

Greetings!

Herewith find analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 27th August 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

This week I have analysed 14 of the 24 hands: 1,2,3,4,5,6,10,12,13,14,17,18,23,24
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. Hand #12 is given special attention and is interesting in terms of declarer play and defense.

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 **14 hands**, played at **13 tables**, representing a total of **182 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **2,366 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **9,464 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

3rd September 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

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

E 7N; E 7♠; E 7♣; W 6N; W 6♠; W 6♣; EW 4♥; EW 3♦; Par -1520:
E 7N

A Grand Slam or even a Small Slam is on the cards but will only be bid at a minority of tables. It is a lucky make...clubs break 3-3 and ♠ Q is likely to be found. And note that it is better (safer!) played by East rather than West. Note also that declarer can actually make thirteen tricks...South is squeezed in a two card ending where West (on lead) holds ♥ 9, ♦ Q and East holds ♥ AQ... South has to reduce to 2 cards and cannot protect both suits. This ending requires declarer to cash ♦ A early in the play thereby promoting South's ♦ K as a winner but where South is then '*squeezed*' in the red suits and is unable to hold on to ♦ K whilst also holding ♥ K10. Cashing the ♥ A in this way is a very rare play called **The Vienna Coup** and is often a pre-requisite for a **Squeeze** to succeed. Note that a red suit lead by South will enable declarer to make thirteen tricks. A heart lead by North would give declarer some considerable food for thought!

Saints & Sinners

On the simple basis of '*you can't argue with success*' **Saintly** status has to be conferred on those pairs that reached the small slam with particular praise for those that were able to arrange for East to be declarer.... **Rhona Bolger & Margaret Forde, Mary Muldoon & Brid O'Doherty,** and **Pat Ward & Carmel Musitano.** **Carmel** was the only declarer to make all thirteen tricks. This is not a nice slam to play from the West hand on a red suit lead!

Absolute Sinner status to the E/W pair that languished in 2 ♠ after East opened 1 NT and South bid 2 ♦.

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 2N; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par +500; EW 5♣×-3

4♠ or 4♥...which will it be? 4♥ is fairly easy...play ♥Q at earliest opportunity and then get to hand and play hearts from the top. Declarer could face a decisive moment if East leads a diamond to West's ♦A and West continues with a small club! Declarer has to guess right to make the contract! In a 4♠ contract declarer needs to be careful...play on hearts, setting up the suit before drawing trumps, ending in the North hand. So, win at first opportunity and play ♥Q. If West ducks then play a spade to ♠A (or ♠Q) and lead ♥K. If West ducks this trick then play a third heart and ruff with a small trump and then cash ♠K and continue with a spade to dummy's ♠A (or ♠Q) and cash remaining hearts. Note, if East ruffs third round then declarer should overruff and play a trump to North's S♠A (or ♠Q) being thankful that spades break favourably. A different approach is needed if E/W cash ♦A, ♣A followed by another club to North's ♣K. Now, if declarer plays a heart to ♥Q and West wins with ♥A and continues with a third club declarer must ruff with ♠7 and continue with ♥K, discarding a diamond from hand and then continue with ♥J discarding another diamond from hand unless East ruffs in which case declarer overruffs and then plays a spade to ♠A (or ♠Q) and cash second top spade and then run the remaining hearts. Tricky!

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner...the declarer in 4♥ who failed by two tricks...a self-inflicted wound. East led ♠J, declarer winning in hand with ♠Q. Declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥Q and West's ♥A. Perhaps West should have switched to a small club at this stage which would have put declarer on the spot! But West continued with a spade and declarer erred by playing low from hand. This had two effects...1) the spade suit was now effectively 'blocked'... 2) declarer was in the wrong hand and could not draw trumps immediately. Declarer clearly didn't count the spades that had been played which would have informed him that one of the two defenders was now void in the suit. Declarer played a third spade and West gratefully accepted the gift and ruffed. Declarer subsequently lost a diamond and two clubs and finished with eight tricks. **What should have happened**...Declarer should have won the second spade in hand with ♠A, drawn trumps and then continued with spades scoring ten tricks... N/S lost 10.08 IMPs instead of gaining 7.42 IMPs, a swing of 17.50 IMPs!!!

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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


NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 2N; EW 2♣; EW 1♦; Par +500; EW 5♣×-3

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to the defenders at another table where East led a small diamond against 4♥ by North. West (**Robert Delargy**) won with ♦ A and switched to ♣ 8 (♣ 4 perhaps better, suggesting to partner that you hold an honour card in the suit). Declarer now has to guess correctly to make the contract, i.e. whether to play ♣ J or ♣ K, . Declarer opted to play ♣ K, and I would not fault them for that choice. But it meant that the contract failed by one trick.

Sinner status to **West** at one table where South declared 4♠ on the lead of ♣ 4 to dummy's ♣ J and East's ♣ A. East continued with a club to North's ♣ K. Declarer now erred by playing a trump to ♠ K and a trump back to dummy's ♠ A. Declarer next played a heart to ♥ Q. West has two ways of beating the contract...1) Win with ♥ A and continue with ♦ A and then ♣ 10. IF declarer ruffs with ♠ Q then he can cash ♥ K, discarding a diamond from hand and continue with ♥ J, discarding another diamond as East ruffs with ♠ J for the setting trick. 2) The alternative defense is to duck ♥ Q! What can declarer do? Unfortunately (for the defense) West won the heart, cashed ♦ A and continued with a heart, declarer winning with ♥ K. Declarer cashed ♠ Q drawing East's last trump and then played winning hearts to bring home the contract. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Some N/S pairs will reach 4♠ ...and may get lucky. Note the symmetry of East's minor suits...identical apart from the denomination! And the lucky declarers in 4♠ will be those that receive a club lead which will eliminate declarer's club loser and enable the contract to be made whereas a diamond lead does not eliminate declarer's loser in that suit and also leaves declarer with a club loser!

Saints & Sinners

4♠ was declared at seven tables. A club was led at five tables and yet only THREE declarers made ten tricks. **Sinner status** to those that failed to make 4♠ on a club lead. The play is quite simple. Win the opening lead in dummy and continue with a club to ♣ A followed by a club ruff. Declarer then plays on trumps and eventually loses 1 spade, 1 heart and 1 diamond.

At one of these two tables declarer won the first club and then proceeded to play on trumps WITHOUT first ruffing her losing club. Declarer duly lost a trick in each suit!

