leading a diamond. Similarly if you are sitting in the East position...this is a lethal holding with which to open the suit. Leave it to the opponents.

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the N/S pair who let out 4♠. A heart lead by North did not help the defense. Declarer finessed ♠Q which South won with ♠K. A diamond to North's ♦A followed by a heart ruff by South and cashing of ♣A defeats the contract...BUT, South won the ♠K, led diamond to North's ♦A who then continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦J, South's ♦Q and declarer's ♦K. Declarer drew trumps and then cashed ♥K and continued with ♥J which North failed to cover (**Sinner** status awarded). Declarer next ruffed a diamond in dummy and cashed ♥8 discarding two clubs from hand and losing a club at end.

1) After South wins ♠K and returns ♦7 should North have known to give South a heart ruff? YES... North led ♥6 at trick one on which South contributed ♥4 declarer winning with ♥7. Upon winning with ♦A North should, have wondered about location of ♥KJ...clearly South held neither of these cards therefore declarer has them in which case South's H4 must be a singleton!!!
Counting, counting ...all the time!

2) If North DID cover ♥J with ♥Q declarer can still make the contract but we will never know because declarer was not put to the test! If North covers then declarer wins with ♥A and then makes the 'automatic' play of ruffing the fourth heart in hand with her last trump thereby establishing dummy's fifth heart as a winner. Yes, she can return to dummy with a diamond ruff and lead the winning heart BUT South can beat the contract by holding ♣A and ♦10 to take the last two tricks. So, how can declarer succeed after winning with ♥A...by playing on clubs! Declarer leads a club and wins with lowest club honour as necessary (either ♣J or ♣K) or plays low if South rises with ♣A. If South wins with ♣A then declarer ruffs diamond continuation and subsequently finesses ♣J for ten tricks via 3 spade, 3 hearts 1 diamond, 1 diamond ruff in dummy, 2 clubs.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the E/W pair who played in 2♥ rather than 2♠ with the 4-4 trump fit and **Double Sinner** status to the West, declaring 2♠ who failed to count when South switched to a small diamond. At that point South was already credited ♣AQ on opening lead (♣J won the first trick) and ♠K. This amounts to 9hcp and therefore South cannot have DA which would give him 13hcp and where South Passed as dealer! Playing low from dummy would see declarer make the contract instead of failing by one trick!

Sinner status to the E/W pair that reached 3NT and the N/S pair that let it out. **Sinner** status for the bidding...South opened 1♣, West made a Takeout Double, North bid 1♥, West bid an underwhelming 1♠ with her 11hcp, South reb-id 2♣ (**Sinner** status awarded...should have Passed). **West** made a criminal bid of 2NT (**Sinner** status awarded. West bid her hand to the max with her initial Takeout Double...she should have Passed unless East made a FORCING bid. North led ♣7 (M.U.D) against West's 3NT, South winning with ♣A and continuing with ♣Q (small club better). as declarer won with ♣K. Declare continued with ♥K and then led ♥J and North made a HUGE faux-pas by not covering with ♥Q and thereby guaranteeing herself two heart tricks! But it was what it was and after ♥J won declare continued with a heart to dummy's ♥A and a fourth heart to North's ♥Q. North continued with her last club, declarer discarding a small spade from dummy while winning in hand with ♣J. Declarer led ♠J and finessed into South's ♠K. Unfortunately (and mistakenly) South had discarded clubs on dummy's hearts and had none left to cash. At least one spade could have been discarded instead of a club. BUT the contract could still have been defeated if South returned a spade forcing declarer to win in dummy, cash a heart and then have to led a diamond for N/S to score two diamond tricks and so defeat the contract by one trick. Unfortunately for the defense South led a diamond instead and when declarer played low from her hand North was forced to win with ♦A thus establishing ♦K as declarer's ninth trick! Although South could only see the East's hand (dummy) why should she have played a spade? Because if declarer has ♦A then declarer has 9 tricks via 2 spades, 4 hearts, 2 clubs and 1 diamond (♦A). So, South must assume that partner has ♦A and with South holding ♦Q10x over dummy's ♦J5 that means N/S will make the last two tricks!

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the East players who switched to ♦ J. This can never be right. Let declarer guess whether to play ♦ 10 or ♦ Q.

Sinner status to the various ♦ declaring a spade contract on the lead of ♥ 4 after North bid 1 ♥ and where those declarers played ♥ J from dummy...KNOWING that North held ♥ Q1096.

Sinner status to the East, declaring 3 ♠ on lead of ♥ 4 after South opened 1 ♣ and North responded 1 ♥. Declarer made the silly play of ♥ J (see above) and beat North's ♥ Q with ♥ A. Declarer now played a second heart at trick two which South ruffed. South continued with a diamond to North's ♦ A and then ruffed the third heart. South cashed ♣ A and continue with ♦ 10 to dummy's ♦ K. Declarer now led ♠ 2 with North following with ♠ 3 ...and declarer should have **STOPPED** to think and assess the evidence already presented. 1) South opened with 1 ♣, 2) North responded 1 ♥, 3) North & South have a combined holding of 17 hcp, 4) North has already been identified with ♦ A and ♥ Q...leaving a mere 11 hcp unaccounted for. If North holds ♠ K it means that South has opened with a mere 8 hcp!!! Hardly likely! Declarer should rise with ♠ A, dropping South's now singleton ♠ K. Contract making! Sadly (for E/W) declarer finessed ♠ Q and the contract failed by one trick.... *Counting, counting ...all the time!*

Saintly status to **Frank Killilea** who declared 3 ♦ and brought it home when West made the fatal mistake of switching to a small diamond as a consequence of which E/W scored NO trump trick....declarer playing low from hand and beating East's ♦ J with dummy's ♦ Q and then finessing ♦ 9 to deprive West of a trick with ♦ K! **Sinner** status to **West**.

Sinner status to the **South** who opened 1 ♦ and then rebid 2 ♣...and got lucky because partner held 4 diamonds and only 3 clubs! Open 1 ♣. **Sinner** status to the West at the same table who should have returned her third diamond after winning second round with ♦ K but instead led a club from ♣ KJ2 into declarer's known second suit thereby handing declarer an unnecessary overtrick!

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 6♥; EW 6♣; EW 1N; EW 1♦; Par -1430: EW 6♥

E/W can make a small slam in hearts or clubs but bidding either will likely prove difficult. N/S might feel that they have a Save in spades but need to pay attention to the vulnerability! The defense can make five trick with the possibility of the fatal sixth trick giving a three trick defeat if declarer misguesses the trump position! That could amount to -800 if E/W Double the final contract!

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the E/W pairs who allowed N/S to play in 4 ♠ UNDOUBLED.

Double Sinner status to the East player who failed to raise partner's 3 ♥ to 4 ♥ and let the opponents play in 3 ♠ UNDOUBLED! East's has a huge hand after partner open 1 ♣ and then makes a free bid of 3 ♥ over South's raise to 2 ♠ after North overcalled 1 ♠

Sinner status to the West who rebid clubs instead of bidding hearts after partner made a Negative Double of North's 1 ♠ overcall of West's opening 1 ♣. A Negative double in this situation promises support for BOTH unbid suits! despite making twelve tricks E/W lost -8.58 IMPs where other E/W pairs were scoring +3.58 IMPs for playing in the heart game.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Most N/S pairs will reach 3 NT. after East opens 1 ♥. Note the layout of the diamond suit. Declarer can make four tricks by finessing ♦ 8 on the third round of the suit if correctly reading East's play of ♦ J10 as a doubleton...

