

Greetings!

Herewith find attached the analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 10th September 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

Last week was our largest entry yet...a full 16 tables compared with the 9 tables for the previous week...and that added to the workload for the hand analysis. Consequently this week I have analysed 12 of the 24 hands: 3,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,16,18,21,22

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 Board #21 which is analysed over SIX pages. This is a fascinating hand with opportunities for Saints & Sinners....unfortunately there were more Sinners than Saints! Several defenders were found wanting, with little thought given to working out declarer's distribution and how to use that information to best effect. In two cases declarer, playing a doubled contract, could have been punished with a SIX trick defeat but got away with a lot less!

Board #18 also receives close scrutiny. As does Board #6.

Thanks also to **Rory Timlin** who forwarded his personal observations and comments. I have include his analysis of the probability of success in respect of potential contracts related to Board #6.

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 **12 hands**, played at **16 tables**, representing a total of **192 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **2,496 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **9,984 individual card plays** that are dissected! Just for info!

**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**

17th 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

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

EW 3♠; NS 2♣; W 1♥; S 1♦; Par -140; EW 3♠

**Board 2**  
East Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Board 3

South Deals  
E-W Vul

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

NS 6N; NS 6♦; NS 5♥; NS 1♠; NS 1♣; Par +990: NS 6N

The list of makeable contracts includes 6 NT and 6 ♦ by N/S but NOT 6 ♥ although the latter can make on a non-club lead. Note that a 2-2 heart break would see the contract home but the actual heart distribution reflects the odds. To make the contract on a non-club lead declarer will need to cash two top trumps and finesse ♠ Q, discarding a club from hand (or do those in reverse on a spade lead) and then play on diamonds discarding two more clubs from hand. West can ruff the fourth diamond but by that time the bird (make that clubs!) will have flown! Few will likely bid the small slam and not all will make it!

### Saints & Sinners

What irony! 6 ♥ was bid at two tables. At one table West led a club and yet declarer made the contract! For some reason East played ♣ Q at trick one, declarer winning with ♣ K. Declarer then cashed ♥ AK and then played on diamonds discarding his remaining two clubs before West could ruff and continue with a club to partner's ♣ A! **Sinner** status to **East**.

At the other table West led a spade and the contract failed when declarer rose with ♠ A and could not recover. West ruffed the fourth diamond and declarer had only been able to discard two clubs! A shift to a club saw East win the trick with ♣ A as declarer forlornly followed with ♣ K. So, would declarer have found the spade finesse on a non-spade, or club lead? Declarer should. Why? If declarer cashes two top trumps then West is identified as having the winning ♥ Q. Now declarer realises that he must dispose of THREE club losers in order to make the contract. There are two possibilities ...

- 1) If West holds four diamonds and declarer can CASH four diamonds then declarer can discard three clubs BEFORE West can ruff and switch to clubs.
- 2) If West holds ♠ Q AND at least three diamonds then declarer can finesse ♠ Q, discarding one club and then play on diamonds discarding two more clubs!

The problem is which line to pursue and unfortunately it is not possible to test the diamond suit before deciding to finesse ♠ Q! What would be ideal is if West held FIVE diamonds then when declarer cashes ♦ K, East shows out and the marked finesse of ♦ 10 can then be taken in comfort! Odds favour a spade finesse (50%) rather than diamonds 4-1, West holding 4 (5%).

**Board 4**

West Deals

Both Vul

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

NS 1N; NS 2♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; EW 1♦; Par +90: NS 1N; NS 2♣

### Board 5

North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

EW 3♠; EW 4♦; EW 2N; EW 2♣; NS 1♥; Par -140: EW 1♠+2

E/W can make 4 ♦ although at first glance it seems that they have four losers...1 spade, 2 hearts, 1 club...BUT once N/S cash the heart winners, declarer ruffing the third round, either spades or clubs can be played by declarer to set up a discard of the loser in the other black suit...ten tricks making. N/S need to be careful that they don't get too high in a competitive auction. 1 ♥ is listed as the maximum makeable heart contract. But again, the defenders will need to be alert to cash their winners. Note that E/W should be able to cash 2 spades, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs. But some defenders may lose a trick along the way.

### Saints & Sinners

**Absolute Sinner** status to the **North**, declaring 2 ♥, who covered ♠ 10 lead from West with ♠ J and thus set herself up for three spade losers!!! As declarer, whenever you hold Jxx opposite Qxx and the opponents open the suit do not play an honour from either hand EXCEPT to win the trick, and in that way you are guaranteed to make one trick. With that holding the opponents CANNOT cash three winners unless declarer misplays as happened here. Declarer ended two down losing 3 spades, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs.

**Saintly** status to **Colette & Liam** who were the only other E/W pair to hold North to seven tricks (5 hearts, 1 spade, 1 club).

At another table N/S overbid to 3 ♥ and suffered a two trick defeat...-200. Better to have left the opponents play in 3 ♦. **Sinner** status to **North**.

**Sinners abound**...at SEVEN tables E/W mis-defended and allowed declarer to score eight tricks.

**Sinner** status to the **East**, declarer in 3 ♦ who failed to make the overtrick. After ruffing the third heart and drawing trumps, declarer led ♣ J from hand...presumably intending to finesse into North when South followed low...BUT declarer rose with ♣ A and now there was no comeback, declarer eventually losing a trick in each black suit!

### Board 6

East Deals  
E-W Vul

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

EW 6♦; EW 5N; EW 5♣; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; Par -1370: EW 6♦

6♦ yes...6NT, no. This all about E/W bidding to the correct contract OR N/S not making a mistake with the defense. It's that simple. If East opens 1♦ then E/W have a good chance of getting to the best spot. It's less easy when East opens 1NT.

### Saints & Sinners

**Saintly** status to **Colette Mulhern & Liam Hanratty**, the only E/W pair that bid 6♦. The bidding sequence might not have been very scientific but at least they landed in the right contract. There is nothing to the play and if the defense do not lead a heart at trick one then declarer can try for the overtrick by finessing ♠ J. Fortunately for this E/W pair, the finesse loses...H'mm, what made him say that I hear you say? Because, if the finesse works then there is a route to twelve tricks in NT! Go figure!