At the second table declarer also won the first club in dummy and also proceeded to play on trumps with West winning the second round. West then mistakenly cashed ♥ A setting up dummy's ♥ K for a club discard before continuing with a club which declarer won in hand. Declarer then ruffed her third club in dummy, cashed ♥ K discarding a diamond from hand and then finessed a diamond into East's ♦ K who returned a diamond which West gratefully ruffed for the setting trick. Contract down one. Two **Double Sinners** sinners at this table...**North** because she should have ruffed the third club BEFORE playing on trumps...and secondly because after she was permitted to ruff the third club she should have ruffed a heart in hand and drawn the outstanding trump and thereafter just conceded one diamond. IMPs Bridge is ALL about making your contract. Overtricks are a bonus which declarer can pursue once the contract has been secured! West is also a **Double Sinner** for letting the contract make. After winning the second spade West should have played a third spade which would deny declarer the option of ruffing her losing club. Also, West should NOT have cashed ♥ A which promoted dummy's ♥ K.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table North declared 3♠ and was given a rocky ride by a piercing defense. West (**Pat Ward**) opened with a light 1♥ after which N/S subsided in 3♠. **Carmel Musitano** found the devastating lead of ♥J. Declarer covered with ♥K as West won with ♥A. West now switched to his singleton diamond, declarer playing low as East won with ♦K. East returned a diamond which West ruffed. West continued with ♣9, declarer rising with ♣A and playing a trump to dummy's ♠Q and West's ♠A. West continued with a club to East's ♣K who then gave West another diamond ruff. By this stage E/W had scored SIX tricks and declarer finished two down. **Saintly** status to **Pat & Carmel** for an excellent defense. BUT, it could have been a very different outcome if declarer ducked the ♥J at trick one...If East continues with a heart then declarer can ruff and play a trump BEFORE West is able to make the devastating diamond switch. And when West wins the ♠A and continues with ♦7 declarer can rise with ♦A and draw trumps before continuing with a diamond eventually losing a trick in each suit!

At another table declarer was guilty of lack of concentration and managed to convert ten tricks into eight! East mistakenly led ♥7 from ♥J76 (♥6 is the normal lead from this holding), declarer playing low and partner winning with ♥Q as declarer followed with ♥10. West, perhaps reasoning that partner had led from ♥76 and that declarer had ♥J10, continued with ♥A...disaster! Declarer ruffed and then played a spade to dummy's ♠Q and West's ♠A. West now played his singleton diamond and East won with ♦K as North played low. East, not appreciating the diamond position, continued with the fatal (for the defense) ♣2. Declarer played ♣J from dummy and then inexplicably overtook with ♣A in hand, thus snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. **What should have happened:** Declarer should have won in dummy with ♣J, played a club to his ♣A, drawn trumps and then played diamonds ENDING in dummy and discarding his losing club on ♥K...Contract made! **What actually happened:** Declarer won the club switch in hand with ♣A, drew ONE round of trumps before continuing with a diamond to dummy which West gratefully ruffed. East eventually scored the ♣K for a two trick defeat. Careless by declarer at two stages in the play! **Double Sinner** status awarded.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table North declared 4♠ on the lead of a small club, dummy's ♣J winning the first trick. Declarer played a spade to his ♠K and then committed the major error of playing a second spade instead of cashing ♣A and ruffing his losing club with dummy's ♠Q. West could have won the second spade and could have defeated the contract by continuing with a third spade removing the trump from dummy with which declarer could have ruffed his losing club! Alas (for the defense) West ducked and declarer woke up and now cashed ♣A and ruffed his losing club with dummy's last trump. Declarer subsequently lost ♦A, ♠A, ♥A but made his contract. **Sinner** status conferred on **declarer** and **West**.

At another table, North also declared 4♠ on a small club lead and here the declarer also played two rounds of trumps without first ruffing her losing club in dummy. West had the opportunity to win the second trump and continue with another trump thus ensuring that declarer has a losing club despite the helpful lead. But, West won the second spade and returned a club, declarer winning in hand with ♣A. Declarer could still have ruffed her losing club with dummy's ♠Q but instead chose to play a heart rising with dummy's ♥K after East followed low. West won with ♥A and now had another opportunity to defeat the contract by playing his last trump thus consigning declarer to a losing club but instead tried to cash ♥Q which declarer ruffed. Only now did declarer wake up and ruff his losing club! But the story wasn't over...declarer next finessed a diamond to East's ♦K who could still have defeated the contract by giving his partner a diamond ruff. Instead, East continued with ♥J which declarer ruffed, drew West's last trump and claimed ten tricks. **Double Sinner** status to **declarer** who had two chances to secure the contract and **Double Sinner** status to **West** who had two opportunities to defeat the contract.

Saintly status to **Patricia Eames** who made no mistake in 4♠ on the lead of a small club. She won in dummy, played a round of trumps and then cashed ♣A and ruffed her losing club in dummy. Well played.

Of the three declarers who successfully negotiated 4♠, **Patriucal Eames** is the only one to emerge with credit for the play of the hand.

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 5♥; NS 3♠; NS 4♦; EW 4♣; Par +500: EW 6♣×-2

This will be a bidding battle or an easy stroll for West should the hand be opened with a pre-emptive 5♣. Note that N/S can make 5♥ whereas E/W can make 4♣. The West hand is best suited to a pre-emptive opening bid of 5♣ which will either silence the opposition or make it difficult for them to find their best landing spot!

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the N/S pair who let out 5♣. After West pre-empted 5♣ all Passed and North led ♠ A, continued with ♥ A and then played ♠ K which declarer ruffed. Declarer then cashed all her clubs reducing everyone to two cards.. Before discarding on the last club North held ♥ K, ♦ QJ; Dummy held ♠ 10, ♥ 87; South held ♠ Q, ♦ K8. North discarded ♦ J, declarer discarding ♠ 10 from dummy and South discarded ♦ 8 and suddenly West's ♦ A7 produced two tricks.

So, who's to blame? Both North and South are guilty. Yes, the play of a long suit often produces situations where the defenders have to make a decision as to what to discard and it is not always clear as to what is the correct discard. BUT, here it should have been clear to both defenders. Take North who had to discard first. What North should have noted is that South had already discarded three hearts having followed to one round at trick two. That means South started with four hearts. North could see three hearts in dummy and held five hearts in her hand. Ipso facto declarer had started with only one heart which was played at trick two. North should have discarded the ♥ K and retained the doubleton ♦ QJ. And now let's turn our attention to South. South should have remembered that North cashed ♠ A at trick one and then attempted to cash ♠ K at trick three WHICH DECLARER RUFFED. so, South knows that declarer does not have another spade and should have discarded ♠ Q and retained ♦ K8. What is unusual about this hand is that BOTH defenders were in a position to defeat the contract. Quite often in a situation like this it is frequently the case that only one defender is in a position to hold the card(s) that will defeat the contract! Here, either defender could have done it! And of course it all boils down to '*Counting, counting...all the time!*' And to make matters worse N/S can make 5♥

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 5♥; NS 3♠; NS 4♦; EW 4♣; Par +500: EW 6♣×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table West opened 1♣, North overcalled 1♥, East passed, South bid 2♥, West bid 3♣, North bid 4♥ and West bid 5♣ which North Doubled. At this table North cashed ♠A, followed by ♥A and then ♥K which declarer ruffed. Declarer then proceeded to play out all her clubs coming down to the same three card ending before North has to discard as outlined previously. But now there is a difference because North knows that declarer has two cards left but doesn't know if it's two diamonds or two spades or one spade and one diamond UNLESS South gave a count signal on the ♠A. [YOU CANNOT DEFEND EFFECTIVELY AND ACCURATELY WITHOUT USING COUNT SIGNALS]

So, if South did not give a count signal on the ♠A then as North I would discard a diamond coming down to ♠K, ♦Q.

