

Greetings!

Herewith find attached the analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 17th September 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

Last week we had a healthy entry of 15 tables. I was away for the weekend and with my nose to the grindstone since I returned on Sunday evening I have prepared analysis of 10 of the 24 hands: 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,15

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As usual, the 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 #4 which is analysed over FIVE pages. This is a fascinating hand with opportunities for declarer to shine and be elevated to Saintly status. Also Board #11 which is a hand that tested the defense and most were found wanting! One N/S pair excelled and were the only pair to defeat a contract that declarer simply cannot make except with some help from the defense!

Boards #6, #7, #9 also receive close scrutiny.

For the first time I have included some comments and observation in respect of several hands that do not receive the full 'Saints & Sinners' treatment.

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

And for the benefit of those who don't already know, a few words by way of explanation as to how this analysis is undertaken... First, the results are downloaded from BBO...late on Thursday night or early on Friday morning. The downloaded content includes the contracts and results for each board. Remember that each set of hands is played simultaneously at all tables. The results also include access to a MOV file for each hand played (at all tables) which enables me to re-play, trick by trick (an exact re-creation) of how the hand was played. In that way I can observe the actions that constitute the rationale by which I award '**Saint & Sinner**' status.

Some statistics...This review contains the analysis of **10 hands**, played at **15 tables**, representing a total of **150 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **1,950 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **7,800 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

24th 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

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

NS 2N; NS 3♣; E 1♠; N 1♥; NS 1♦; Par +120: NS 2N

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 4♣; EW 2♥; EW 1♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

E/W can make 4 NT but only 3 ♠. In spades, South can cash two top hearts and then continue with a third heart to promote North's ♠ J.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **West** who opened 1 ♠, East responded 1 NT and West re-bid 4 ♠ on a 5 card suit! **Sinner** status awarded. West should have rebid 3 ♥, **FORCING**, and showing at least 5 spades and 4 hearts. **Sinner** status to the **South** at the same table for not having opened a weak 2 ♥ or at least bidding 2 ♥ over East's 1 NT. To defeat 4 ♠, N/S must cash two top hearts and continue with a third heart which promotes North's ♠ J...with the ♦ A as the setting trick.

Sinner status to any **West** who simply overcalled South's opening 2 ♥ with 2 ♠. The West hand is TOO good for a simple overcall. A Takeout Double is one option and 2 NT (a point too strong...but then life isn't perfect!) is an alternative. Some may gamble with a bid of 3 NT.

Saintly status to the **FOUR E/W** partnerships that reached 3 NT...one declarer making ten tricks, two making eleven tricks and one making twelve tricks!

Sinner status to the **North** player who led a heart, South cashing two top hearts before continuing with the killing third round. Unfortunately, North had her eye off the ball and ruffed the third heart with ♠ 2 as declarer overruffed with dummy's ♠ 9, drew trumps and scored eleven tricks. Fortunately for N/S the contract was just 2 ♠...

Saintly status to the N/S pairs (**Angela & Peggy, Noelle & Robert, Carmel & Kathleen**) that defeated 4 ♠. At two tables, West declared 4 ♠ and N/S scored two top hearts, a heart ruff with North's ♠ J, and ♦ A. At the third table East declared 4 ♠ after South opened 2 ♥, West Doubled...and East bid 2 ♠ (a misclick of spades instead of clubs?!). South led three rounds of hearts and North ruffed the third round with ♠ J and then cashed ♦ A.

Saintly status to **Josephine McCann** who switched to a spade after winning the first two tricks against West's 3 NT.

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 3♠; EW 4♣; EW 2♥; EW 1♦; Par -430; EW 3N+1

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Saintly status to **Mary** who Doubled South's opening 2♥ and then rebid 3NT over East's 3♣. North led a 4th best diamond and Mary won with ♦K and then rattled off six clubs and five spade a for a total of twelve tricks. N/S might have scored their top three red suit winners if North had led the ♥9 at trick one!