**Sinner** status to the **two E/W pairs** that bid to 6NT and rejected the much safer 6♦...remember this is an IMPs competition...making your contract is the name of the game ...and overtricks are of minimal value. Also, 5♣ or 5♦, if safer, is the place to be rather than a 3NT that may not make. And the same applies at the Slam Level. Making 6NT as opposed to 6♦ gains a mere 70 MPs if Non-Vul, i.e. 2 IMPs, whereas making 6♦ as opposed to going down in 6NT will cost 970 MPs or 14 IMPs

The major feature of this hand is the DEFENSE, in particular at the two tables where 6NT was bid and allowed to make. Declarer CANNOT make 6NT...it has to be gifted by the defense. Top tricks consist of 2 spades, 1 heart, 5 diamonds, 3 clubs, i.e. eleven tricks. There are only four options for a twelfth trick... 1) clubs break 3-3,... 2) South holds ♠ Q and hence the finesse of ♠ J works,... 3) North holds 4 clubs AND six spades in which case he can be squeezed...with a four card ending North cannot hold four clubs and the master spade while East holds 3 clubs and ♠ 4.... 4) Where South holds ♥ KQ and four clubs.

As none of these options work the only other way for declarer to make twelve tricks is through a defensive error. And that's what happened at EIGHT of the 16 tables in play, including two where the final contract was 6NT!

### Board 6

East Deals  
E-W Vul

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

EW 6♦; EW 5N; EW 5♣; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; Par -1370: EW 6♦

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

**Sinner** status to the EIGHT N/S pairs that mis-defended and allowed declarer to make twelve tricks.

At one table West declared 3 NT and North led a small spade, declarer winning with ♠ J. No Saints or Sinners here...just a fortunate lead for declarer and an unfortunate lead for the defense. HOWEVER, **South became a Sinner** when she proceeded to discard clubs on the run of the diamond suit. Firstly, West had responded 2♣ to East's opening 1♦ thus marking South as likely being the only defender who could possibly prevent declarer from scoring four club tricks. South should cling to her four clubs as if they were family jewels. Declarer made thirteen tricks.

**Sinner** status to all **Souths** who defended a NT contract by East (thus West's hand exposed to both defenders) and could clearly see dummy's club holding and hence knew that they alone could prevent declarer from scoring four club tricks. One of the Golden Rules in defense is to hold on to a four card holding where dummy has (in dummy) or declarer may have (in declarer's unseen hand) four cards in the suit and where one or more of your cards may prevent declarer from scoring all four tricks in the suit. In this hand South holding ♣ 10962 can see that unless declarer holds ♣ AJ then South (but NOT North) can prevent declarer from scoring four club tricks. It's that simple!

**Saintly** status to the South players who held on to their four clubs and so restricted declarer to eleven tricks....**Geraldine Coyne, Mairead O'Shaughnessy, Peggy Cheevers, Robert Delargy, Mary Muldoon, Sheila Baynes.**

At one table, South (not listed above) faithfully held on to his four clubs but unfortunately his partner discarded one spade too many (South had already discarded his three spades on declarer's diamonds) and declarer scored a twelfth trick with ♠ 4. **Sinner** status to **North** for not discarding her ♥ 9 and retaining an extra spade!



**Board 6**

East Deals  
E-W Vul

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

EW 6♦; EW 5N; EW 5♣; EW 1♠; EW 1♥; Par -1370: EW 6♦

**Saints & Sinners (continued)**

**Rory Timlin provided the following analysis with relevant chances of success of various slam contracts:**

**6♦ is 100%.**

**6NT is about 70%.**

On a heart lead, test clubs before spades.

To make, clubs 3/3 is 36%. Spade finesse is 50% of remaining 64%=32%. Total 68%.

On a non heart lead, finesse spade before testing clubs. This gives a 3% extra chance (heart/club positional squeeze). Total 71%.

Assuming a heart is led 33% of the time, total chance of making 6NT is 70%.

**7♦ is about 70%.**

On a heart or non heart lead, win and draw trumps. After that analysis is very similar to 6NT above, except that in 6NT can go down more than one if everything is wrong.

**7NT is about 21%.**

Test spades before clubs, in order to add possibility of heart/club positional squeeze.

Need spade finesse to work and for clubs to break (or squeeze).

As for the best contract, in theory 7♦ is best (over 65%), followed by 6♦, 6NT and 7NT in that order. In practice (disregarding the actual layout) one would settle for 6♦.

[Thanks to Rory for this analysis and commentary]

### Board 7

South Deals  
Both Vul

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

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

4♥ can make. The problem is getting into that contract. I would expect most pairs to stop in 3♥ if South opens 1♥ otherwise N/S will likely declare 2NT. The defense should score 4 spades and ♥A if N/S declare a NT contract.

### Saints & Sinners

**Big Sinner** is the **South** who failed to make 10 tricks in 4♥. Declarer misplayed the diamonds by first cashing ♦A thereby promoting East's ♦Q as the setting trick. This is a play that is very much against the odds! The simple finesse of ♦J will see the contract home! Sinner status to the two Norths who simply raised partner's opening 1♥ to 2♥. North holds a good 11 hcp and is well worth the raise to 3♥. **Sinner** status to the **South** who declared 3♥, also making only nine tricks!

Four Souths opened 1NT and the heart fit was duly lost. Five declarers made exactly 2NT.

**Absolute Sinner** status to the South who opened 1♥ and then Passed North's 100% FORCING bid of 2♦. South must bid again. It's different if North has previously passed, thus limiting the strength of her hand. BUT a partner who has NOT passed is unlimited in terms of the strength of their hand!

**Sinner** status to the **West**, defending 4♥, who led ♠J from ♠KQJ4! The lead of the ♠J from this holding will certainly confuse partner and may lead to a misdefense. Fortunately for the defense that did not happen on this occasion!

**Sinner** status to the **East**, declaring 3♠, who turned eight tricks into seven! South started with three rounds of clubs...(Sinner status awarded...looking at five clubs in dummy it is not a good idea to play three rounds, setting up dummy's suit!). Declarer ruffed the third round and now had eight tricks in his sights via 4 spades in dummy, 1 club ruff in hand, ♥A in dummy and 2 winning clubs in dummy. All declarer needs to do is cash three trumps ending in dummy and then cash dummy's 2 winning clubs. Add the ♥A and declarer has eight tricks. But declarer decided to ruff his two club winners in his hand and duly ran into a trump promotion when South led a diamond and declarer ruffed with dummy's ♠4 and was overruffed by North's ♠6! Careless play by declarer.

**Board 7**  
 South Deals  
 Both Vul

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

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

**Saints & Sinners (continued)**

**Sinner** status to the **South** who decided to Pass as dealer ...I think I'm right in saying that **Terence Reese**, one of the greatest players and bridge writers of all times, used to say that with three quick tricks always open the bidding. The South hand in this instance is a good example. No wasted values... a five card heart suit...and three quick tricks!