But, South is in a different position. South can account for all spades bar one (5 in dummy, 5 in hand and declarer and North having already played a spade each). Therefore South knows that there is only one spade unaccounted for, i.e. the ♠K. IF declarer has ♠K then South's ♠Q is of no use. So South should discard his ♠Q and retain the ♦K8. **Sinner** status to **South**.

Simple... *'Counting, counting...all the time!'*

Sinner status to the **West** who allowed N/S to play in 4♥.

Sinner status also to the North who bid 6♠ after West opened 5♣ and South made a 'forced bid' of 5♣ in response to North's Double.

Note that at the three tables where N/S ended up in a heart contract West at each table opened with a bid 1♣. The benefit of the Pre-emptive 5 level opening should not be underestimated!

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 4♥; NS 3N; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +500: EW 4♠×-3

4♥ can be made..but can it be bid? If South opens 1 NT (and assuming West passes) North can make a transfer bid of 2♦. South can bid 3♥ showing a hand with maximum points and four card heart support and North may elect to bid the heart game. Bidding it is one thing...making it is another as it looks like declarer has two diamond losers and two club losers. HOWEVER, if West cashes two top diamonds then declarer can ruff out East's ♦ Q and establish the ♦ J for a club discard. Also, if West bid spades then declarer can take the double finesse in the suit (finesse ♠ Q and if West covers then subsequently finesse ♠ 9) to establish the ♠ 9 as a winner and provide the means for discarding a losing club from the South hand!

Saints & Sinners

4♥ was bid at three tables. At one table, West having bid 2♠ over South's opening 1 NT, East led ♠ 5 (M.U.D), declarer playing ♠ Q from dummy, covered by West with ♠ K as declarer won with ♠ A. Declarer cashed three trumps ending in dummy and then led ♠ 7...and when West played low declarer eschewed the opportunity to finesse ♠ 9 and rose with ♠ J. Next declare ruffed ♠ 9 with dummy's last trump and then played a club to ♣ K and East's ♣ A. A club return from East then scuppered the contract. Given West's spade bid declarer's best option was to finesse ♠ 9 on the second round of the suit. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table South opened 1 NT and with no opposition bidding N/S reached 4♥. At this table West led ♦ A and continued with ♦ K. Declarer subsequently ruffed out East's ♦ Q and discarded a losing club on ♦ J. Contract made. **Saintly** status to **Sean & Enda** for bidding the game and **Additional Saintly** status to **Enda** for making the contract.

At a third table South opened 1♦, West overcalled 1♠ and North eventually declared 4♥. East, on lead, ignored her partner's overcall and duly led ♣ A which eliminated declarer's potential second club loser. Contract made. **Sinner** status to **East** for a poor choice of opening lead. A spade lead might not have brought about the defeat of the contract but at least it would have given declarer something to think about!

At two other tables N/S played in a heart part-score making ten tricks.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 4♥; NS 3N; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +500; EW 4♠×-3

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Three N/S pairs played in a NT contract with declarers making eight, nine and ten tricks respectively. At one table West cashed ♦ A at trick one before switching to a spade, declarer winning in hand with ♠ Q. Declarer continued with a diamond towards dummy's now singleton ♦ 10, East winning with ♦ Q. East continued with a diamond thus establishing declarer's dJ as a winner. Declarer subsequently finessed ♠ J and scored nine tricks via 3 spades, 5 hearts, 1 diamond. The defenders were always entitled to four tricks via 3 diamonds and ♣ A. Sainthood status to declarer, **Brian Place** for a nicely played hand and in particular for spotting the potential of developing the diamond trick. And also for the neat un-blocking play of SQ on the first lead of the suit by West!

At another table declarer did not un-block the ♠ Q on the opening lead and later in the play found herself with ♠ AJ in dummy opposite ♠ Q in hand and with no other entry in dummy! (The importance of un-blocking of ♠ Q at trick one now becomes obvious!). But not to wonder when you have a helpful defender in the West seat who proceeded to solve declarer's dilemma by exiting on ♠ K!!! Declarer gratefully accepted this gift, rose with ♠ A, following with the blocking ♠ Q from hand and duly cashed ♠ J. **Absolute Sinner** status to **West**. Apart from anything else, East may have been holding the singleton ♠ Q! Declarer made an impossible ten tricks!

At five other tables E/W played in a spade contract with no declarer making more than seven tricks!

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

E/W can make 5 NT, 5 ♦, 4 ♠ with 3 NT the most likely contract. Communications between the two hands are delicate! Declarer can count eight top tricks...3 spades, 1 heart, 4 clubs with good opportunities in diamonds for 2 or even 3 tricks. But communications between the two hands are very delicate. *The ♣ J in the East hand is crucial...other than ♥ A it is the only guaranteed entry to the East hand*

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the three declarers who failed to make nine+ tricks....

At one table West declared 3 NT on the lead of ♠ J, declarer winning in hand with ♠ K. **What should have happened...** At trick 2 declarer should lead ♦ 10 (or ♦ 9, ♦ 8, or ♦ 7) and finesse into South. As it turns out South is forced to win with ♦ A and now declarer has eleven tricks via 3 spades, 1 heart, 3 diamonds, 4 clubs. NOTE...even if diamond finesse loses to ♦ Q declarer will win any return and play a second diamond from either hand thus establishing two diamond winners. **What actually happened...** declarer played a club to dummy's ♣ J, cashed ♠ AQ thereby establishing two winners for North. Declarer then continued with a club to hand and cashed the remaining top clubs thereby establishing a winner for South. Declarer could still have made the contract by playing a diamond to dummy's ♦ J but instead made the mind-boggling play of leading ♥ J thus establishing two heart tricks for the defense! North covered with ♥ K and declarer won with ♥ A. Declarer now exited on ♠ 7 to North's ♠ J, South discarding a small heart. North won and the defense duly cashed their remaining winners and the contract was defeated.

At another table where 3 NT failed, East received the lead of ♥ 4, declarer playing low from dummy as North followed with ♥ Q, declarer winning in hand with ♥ A. Declarer then played a spade to dummy's ♠ K...**What should have happened...** Declarer should now lead a diamond, finessing into South. As we have seen before this establishes three diamond tricks for declarer who can win any return, cash top spades and then play four rounds of clubs before repeating the diamond finesse. Declarer will score 3 spade, 1 heart, 3 diamond, 4 clubs. Contract made.

What actually happened?.... Declarer played a club to ♣ J and cashed two top spades before playing three top clubs. Declarer then played a diamond and guessed wrong by rising with ♦ K, South winning with ♦ A. South now cashed ♣ 10 and then played a heart to North's ♥ K who proceeded to cash ♦ Q and ♠ J. Contract failed by one trick.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At the third table, East also declared 3 NT on the lead of ♥ 4, declarer playing low from dummy as North contributed ♥ Q, declarer winning with ♥ A. This declarer continued with ♥ 8 as South followed with ♥ 2 and... **What should have happened**....What is the one heart that North assuredly does not hold? The answer is... the ♥ 10. So declarer should play low from dummy. Either the ♥ 8 will win or North will win with ♥ K. Either way declare will have generated / promoted a second heart trick. Note that with ♥ J9 still in dummy the defense can not continue the suit without conceding an extra trick to declarer who will clearly finesse ♥ 9 if South plays a third heart. **What actually happened?**.... Declarer played ♥ J losing to North's ♥ K, Now declarer can no longer develop a second heart trick unless the opponents continue the suit! Declarer duly cashed black suit winners setting up winners for N/S and eventually discarded a heart from dummy, holding onto ♦ 10 instead, despite holding the winning ♦ K in hand, thereby promoting South's ♥ 7 as the decisive setting trick for the defense.