At another table East made an enterprising opening bid of 3♣, South bid 3♥ and West closed the auction with 3NT. North led her singleton heart and South won the first two tricks before making the lack-lustre continuation of a third heart! South should have switched to a diamond or a spade. **Sinner** status to South.

Sympathy vote to **May O'Sullivan** who opened a Multi 2♦ (either a weak 2♥ or 2♠ or a strong hand), West Doubled, East bid 3♣ and West bid 4♠. Ann Roche led her singleton ♥9, May winning correctly with ♥K and then cashing ♥A as North showed out. May now paused for thought and eventually switched to ♦J. Unfortunately this was the wrong option but could have been the right one. Note dummy's threatening club suit which means that N/S need to cash any diamond winners before they disappear on dummy's clubs!

Board 3

South Deals

E-W Vul

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

NS 6♥; NS 1N; NS 2♣; EW 1♠; NS 1♦; Par +980: NS 6♥

Yes, with a combined 25 hcp N/S can make 6♥. This is yet another illustration of the **Power of Shape**. The small slam is unlikely to be bid even though it is rock solid on any lead and defense.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **two Souths** who simply bid 3♥ after North opened 1♥ and East overcalled 1♠. **Sinner** status also to the respective **Norths** for not having raised to 4♥ on the North hand with 0-5-3-5 distribution and 16 hcp! **Sinner** status to the **East** at one of these tables who led ♣ J and watched as declarer scored all thirteen tricks. It is not normally a good idea to underlead an interior sequence such as this against a suit contract!

Sinner status to the **East** at another table who led ♣ 6 as a result of which declarer also scored all thirteen tricks. It is not normally a good idea to underlead an ace against a suit contract!

Sinner status to the **North** who failed to make twelve tricks after East led a small spade against 4♥. Declarer erred by drawing three rounds of trumps (one too many!) and eventually lost a second club. Careless.

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; EW 4N; EW 2♥; Par -1430: EW 6♠

4 ♠ should be an easy make. There are various routes to ten tricks including ruffing two losing hearts in the East hand. Note that a minor suit loser in the West hand can be discarded on the fourth card in the other minor suit in the East hand! 6 ♠ is not only difficult to bid but also requires some delicate cardplay including a backward finesse in diamonds...lead ♦ J and let it run if South does not cover. If South does cover then win with ♦ A and now run ♦ 9 through North! This is a hand where E/W will be happier to bid 4 ♠ rather than 3 NT. But, if West opens 1 NT and North bids 2 ♥ have you the mechanism for checking to see if opener has 4 spades and also for telling opener that you do not have a heart stopper? If not, then check out **Lebensohl**'.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **three E/W pairs** that failed to bid game and languished in a partscore.

Sinner status to the **West**, declarer in 4 ♠ on lead of ♥ K, who won in hand and then led ♠ Q from hand, covered by North and won with dummy's ♠ A. Declarer then cashed ♠ J and played a third spade (doing the defense's work!)...by sacrificing two losing trumps to South's ♠ 10. A heart continuation saw declarer ruff with dummy's last trump thus establishing a heart trick for the defense. Declarer now played on diamonds, finessing dummy's ♦ J into South's ♦ Q. South now continued with another heart and then a fourth heart, declarer ruffing with her last trump. When declarer lost a club to ♣ K North cashed her fifth heart for a two trick defeat!

At another table, East declarer 4 ♠ after North overcalled 1 ♥. South led ♥ 10, declarer winning with dummy's ♥ A. Declarer then led a spade to her ♠ A and continued with a spade to dummy's ♠ Q and North's ♠ K. North continued with ♥ K, declarer ruffing in hand. Declarer continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and returned a diamond to her ♦ K, scoring the finesse of ♦ J. Declarer next continued with a club to dummy's ♣ A and then played a diamond to her ♦ J losing to South's ♦ Q. South continued with ♥ 9 forcing declarer to ruff in hand with ♠ J thus promoting South's ♠ 10 as a winner, the second trump winner for N/S! Declarer led the 13th diamond as South ruffed with ♠ 10. South continued with a club to North's ♣ K for the setting trick! Sinner status to declarer for lack of a considered plan of play. **Saintly** status to defenders, **May & Ann**.