And I would also open the West hand. Nine cards in the black suits and no wasted values. Opening 1♣ and re-bidding 1♠ promises a 5-4 distribution. It's always good to be able to show a nine card distribution with two bids! But others may have different views. And it conforms to **'The Rule of 20'**...add the length of your two longest suits to your high-card points and if it totals 20+ then open with a one level bid.

**Saintly** status to the two N/S pairs (**Enda & Paul Barrett** and **Pat & Carmel**) who reached 4♥ both declarers making the requisite ten tricks.

### Board 8

West Deals  
None Vul

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

EW 5♠; EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 5♣; EW 1♦; Par -450; EW 4♠+1

4♠ is safer than 3NT although the latter can always make. Indeed both contracts can make with an overtrick as long as the ♠ Q is found! 4♠ is never in danger whereas 3NT is under pressure on a diamond lead!

### Saints & Sinners

**Sinner** status to the N/S pair that allowed declarer to make 4♠+3. South led ♥ J, declarer winning in hand with ♥ K. Declarer played three rounds of spades, finding North's ♠ Q. North discarded ♣ 4 on the third spade. Declarer then led ♣ 3 and South erred (**Sinner** status awarded) by following with ♣ 6 as declarer won the trick with dummy's ♣ 10. Declarer continued to play clubs and on the third round North erred by discarding ♥ 4 thus gifting declarer a fourth heart trick. Declarer now has all 13 tricks via 4 spades, 4 hearts, 1 diamond, 4 clubs. **Saintly** status to **David Walsh** who took full advantage of the opponents errors

**Sinner** status to the **North**, defending 4♠ by East who played ♦ K on the opening lead thus denying ♦ Q! Declarer won with ♦ A and played three rounds of spades, North discarding ♦ 4 on the third round, followed by three rounds of hearts, South discarding a diamond on the third round. Declarer had now scored seven tricks and with the fourth spade and two top clubs still in hand, played a club from dummy and when North followed low, declarer played ♣ 9 from hand, losing to South's ♣ J. If South next continued with a diamond North could have cashed two winning diamonds and a winning heart to hold declarer to nine tricks!. But South, perhaps placing ♦ Q with declarer, not unreasonable given North's play of ♦ K on the opening lead, continued with a club and declarer claimed the rest of the tricks. But in fact N/S were guilty of not checking the claim because declarer had a losing diamond in her hand and no way of getting rid of it!!! **Sinner** status to **N/S** for not properly checking the claim and rejecting it!

**Sinner** status to the **North** at another table, defending 4♠ by East who discarded a heart on the third round of spades thereby gifting declarer a twelfth trick! Declarer was able to discard her losing ♦ J from hand and then simply lost a club trick!

**Sinner** status to the **North**, defending 3NT by East, who discarded a heart on declarer's third spade.

**Board 8**

West Deals  
None Vul

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

EW 5♠; EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 5♣; EW 1♦; Par -450; EW 4♠+1

**Saints & Sinners (continued)**

**Sinner** status to the **North**, declaring 3 NT who won the opening diamond lead and immediately played on clubs losing a trick to South ♣ J. N/S then promptly cashed four diamonds to defeat the contract by one trick. Playing on clubs is clearly a mistake because declarer cannot make more than two tricks unless he finds either defender holding a doubleton ♣ QJ, OR a singleton ♣ Q or ♣ J with one defender and where declarer can subsequently finesse against the other defender, failing which he has to lose the lead if he plays a third club thus opening the door to the possibility of the opponents cashing four diamonds tricks...which is exactly what happened. On the other hand, if declarer can 'find' the ♠ Q then 3 NT is assured and declarer may be able to make an extra trick...or even two!

**Board 9**  
North Deals  
E-W Vul

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

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

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

Eleven tricks can be made in a spade contract whereas only ten tricks can be made in a NT contract. And as with Boards #7 and #8, declarer is under pressure in 3 NT on a heart lead on the former and a diamond lead on the latter, whereas the major suit game is much more comfortable.

### Saints & Sinners

**Sinner** status to the two N/S pairs who declared 3 NT instead of 4♠, one of whom paid the ultimate price by going down. Indeed in the case of one of these two pairs, North opened 1♣, South responded 1♠ and North re-bid 2 NT instead of 2♠ (or even 3♠). South raised to 3 NT and North Passed. East led ♥ 7 and declarer played two rounds of spades, ending in hand, and then led ♣ 8 and let it run to West's ♣ K. So, declarer has actually negotiated the club suit to her advantage and is now looking at ten tricks via 4 spades, 2 hearts, 1, diamond, 3 clubs (finessing ♣ 10 after cashing ♣ Q). **BUT, see what actually happened...** West, after winning ♣ K continued with a heart, declarer winning perforce with ♥ A. Declarer now cashed ♣ Q...and then ran ♦ 9 into West who won with ♦ 10!!! West played a heart to East who cashed two further hearts to defeat the contract by one trick. Suicidal play by declarer. **Absolute Sinner** status awarded to **North**.

At the other table, North opened 1♣, South bid 1♠ and North re-bid 1 NT which South, unaware of the spade fit, not unreasonably raised to 3 NT. **Sinner** status to **North**. East led a heart and declarer, upon winning with ♥ K, played a club to dummy's ♣ A and then played a second club, West winning perforce and continuing with a heart to declarer's ♥ A. Declarer then cashed nine tricks. Contract made.

**Board 10**  
East Deals  
Both Vul

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

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

**Board 11**  
 South Deals  
 None Vul

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

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

N/S can make 5♥ but some may miss it if North only bids 3♥ in response to South's opening bid of 1♥. Yes, North has only 12 hcp BUT 4 card trump support, two side suit aces and a four card suit headed by QJ should see North bid the heart game, in particular if South's 1♥ promises a five card suit!

### Saints & Sinners

**Sinner** status to the **Norths** who only bid 3♥ resulting in three N/S pairs missing the game.

**Absolute Sinner** status to the **South**, declaring 4♥, who failed by one trick instead of making with at least one overtrick! Declarer won the club lead and played two rounds of hearts East winning the second round. East cashed a top club and continued with another club, declarer ruffing in hand with ♥Q. Declarer continued with a LOW spade to dummy's ♠A, setting up ♠K as a winner for the defense. Next, declarer led ♦Q, East covering with ♦K. Declarer was now booked for ten tricks EXCEPT she forgot to draw East's remaining trump. Declarer continued with diamonds and East gratefully ruffed the third round with ♥3 before continuing with a spade to West's ♠K for the setting trick. Concentration is vital when playing or defending. And scoring the spade finesse was not a good idea!

**Sinner** status to the **two Souths**, declaring 4♥, who ended up leading a diamond AWAY from the ♦A and thus lost an unnecessary trick to East's ♦K.