In all three cases the respective declarers proceeded to cash their winners before establishing the extra tricks that were needed to make the contract. As declarer, always seek to establish winners in a side suit(s) before relinquishing control of the other suits.

Declarer at one table took an unusual line by leading ♦ 10 and rising with dummy's ♦ K when North followed low. Very slim chances of a singleton ♦ Q...against the odds despite the fact that South actually held a singleton ♦ A!

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 4♥; EW 4♦; NS 2♣; Par -620: EW 4♥

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

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

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 3♠; NS 4♣; NS 2♥; EW 2♦; Par +130: NS 4♣

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

NS 5♠; NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 3♥; NS 4♦; Par +650: NS 4♠+1

3 NT will be the most popular contract although a couple of N/S pairs may get excited and overbid to 6 NT which has no chance against normal defense....even a soft spade lead by West still only gives declarer eleven tricks. If East did hold ♦ KQJx as well as ♥ QJxxx then declarer could squeeze (literally!) twelve tricks on a spade lead! Declarer concedes a club to West and then rattles off his black suits with dummy holding ♥ A10, ♦ 10, declarer holding ♥ K83, ♦ 5. East will find it impossible to hold ♥ QJx, ♦ KQ, Alas, at the table West's ♦ J72 saves East's blushes. It takes a diamond lead to hold declarer to ten tricks in a NT contract.

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the N/S pair who reached 6 NT.

Sinner status also to the **South** who found herself in 4 ♠ (**Sinner** status to **North** who raised South to 4 ♠ with only three card support! If South held 5 spades she would likely have opened 1 ♠! But North carries most of the blame for failing to make the contract she found herself declaring! West led ♥ 9 in response to East's one level heart bid, South having opened 1 ♣ to which North responded 1 ♦. We all find ourselves, from time to time, in poor contracts and it is our responsibility to give it our best shot. This is a classic example. The simple line is for declarer to win in dummy with ♥ A and then cash two top spades. Declarer then continues with two top clubs and ruffs a small club in dummy. (At worst East may overruff...but then declarer's two remaining clubs are winners and there is only one trump outstanding.) If East does not overruff the third club declarer plays a heart to ♥ K in hand and if it wins then he cashes ♠ Q and then plays on clubs. Contract made...with an overtrick on the actual layout! **What actually happened...**declarer won the opening lead in hand (mistake) and then cashed FOUR rounds of trumps West winning the fourth round. West erred by switching to a club instead of continuing with a heart. Declarer won first club in dummy and proceeded to play three more rounds West winning the fourth round with ♣ 10. West now continued with his second heart declarer winning performe in dummy with ♥ A, Declarer was forced to play diamonds and duly lost two more tricks. Declarer should have appreciated that the club suit was unlikely to break 3-3 (only a 36% probability) and should have realised the need to preserve ♥ K as an entry to hand and thus should have won the first heart in dummy, preserving ♥ K for later access to her hand.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

NS 5♠; NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 3♥; NS 4♦; Par +650: NS 4♠+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the three E/W pairs who allowed declarer to make 3 NT with three overtricks! Whereas it requires a diamond lead to hold declarer to ten tricks even a spade lead, although gifting declarer a soft trick with ♠ 9, should still see declarer only make eleven tricks. At three tables errors in the defense enabled declarer to score twelve tricks..

At two other tabled N/S scored eleven tricks on the basis of the opening lead. In one case, West led a spade giving declarer four spade tricks. In the other case East led a small heart which declarer won in hand with ♥ 10....the vital eleventh trick, Neither Saints nor Sinners here.

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

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

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 3♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

3 NT is the likely final contract. At some tables South may overcall 1 ♠ after West opens 1 ♣ and East bids 1 ♦. If West becomes declarer then North may lead ♠ 10. To make the contract West MUST duck the opening lead. Declarer has seven tricks and needs two more to make the contract. Clubs might produce four tricks but the odds do not favour a 3-3 break nor a doubleton ♣ J10. The diamond suit is the other option for the two extra tricks and the best line is a straight finesse of the ♦ 9, Even if it loses the subsequent play of ♦ K from dummy will generate the two tricks needed. The main issue is to avoid losing five tricks...2 diamonds and three other tricks. Note that playing a diamond to dummy's ♦ Q (or ♦ K) will produce one extra trick but not two unless one defender is holding ♦ Jx, note that if declarer ducks the opening spade lead North will have to find a switch. A club switch gives declarer the option of four clubs...cover South's ♣ 10 with ♣ Q and then finesse ♣ 9. If North switches to a diamond then declarer should let it round to the ♦ 9. If South wins with ♦ J then declarer can subsequently enter dummy and play ♦ K thereby establishing diamond winners to make the contract. If North switches to a heart declare must play low from dummy and beat South's ♥ J with ♥ A. Then declarer should run ♦ 9. If that wins then declarer can enter dummy via ♣ A and lead ♦ K to establish a second diamond winner.

Saints & Sinners

3 NT was contracted at all table and failed at four. **Sinner** status to the **North** who made a vulnerable overcall of 1 ♥ on 3 hcp!

At one table North found the lead of ♠ 10 even though South had not bid the suit. Declarer found the good play of ducking. North switched to ♣ 2 declarer beating South's ♣ 10 with ♣ K. Nine tricks are now assured if South simply runs ♦ 9... BUT declarer erred by continuing with ♠ A hoping the spade suit would break 3-3. That option was now dead BUT declarer was still in the game and could have made the contract by finessing ♣ 9 and also forcing one diamond trick. Unfortunately declarer continued by playing ♦ 9 overtaking with dummy's which South ducked. Declarer could have put all his eggs in one basket and returned to hand with a spade (or heart) and then finesse ♣ 9. returning to hand in the other major to cash the remaining club winners giving nine tricks via 2 spades, 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 4 clubs! Alas, declarer cashed ♣ A and continued with a club to hand getting the bad news as South discarded on the third club and the contract duly failed by two tricks. **Sinner** status to **West**.