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to **Clare Burke** who declared 3 NT on the lead of ♣ 6 and made twelve tricks on the lead of ♣ 6. Winning with ♣ 7 in dummy, declarer cashed North's two top spades and then led ♣ 10, East rising with with ♣ A and switching to a small heart, declarer rising with dummy's ♥ K. perhaps East, looking at dummy, should have noted the strength and simply cashed ♥ A instead of switching to a small heart. Eats paid the price. Declarer won ♥ K then proceed to caah her black suit winners, Both defenders discarded a diamond and thus declarer was easily able to score four diamond tricks without having to finesse ♦ 8 on the fourth round of the suit!. twelve tricks made...more than scored by any other declarer.

Saintly status to **Siobhan O'Sullivan** for finessing ♦ 8 to make 5 ♦. 3 NT is a better contract.

Saintly status to **Peggy Fay** and **Bridie Redahan** who also finessed ♦ 8 in a contract of 3 NT thereby making an overtrick.

Sinner status to the **North**, declaring 3 NT, who played the diamond suit by cashing ♦ K on first round thus depriving herself of the possibility of four diamond tricks.

Double Sinner status to the North who Passed partner's takeout Double of East's 1 ♥. This contract might have made if declarer ruffed the third club with dummy's ♥ 5 instead of ♥ J. North should have switched to a trump after winning ♠ Q. Declarer will subsequently lose TWO club tricks (it would have been three on a non-club lead at trick one!) as well as 2 spades, 2 diamonds, 1 heart. **Sinner** status also to **South** for switching to ♠ J instead of a small spade when first leading the suit.

Sinner status to the **West** player, defending 3 NT after partner opened 1 ♥, who failed to lead ♥ J and instead led a small spade from a hand with only a single honour card..the ♥ J,

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

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

W 4♥; E 3♥; EW 2N; EW 2♦; NS 1♠; S 1♣; Par -620: W 4♥

WEST can make 4 ♥. East can be held to 3 ♥. If East is declarer then a club lead and continuation by South earns a club trick for N/S. Note that in order to make the respective heart contracts declarer must double finesse in diamonds, i.e. play South for ♦ K10x. Declarer must first lead ♦ J and if South covers with ♦ K then declarer must subsequently lead ♦ 9 (or ♦ 8) and run it if South does not cover with ♦ 10.

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to **Miriam Mullan** for leading ♣ 9. **Sinner** status to **North** for returning a small club after winning with ♥ A and letting declarer win with ♣ 7

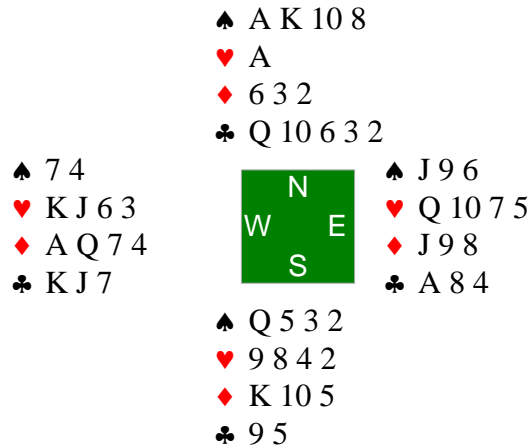
Sinner status to the **South**, defending 2 ♥ by West who failed to cover ♦ J on first play of the suit thus handing declarer a simple four diamond tricks.

Saintly status to the South (**Marie Killilea**) who led ♣ 9 and to North who cashed ♠ AK after winning with ♥ A. BUT then North fell from grace by continuing with ♣ 10 thus promoting declarer's ♣ 8 as a winner. North should have continued with a third spade. And at trick 11 declarer led ♦ 9 and South gave declarer a chance to make the contract by not covering with ♦ 10. Fortunately for N/S declarer finessed ♦ Q and subsequently lost a trick to South's ♦ K. If declarer had let ♦ 9 run he would have made his contract.

Sinner status to E/W who allowed N play in 2C and then let the contract make. Declarer won the ehart lead and played a spade to dummy's SQ and led C(which was ducked into East who played low. if east had won with CA then West would subsequently make two tricks with CKJ because declarer would not be able to get to dummy to finesse against West's CKJ.

At one table North led a club against West's 1 NT and subsequently re-gained the lead with ♥ A. North cashed ♠ K and after partner played a discouraging ♠ 2 (♠ 5 might have been more encouraging) North switched to ♦ 2, suggesting holding an honour card in the suit, and South fell from grace by playing ♦ K instead of ♦ 10 when declarer played low from dummy. This handed declarer ten tricks! **Sinner** status to North and South. Yes declarer can take four diamond tricks but leave it to him to find the play...don't play the suit for him!

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul



W 4♥; E 3♥; EW 2N; EW 2♦; NS 1♠; S 1♣; Par -620: W 4♥

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to all Souths who failed to cover ♦ J with ♦ K.

Sinner status to the **North** who a) made an inappropriate Takeout Double of West's 1 ♦ with a singleton heart, b) raised his partner's 1 ♠ bid to 3 ♠ which is an overbid. The contract duly failed by 2 tricks. **Additional Sinner** status to South who could have got out for one down by playing on clubs. It takes a trump lead and continuation to hold declarer to seven tricks.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 5♥; EW 3♠; EW 2N; N 3♣; NS 2♦; S 2♣; Par -450: EW 5♥

E/W can make 5♥ but only 2NT as the defense can score 4 clubs and ♠ A against the latter contract. If West opens 1♥ then East can raise directly to 4♥. Note that this hand is an example of the 'Power of Shape'...what the East hand likes in honour cards it makes up for with shape...

Saints & Sinners

Absolute sinner status to the North who ventured into the bidding at the FIVE level with a suicidal bid of 5♦ after E/W reached an uncontested 4♥. Declarer duly failed by FIVE tricks in 5♦x and paid a hefty price of -1100 and a loss of -12.83 IMPs. Also, additional **Sinner** status to declarer who should have reduced the deficit to a more acceptable -500! The defense actually scored FOUR trump tricks!

Absolute Sinner status to the East who raised partner's 1♥ opening to 2♥...a gross underbid. But worse was to follow when East unbelievably became declarer in 4♠ which went three light!

Saintly status to **Brendan King** who played on spades early on and thus only needed one club ruff..his second losing club being discarded on dummy's winning ♠ K.

Saintly status also to **Angela Noone** who was able to establish dummy's ♠ J as a winner after North discarded a spade on a heart. **Sinner** status to North who can see dummy's spade suit!

Sinner status to the **South** who failed to rise with ♣ K when partner won first club trick with ♣ 10 and continued with ♣ 8 which declarer did NOT ruff in dummy. South also played low holding ♣ AK and declarer won the trick with ♣ J.

Saintly status to **Sean** and **Aine**, the only Easts to make a direct raise to 4♥ opposite partner's 1♥ opening!

Sinner status to any **South** who rose with ♣ A (instead of ♣ K) when declarer led singleton from dummy!