**Sinner** status to the **two Souths**, declaring 4♥, who only made ten tricks. In one case West led a spade and declarer rose with dummy's ♠A, thus promoting West's ♠K as a winner for the defense. Declarer subsequently lost a spade, a heart and a club. At the other table where declarer only made ten tricks, West led ♦8 and declarer wastefully played ♦Q from dummy. Subsequently declarer played a fourth trump to dummy to access dummy's fourth diamond all arising from the unnecessary play of ♦Q at trick one! Declarer was now in the wrong hand to play spades and after discarding the losing club from hand on dummy's fourth diamond simply cashed ♠A and played a spade to her hand thus losing to West's ♠K, thereby ending with ten tricks. Poor planning by declarer.



## Board 12

West Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 5♦; EW 3♠; NS 1♥; EW 1♣; Par -430: EW 3N+1

3 NT or 5♦? How will declarer play the diamond suit?... A little knowledge can be a dangerous thing... Both contracts will hang on how declarer plays the diamond suit. Unfortunately those declarers with a little knowledge re odds in respect of suit breaks are likely to fail whereas others will succeed. A little knowledge? Yes, with 4 missing cards in a suit the odds are 50% that the suit will break 3-1, 41% for 2-2 and 10% for 4-0. Do you see what's coming?

### Saints & Sinners

Of the twelve E/W pairs that played the hand in a diamond or NT contract, only one declarer, an Irish International, played the diamond suit with the odds on his side...and failed when the suit broke 2-2. Playing with the odds will invariably bring home the bacon but occasionally it doesn't. This was one of those hands!

Two declarers failed in 5♦ despite not losing a trump trick. In both cases North led a spade. Now study the spade holding in the East and West hands...With the lead coming into West's hand, declarer, despite missing two top honours (♠ KJ), can only lose one trick. If South plays an honour declarer wins with ♠ A and then forces out the other honour after drawing trumps. Both declarers failed to appreciate their spade holding and duly played out all their trumps, in one case discarding the vital spades from dummy and then having to lead a spade from his ♠ 106 into South's ♠ J7. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

In the other case, declarer reduced herself to ♠ 106, ♦ 3 and where dummy held ♠ Q9, ♣ J with the defenders still holding ♣ KQ between them. Also, the ♠ J had been played earlier. Declarer simply needed to play a spade (either ♠ Q, 10 or 9 to force out the ♠ K BEFORE cashing the last trump and declarer would then have a winning spade as well as the last trump! But declarer cashed the last trump and then played the spade and South gratefully won with ♠ K and then cashed ♣ K as declarer forlornly discarded her winning ♠ Q. **Sinner** status to **declarer** for lack of concentration.

One East, declaring 3 NT received the lead of ♣ 3, North playing ♣ K which declarer won with ♣ A. Declarer continued with ♣ J, South winning with ♣ Q and switching to ♥ J which North ducked as declarer won with dummy's ♥ Q. Declarer then cashed the rest of the tricks for 3 NT+3! **Saintly** status to **Peggy Fay**.

**Board 13**  
North Deals  
Both Vul

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

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

**Board 14**  
East Deals  
None Vul

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

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

W N E  
S

EW 1N; EW 2♦; EW 2♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; Par -90: EW 1N; EW 2♣;  
EW 2♦

**Board 15**  
South Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ K 8 7 3  
♥ 10 8 7 6  
♦ 10 8 7  
♣ 5 3

♠ Q 10  
♥ Q 5 4  
♦ Q J 5 4 3 2  
♣ J 2



♠ A J 9 5 2  
♥ K J 9  
♦ 9  
♣ A 10 8 7

♠ 6 4  
♥ A 3 2  
♦ A K 6  
♣ K Q 9 6 4

EW 4♠; N 3♦; NS 1N; S 2♦; NS 2♣; EW 1♥; Par -420; EW 4♠

### Board 16

West Deals

E-W Vul

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

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

E/W likely to reach the heart game although some may be pushed to the five level if N/S find their club fit.

### Saints & Sinners

**Sinner** status to the **North**, defending against 6♥, who led ♦ A and then switched to ♣ K. That sequence of leads spelled disaster for the defense. Switch them around and the contract cannot make! It is generally the right policy to lead a K from a suit headed by KQ BEFORE leading an unsupported Ace! And at this table West had actually bid diamonds making North's four card holding extremely important! And to make matters worse, if North had continued with another diamond at trick two then South would have ruffed and that would have been the end of the hand! The card South played on the ♦ A should have indicated either a singleton or doubleton given West's 2♦ re-bid.

6♥ was also bid at another table where North made the lead of ♣ K. But at this table North subsequently made the fatal discard of ♦ 2 on the third heart. Declarer, winning the third heart in dummy, next lead a diamond to her ♦ J, North winning with ♦ A. North continued with ♣ Q which declarer ruffed with ♥ J. Declarer next cashed ♥ A, felling dummy's ♥ K and South's ♥ 9 ...and then cashed four diamonds as North must surely have felt a lump develop in her throat as a result of her diamond discard! Declarer was now on her way to twelve tricks with just the minor issue of the spade finesse for the twelfth trick! [Note: At this table North made a Takeout Double of West's 1♥ and so is definitely marked with ♠ K!] But, for whatever reason, declarer balked at the last minute and rose with dummy's ♠ A and snatched defeat from the jaws of victory! **Sinner** status to **declarer**. **Sinner** status also to **East** for a gross underbid of 3♥ over North's Takeout Double of West's opening bid of 1♥. West could have Passed 3♥!

North is obviously in a difficult position when it comes to making discards on the first three heart tricks. Perhaps she should discard a third small club instead of ♦ 2. If declarer has at least two clubs and one or two diamonds, then North should score two tricks. However North will be under even more pressure if declarer plays a fourth trump! But I sympathize with North's predicament in particular because of the lack of bidding indicating West's distribution. South cannot do much to help partner but her first club should have told a story. This is another example of the importance of playing 'count signals'!

### Board 16

West Deals  
E-W Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners

**Saintly** status to **Paul Barrett**, sitting in the North seat who made a Takeout Double of West's opening bid of 1♥ and then made a second Takeout Double of East's raise to 4♥. South bid 5♣ which became the final contract. West led ♥A which declarer ruffed in dummy. Declarer continued with ♣K which East won with ♣A. East now erred by switching to a small spade instead of continuing with another heart. Declarer gratefully won with ♠K and subsequently lost two more spades for one down and the gain of a massive 11.40 IMPs for N/S.

**Sinner** status to the **South** who Doubled 4♥ after West opened 1♥, North overcalled 2♣, East bid 4♥ and South, with nothing in his hand except four small hearts, produced a silly Penalty Double. Declarer duly made the contract with two overtricks and racked up a score of 1190 and a huge 10.40 IMPs for E/W.