Board 12

West Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 3♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table West declared 3 NT on the highly unusual lead of ♥ 9 despite the fact that South did overcall 1 ♠! Declarer beat South's ♥ J with ♥ A and led ♦ 9.. if declarer let it run to South then she could have made nine tricks. Unfortunately she rose with ♦ K which lost to South's ♦ A. South now erred (**Sinner** status awarded) by continuing with ♠ Q, declarer rising with ♠ A as North followed with ♠ 10...**STOP**...if declarer had stopped and absorbed the play of this trick she could have found a neat and simple play for her ninth trick... South overcalled 1 ♠, has produced ♠ Q as North followed with ♠ 10. South presumably now holds ♠ J943 to account for her 1 ♠ overcall. If declarer now leads ♠ 2 from hand South will be forced to win with ♠ 9...**BUT** now declarer will hold ♠ A8 over South's ♠ J43 and declarer can enter dummy via a club or heart and lead ♠ 7 and finesse when south plays low. Alas, declarer failed to find that line but it could still be played later. and instead continued with ♣ KQ followed by a third club to dummy's ♣ A. Declarer could still have led the spade from dummy and ducked if South followed with ♠ J or ♠ 9 and then re-entered dummy with ♥ K and subsequently taken the spade finesse. **BUT**, declarer cashed ♥ K, ♦ Q and then played a spade beating South's ♠ 9 with her S ♠ K. And yes, declarer was still in line to make the contract. Holding ♠ 82, ♥ 107, all declarer need to do was play ♠ 2 to dummy's S ♠ 7 forcing South to win with ♠ J. South, now holding ♠ J4, ♦ J5 would have had to concede either a spade to declarer's ♠ 8 or a diamond to dummy's ♦ 1064. Alas declarer exited on ♥ 7 and North won with ♥ Q and cashed ♣ J before playing a diamond to South's ♦ J. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table North led ♠ 10 against West's 3 NT after South overcalled 1 ♠. Declarer won this trick with ♠ A and could no longer make the contract. Running ♦ 9 South will win with ♦ J and continue with ♠ Q thus establishing 3 spade tricks for the defense and with South still holding ♦ A! **Sinner** status to declarer.

At the fourth table where the contract failed South, not having bid, led ♠ 4 against East's 3 NT. Declarer won with dummy's ♠ K and despite running ♦ 9 could no longer make the contract when South won with ♦ J and continued with ♠ 9. As we have previously seen, ducking would have given declarer a chance(s) depending on how South continued at trick two! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 3♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table West declared 3 NT against the lead of ♠ 10, South having overcalled 1 ♠. Declarer ducked and North continued with ♥ 2 to South's ♥ J and declarer's ♥ A. Declarer could have made the contract by running ♦ 9 but instead declarer played a diamond to ♦ K which South ducked (good play) as North signaled the holding of an odd number of cards in the suit. Declarer next continued with three top clubs ending in hand before continuing with a heart to dummy's ♥ K. Declarer continued with two top spades on which North fatally discarded his two remaining diamonds. Declarer then applied the '*coup de grace*' by exiting on a club to North's ♣ J who then found himself end-played and having to concede the ninth trick, and the contract, to declarer's ♥ 10. South is clearly marked with ♦ A (and ♦ J) when declarer does not pursue the suit. North should have retained a diamond as an exit card and shortened his heart holding so as not to allow himself to be end-played. **Sinner** status to **North**.

At another table West opened 1 ♣ and rebid 1 ♠ over partner's 1 ♦ response. East then bid 3 NT and despite the bidding South led ♠ 4 and declarer's goose should have been cooked when she rose with ♠ K and continued with a diamond to her ♦ K and South's ♦ A who continued with ♠ 9 which declarer ducked (North discarding ♥ 2) and then won the next spade with dummy's S ♠ A. Declarer continued with three top clubs ending in dummy as South fatally discarded ♠ 3 on the third round. Declarer then led a heart on which North fatally played ♥ 9, declarer winning with ♥ K. Declarer cashed ♦ Q and then led ♥ 4 on which South discarded ♦ 5... Declarer won with ♥ A and exited on ♥ 7 which North had to win with ♥ Q thus establishing dummy's ♥ 10 as a winner thanks to North's earlier unwise play of ♥ 9! Declarer duly scored her ninth trick with ♥ 10.

At yet another table, West declared 3 NT after East made an unusual response of 3 ♦ to West's opening 1 ♣. North led ♥ 5 to South's ♥ J and declarer's ♥ A. Declarer cashed three top clubs ending in hand as South mistakenly discarded ♠ 3. Declarer continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦ K and South's ♦ A who continued with ♠ J to declarer's ♠ A and North's ♠ 10. As outlined before, declarer could promote a third spade trick in hand by continuing with a spade to dummy's ♠ 76 and subsequently finessing ♠ 8 against South's ♠ J4. BUT declarer continued with a heart to dummy's ♥ K, cashed ♦ Q and then cashed ♠ K before end-playing South with another spade. South then had to concede the last trick to dummy's ♦ 10. **Sinner** status to **declarer** and **South**.

Board 12West Deals
N-S Vul

	♠ 10		
	♥ Q 9 6 5 2		
	♦ 8 7 3		
	♣ J 5 3 2		
♠ A K 8 2	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 7 6 5	
♥ A 10 7 3		♥ K 4	
♦ 9		♦ K Q 10 6 4	
♣ K Q 8 7		♣ A 9 4	
	♠ Q J 9 4 3		
	♥ J 8		
	♦ A J 5 2		
	♣ 10 6		

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 4♣; EW 3♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table West declared 3 NT after North made an outrageous vulnerable overcall of 1 ♥ on a hand with 3 hcp! **Sinner** status awarded to North who found the fatal (for the defense!) led of ♦ 8 though dummy's bid suit. Declarer, **Maura Connolly**, found the winning play of following low from dummy as South won with ♦ J. South continued with ♥ J which declarer won in dummy and then secured her contract by leading ♦ K, South winning with ♦ A. Indeed declarer now has ten tricks via 2 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds, 3 clubs, but failed to cash ♦ 6 and so ended with nine tricks! **Saintly** status to **Maura**...with venal sin stain!

Saintly status to **Colette Mulhern** who finessed ♣ 9 on second round of the suit having received the opening lead of ♣ 2. She duly made ten tricks.

Sinner status to the South who watched as declarer (West) cashed three top clubs ending in dummy and led a small diamond towards her hand. South should have won with ♦ J and continued with a heart to dummy's ♥ K thus depriving declarer of even one diamond trick! **Sinner** status to declarer for not running ♦ 9 at trick two after receiving the opening led of a small heart.

Sinner status to the **North** who upon winning the fourth club, as partner discarded ♦ 5, cashed ♥ Q on which South discarded ♠ J, could have defeated the contract by playing her diamond to South's ♦ AJ but instead returned a heart to declarer's known ♥ 10 thereby giving declarer ten tricks instead of holding him to eight!

Saintly status to **John Fahy**, the only declarer to make eleven tricks on the lead of ♥ 5 from North John ran the ♦ 9 and subsequently cashed all the diamond winners on which North made an error when discarding a club thus promoting John's fourth club as a winner! How should North have known to keep all her clubs...because if declarer has a singleton diamond then she must have at least four clubs or else a five card major! And with a five card major she would have opened it instead of opening 1 ♣. **Sinner** status to **North**.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 4♠; EW 3♥; NS 4♣; EW 3♦; Par +500: EW 5♦×-2; EW 5♥×-2

N/S can make 4 ♠...not that easy to reach that contract and it takes a specific sequence of plays to make it! N/S can also make 4 ♣ and E/W can make 3 ♥ or 3 ♦. To beat 4 ♦ South must lead three rounds of hearts, North ruffing the third round. North must then cash ♣ A lest declarer's clubs be discarded on dummy's winning hearts.

Saints & Sinners

Four N/S pairs reached 3 ♠, all but one making with an overtrick.