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 5♥; EW 3♠; EW 2N; N 3♣; NS 2♦; S 2♣; Par -450: EW 5♥

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the West who failed to make eleven tricks in 5♥. Note that it requires a little forward planning when hearts break 3-0 (It's easy on a 2-1 break...declarer can ruff 2 clubs and 1 diamond in dummy and cannot go wrong in spades for the eleventh trick with North holding both honours.). At the table declarer received a club lead to South's ♣ K. South switched to ♦ 5 which declarer won in dummy with ♦ A. A heart to declarer's ♥ A revealed the bad news re the trump suit. It is at this point that declarer needs to stop and take stock! It's the 'timing' that is crucial...the sequence of plays to arrive at the right position towards the end game. Declarer can make 5 hearts in hand by taking a finesse against South's ♥ Q4. In addition declarer can score 2 diamonds and 1 diamond ruff (as long as South does not overruff!), Declarer can also ruff his two losing clubs in dummy. That comes to ten tricks...and the eleventh will have to come from spades. Declarer must assume that he will guess right...BUT must also be in hand when he leads the spade towards dummy. So, in all, declarer must arrange 1 diamond ruff, 2 club ruffs, finesse against South's ♥ Q4 and also lead a spade TOWARDS dummy. That requires some very careful planning! Notice the major problem of getting back to hand to ruff the clubs and diamond in dummy and also to lead the spade towards dummy! This has to be done while declarer only plays one more round of trumps BEFORE scoring the three ruffs in dummy...playing two more rounds will mean that there is a trump short for the three ruffs!

Let's work it out...in our head. ruff a club, play diamond to ♦ K, ruff second club, finesse ♥ J and ruff diamond with dummy's LAST trumps. And suddenly we realise that we have to play a spade FROM dummy, thereby losing two spade tricks! Clearly that won't work. Nor will it work if we ruff the diamond first and then the clubs. What this means is that declarer MUST play a spade FIRST to establish the spade winner BEFORE playing for club and diamond ruffs! So, lead a spade at trick three. If North rises with ♠ A then win the return and proceed to organise the minor suit ruffs in dummy. Is there a potential pitfall...Yes,...declarer must be careful not to play a third spade from dummy (ruffing in hand) before he has negotiated the ruff of the third diamond. Why? Because South can discard his third diamond on dummy's third spade and can then overruff dummy when declarer tries to ruff the third diamond! So, ruff the third diamond before ruffing the clubs. (continued on next page)

Board 8West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 5♥; EW 3♠; EW 2N; N 3♣; NS 2♦; S 2♣; Par -450: EW 5♥

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Unfortunately, declarer ruffed the third diamond and then drew two more rounds of trumps but now had only one trump in dummy with two clubs in hand. She led a spade, North rising with ♠ A and continuing with a club and now declarer's goose was cooked. If she ruffed in dummy she had a losing club in hand and no way of getting rid of it. Ironically if she had played a spade earlier she could have engineered two spade tricks, one providing a discard for one of her two losing clubs! But declarer discarded from dummy hoping that the club honours were split (South had already shown up with ♣ K) but alas South scored ♣ A for the third defensive trick. Down one...

This is a classic example of the importance of planning the play of hand particularly with respect to ensuring that the right sequence of plays is identified and that the consequences of failing to plan accordingly are clearly identified. And of course much of this planning should take place before declarer calls for a card to be played from dummy at trick one!

Sinner status to the E/W pair who failed to bid the heart game. If West opens 1♥ then East has an automatic raise to 4♥...5 card trump support, a singleton club, a doubleton ♦ A4, and a 5 card spade suit headed by two of the top four honours. The East hand is way too strong for a limited Bergen raise of 3♣ which promises FOUR card trump support and 7-9 hcp.

Board 11

South Deals
None Vul

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

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

N/S can make 5♥ or 4♣. E/W can make eight tricks in spades.

Saints & Sinners

Four N/S pairs were allowed to play in 4♥...all but one making at least ten tricks.

Absolute Sinner status to the **West** who Doubled 4♥ by South and scored -890 when South took all 13 tricks on the fatal lead of ♣ J. Declarer won with dummy's ♣ A and then cashed two top hearts ending in dummy. Declarer then led ♣ Q and ruffed out East's ♣ K. Declarer subsequently discarded diamond losers on dummy's established clubs. West could have saved two tricks by cashing ♦ AK...but that's all. West does not have any reason for making a Penalty Double of 4♥ after she opened 1♠ and heard North make a Takeout Double over which partner made a weak raise to 2♠. Self-destruction by West!

Sinner status to the **South** who declared 4♥ and failed by one trick. West led ♦ AK and then switched to a trump at trick three...**STOP**. Declarer can count 5 trumps, 1 spade, 1 club and needs three more tricks. Double-dummy, i.e. seeing all four hands it can be noted that the club suit can be established by cashing ♣ A and continuing with ♣ Q. But that's easy when we can see all four hands! The three other tricks can come from ruffing 1 diamond and 2 spades in dummy. Note that because of West's known spade length it would be safer to ruff the diamond with dummy's lowest heart and then ruff the two spades with ♥ AJ...that should be safe because even if West has SIX spades (East holding only two) East will not be able to overruff! So, win heart switch in hand, ruff a diamond with ♥ 7, play a spade winning in hand with ♠ A and ruff a spade with ♥ J, ruff a club with ♥ 6 and ruff a spade with ♥ A. Contract made!

An alternative line is to play a **Dummy-Reversal**, i.e. draw two rounds of trumps and then play clubs by cashing ♣ A and then ruffing clubs in hand. At worst it requires that clubs break 3-3 or even 4-2 or where East holds EITHER ♣ K or ♣ J. Note that if hearts break 3-1 it might complicate matters. And of course if West starts with two top diamonds then it is a simple case of ruffing two spades in the North hand.

Board 11

South Deals
None Vul

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

NS 5♥; NS 4♣; EW 2♠; NS 1N; Par +450; NS 5♥

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to **Pat Ward** who bid 3♥ after North overcalled West's opening 1♠ with 2♣ and where East supported partner with a raise to 2♠. West bid 3♠ and **Carmel Musitano** bid 4♥. East, perhaps unwisely bid 4♠ which Pat Doubled. The contract failed by two tricks and earned N/S +300 and +3.83 IMPs.

Sinner status to the declarer in 3♠ who failed by two tricks. The defense led a diamond, declarer winning in hand and playing a spade to dummy's ♠ Q and South's ♠ A. South cashed two hearts and then reverted to diamonds, declarer winning in dummy. Declarer led a spade getting the bad news when North showed out. All declarer needed to do was cash another top spade leaving South with a winning ♠ 10 and then play n diamond, BEING sure to retain the ♦ K in hand so that declarer can subsequently lead a club TOWARDS dummy's ♣ K532. BUT, declarer left South with ♠ 109 and played diamonds, South ruffing the fourth round with ♠ 9. South next played a club to North's ♣ A and then ruffed the club return thus scoring three trump tricks instead of the two to which she was entitled. Careless play by declarer

Sinner status to the **North** who bid his clubs THREE times without any assistance from partner and duly declared 4♣ on the lead of ♠ 6...and failed by one trick. Declare won the spade lead with dummy's ♠ A and instead of leading a club (bring in the suit for one loser and ten tricks are there...maybe even eleven or twelve if the defenses do not cash their 2 diamond winners!). But no, declarer ruffed a spade in hand at trick two, the purpose of which still eludes me! Declarer did play a heart to dummy at trick three and ran the ♣ 9 to East's ♣ K. The defense cashed their two diamond winners and continued with a third diamond which declarer ruffed in hand. The rest should have been easy. Draw all remaining trumps and then cash dummy's heart winners. But this declarer didn't draw all the trumps and East duly scored a heart ruff with ♣ 5 even though declare had ♣ A in hand! Careless.