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; EW 4N; EW 2♥; Par -1430; EW 6♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table E/W had a good bidding sequence: West opened 1 NT, North bid 2♥, East made a Negative (Takeout) Double, South Passed and West bid 2♠. East continued with 3♠ and West bid 4♠. North led ♥K declarer winning with ♥A and continuing with ♠Q (small spade better) as North covered with ♠K, declarer winning with dummy's ♠A. Declarer now continued with a club to her ♣A and then followed with a second spade to dummy's ♠J. Declarer continued with a third spade to South's ♠10 (This is wasteful...why voluntarily concede two losing trumps to a defender's winning trump, particularly where you do not already have winners established in other suits!). South continued with ♥10, declarer ruffing with dummy's last trump. Declarer now played a diamond to her ♦A... and had reached the crossroads! The contract was still makeable depending on what declarer did next!!! At this point declarer held ♠9, ♥4, ♦98, ♣53...dummy holding ♦KJ6, ♣Q97. North held ♥Q7, ♦107, ♣K10 while South held ♥96, ♦Q3, ♣J8. Declarer has scored six tricks, and only lost one, and needs four more for her contract. Her last trump and ♦K account for two of the four. There are two simple options for the other two tricks: 1) making two clubs (lead towards ♣Q and hope that a) ♣K is with North and b) that clubs break 2-2, OR 2) that diamond finesse works (i.e. North holds ♦Q) and that diamonds break 2-2. At first it seems like a simple choice...play on diamonds or clubs! But that is false thinking. This is a case of where declarer can have her cake and eat it! What declarer can do is to play a club first... If North ducks and ♣Q wins then declarer can play a second club and if outstanding clubs break evenly then declarer's fourth club will be established as a winner with ♦K as an entry! AND, if South holds ♣K then declarer can eventually win with her last spade and then take the diamond finesse. That's having your cake and eating it! Following that line would have seen declarer home as North does have the ♣K and the clubs do break evenly so dummy's fourth club would have been declarer's tenth trick! Note that if declarer plays on diamonds first and loses to South's ♦Q then the defense can continue hearts forcing declarer to win with her last trump and now when she leads a club a defender will win with ♣K and cash a winning heart for one down! This is an example of '**combining chances**', i.e. playing one suit first before playing the second. The important thing is to recognise which suit **SHOULD** be played first! On this occasion it's clubs. Unfortunately, at the table, declarer played on diamonds first and duly failed by one trick! Clear thinking is always needed at crucial moments in the play of the hand! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; EW 4N; EW 2♥; Par -1430: EW 6♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table E/W sailed into 4 ♠ with West as declarer and where North, not having bid hearts, led ♥ K. Declarer duly drew trumps, played on diamonds and eventually failed to cash dummy's winning fourth diamond and duly failed by two tricks! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table West opened 1 NT, North bid 2 ♥ and East bid 3 ♥ which was not alerted but clearly was not natural. If playing **Lebensohl** it would show this exact type of hand, i.e. 4 spades and no heart stop but with sufficient points for game. West can then bid either 3 ♠ or 3 NT depending on the holdings in the respective suits! In the absence of an agreement re Lebensohl, I would bid 3 ♠ with the West hand and East can then raise to 4 ♠. At the table, West bid 3 NT which duly failed by three tricks. Note that 4 NT by E/W features in the list of makeable contracts. So, how to make 3 NT....it's sort of double-dummy, i.e. you need to see all four hands to work out the solution! Win heart lead and play a spade to dummy's ♠ J. Cash ♠ A and play two more rounds of spades. North has to find two discards and simply put declarer can establish an extra minor suit winner if North discards a heart OR can score three diamond tricks if North discards even one diamond. Alternatively, if North discards two clubs then declarer can cash ♣ A felling North's ♣ K and scoring her ninth trick with dummy's ♣ Q. **Sinner** status to **E/W** for not reaching 4 ♠ and **Additional Sinner** status to **declarer** for not making a better effort in 3 NT.