At one table, South opened 1 ♣, North responded 1 ♠ and South raised to 4 ♠. East lead ♦ A and switched to a small heart. Declarer had lost one trick and needed to restrict trump losers to two tricks. But how to do that? Ideally declarer needs to be able to lead the first trump towards the ♠ KJ64 but in order to do that declarer needed to get to his hand. There seemed to be two options...play a club or ruff a heart. Playing a club is fraught with danger that a defender might get a ruff and that declarer might still lose two trumps. The other option was the one that declarer selected...ruff a heart. After ruffing the heart declarer led a trump playing ♠ J from dummy when East played low. West won with ♠ Q and then found an excellent defense (**Saintly** status awarded to **Sheelagh McInerney**) when she played a fourth heart which partner (**Breda Cunningham**) ruffed with ♠ A. And suddenly the contract could no longer be made because Sheelagh was entitled to a second trump trick with her ♠ 109. After the hand was played declarer was the first to recognise that he could have made the contract by playing ♠ K instead of ♠ J. When this wins declarer could then play a second spade in the hope that the suit breaks 3-2.. That way declarer may lose two trump tricks but will not lose three! But that line would fail if West held ♠ A109 and East held a doubleton ♠ Qx. Declarer's actual line would have worked if West held ♠ Qx and East held ♠ A109. On the basis that declarer needs to play two rounds of trumps ASAP perhaps it is best to play ♠ K on the first round and when it holds then play a second trump. As long as trumps are 3-2 then all is well.

At another table, North declaring 3 ♠ received the lead of ♣ 7. Winning in hand declarer played a spade to dummy's ♠ J, East playing low. West won with ♠ Q and returned a low diamond to East's ♦ Q, East continued with her second club and West ruffed with ♠ 9 thus holding declarer to nine tricks. It is very unusual to lead a doubleton and find partner with a singleton!

Board 13

North Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 4♠; EW 3♥; NS 4♣; EW 3♦; Par +500: EW 5♦×-2; EW 5♥×-2

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Two E/W pairs were allowed to play in a diamond contract. At one table East declared 4♦ after North bid 1♠ in response to partner's Takeout Double of East's opening 1♦. South, not unreasonably, led a spade and that was ten tricks to declarer.

At the other table where a diamond contract was played East reached 3♦ and received the lead of ♣K from South after North had bid clubs. The ♣K won the trick and South then erred by switching to ♠4 thus handing ten tricks to declarer. After the ♣K wins the opening trick it is clear that North holds ♣A. Surely South could reason that East who opened the bidding is likely to hold ♠A...and given the presence of ♠Q109 in dummy and with South holding ♠KJ64, a spade continuation at trick two is not a good idea. South should have tried ♥AK and give partner a ruff. This holds declarer to nine tricks with declarer's losing spades being discarded on dummy's winning hearts!

One N/S pair reached 5♣x after E/W had bid to 4♦. That wouldn't be too bad if N/S were bidding and making 4♠ at other tables...but unfortunately only one N/S pair reached 4♠...and duly failed by a trick.

Three N/S pairs were allowed to play in 4♣ whereas two others bid to 5♣, both suffering a one trick defeat.

Board 14
 East Deals
 None Vul

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

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

EW 5N; EW 5♦; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; NS 2♠; Par -460: EW 5N

E/W can make 5♦, 3NT+2. N/S can make 3♥. But 5♦ by E/W is more likely to be reached rather than 3NT. Although declarer seems to have 2 spade losers, 1 heart, and a potential club loser it all boils down to whether or not declarer can find the ♣Q. Some will...and some won't. What may help declarer in his quest would be any bidding by South (hearts) and North (spades). Note that South can be identified with a singleton spade and a singleton trump and therefore is more likely to have a longer club holding than North. And with the length is the likelihood of South holding the ♣Q! Note also that although declarer in 5♦ appears to have two spade losers North cannot gain the lead to cash the two winners even if South leads a spade.

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to **Sean & Enda** who bid to 5♥, a good save against the Vulnerable 5♦ bid by E/W. **Sinner** status to E/W for not doubling 5♥.

Sinner status to the E/W pair who bid 6♦ after their opponents reached 5♥

Sinner status to the E/W pair who failed to bid 5♦ and let their opponents play in 4♥

Saintly status to the three E/W pairs (**John & Liam, Robert & Mary, Peggy & Angela**) who reached 3NT a contract that cannot be defeated despite the glaring weaknesses in both major suits. Fortunately declarer can scramble nine tricks on a spade lead and has a comfortable nine tricks on a heart lead. It is noteworthy that at none of these three tables did South show a weak 2♥ which would likely produce a bid of 4♥ from North leading to a good save by N/S.

Sinner status to the two declarers in 5♦ who did not bother to explore the distribution of the opponents hands via the spade suit (after playing hearts first and taking a spade discard from hand on dummy's ♥K) and instead took an immediate finesse in clubs in to the South hand.

At one table where East declared 5♦, South cashed ♥A at trick one and then found the devastating (for the defense) switch of ♣Q at trick 2! If making the club switch South should lead a small club in case North has ♣A(xx) and declarer holds ♣J(xx) thus giving declarer a decision as to what to play from dummy!

Board 14
 East Deals
 None Vul

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

EW 5N; EW 5♦; NS 3♥; EW 4♣; NS 2♠; Par -460: EW 5N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the North, defending 5♦ whose partner led ♠ J which declarer ducked despite North having made a free bid of 3♠ during the auction. North overtook with SQ and without batting an eyelid switched to hsi singleton club thus handing the contract to declarer. **Additional Sinner** status to North for not supporting his partner's heart overcall.

At two other tables where E/W reached 5♦ after both Souths bid 2♥ (Weak), South led the singleton ♠ J and declarer rose with dummy's ♠ A. Declarer drew two rounds of trumps and then guessed right by playing a club to her ♣ A and finessed against South's ♣ Q. A lucky guess? Perhaps declarer could place North with ♠ KQ based on South's lead. If so, then it left South with little in the way of high cards to account for her 2♥ overcall. this line also allows for the possibility that the ♣ Q falls in three rounds in which case declarer can discard a losing spade from dummy and thus limit definite losers to 1 heart and 1 spade.

Alternatively declarer could have done some investigating re opponents distribution before deciding how to tackle the club suit. Playing a heart would enable declarer to discard a losing spade and subsequently discover that South holds a singleton spade and a singleton trump! That would certainly present a compelling reason to place club length, and hence the ♣ Q, with South! BUT, the problem with this line is that the defense may be able to cash three tricks via ♥ A and two top spades if South holds a doubleton ♠ Jx instead of a singleton ♠ J. On the basis that you can't argue with success...**Saintly** status to both declarers, **Ann Roche**.and **Siobhan O'Sullivan**.


Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

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

♠ 10 7 6 4
♥ 9
♦ Q J 10 9 8 7 2
♣ Q

NS 5♦; W 2N; NS 2♠; W 2♥; W 3♣; E 2♣; E 1♥; Par +500:
W 5♥×-3; W 5N×-3; W 6♣×-3

Board 16
West Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 17

North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 5♣; NS 4♦; N 2N; NS 2♠; S 1N; NS 1♥; Par +400; NS 5♣

5♣ by N/S makes...but only 2♠ makes. Some Easts may decide to Pass as declarer...but others will use the **Rule of 20** and open 1♥. And those that play **Flannery** will have the bonus of opening 2♥ showing 5 hearts, 4 spades and 11-15 hcp. The latter bid will likely silence N/S. If South starts with a Takeout Double and subsequently bids spades North can always bid clubs. The initial Takeout Double promises support for the THREE unbid suits. This applies particularly if West supports hearts and North Passes and South then bids 2♠. Now North can convert to 3♣. North's initial Pass already indicates a hand with limited values.

Saints & Sinners

Saints...the two N/S pairs who played in 4♣, **Sean & Enda** and **Fiona & Brian** the latter reaping the added bonus of making 4♣x+1 for a score of +610 and 10.92 IMPs

Absolute Sinners...the three N/S pairs who played in 3♠ or higher. and the declarers who failed to make eight tricks in spades

Absolute Sinner to the **East** who let out 3 NT by North. East led ♥ 4 as declarer discarded a club from dummy, winning in hand with ♥ K. Declarer next led ♦ J, covered by East with ♦ K and won in dummy with ♦ A. Declarer next cashed dummy's ♠ A and continued with ♦ Q and then ♦ 10 on the later of which East correctly discarded a small spade. Declarer refrained from cashing her fourth diamond (had she forgotten that it was a winner?) and instead continued with ♣ Q, West winning with ♣ K. West next played ♥ 8 through North's ♥ 1096, East covering ♥ 9 with ♥ Q. East now held ♥ A73 sitting over North's ♥ 96. E/W can now take the next four tricks to defeat the contract by two tricks...BUT, East fell from grace by cashing ♥ A and continuing with ♥ 7 to declarer's ♥ 10. Declarer exited on a club and West, winning with ♣ A, had nothing left but ♠ 1096 and was forced to lead into dummy's ♠ KJ, ♦ 6 and so declarer won the last three tricks and succeeded in a hopeless 3 NT that should never have made. **What should have happened** ...After East won the heart switch by West with ♥ Q, East can return a club to partner's ♣ A who will then continue with another heart through declarer's ♥ 106 with East holding ♥ A73. East will win the three hearts and thus defeat 3 NT by 2 tricks!

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

♠ 10 9 6 2	♠ —	♠ Q 5 4 3									
♥ J 8 5 2	♥ K 10 9 6	♥ A Q 7 4 3									
♦ 7 3 2	♦ J 8 5 4	♦ K 9									
♣ A K	♣ J 10 9 7 5	♣ 8 2									
<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;"> <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 K J 8 7											
♥ —											
♦ A Q 10 6											
♣ Q 6 4 3											

NS 5♣; NS 4♦; N 2N; NS 2♠; S 1N; NS 1♥; Par +400; NS 5♣

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to all South's who failed to make a second takeout Double after West supported hearts and where partner had Passed the initial T/O Double. Also to the Norths who failed to convert to clubs after South bids spades.

Sinner...the South who did not support partner's freely bid 2♣

Board 18
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

N/S can make 5♥ or 5♣...but the problem will be how to get there if West opens with a pre-emptive 4♠ or even a **Namyats 4D**...This latter bid shows a strong 7+ card spade suit with 8-9 tricks and distinguishes it from a hand with a weaker 4♠ opener. 4♣ is similar except it refers to a hand with hearts. The West hand is TOO strong for a pre-emptive 4♠ opening bid which would reflect a weaker hand. Note that opening the West hand at the one or two level makes it easier for N/S to find their club fit or even to reach a heart contract which will likely require a 2nd round finesse of ♥ 10 to make eleven tricks. Note that in 4♠ declarer has nine top tricks (eight spades and ♣ A). A tenth trick can be generated from the diamond suit by leading twice from dummy and playing for split honours, i.e. North and South to each hold one of the top honours...or for South to hold both. This line offers approx a 75% chance of success.

Saints & Sinners

Two clear Saints - Margaret Forde and Colette Mulhern. The problem in declaring 4♠ is to avoid losing three diamonds as well as the obvious heart trick. Other things being equal, the best line is to lead towards declarer's diamond holding TWICE from dummy. All that is required is for South to hold either one or both missing diamond honours. The chances of success are circa 75%. Both **Margaret** and **Colette** chose this line. Note that it also works when either defender holds a doubleton ♦ 10x.

Some merit also in the line that some other declarer's pursued, i.e. ruff the third heart in the hope that the ♥ Q will drop thus promoting dummy's ♥ J for a discard of a diamond from hand. This line gets some credence because of the fact that South follows to the first two heart tricks with ♥ 810, With a doubleton ♥ 108 South would probably show the doubleton by playing the cards in reverse order, i.e. ♥ 10 followed by ♥ 8, unless playing **Reverse Count**.

Re both of the above lines it is important that declarer recognises the need for TWO entries to dummy which requires that declare cash only one top trump and preserve dummy's ♠ 97 as entries to advance either of the two plays outlined above.

Playing on diamonds is the superior line.

Board 18
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ A K Q 10 8 6 5 3	♠ 4	♠ 9 7 2						
♥ 5	♥ A K 9 7 4	♥ J 6 3 2						
♦ Q J 2	♦ A 5 3	♦ 9 7 6						
♣ A	♣ J 10 5 2	♣ 8 7 3						
<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="padding: 5px; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="padding: 5px; text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>			W	N	E	S		
W	N	E						
S								
<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♠ J</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♥ Q 10 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♦ K 10 8 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">♣ K Q 9 6 4</td> </tr> </table>			♠ J	♥ Q 10 8	♦ K 10 8 4	♣ K Q 9 6 4		
♠ J								
♥ Q 10 8								
♦ K 10 8 4								
♣ K Q 9 6 4								

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the **West**, declaring ♠S who ruffed the second heart, cashed a top spade and then cashed ♣ A, played a spade to dummy and ruffed a club in hand and then cashed all her trumps bar one before leading ♦ 2 won by North who continued with a club which declarer was forced to ruff with her last trump. Declarer then led ♦ Q to South's ♦ K who then cashed ♣ Q for the setting trick. Poor effort by declarer, ruffing dummy's losing clubs in the West hand being particularly pointless!

At another table the defense led two top hearts, declarer ruffing the second. Declarer proceeded to seal her fate by cashing two top trumps. She then played a third trump to dummy's ♠ 9 and led a diamond but with no way of accessing dummy to lead a second diamond towards her ♦ Jx the contract duly failed. Declarer would have succeeded had she only drawn one round of trumps before playing a small trump to dummy's ♠ 7 and then leading a diamond to her ♦ J and North's ♦ A. BUT, now declarer could win any return and play another trump to dummy's ♠ 9 and lead a second diamond towards her hand scoring the ♦ Q. Contract made...

Saintly status also to **Pat Ward** who played in the recommended manner and duly established his diamond winner...unfortunately Pat was declaring 5♠ and duly failed by one trick.

Sinner status to declarer and to North at one table where North led ♥ AK, declarer ruffing the second round. For some strange reason declarer cashed ♣ A and then a top spade before continuing with ♦ Q. North fell from grace by winning with ♦ A (declarer can now enter dummy with a trump and lead a diamond towards her ♦ Jx thereby establishing a diamond trick. If North ducked the ♦ Q then South can win with ♦ K and now declarer cannot make a diamond trick!) To make matters worse North continued with a diamond thereby guaranteeing a diamond trick for declarer. **Double Sinner** status to **North**.