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 6N; NS 5♠; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 3♣; Par +1440: NS 6N

Yes, N/S can make 6 NT a contract that is unlikely to be bid. 3 NT, 4 ♠, 4 ♥ are the more likely final contracts that will be reached at most tables.

Saints & Sinners

Seven N/S pairs reached 4 ♥...four were successful and three failed. One North successfully negotiated 4 ♠ despite the 5-1 trump break....**Saintly** status to **Pam O'Donovan**.

Sinner status to the ♥, declaring 4 ♥ on lead of ♠ 4 who won in hand beating West's ♠ J with ♠ K. declarer now simply needed to play ♥ AQ and would have ended up with ten or eleven tricks. When you receive the lead of a small card into your five card suit headed by AK10 and with Qx in dummy you should smell a rat! The lead has all the hallmarks of a singleton. Lash out trumps immediately. At this table, an innocent declarer decided to play a spade to dummy's ♠ Q at trick two presumably intending to take the trump finesse. But this is playing against the odds. The trumps finesse will only work if West has precisely ♥ Kx. What actually transpired was a massacre...East ruffed the second spade, played a club to partner's ♣ Q, declarer winning in hand.. Declarer now led a club from hand and ruffed with ♥ 2 only to see West overruff with ♥ 3. West returned a diamond to East's ♦ A who continued with another club, declarer discarding a diamond from dummy as West ruffed with ♥ 6. West now continued with ♠ 3 and North, holding ♠ AK107 carelessly played ♠ 10 instead of ♠ 7 (East known to be void in spades!) as East ruffed with ♥ 9. Declarer overruffed with ♦ 10 and lead a heart towards her ♥ AQ, West following with ♥ 8...and declarer rose with ♥ A establishing West's ♥ K as the fourth trump trick for the defense!!! Declarer finished 2 down and lost a hefty -11.33 IMPs.

Saintly status to **Mary Chamberlain** who declared 3 NT on the led of ♣ 9. Winning with ♣ A Mary cashed ♥ A and continued with ♥ Q which **Kevin Moylan** ducked (**Saintly** status awarded to **Kevin**). Declarer continued with a spade to dummy's ♠ Q and then led ♥ J which Kevin won with his ♥ K. **Kevin's Saintly** status lost a bit of its shine when he continued with a diamond into dummy's strongest suit...a spade return would have been better severing declarer's communication link to her hand. East won with ♦ A and continued with a club thus setting up declarer for 11 tricks (3 spade, 4 hearts, 1 diamond, 3 clubs), more tricks scored than any other declarer. **Well done Mary**.

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 6N; NS 5♠; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 3♣; Par +1440: NS 6N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the North, declaring 4♥ on the lead of ♠ 4 who rose with dummy's ♠ Q and then finessed ♥ Q, cashed ♥ A... a good start for declarer who next cashed ♣ A, noting West's ♣ Q. Declarer continued by cashing ♠ AK before continuing with ♣ K which West ruffed with ♥ 8. West continued with a diamond to East's ♦ A who played another club. **STOP. At this point declarer is home. Simply discard dummy's losing ♦ J leaving West to ruff with ♥ K or let North win with ♣ J...and then claim ten tricks... contract made.** But declarer obviously didn't STOP to think and aimlessly ruffed the club with ♥ 10, West overruffing with ♥ K. West then delivered the 'coup de grace' by continuing with ♠ J which declarer was forced to ruff in dummy. Declarer cashed ♦ K and when ♦ Q didn't drop eventually lost the last trick to East's ♦ Q. Very careless by declarer!

Sinner status to any declarer in a NT contract who used ♠ Q entry to dummy to take the heart finesse. NOTE: If the heart finesse loses declarer might only score one heart trick if both diamond honours are in the West hand!!! The only guaranteed entry to the South hand is via the ♠ Q. If West ducks ♥ Q then I would play on diamonds hoping to establish some trick(s) in that suit WHILST still holding ♠ Q as an entry!

Sinner status to the **South**, declarer in 4♥ on led of ♣ Q, who played a spade to dummy's ♠ Q at trick two and then took the heart finesse, and then cashed ♥ A. Declarer is now in a good state. A diamond towards ♦ KJ987 with the option of returning to dummy via a spade to lead another diamond and thus establish the diamond suit and with three trumps still in hand! But declarer didn't recognise her good situation and instead cashed ♠ A and ruffed a spade in hand (reducing her trump holding to ♥ J10) before leading ♦ J FROM HAND! East won with ♦ Q and could have defeated the contract immediately by giving partner a club ruff with West's ♥ 8. However, West cashed ♦ A and continued with a diamond to South's ♦ K. But declarer had to lose a diamond ruff and ♥ K to West and declarer duly finished one down despite being in a strong position earlier in the play.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

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

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

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

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

N 5♠; S 4♠; NS 2N; EW 2♥; EW 2♦; NS 1♣; Par +650; N 5♠

This should be a routine 4♠ for N/S

Saints & Sinners

At one table South opened 1♠, West passed, North bid 4♠...and East bid 4NT. This was not a natural bid and simply indicted that East was prepared to play at the 5 level. South Passed, West bid 5♣, North passed and East bid 5♦ indicating his holding of the two red suits. West, given the option could Pass or convert to 5♥. In fact East's 5♦ bid was followed by three Passes...**Sinner** status to N/S who should have Doubled. South cashed ♠SAK, declarer ruffing the second spade. Declarer played ♥AK followed by a third heart which South mistakenly ruffed as North followed with the winning ♥Q. South now made a second mistake by cashing ♦A and then followed with ♣Q to North's ♣A. North returned a club and declarer won with ♣K, drew trumps and won the last two tricks with ♥85. Contract only two down....and UNDOUBLED. 5♦ should always be at least three down and might even be four light. When declarer played his third heart South could have discarded a club. North, upon winning ♥Q could cash ♣A and give South a club ruff. South will subsequently make a trick with ♦A BUT may also make another diamond trick by forcing declarer with spades. Certainly 5♦ should be Doubled and should suffer at least a three trick defeat giving N/S +500 instead of the +100 .which they actually earned. **Double Sinner** status to N/S.

Saintly status to **Sean Glynn** for his inventiveness in the East seat. Sean was certainly aware of the favourable vulnerability when he made his bid...3 down would still only cost -500 as opposed to the 620 which N/S would earn from 4♠.

Sinner status to the **East** who doubled North's 2♣ response to South's opening 1♠ and then Doubled again when North bid 4♠. East does not have the beating of 4♠ and should be particularly doubtful of scoring even one diamond trick...at least nine diamonds are known to be in the South and East hands. To score a diamond trick the outstanding diamonds will need to break 2-2 between West and North. 4♠x duly made.

Board 16

West Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 4♦; NS 4♣; NS 2♥; NS 1N; EW 1♠; Par +130: NS 2♣+2;
NS 2♦+2

Another part-score hand where N/S can make ten tricks in either minor suit or eight tricks in hearts. But E/W will compete in spades. It could be a ding-dong battle.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the N/S pair who let their opponents play in 2♠ after North opened a Strong NT and where East showed both majors. South, knowing that his side holds the balance of points and with two 2 five card suits should take some action. **South** also earns an additional **Sinner** status for not cashing ♣ A after ruffing the second heart. Instead, South returned a small club to declarer's singleton ♣ K which allowed the contract to make...just! At no other table where a spade contract was played did declarer make eight tricks.