**Sinner** status to the **North**, defending 4♥, who discarded a diamond even though West had bid diamonds on the way to 4♥.

**Board 17**  
North Deals  
None Vul

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

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

**Board 18**  
 East Deals  
 N-S Vul

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

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

E/W can make 4♥ but getting there may prove difficult. N/S can make 1♠ but may find themselves declaring a spade contract at a higher level! Note that whereas declarer can make eight trick in NT, nine should be out of reach.

### Saints & Sinners

Two E/W pairs reached 3 NT. At one table West was declarer and North led ♦ 3, declarer playing ♦ K from dummy as South won the trick with ♦ A and then returned ♦ 9 which declarer ducked. South continued with ♦ 5, declarer winning perforce with dummy's ♦ Q. Declarer next finessed ♣ J and North won with ♣ Q and then cashed two diamond winners to defeat the contract by one trick. Note that even if declarer rose with ♣ A on first round of the suit he still cannot make 3 NT as long as North covers ♥ J with ♥ Q, thus promoting two heart tricks for the defense. BUT if North fails to cover ♥ J then declarer can let it run to South. If South wins with ♥ K then declarer can now score FIVE heart tricks and thus make the contract.

At the other table it was East who declared the hand, offering some protection to his diamond holding. South led ♦ A where a small diamond would work better. South continued with ♦ 9, declarer winning in hand with ♦ K. If the club finesse works then declarer can score nine tricks via 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 5 clubs. Declarer duly led ♣ 9 and finessed into North's ♣ Q. North returned a diamond, declarer winning perforce with ♦ Q. Declarer now played a small heart from hand towards dummy. This play would work if South, holding ♥ Kxxx and North with singleton ♥ Q, rose with ♥ K thus creating a second heart trick for declarer whilst also depriving North of an entry for her diamonds. Sadly, for declarer, this layout did not exist and North duly won the trick with ♥ Q and cashed her diamond winners for a one trick defeat.

Eleven E/W pairs played in a heart contract, scoring either nine or ten tricks. One East played in 4♥ and South made an unorthodox and dangerous lead of ♦ 9 (declarer or dummy might have held a singleton with declarer (or dummy) winning the trick with ♦ K). Declarer cashed ♥ A and continued with a small heart and South erred by rising with ♥ K, crashing his partner's ♥ Q. After cashing ♦ A South continued with ♣ 8 and declarer had no problem rising with dummy's ♣ A felling North's ♣ Q. Eleven tricks made. **Sinner** status to **South**.



**Board 18**  
 East Deals  
 N-S Vul

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

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

**Saints & Sinners (continued)**

At two tables N/S were allowed to play in spades and neither defense was testing!.

At one table East Passed and West opened 1♣. North made a conventional bid of 2♣ which promises 5♠ and 5♦. North might have the shape but is perhaps a tad light in high cards for her bid particularly in the light of the unfavourable vulnerability and a Passed partner! East competed with 2♥ and South's 2♠ ended the bidding. Perhaps, holding 10 hcp and a six card heart suit headed by ♥A10 opposite a partner that opened the bidding East should have bid 3♥. On the other hand perhaps South could have bid 3♠ over East's. South has good support for both of partner's suits and 10 hcp. If North was stronger for her 2♣ bid then perhaps 4♠ is making! At this table West led ♣A and then switched to ♥J, declarer ducking in dummy as East also played low. Declarer won with ♥K (covering with ♥Q in dummy would have left declarer with ♥K9 over East's ♥10xxxx. Declarer led ♠K, West rising with ♠A and continuing with ♥3 to dummy's ♥Q and East's ♥A. East now fell from grace by making the hugely damaging (for the defense) switch of ♦Q DESPITE seeing the five card diamond suit in dummy!!! Declarer won with ♦A and drew two more rounds of trumps (she should have drawn three rounds and removed all of West's trumps!). Declarer then continued with a diamond towards her ♦9, East winning with ♦K. East could have given partner a diamond ruff at this point but instead continued with ♥10 which declarer ruffed in dummy, cashed dummy's ♠Q drawing West's ♠9 and then won the rest of the tricks with dummy's diamonds. **Saintly** status to **West** for her defensive plays. **Sinner** status to **East** who missed the earlier opportunity to put the contract under pressure....After winning the ♥A East should have continued with ♥10 which would force declarer to ruff in dummy thus reducing dummy to three trumps, the same number as West. Note that if declarer draws four trumps BEFORE playing diamonds then East can win with ♦A and cash several heart tricks (or West can cash several clubs). Note also that declarer can refuse to ruff the third heart and can ruff a heart continuation in hand and overruff in dummy if West ruffs with ♠9. This at least will ensure that declarer makes eight tricks. But the situation becomes a little more testing for declarer if West continues with top clubs after winning with ♠A or if East plays clubs after winning ♦A. Now declarer has to ruff in dummy and if declarer draws all the trumps then E/W can cash clubs and/or hearts. 2♠ should not make against good defense.

**Board 18**  
 East Deals  
 N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table East's opening 2♥ was passed to North who found a bid of 2♠. West competed with 3♥ and South bought the contract with a bid of 3♠. East led ♦K, West following with ♦6. Declarer, winning with ♦A continued with a spade to ♠J in hand and then played another spade to West's ♠A. West then played ♦4 (completing the high-low in the suit), East winning with ♦Q. East now cashed ♥A and then continued with another heart declarer winning in hand...and the moment had passed! East could have given partner a diamond ruff to hold declarer to eight tricks. Declarer drew trumps and cashed her diamond winners for nine tricks!

I was particularly impressed by the bidding sequence where **Marie Killilea** and **Moya McEoin** held the East and West cards respectively. Marie opened the bidding with 1♥, a better choice than the 2♥ which was favoured by many, South passed and Moya correctly bid 2♣, North Passed and Marie rebid 2♥. Now Moya bid 2♠ showing her hcp and also her 5-4 distribution, i.e. 5+ clubs and 4+ spades. Marie now bid 3♥ which ended the auction. As an alternative she might have considered bidding 3♣ knowing that there was a 5-3 club fit. **Saintly** status to **Marie & Moya**. Many less experienced (and even some experienced) players would have bid 1♠ rather than 2♣. **David Walsh & Rory Timlin** matched the first four bids in the above sequence whereupon David then bid 3♣ rather than 3♥ and Rory then bid 3♥ (showing two card heart support). David closed the auction with a bid of 3NT. This failed by one trick.