Three declarers took an inferior line of ruffing the second heart and then using dummy's ♠ 97 as entries to ruff a third heart in hand and were lucky to see South's ♥ Q fall with the second spade entry in dummy available to cash the ♥ J discarding a losing diamond from hand.

Board 19
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Board 21
 North Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

Board 22
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

W N E
S

♠ J 10 8 7
♥ A Q 9
♦ 6 5 2
♣ Q 9 7

EW 1♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par -80: EW 1♥; EW 1♠

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

E 4N; W 3N; EW 4♦; EW 2♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; Par -630; E 3N+1

If South opens with a Weak 2 ♠ then West can bid 3 ♦ and E/W should reach 3 NT. If South opens with a bid of 3 ♠ that is likely to become the final contract. West has neither the shape nor the high card strength to make a Takeout Double. East is too weak to bid a protective 3 NT. The value of pre-empting at a higher rather than a lower level is reflected in the increased difficulty that it imposes on the opposition in their efforts to reach the right contract! Bidding space becomes very cramped!

Saints & Sinners

The issue here is the level at which South opens the bidding. It is a distortion of the West hand to make a Takeout Double of 3 ♠ whereas it is quite appropriate to bid 3 ♦ if South opens 2 ♠ in which case East will bid 3 NT.

Four E/W pairs reached 3 NT. In two cases South opened a Weak 2 ♠ and West overcalled 3 ♦ which East converted to 3 NT. Sound bidding by E/W. **Saintly** status to **Pat Ward & Carmel Musitano** and **Mary Muldoon & Brid O'Doherty**. At two other tables South opened 3 ♠ and both West's made an inappropriate Takeout Double over which East was luckily able to bid 3 NT and landed in a contract that could not be defeated. Lucky.

One E/W pair seemed to finish one level too high when they reached 5 ♦. What looked like Mission Impossible turned out to be possibly possible...with a bit of X-ray vision. North led her singleton spade and South beat dummy's ♠ Q with ♠ A. South continued with ♠ 9 and now the contract could make if declarer discards a club and North ruffs. If North continues with a heart then declarer can win in hand, draw trumps and play a club to dummy's ♣ A, cash ♠ K discarding another club from hand. Declarer then ruffs a club in hand, South following with ♣ K, thereby establishing dummy's ♣ Q for a discard of declarer's losing heart. Declare scores 1 spade, 2 hearts, 6 diamonds, 2 clubs. Contract made... BUT... if North switches to ♣ J after ruffing the second spade then that changes the tempo and removes the ♣ A before declarer can discard another club from hand on ♠ K.

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

E 4N; W 3N; EW 4♦; EW 2♥; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; Par -630; E 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to the two E/W pairs, **Kathleen O'Connell & Mairead Watters** and **May O'Sullivan & Ann Roche**, who took their seven tricks to defeat 3♠ by three tricks

Saintly status also to **Sheelagh McInerney & Breda Cunningham** who took their seven tricks when defending against South's 2♠ contract. Perhaps West could have competed with 3♦ over South's 2♠.

Sinner status to the three E/W pairs, who lost a trick in their defense of 3♠ and only defeated the contract by two tricks. In two cases West switched to a trump (**Sinner** status awarded) and East in both cases made the mistake of following with ♠Q. If East plays low she will eventually come to two spade tricks. At the third table West switched to ♥7 and East contributed the ♥9 when declarer played low from dummy thus gifting South a trick with ♥10. East should have observed the presence of H5432 in dummy and his own holding of HK96 to realise that West surely had an honour card in the suit and should play ♥K. West could have made life easier for partner by switching to ♥A and continuing with H8...**Sinner** status to both players

Board 24
 West Deals
 None Vul

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

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

Yes, N/S can make 3 NT but they shouldn't reach that level. In fact 2 ♠ by West should be the most common contract. Some 'old-school' adherents may reject the West hand as too weak (doesn't have 12+ hcp) for an opening bid at the one level in which case North will open 1 ♠ and South will likely declare 1 NT.

Saints & Sinners

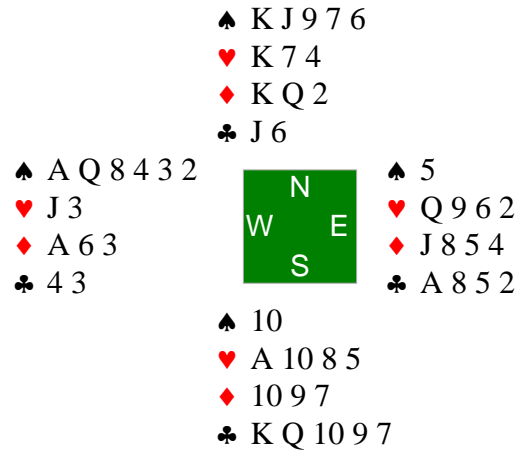
Sinner status to any West who failed to open 1 ♠. The hand is too good to Pass and too good to open as a Weak 2 ♠. It qualifies under the **Rule of 20** (add length of two longest suits to high card points and if 20 or greater then open with a one level bid). This hand qualifies for an opening bid of 1 ♠

Sinners...all the Norths who failed to PASS after West opened 1 ♠. To make a Takeout Double is wrong...North's longest suit is the one opened by his right hand opponent! And he certainly cannot boast support for the unbid suits! Overcalling 1 NT signals a much stronger hand, the equivalent of a Strong NT, and is also wrong. If North does overcall 1 NT then South should push on to game...9 hcp, a very good five card club suit and a four card heart suit. 2 ♣ should be Stayman and if North responds 2 ♦ then South can bid 3 NT. Note that South holds four tens, two of them with a supporting 9 and one as part of a four card suit that also includes the 8! Very good intermediate cards that add to the overall strength of the South hand!

3 Sinners at one table... West opened 1 ♠ and North overcalled 1 NT (**Sinner** status awarded). East with a very weak hand and only 7 hcp made a Penalty Double with a singleton in partner's suit, three four card suits... one headed by an ace, another by a Q and the third by a J, with poor intermediate cards in all suits. This is not a hand with which to make a Penalty Double of North's 1 NT after partner opens 1 ♠...(Sinner status awarded). East paid a big price at the table when North duly rattled in ten tricks for a score of +580. **Sinner** status to South who should have made a Penalty Re-Double (her side clearly hold 24/25+ hcp!).

'The money is in the defense' is a refrain I often use. **Saintly** status to the two N/S pairs (**Sean & Enda** and **May & Ann**) who defeated 2 ♠ by West by four tricks.

Board 24
 West Deals
 None Vul



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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the **N/S pair** who defended against 2♠ by West, and defeated it by a single trick. At this table N/S scored **NO** heart trick! North switched to a small heart during the middle of the play and South played the ♥ 10 rather than the ♥ A. Declarer subsequently discarded her second heart on dummy's fourth diamond! **Saintly** status to declarer (**Mairead Watters**) who made more tricks in a spade contract than any other declarer.