Sinner status to the **North** who opened 1♥, East overcalled 1♠, South Passed, West bid 2♠ which was Passed to South who bid 3♣ following which North criminally bid 3♥. South's bid is clearly based on at least a five card suit and North should have Passed. If South had heart support he would have shown it!

Sinner status to the other **North** who opened 1♥ and following East's Pass partner bid 1NT. This passed back to East who now bid 2♠ after which North bid 3♥ clearly showing a six card suit!!! *South's failure to bid 2♥ at first opportunity denies 3 card heart support!!!*

Sinner status to the N/S pair who let their opponents play in 1♠. North could have re-opened the bidding with a Tekout Double of East's 1♠ overcall allowing South to bid 2♣ or even 2♦. If South bids 2♦ and West bids 2♠ then South can now compete with 3♣ (remember South's initial Pass!). So, 3♣ would simply be competing and North should not get excited. Note the benefit of bidding 2♦ the first time...you can bid 3♣ the second time thus offering North a choice of contracts without raising the level of bidding. If South bids 2♣ initially and West bids 2♠ now South cannot bid the diamonds without forcing North to show preference for clubs at the FOUR level!...*Thinking, thinking...all the time!*

Board 16

West Deals

E-W Vul

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

NS 4♦; NS 4♣; NS 2♥; NS 1N; EW 1♠; Par +130: NS 2♣+2;
NS 2♦+2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to **Isabel Burke** who made a Negative Double of East's 1♠ overall which in this situation shows support for both minors. **Granny** made an imaginative if somewhat risky bid of 3♦ on her three card suit after West bid 2♠. But Granny loses some bonus points for failing to make ten tricks. The opponents led and continued spade declarer winning the second trick with ♠K. Declarer made the same mistake that was made at several other tables when she led CJ instead of a small club. East followed with ♣K perforce and suddenly West had a potential club trick! Declarer now played a diamond and West rose with ♦A and played a second club, East ruffing with ♦Q, Suddenly dummy was 'high'...all winners. But Clare didn't spot that and proceeded to cross ruff in hearts and clubs eventually enabling West to win the last trick with ♦8. All declarer needed to do after East scored her club ruff was to cash two diamonds leaving dummy with three winning clubs and a top diamond. This was the only table where N/S played a minor suit contract!

Sinner status to the West who made what presumably was a Penalty Double of South's 3♣ after East overcalled 1♠. Fortunately for West his partner decided to reject that option and bid 3♠ which failed by 2 tricks. N/S can make TEN tricks in clubs which would have amounted to -570 for E/W!

Absolute Sinner status to all the Norths who rebid hearts at the 2 and/or 3 level without any support from partner.

Saintly status to **Liam Hanratty** who re-bid 1NT after East overcalled 1♠ although I would prefer a Takeout Double. Clearly partner is marked with the minor suits.

Saintly status to the E/W pairs that defeated 3NT and 2NT respectively by 2 tricks.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ 7 5 4 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 10 3
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 10 3		♦ K Q 10 5 3			
♦ K Q 10 5 3		♣ J 2			
♣ J 2					

EW 5♠; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 2♦; Par -450; EW 5♠

E/W should reach 4♠ although some may not if North opens with a pre-emptive 3♥.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the North who opened 3♥ and subsequently bid 5♥ despite silence from partner

Absolute Sinner status to the East, declaring 4♠ who turned eleven tricks into eight!!! Declarer received the lead of a heart to North's ♥ A who then switched to a trump which declarer won in dummy with ♠ 10..first mistake, but not fatal at this point. **STOP...and THINK.** Declarer now has 4 spade tricks, 5 club tricks (unless suit breaks 4-1 and declarer cannot pick up ♣ Jxxx) and ♦ A for a minimum of ten tricks. An eleventh trick can be made by ruffing a heart in dummy. So, unless the spades prove to break 5-0 this is an easy ride to eleven tricks! **What should have happened:** Win trump switch with ♠ A, K or Q (but NOT with ♠ 10). Cash a top spade to confirm spades are not 5-0.. Play ♠ 10 and overtake with ♠ J, ruff a heart with a remaining top spade in dummy. Cash ♣ K and play a club to ♣ A in hand, Draw remaining trump with ♠ 9 and then play on clubs for eleven tricks! **What actually happened:** Declarer won trump switch with ♠ 10 (mistake) and played a club to ♣ A and then ruffed a heart with ♠ Q. Declarer now cashed ♠ K followed by ♠ A which revealed the 4-1 spade break.

At this point declarer held ♠ K in dummy opposite ♠ J9 in hand while south held ♠ 75. So, declarer could simply cash dummy's remaining top spade and then play on clubs with South eventually scoring a trick with ♠ 7 and one of dummy's losing diamonds disappearing on declarer's ♠ 9. Contract still making despite the awkward trump break.

But declarer panicked and cashed ♦ A and then continued with a second diamond to her ♦ J and South's ♦ K. South continued with ♦ Q on which declarer discarded ♥ 9 from hand (dummy now dead and irrelevant!) followed by another diamond on which declarer discarded her last club eventually winning the last trick with ♠ 9. Note the HUGE difference it makes if declarer plays clubs instead of cashing ♦ A...now the contract will make!

THIS IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF THE ABSOLUTE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING THE PLAY AND ADJUSTING THE PLAN AS PLAY PROGRESSES.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

EW 5♠; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 2♦; Par -450; EW 5♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table North also declared 3♥x (**Sinner** status to East for not bidding 3♠). At this table **Sinner** status is also awarded to declarer who received a spade lead and continuation, declarer ruffing the second spade in hand. If heart breaks 2-2 or ♥ Q falls then declarer can count eight tricks...7 trumps and 1 diamond. But surely declarer must make some attempt to secure a ninth trick? Where can a ninth trick come from? There are two possibilities...a club ruff in dummy or a second diamond trick. If declarer plays a club at trick 3 then the defense will switch to trumps and when the defense win the second club another trump will put paid to the club ruff. A non-runner. So, declarer should play a diamond towards dummy playing ♦ Q if East plays low. And now the spotlight will fall on West. If he wins the diamond then declarer can draw trumps and subsequently finesse the ♦ 10 for a second diamond trick. How can West know whether to win the diamond or duck? The answer lies in the first diamond that East plays...this **MUST** be a **Count Signal** which will indicate the NUMBER of diamonds that East holds which in turn lets West calculate how many diamonds North holds! When East plays ♦ 2 West should immediately realise that East has an odd number of diamonds (East would play a higher diamond to begin a 'peter' indicating an 'even' number of diamonds!). Thus West knows that East has 1, 3 or 5 diamonds...the last can be ruled out because if East held five then declarer would have none! [*Counting, counting...all the time!*]. So, East holds either 1 or 3. If East holds 1 then declarer holds 4 and declare will always score 3 diamond tricks. More significantly, declarer would be very silly not to draw trumps **BEFORE** playing on diamonds because he might run into a diamond ruff...or even two ruffs!. So, East must have 3 diamonds in which case declarer has 2 diamonds. West should duck. This does two things...1) it leaves a question mark in declarer's mind as to who holds the ♦ A...and, 2) it means that once the second diamond is played declarer cannot avail of diamond winners except via a trump entry. When West ducks declarer can ruff a spade in hand and lead another diamond and when East plays ♦ 6 declarer will have to guess whether to finesse ♦ 10 or play ♦ K. Note that if declare plays the ♦ K then that kills the diamond suit...Yes declarer can play a heart to dummy's ♥ 10 but the ♦ 10 will not be established as a winner!. On the other hand, and perhaps taking the bidding in to account, declarer might find the winning play of finessing ♦ 10 and that **WILL** leave ♦ Kxxx as a winner(s), with ♥ 10 as an entry, on which to discard one (or more) of declarer's losing clubs. Note that E/W cannot play clubs without stopping declarer from scoring a ruff in dummy!.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ 7 5 4 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 7 5 4 3
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 10 3		♥ 10 3			
♦ K Q 10 5 3		♦ K Q 10 5 3			
♣ J 2		♣ J 2			