**Sinner** status to the **West** player who responded 1♠ to East's opening bid of 1♥. East re-bid 2♥ and now West bid 3♣ which misrepresented her shape by suggesting at least 5 spades and 4 (or more) clubs AND forcing the partnership to game even though West has only 11 hcp. West at this table would have been wise to follow the sequence described in the previous paragraph.

**Board 19**  
 South Deals  
 E-W Vul

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

NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 4♣; NS 2♠; Par +430: NS 3N+1

4♥ should be reached by N/S with some opening 1♥ (qualifies under Rule of 20) whereas others may open 4♥. The hand is too strong for a pre-emptive 3♥ opening.

### Saints & Sinners

**Sinner** status to the N/S pair who declared 6♥. West led ♠ A and East played a discouraging ♠ 2! (**Sinner** status to **East** who could surely have spared ♠ 9 instead of ♠ 2!). West switched to a rather pointless club and declarer managed to discard her remaining two losing spades. Declarer then led ♥ 9, overtaking with ♥ 10, and cashed ♥ A, eventually losing a trick to East's ♥ K. East attempted to cash ♠ K but the horse had bolted! Declarer failed by one trick instead of two!

**Sinner** status to the two **Souths** who opened with a top-heavy 3♥ pre-empt and played in the part-score!

**Sinner** status to the two **West**s who led ♥ 8 after South opened 4♥. And **Sinner** status also to the **partners** who unthinkingly rose with ♥ K despite the fact that there was only a singleton heart in dummy and thus declarer could not repeat the finesse against East's ♥ K3 thus ensuring that East would score one heart trick!

**Sinner** status to the **West** at another table who also led ♥ 8 after South opened 4♥. But **Saintly** status to **East** (the wily **Peggy Fay** who has been there before!) who played low on the heart lead and subsequently scored a trick with her ♥ K. **Saintly** status also to declarer (**Clive Robinson**) who played thoughtfully. Winning the lead with dummy's ♥ 9, declarer then cashed three top clubs discarding three spades from hand. Declarer next ruffed a spade and continued with ♥ A and a heart to East's ♥ K. East played a spade which declarer ruffed and declarer then finessed ♦ Q, led a club ruffing in hand and establishing dummy's fifth club as a winner for a discard of declarer's losing third diamond. Well played.

**Sinner** status to two other **West**s who led ♥ 8 and **Saintly** status to their respective partners, **Marion Donlon** and **David Walsh**, who played low! Swap ♥ K and ♥ Q and the trump lead is very costly!

**Board 20**  
West Deals  
Both Vul

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

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

**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

A dynamite hand! N/S can make 4♥ or 5♣. E/W can score eight tricks in spades. I suspect that several Easts and Souths will lose the run of themselves and end up a level or two too high! 4♥ needs careful card play by declarer. 5♣ is fairly straight forward and, despite West's trump holding, is also indestructible. Swap the ♣ 8 and ♣ 7 and it's another story!

### Saints & Sinners

**Saintly** status to **Geraldine Coyne** who made 4♣x+1 against a pair of Irish International players. West, not unreasonably, must have felt confident when his opponents bid 4♣ and he applied a Penalty Double. Nothing to the play and N/S emerged with a whopping +910 which earned them 8.87 IMPs.

At five tables, South declared the impregnable 5♣. **Saintly** status to **Peggy Cheevers** who played in 5♣x and scored +750, which was worth 5.93 IMPs.

North at two tables were among the few to start the bidding with a Pass which allowed East to open 1♦. Most North players made the natural and normal opening bid of 1♦ and of course that generated a hugely different auction at many tables.

**Absolute Sinner** status to the **East** who overcalled North's opening 1♦ with 1♠, subsequently raised to 2♠ by West, who then emerged with a bid of 5♦ after the opponents reached 4♥. This was Doubled and neither East nor West saw fit to remove it to 5♠. The contract duly suffered a four trick defeat for a hefty -800 and the loss of 7.07 IMPs. Declarer should have been able to save a trick and limit the loss to -500.

At another table East reached 5♠x after opening 1♠. During the auction North bid a natural 4♦. **Sinner** status to **North** who during the play subsequently switched to ♦ 8. East failed to take advantage by letting it run to dummy's ♦ 9 which would have altered the outcome quite significantly. Declarer duly suffered a four trick defeat for a loss of -800 and -7.07 IMPs. **Sinner** status also to **East** who could have got out for a two trick defeat.

**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table East arrived in 5 ♠x after North had opened 1 ♦ and South had bid clubs and West had supported East's spade overcall. Now watch carefully how North converted a potential six trick defeat (+1400) into a three trick defeat (+500). South led three rounds of hearts, declarer ruffing the third round in hand. Declarer then led ♦ A, ruffed by South with her singleton ♠ 7. South continued with ♣ K, covered by dummy's ♣ A and ruffed by North with ♠ 2 and overruffed by declarer with ♠ 3. Declarer continued with ♠ K, perhaps hoping that South had started with ♠ Q7, as North won with ♠ A. **STOP ... What should have happened...**North now holds ♠ Q8, declarer ♠ 109, dummy ♠ J5. North also holds ♥ A, ♦ J1086 while declarer holds ♦ KQ742. IF North continues with ♠ Q followed by ♠ 8, declarer is denuded of trumps and can subsequently cash ♦ KQ but then must concede a diamond to North who will cash the remaining tricks via ♥ A, ♦ J10 thereby restricting declarer to a total of FIVE tricks and a six trick defeat!!!

**Now follow what actually happened...** North, on lead after winning ♠ A, exited on ♦ J, declarer winning with ♦ K and continuing with ♦ Q and a third diamond, ruffed with dummy's ♠ 5. Declarer then led a club from dummy and North ruffed with ♠ 8 (despite knowing that partner had winning clubs and declarer had none!). Declarer gratefully overruffed with ♠ 9 and then ruffed a diamond with ♠ J as North followed suit. Declarer now played another club which North ruffed with ♠ Q leaving declarer with the winning ♠ 10. Declarer scored SIX tricks instead of three because North did not play ♠ Q followed by ♠ 8 when the opportunity presented itself! **'Thinking, thinking...all the time!' Absolute Sinner status to North.**

At another table East was allowed to play in 4 ♠, undoubled. N/S gained a miserly +100, poor compensation for the missed vulnerable game. I sympathize with South who didn't have the benefit of hearing her partner make an opening bid of 1 ♦ and simply overcalled 2 ♣ after East opened 1 ♠! **Sinner status to North.** Perhaps South might have contemplated bidding 3 ♥ over East's 3 ♦.

At two tables South declared 6 ♣, Doubled at one table, with both declarers taking their eleven tricks and failing by a solitary trick.