The key play in this hand, whether it be as declarer in 4 ♠ or 3 NT, is to play a small spade towards the ♠ AJ62, finessing the ♠ J if North plays low. There are a couple of layouts where declarer can make FOUR spade tricks of which the simplest is for North to hold a doubleton ♠ Kx. Note that this line will also score four spade tricks where North holds a singleton ♠ K. Leading the ♠ Q will only work where North holds ♠ Kxx and South holds precisely ♠ 10x. An extra element that might favour North having the shorter spade holding is if North has bid hearts.

Saintly status to **Sheila Baynes**, declarer in 3 NT after North bid hearts and where E/W failed to find their spade fit, who received the lead of a small heart, dummy's singleton ♥ J winning. Declarer played spades successfully for four tricks and subsequently established dummy's fourth diamond for ten tricks. **Sympathy** to North on the unfortunate, but correct lead.

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; EW 4N; EW 2♥; Par -1430: EW 6♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Top marks and **Saintly** status to **Catherine Fleming**, declaring 4 ♠, who received the lead of ♥ Q (partnership agreement?) declarer winning in hand and ruffing a heart in dummy at trick two. Declarer returned to hand via ♣ A and ruffed another heart in dummy. Declarer then played a club to her ♣ A and led a spade finessing ♠ J when North played low. Declarer next played a small diamond AWAY from hand (I think I would have cashed ♦ K and continued with a third diamond), South winning with ♦ Q. South continued with a club to North's ♣ K and that was the end of the defense, declarer finishing with eleven tricks and nought that the defense could do!

At another table East declared 4 ♠ after North overcalled 1 ♥. South led ♥ 10, declarer winning with dummy's ♥ A as North signaled with ♥ 7. Declarer played a spade to her ♠ J and then returned to dummy via ♦ A...and led ♠ Q, North covering perforce with ♠ K as declarer won with ♠ A. Declarer next played a club to dummy's ♣ A and then ruffed a heart in hand and proceeded to cash ♦ K before exiting on a diamond to South's ♦ Q. South now cashed ♠ 10 reducing dummy to a single trump (declarer was now void in spades). South had an easy route to beat the contract...simply cash a heart and continue with another heart establishing a winner for North who still holds ♣ K. BUT South continued with ♣ J, and North could have risen with ♣ K and cashed the setting heart trick but instead played low as declarer won with ♣ Q, and cashed ♦ J, discarding the losing heart from dummy. **Sinner** status to **North & South**.

At another table West declared 3 NT after North overcalled in hearts. North led HK and continued hearts declarer winning the third round whilst discarding two clubs from dummy. Declarer played a spade to dummy's SJ and then cashed SA and continued with two more spades North correctly discarding a club and a diamond. On the fourth spade South had to discard and played the only card to let the contract make...his last heart! Declarer duly cashed DA and then finessed DJ into South's DQ. A heart continuation at this point would see North cash two heart winners to defeat the contract by one trick. Alas, South had already discarded his fourth heart and could only play a club or a diamond leaving declarer with nine tricks and contract made!

Absolute Sinner status to **South**. It was pointless of South to retain CJ86 whilst discarding the only card that could provide two tricks for the defense!