EW 5♠; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 2♦; Par -450; EW 5♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the **North** who failed to open the bidding and then bid 2♥ over West's opening 2♣. **Double Sinner** status to the East at the same table who bid 2NT over North's 2♥ overall which West raised to 3NT. This deservedly failed by three tricks.

YOU CANNOT BID NT WHEN OPPONENTS BID A SUIT UNLESS YOU OR PARTNER HAVE A STOP, OR PREFERABLY TWO, IN THE OPPONENTS SUIT.

Sinner status to the **North** who opened 3♥ and then bid 5♥ despite silence from partner.

Sinner status to any **West** who did not make a Takeout Double of North's 3♥ opening and who instead bid either 3♠ or 4♣.

Sinner status to the **East** who Passed partner's Takeout Double of North's pre-emptive 3♥ opening bid. West's inaction cost her side -530 and the loss of a whopping 12.67 IMPs.

Sinners on both side of the same table! **Sinner** status to **East** who Passed partner's Takeout Double of North's 3♥ opening bid. **Double Sinner** status to **South** who then bid 4♥ over the Double!!! 3♥x can make. 4♥x was one down

Sinner and Saint...all in one! **Brendan King** earns the former accolade for bidding 3♠ instead of making a Takeout Double of North's 3♥ opening bid. But he then redeemed himself somewhat by making twelve tricks, one of only two declarers to do so. North led two top hearts, declarer ruffing the second one with ♠Q (key play), Brendan then cashed ♠A confirming that spades were not breaking 5-0. He continued with ♠10 overtaking with dummy's ♠J. He then ruffed a second heart in his hand with ♠K, his last trump. He now played a club to dummy's ♣A and cashed the ♠98, drawing South's two remaining trumps on which he discarded his two losing diamonds, He then played on clubs and cashed the ♦A for this twelfth trick. Well done. Pity about the bidding!

Saintly status to **Mary Moylan** who also made 12 tricks on a similar line to that outlined above.

Board 18
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

W N E
S

♠ A 8 6 2
♥ 9 4 2
♦ 8
♣ Q 7 6 4 2

EW 4♦; W 1N; N 1♠; N 1♣; Par -130; EW 2♦+2

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

NS 3N; NS 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; Par +400: NS 3N

N/S can make 3 NT, 3 ♦, 2 ♠. E/W can make 2 ♥ but are unlikely to buy the contract.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **North** who responded 1 ♠ instead of 1 ♦ to South's opening bid of 1 ♣. East overcalled 3 ♥ which was passed back to North who now bid 4 ♦ which ensured that South would convert to North's longer spade suit!!! 4 ♠ failed by three tricks!

At one table South opened 1 NT (12-14) and North responded 2 ♣ (Stayman), East interrupted proceeding with 2 ♥ which was passed back to North who now bid 3 ♦, West bidding 3 ♥ and North buying the contract with 4 ♦. East found the lead of ♠ 10 and ruffed the third round before exiting with ♣ Q and there was no way for South to avoid a club loser at the end. One down.

An identical defense occurred at another table but unfortunately N/S were in 5 ♦ which duly failed by two tricks. **Sinner** status to N/S for overbidding.

Absolute Sinner status to the **North** who declared 5 ♦ x on the lead of the ♥ A...the only lead to let the contract out. Declarer ruffed in hand and played a diamond to dummy's ♦ K and then cashed ♥ K discarding his losing club from hand. Declarer proceeded by playing a trump to his ♦ Q and then made a major error when he played a third diamond denuding dummy of its third trump with which he could have ruffed his fourth spade if necessary. Declarer now started to tackle the spade suit and played a spade towards dummy's ♠ J97. West beat the ♠ J with the ♠ A and then cashed the ♠ K felling partner's crucial ♠ 10 and thereby solved declarer's problem. At that stage declarer could have claimed and would have notched up +550. HOWEVER, it seems our declarer forgot that his ♠ 8 was a winner because when West continued with a third spade declarer did not claim and then played a club to dummy's ♣ A and inexplicably played a small club back to his singleton ♣ 9 losing to East's ♣ Q. One down! It is vital to keep track of the **intermediate cards!** Needless to say, if declarer had not played the wasteful and unnecessary third round of diamonds he would have had a diamond in dummy with which to ruff his 'losing' ♠ 8. Two mistakes leading to a whopping swing of 650 points... -100 instead of +550, a swing of approx. 15 IMPs.

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

NS 3N; NS 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; Par +400: NS 3N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At two other tables South opened 1 NT and both Norths bid 3♦, presumably forcing. East bid 3♥ and both Souths bid 3 NT which cannot be beaten.

A heart contract was reached at four table...at three of these, each declarer failed by a trick in 3♥. At the fourth table declarer was at the helm in 4♥ and also failed by a trick when he should have failed by two tricks!!! At this table South led a spade declarer winning with dummy's ♠ A. Declarer then led a heart and rose with ♥ A when North showed out. Declarer continued with ♥ Q losing to South's ♥ K. South now continued with ♣ AK, noting East's ♣ Q falling on the second round and then inexplicably continued with a third club which declarer gratefully won with dummy's ♣ J whilst discarding a losing diamond from hand! **Sinner** status to **South** who should have realised that a discard was coming up when partner followed to the first club with ♣ 2. If North had a doubleton club she would have played ♣ 10 (or ♣ 9) on ♣ A and followed with ♣ 2 on South's ♣ K. *Counting, counting ...all the time*

At two tables North declared 3♦ which was allowed to make with an overtrick at each table. **Saintly** status to **John Fahy & Liam Faherty** for using **Minor Suit Transfers** opposite an opening 1 NT. South opened 1 NT and John bid 2 NT (a transfer to diamonds). Liam bid 3♣ which suggested a goof holding in diamonds, usually Qxx or better. John converted to 3♦. East led ♠ 10 to West's ♠ K and duly ruffed North's ♠ 8 (that's a clue for subsequent use by East!!!) on the third round and was on target for holding declarer to nine tricks when unfortunately she tried to cash ♥ A... Declarer ruffed and duly disposed of his club loser on dummy's ♥ K. How should North's play of ♠ 8 have been useful to East? Okay...where is the ♠ Q? It has to be with North...Why? Because partner won the first spade with ♠ K, denying the ♠ Q!!! So, North is known to hold 4 spades, 6 (or more) diamonds and 3 other cards. If North has 3 clubs then he has a void in hearts. BUT, unless he specifically holds ♣ Jx it cannot cost for East to switch to ♣ Q.