**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table East also reached 5♠x after North opened 1♦, East overcalled 1♠ and South bid 2♣. West bid 2♠, North passed and East bid 4♠. South bid 5♣ which East Doubled. East bid 5♦ which South Doubled and finally West converted to 5♠ which North Doubled. South led ♥K and then switched to a cheeky ♣3 (a clear Suit-Preference signal). Declarer rose with dummy's ♣A which North ruffed with ♠2 as declarer overruffed with ♠3. Declarer then led ♦Q which South ruffed with ♠7. South cashed ♥Q before continuing with ♣K on which North discarded a diamond as declarer ruffed with ♠6. As happened at the other table declarer led ♠K South and North now found herself in exactly the same situation as the North at the other table... win with ♠A, cash ♠Q and continue with a spade would see declarer denuded of trumps and only able to score ♦AK with North winning all the remaining tricks, ♥A9, ♦J10, leaving declarer SIX down! BUT, North played ♥A after winning ♠A, which declarer ruffed with ♠9 before cashing ♦AK and then ruffing a diamond with ♠5 as North followed suit. Declarer now led a club as North discarded ♥8, declarer ruffing in hand with his last trump. Declarer now led a diamond and ruffed with dummy's ♠J. North inexplicably underruffed with ♠8! Declarer escaped for 3 down when it should have been 4 down and could have been SIX down! **Sinner** status to **North**.

Both North players defending 5♠x where declarer led ♠K from hand were guilty of not taking a deeper view of the defense and visualising the positive outcome which would ensue after playing ♠Q and another spade!

Interesting developments took place at the remaining three tables where N/S declared 4♥.

See detailed analysis of what happened at these three table on the following pages.

The play in 4♥ varies depending on the approach taken by the defenders. It may help to have the cards out on the kitchen table to follow the play card by card!

**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table North opened 1♦, East made an inappropriate Takeout Double (should simply have overcalled 1♠). South bid 2♣ and West Passed. North now made a reverse bid of 2♥ promising at least 5 diamonds and 4 hearts AND 16+ hcp!!! North should have simply rebid 2♦. East came to life with 2♠ and South's 4♥ bid closed the auction. East led ♦A which declarer ruffed in dummy with ♥7. Declarer continued with ♣K, covered by West with ♣A and declarer ruffed with ♥6 and was overruffed by East with ♥10. East now switched to ♠3, when he should have known that North held ♠AQ... [How so, I hear you ask...because North opened 1♦ and West has already shown up with ♣AJ...declarer MUST have ♠AQ, ♥A for her opening bid! East could have given declarer food for thought by continuing with a diamond honour or even a trump instead of gifting a soft spade trick!]. **STOP...** At this point declarer has one trick in the bag with ♠Q to come. Add ♠A and with three trumps in each hand (all high) declarer can rise to nine tricks via a straight cross-ruff. But what about the tenth trick? ♣Q is the obvious solution BUT if declarer attempts to cash it before drawing trumps, East may ruff it! BUT declarer's club suit can be converted into winners by simply conceding a club to West's ♣J, all declarer's remaining clubs then being winners. We need to assume that the outstanding trumps are breaking 3-2. Declarer could get very lucky if East started with the three trumps because now both defenders hold a doubleton trump! In that case the play is easy. Cash two trumps ending in hand and then play ♣10, ruffing WITH dummy's last trump if West covers with ♣J. Next, ruff a spade or diamond back to hand and cash all the winning clubs in hand, eventually scoring twelve tricks. **BUT**, what if West holds the three trumps? Okay, so if we cash two trumps and lead ♣10 and if West covers we can overruff but now cannot get back to hand to draw West's last trump and run the remaining clubs...**BUT** if we cash just one top trump, ending in hand, and lead ♣10, ruffing with ♥A if West covers with ♣J, and then play a heart to hand we can then continue with all the remaining winning clubs. Whoever has the outstanding trump will score it but we will still have a trump in hand to access the winning clubs. And remember, if West fails to cover with ♣J and East ruffs the club then there's only one trump outstanding with the opponents and we still have two in each hand. We can ruff the likely diamond return and continue with clubs. If West covers then we ruff with ♥A and return to hand with a trump to cash winning clubs. *That's what planning is all about!* See next page for what actually happened at the table!



**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

After winning ♠ Q declarer cashed ♠ A and then cross-ruffed diamonds and clubs scoring three trump tricks in each hand but unfortunately left her a trick short, the contract failing by one trick.

At the second table South declared 4♥ on the lead of ♦ 9, declarer ruffing East's ♦ A (**Sinner** status to **East** who should have played ♦ Q...the lower of touching honours). Declarer then played ♣ K, ducked by West, discarding ♠ 2 from dummy as East ruffed with ♥ 2 and continued with ♥ 10, declarer winning in hand with ♥ J. Declarer now played ♣ 8, West covering with ♣ J...and declarer ruffed with ♥ 8 as East discarded a diamond. Declarer next led ♦ J from dummy ruffing in hand with ♥ Q. Declarer led ♣ 9 and discarded a spade from dummy when West did not cover with ♣ A. Declarer then continued with ♣ 10 covered by West with ♣ A **and declarer erred by discarding a diamond from dummy**. West continued with ♣ 7 when playing a trump would have defeated the contract. But declarer, given this lifeline by West, took his eyes off the ball and followed with ♣ 3 instead of winning with ♣ Q!!! In fact, declarer could have won with ♣ Q and then continued with a winning ♣ 6 and now would make all the remaining tricks. If West ruffed a club then declarer, with ♥ A9 in dummy, **would overruff with ♥ A** and then play ♥ 9 winning in hand with ♥ K, felling West's last trump and leaving declarer with winning clubs. Contract made! **BUT...see what actually happened...** West continued with a spade which declarer won with dummy's now singleton ♠ A and continued with ♥ 9 to ♥ K in hand and then playing ♣ Q...and now West fell from grace by not ruffing with ♥ 5 which would force declarer to ruff in dummy with ♥ A and then concede two diamonds to East for TWO down. But West discarded a spade on ♣ Q and then ruffed ♣ 6 which declarer overruffed with dummy's ♥ A but then had to concede a diamond to East for one down.