At the other table East led ♥ A and declarer was able to discard a losing club on ♥ K, declarer making ten tricks. East subsequently gave declarer a ruff and discard! Fortunately for the defense declarer was unable to dispose of her second spade loser but made 3♦+1.

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 3N; EW 4♦; NS 1♠; E 1♥; NS 1♣; Par -600: EW 3N

E/W can make 3 NT as well as 4 ♦...but not 5 ♦! But let's see if that last bit holds true!

Saints & Sinners

Two E/W pairs bid to 6 ♦, at one table the contract was Doubled. At both table the contract failed by one trick. **Sinner** status to both pairs for bidding a small slam missing two aces!.

At four tables a contract of 5 ♦ was reached by E/W, making at 2 table and failing at the other two. At the two tables where the contract failed both declarers took their eye off the ball! At one table North found the killing lead of a spade. In fact North led ♠ 8 where ♠ 6 is the standard lead from a three card suit headed by an honour. Notwithstanding that, **Sainly** status awarded to **Siobhan O'Sullivan** for finding the killing lead... the defense can now score ♠ K in addition to ♥ A and ♣ A...**But this is what subsequently transpired!** Declarer rose with ♠ A. [If South let's it round to her ♠ Q9 South will have to rise with ♠ K and the defense will need to cash ♣ A to defeat the contract otherwise declarer will be able to discard ♣ K on ♠ A!] Declarer played three rounds of diamonds ending in hand as South discarded a club, a heart and ♠ 4. Declarer next led a heart to dummy's ♥ QJ, North rising with ♥ A...and now North lost her Sainly glow and became a **Sinner** when she continued with a small heart to dummy's ♥ Q, South following...and declarer also became a sinner for not overtaking ♥ Q with ♥ K, and then cashing ♥ 10 followed by ♥ 8 to discard the two losing spades in dummy! In fact declarer let the ♥ Q win and now played a club to her ♣ K and North's ♣ A, North did not need a second chance and duly returned a spade to South's ♠ K for the setting trick! North is particularly guilty for not noting South play of ♠ 7 at trick one followed by a subsequent discard of ♠ 4. Clearly ♠ 7 was an **Attitude** signal encouraging the spade lead! And **Sinner** status to declarer for not taking notice of South's discard of a heart. At the point that the second heart was led from dummy declarer can account for eleven hearts...7 played and one discarded, declarer has three (♥ K108) and only two are unaccounted for. If declarer overtakes ♥ Q with ♥ K she can then cash ♥ 10 (dropping South's ♥ 9) whilst discarding a spade from dummy and then discard dummy's last spade on ♥ 8.. And if South started with 5 hearts then nothing can be done anyway and declarer will ultimately lose a spade as well as a club. **Play for the possible!** **Sinner** status to declarer and also to South who could have spared a second spade discard or even another club discard rather than the heart which COULD HAVE proved to be so costly.

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 3N; EW 4♦; NS 1♠; E 1♥; NS 1♣; Par -600: EW 3N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table where West was at the helm in 5♦, North led a trump and declarer played three rounds ending in dummy. fatally for the defense South discarded TWO hearts and a spade. Now declarer played ♥ J, south following with ♥ 5 and North winning with ♥ A. North continued with ♠ 6 and declarer rose with dummy's ♠ A and continued with ♥ Q as South followed with the crucial ♥ 9...and declarer fell asleep at the wheel when she failed to overtake with ♥ K, cash ♥ 108 whilst discarding two losing spade from dummy and then ruff ♠ Q with dummy's last trump and claim eleven tricks and contract made! Sadly, **Sinner** status awarded, declarer followed low on the second heart and then played a club North winning with ♣ A and then playing a spade to South's ♠ K for the setting trick. Note also that North could have ducked the first heart and now declarer cannot overtake the second heart to discard dummy's losing spades!

Concentration is vital in particular when declaring or defending. And keeping a keen eye on the intermediate cards is one of the elements that distinguishes the better players.

Saintly status to **Deirdre Corbett** who also found the lead of a spade to hold declarer to ten tricks. Partner might have shown a little more encouragement by contributing the ♠ 7 instead of a discouraging ♠ 4!

Three E/W pairs reached 3 NT, played by East, making nine or ten tricks

Board 21
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 6♥; NS 6♦; NS 5N; NS 3♠; NS 2♣; Par +1430: NS 6♥

Board 22
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

NS 4♦; NS 2N; NS 2♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par +130; NS 2♦+2

Another partscore hand? N/S can make 4♦...but not 5♦. N/S can make 2NT...but not 3NT! Defeating 3NT is easy enough if E/W cash their five heart tricks. But actually defeating 5♦ is not that clear. In fact it takes a trump lead and continuation at each subsequent opportunity which will deprive declarer of a heart ruff in dummy. I suspect that not many players in the West seat will find that defense and so I expect that 5♦ will make, at least a couple of times!

Saints & Sinners

A diamond contract was played at eight tables. All but one, declarer made at least eleven tricks, with twelve tricks being made at two tables! And the one table where declarer ended up with nine tricks was a self-inflicted fatal injury.

At one table, South declared 5♦ on the lead of ♥AK followed by a switch to ♣J, dummy and East following low as declarer won with ♣A. **STOP...** Declarer can now count 6 trumps, 1 club, 3 spades if the finesse works, maybe even four spades although a blockage may occur! Declarer can also safely ruff the third heart in dummy with ♦Q and then play diamonds drawing all the outstanding trumps before taking the spade finesse... So, win the ♣A, ruff a heart in dummy with ♦Q, then play four rounds of diamonds drawing all West's trumps and then lead ♠Q and finesse...eleven tricks and contract made! **But that's not what happened.** Declarer won the ♣A and drew four rounds of trumps without ruffing her losing heart. Declarer then led ♠9 to dummy's ♠A and ruffed a club in hand before playing a second spade to West's ♠K who then played a heart to East's ♥Q for a two trick, self-inflicted defeat! **Absolute Sinner** status to **South**.

Saintly status to **Margaret Fletcher** and **Anne Killilea** both of whom made no mistake when declaring 5♦ on the lead of 3 rounds of hearts. They ruffed the third round with ♦Q and then played four rounds of trumps before leading ♠Q covered by West's ♠K. Eleven tricks and contract made.

Another declarer in 5♦ failed to ruff the third heart in dummy and could have failed by two tricks if the ♠K was offside! This declarer also benefited from some less than stellar defense!

Board 22
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

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

NS 4♦; NS 2N; NS 2♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par +130: NS 2♦+2

Saints & Sinners (continued)


At one of the tables where South declared a diamond partscore West led ♥ A before continuing with ♣ 2, declarer playing low from dummy and East rising with ♣ K. **Sinner** status to West for not leading ♣ J and giving partner a chance to protect her ♣ K! East also committed an error by discarding a spade on the third trump thus establishing dummy's spade suit for four winners. If East does not discard a spade declarer can only score three spades! Sinner status because East can see dummy's four card spade suit and knows she is the only defender who can guard the suit!

At four tables N/S reached a spade contract. At one table North received the lead of a heart and West cashed ♥ AK and continued with a third round which declarer ruffed in hand. Declarer played a club to dummy's ♣ A and then led ♠ 9 (♠ Q is better) and for some strange reason played ♠ J from hand instead of letting ♠ 9 run into East. Winning with ♠ J declarer now played a diamond which East ruffed before continuing with ♥ Q which declarer ruffed with dummy's ♠ 10 as West overruffed with ♠ K. West now gave partner a diamond ruff. East continued with ♥ J which declarer ruffed in hand with ♠ 4. If declarer had stopped to think before ruffing with ♠ 4 and counted she would have realised that there was only one trump left with the defenders. Therefore she should have ruffed ♥ J with ♠ A and then played ♠ 4 to dummy's ♠ Q and cashed the remaining diamonds for a 2 trick defeat. But having ruffed with ♠ 4 she had no means of accessing dummy and so led another diamond which East gratefully ruffed with her last trump for a three trick defeat. **Sinner** status to declarer. Note also that if declarer had led ♠ Q rather than ♠ 9, she could have played three rounds of trumps and avoided those ruffs by both defenders!

Two Norths declared 2 ♠ making exactly eight tricks.

At the fourth table where a spade contract was reached, declarer made eleven tricks through a series of poor plays by East. East got off to the lead of ♣ 4 and subsequently tried to cash ♣ K, setting up dummy's ♣ Q and then led a club into declarer's ♣ Q9. E/W never played a heart and as a consequence never scored either of their two heart winners!

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

<p>♠ K Q 9 4 ♥ A J 9 7 6 ♦ 4 2 ♣ A 8</p>		<p>♠ 8 6 5 ♥ 10 2 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ K Q J 3 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 7 2 ♥ 4 ♦ K J 8 6 5 3 ♣ 6 4</p> <p>♠ J 3 ♥ K Q 8 5 3 ♦ 10 9 ♣ 10 9 7 5</p>
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EW 5♠; EW 5♦; EW 2N; EW 2♥; NS 1♣; Par -650: EW 4♠+1

E/W can make 5 ♠ or 5 ♦...but care is needed in planning the sequence of plays to bring home those contracts, in particular if spades are trumps. A diamond contract is more straightforward. Expect to see a variety of contracts and results! In either contract declarer needs to play diamonds by leading TOWARDS the ♦ KJ8653. With both honours in the North hand declarer can score five diamonds. In a spade contract declarer has a couple of lines including a cross ruff, i.e. ruffing hearts in the East hand and ruffing diamonds in the West hand. As long as the defenders do not get to play a couple of rounds of trumps then declarer should be good for nine or ten tricks. But the winning line is to set up the diamond suit whilst still retaining access to enjoy them via the trump suit!

Saints & Sinners

At nine tables a spade contract was reached and what a range of results...one declarer made twelve tricks whereas another could only manage to score seven tricks!!!

At one table West opened 1 ♥, North bid 2 ♣, East 2 ♦, South 3 ♣ and West now made a **REVERSE** bid of 3 ♠ promising 16+ hcp!!! North Passed and East, of course, should have raised to 4 ♠ but actually Passed...which was probably just as well because declarer couldn't even muster nine tricks let alone the eleven that are there for the taking... North led ♣ K, declarer winning with ♣ A. Declarer, without forming much of a plan, cashed two rounds of trumps and then, with five hearts in his hand opposite a singleton in dummy and with only two trumps in dummy, cashed ♥ A and then ruffed a heart in dummy. Declarer now led ♦ 8 AWAY FROM A SUIT HEADED BY ♦ KJxxx thereby conceding two diamonds to the defense! North won with ♦ Q and made the good play of his last trump which also drew dummy's last trump. Declarer won in dummy perforce with ♠ A and played ♦ J which North won with ♦ A. North continued with ♣ Q and followed with ♣ J, 3 2 declarer ruffing the last one with his remaining trump. Declarer then conceded the ♥ J to South's ♥ K for a two trick defeat, **Sinner** status to **West**.

As I repeatedly say in these columns, **declarer must plan the play of the hand not just the first few tricks**. In this example declarer, if planning a cross-ruff, should have realised that he needs to play diamonds EARLY so that leading a diamond from dummy will not cost and will give access to declarer's hand (via a ruff) in order to ruff hearts in dummy. Think ahead!

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

EW 5♠; EW 5♦; EW 2N; EW 2♥; NS 1♣; Par -650: EW 4♠+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table West declared 3♠ on the lead of ♣K. Declarer won with ♣A and straight away started playing on hearts, cashing ♥A and ruffing a heart in dummy. Now declarer led dummy's remaining club, North winning with ♣Q (**Sinner** status for not winning with ♣J). North now made the good play of leading a spade, declarer winning in hand and then ruffing another heart in dummy. But now declarer's lack of forward planning came home to roost...Declarer cashed dummy's ♠A, the last trump in dummy, and then had to lead a diamond AWAY from dummy thus conceding two diamonds to the defense. South won with ♦9 and cashed ♥KQ as declarer followed before continuing with ♣9, declarer ruffing with ♠9. Declarer drew North's remaining trump with ♠Q and then conceded a diamond to North's ♦A for a one trick defeat.

Board 24

West Deals

None Vul

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

NS 4♥; EW 2♠; NS 1N; NS 1♦; Par +300; EW 4♠×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table North Passed as dealer and **Ann Roche** opened 1♣ with the East hand and when **May O'Sullivan** bid 1♠, Ann, with good shape, raised twice after North belatedly bid hearts. **May** eventually contracted 3♠ and failed by only one trick. **Saintly** status awarded to both players. In fact there was a slight chance of making the contract if May had ruffed the third heart with ♠4 instead of ♠7. With declarer having already played a spade to dummy's ♠Q, North following with ♠9, and South's ♠A, declarer was in a position to run the ♠7 and if South did not cover this with ♠J then she could repeat the finesse winning the next round in dummy with ♠10, drawing South's last trump with ♠K and then cash five club winners. Alas declarer ruffed the third heart with ♠7 but should have continued with ♠8 and run it unless South covered with ♠J. Instead, declarer finessed ♠10 and now there was no recovery!

At another table East made a takeout Double of North's opening 1♥ and West duly bid 3♠ over South's 3♥ bid. North cashed two top hearts before switching to a diamond, dummy playing ♦J, covered by South's ♦Q declarer winning with ♦A. Declarer played a spade to dummy's ♠Q, West following perforce with ♠9, South winning with ♠A. South now played a diamond to North's ♦10 who continued with ♦K, declarer ruffing with ♠4. Now declarer led ♠8 and South fell from grace by not covering with ♠J. When ♠8 won declarer duly finessed ♠10 and drew South's last trump with ♠K and then cashed five clubs to make her contract. **Saintly** status to **Kay Scarry**. Sinner status to South for not covering ♠8 with ♠J which declarer could win with ♠K and then play a spade to ♠7 in dummy ...but now declarer had no way of drawing South's last trump, South eventually ruffing the third club for the setting trick.

At yet another table, East also made a takeout Double of North's 1♥ and eventually bid 3♠ after West responded 1♠ when South initially (and inexplicably) Passed. South eventually Doubled 3♠. N/S cashed two top hearts and then switched to diamonds. Declarer won the second diamond and played a spade to dummy's ♠Q, South winning with ♠A. South could have defeated the contract by playing any red card in his hand but made the fatal (for the defense) continuation of a small spade which declarer let run to dummy, winning the trick with ♠7 as north should out. Declarer continued with a spade finessing the ♠10 against South's ♠J6. Declarer drew the last trump with ♠K and then cashed five clubs for the contract and a score of +530 and a whopping 12.33 IMPs... **Saintly** status to **Mary Muldoon**. **Sinner** status to **South**.