This was a seesaw hand with declarer TWICE rejecting the opportunity to make the contract and then West rejecting TWO opportunities to inflict a TWO trick defeat. Declarer missed his chance by not ruffing West's ♣ A and then playing ♠ A and ruffing a spade in hand and then cashing ♣ Q as West follows suit! 4♥ made! Note that if declarer ruffs a diamond instead of a spade then West can discard his losing club and will ruff declarer's winning club. **Sinner** status to **Declarer** and **West**

**Board 21**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)

At the third table where 4♥ was reached, West led ♠ 4, declarer winning with dummy's ♠ A. Declarer cashed ♥ KQ and then led ♣ K, West following low... Declarer continued with ♣ Q, as West covered with ♣ A...**STOP...What should have happened?...**Declarer should ruff with ♥ A, and continue with dummy's ♥ 8, overtaking with ♥ J in hand and then continue with ♣ 10, losing a trick to West's ♣ J...and claiming TWELVE tricks. **What Actually Happened!** ...declarer mistakenly ruffed with ♥ 9 and ...THE SCREEN BLANKED and next round started!

**Declarer had run out of time!** In this situation the Tournament Director is automatically advised that the board needs to be adjusted. In some situations BBO itself determines the appropriate adjustment BUT sometimes, as with this one, it is left to the TD to assess the likely outcome of the hand and apply the adjustment. After studying the hand I determined that the contract could make. Declarer can return to hand with a diamond ruff and then ruff out ♣ J and return to hand with a spade or diamond ruff and cash the two club winners in hand as West is forced to follow suit! Ten tricks made.

But I would have been happier if declarer had ruffed the first club with ♥ A rather than ♥ 9. Certainly declarer had identified that she could establish the club suit but I'm not convinced that she had worked out how to get back to her hand, drawing West's final trump, whilst also setting up her club suit and with the last trump still in hand as an entry to enjoy the winning clubs! Ruffing the club with ♥ A would have re-assured me that she had planned the play beyond the first couple of tricks!

This was a truly fascinating hand and with so many different options and outcomes. Declarers and defenders both had their opportunities for glory which most shunned. All of the missed opportunities by defenders stemmed from a lack of appreciation of the benefits that would accrue from certain defensive maneuvers that could have been deployed during the play of the hand. The most obvious errors were the missed opportunities at two tables when the respective Easts, declaring 5♠x, led ♠ K from hand. and North could have won with ♠ A, continued with ♠ Q and a third spade, leaving declarer facing a SIX trick defeat!

**Board 22**  
 East Deals  
 E-W Vul

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

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

A spade contract will be reached at most tables. The question is whether it will be in a part-score (2 ♠ or 3 ♠) or at game level. I suspect that the majority of N/S pairs will not reach game but that most declarers will score ten tricks.

### Saints & Sinners

One N/S pair reached 3♠ and **Absolute Sinner** status to **declarer** who failed to make this contract by one trick. At this table East opened 1♣ which was passed around to North who bid 1♠. South raised to 3♠ and all passed. East led ♣ A and then switched to ♥ J declarer winning with ♥ A. There seems to be a simple route to nine tricks with a possibility of actually making ten. Declarer can count 4 spade tricks, losing one to ♠ A, 2 top hearts, 1 diamond, 2 club ruffs in dummy. A tenth trick might come from a finesse against West's presumed ♥ Qxx or if the ♦ J can be found. **So, what happened at the table?** Declarer, after winning ♥ A played two rounds of trumps, East winning the second round and then continuing with a third round (**Saintly** status to **Frankie McGreevy**). Now that dummy was reduced to one trump it was no longer possible to ruff declarer's two clubs! Declarer won with ♠ 9 in hand and then continued with ♦ K, East winning with ♦ A. East now played a small club, declarer ruffing with dummy's last trump. Declarer next cashed ♦ Q and continued with ♥ 10, rising with ♥ K in hand. Declarer then cashed her last trump and conceded the last two tricks to West's ♥ Q and ♦ J.

It was not just that declarer failed to make nine or even ten tricks or the fact that she erred by playing trumps BEFORE ruffing clubs in dummy. During the play, declarer had SEVERAL opportunities to make the contract: 1) Declarer could win the third spade in dummy and either finesse ♥ 10 or play ♥ K and another heart establishing dummy's ♥ 10. Declarer could then ruff a club with dummy's last trump and cash ♥ 10 discarding the remaining club from hand. 2) towards the end of the actual play declarer could have finessed ♥ 10 against West's ♥ Q. 3) When East won ♦ A and switched to a small club, declarer could have discarded a heart and won the club in hand and then ruffed the third club with dummy's last trump. Note that even if West has ♣ Q then declarer can discard a second heart on her now winning ♣ J and then ruff ♥ 8 with dummy's last trump.

**Board 22**  
 East Deals  
 E-W Vul

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

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

### Saints & Sinners (continued)


**Saintly** status to the only N/S pair (**Enda & Paul Barrett**) to bid the spade game.

Thirteen N/S pairs played in a spade part-score of which ten made 10 tricks with the others making only nine tricks. **Sinner** status to those that failed to make ten tricks.

At one table East opened 1♣, North protected with 1♠ over which East re-bid a somewhat light 1NT. South competed with 2♠ which closed the auction. East led ♥J, declarer winning with ♥K. Declarer played on spades, East winning the second round before switching to ♦3. Declarer erred by not inserting ♦9 (or ♦10) from dummy and was forced to win with ♦K when West followed with ♦8. Declarer continued with a spade to dummy's ♠10 and then led ♥10 rising with ♥K from hand. Declarer continued with ♥8 from hand, West winning with ♥Q. West switched to a small club and East cashed her two minor suit aces. Unless E/W have a special agreement re leading ♥J from a holding that also includes ♥Q, declarer should take the lead at face value and should have finessed ♥8. **Sinner** status to **North**

At a second table East opened 1C, West bid 1D, North Doubled, East re-bid 1NT and South closed the auction with a bid of 2S. West led C2, East winning with CA before switching to S4. Declarer won with dummy's 10 and continued with a second spade, East winning with SA and continuing with a third spade (**Saintly** status to **Kathleen O'Connell**) declarer winning with dummy's Sq. Declarer next played a diamond to her DK in hand, East winning with DA and then returning a diamond. Declarer won with dummy's DQ and continued with D9 as West played low (**Saintly** status to **Mairead Watters**). Declarer ruffed in hand with S9 and continued with three rounds of hearts and West fell from grace (a misclick?) by following to the third heart with H7 instead of winning with HQ. West subsequently won the last trick with HQ as declarer was held to nine tricks. East did well not to lead HJ at any stage during the play thus ensuring that E/W would score at least one heart trick to go with the aces in the other three suits! Given West's bid of 1d perhaps declarer should have played the diamond suit to better effect, e.g. running d9 when led from dummy instead of ruffing. In fairness, E/W defended well and gave nothing to declarer.

**Board 23**  
South Deals  
Both Vul

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

NS 2♦; NS 2♣; Par +90; NS 1♣+1; NS 1♦+1

**Board 24**  
West Deals  
None Vul

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

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