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♦; EW 6♣; EW 4N; EW 2♥; Par -1430: EW 6♠

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table West declared 4♠ after North overcalled 1♥. North led ♥K, declarer winning with ♥A and then finessing ♠J. Declarer then cashed ♠A felling North's ♠K. Declarer now has a straightforward route to ten tricks, barring major bad breaks in the minor suits! play a diamond to ♦A followed by heart ruff and then a club to ♣A followed by another heart ruff. Now declarer can cash ♦K and wait to score the ♠Q9...ten tricks! BUT, after cashing ♠A declarer led a club to ♣A in hand and then ruffed a heart and led dummy's last trump to her ♠Q on which North mistakenly discarded a heart. Declarer now cashed ♦A and then finessed ♦J into South's ♦Q. South continued with ♥10, declarer and North following as dummy discarded ♣7. South continued with ♥9 as declarer ruffed with her last trump and was forced to decide whether to discard a club or a diamond from dummy's holdings: ♦K6, ♣Q9. Declarer discarded ♦6 and was now forced to play a club towards dummy, North rising with ♣K and now ruining the earlier discard of a heart! North was left with ♦10 and ♣10 with dummy having winning cards in both suits! 4♠ allowed to make by an errant **North...Sinner** status awarded!

Declarer at another table also scored eleven tricks in 4♠ but more due to defensive error than declarer brilliance! East declared after North overcalled 1♥. South led ♥6 (I would prefer ♥10 or even ♥9 if it promises ♥10), declarer winning with dummy's ♥A. Declarer finessed ♠J and then returned to dummy with ♣A and led ♠9 (to what intent I'm not sure!) as North followed with ♠K, declarer winning with ♠A. Declarer then played a diamond to dummy's ♦A and ruffed a heart in hand before playing his last trump to dummy's ♠Q. Declarer now played a diamond to his ♦K and continued with a third diamond, South winning perforce. South now simply needed to cash a heart and with ♣K to come that would see declarer score just ten tricks, BUT, South erred by continuing with a club to North's ♣K and North compounded the error by failing to cash a winning heart and returned a club, South winning with dummy's ♣Q and subsequently discarding dummy's losing heart on declarer's ♦J. **Sinner** status to **North** and **South** both of whom should have known that they had a cashable heart winner!

Board 5

North Deals

N-S Vul

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

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

4 ♠ makes...but is impossible to bid with confidence especially opposite a Weak NT opening by North.

Saints & Sinners

Four N/S pairs bid game on this hand and none are awarded Saintly status but I would certainly recommend that they buy lotto tickets in case they continue to enjoy the luck that befell them on this hand!

At two tables North opened 1 NT (12-14) and both Souths bid 2 ♥ (transfer to spades) to which both Norths responded 2 ♠ a bid that definitely did not convey holding more than two spades! Both Souths now made a gross overbid of 4S on a hand with EIGHT losers! **Sinner** status to **both Souths**.

At another table North also opened 1 NT and again South responded 2 ♥ which North inexplicably raised to 4 ♥. South converted this to 4 ♠ which North Passed! **Sinner** status to **North & South** who clearly need to work on their bidding system!

At the fourth table North again opened 1 NT over which East bid 2 ♦. South bid 2 ♠ and North found a rebid of 3 NT!!! North/South clearly need to review their bidding over 1 NT especially where the opponents intervene. **Sinner** status to **North**.

All four pairs experienced a bountiful amount of good luck that their bidding did not warrant.

If North opens 1 NT then South can transfer to spades with a bid of 2 ♥. It is North's next bid that might encourage South to move forward.... If North bids anything other than 2 ♠ it should be viewed as agreeing spades as trumps and showing a non-minimum 1 NT opening. Remember that South's bid makes NO promise re strength and can be bid on a Yarborough, i.e. a hand with no card higher than a nine! Also, South's initial transfer only promises five spades. If North held a fourth spade then I would bid 3 ♠ over South's 2 ♥.

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

NS 5♦; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; NS 4♣; NS 1N; Par +400: NS 5♦

3♥ should be the limit for E/W. The makeable contracts list above shows that N/S can make 5♦. On a heart lead and club switch it's easy. Ruff the losing heart in dummy, draw trumps and play on clubs establishing dummy's two long clubs for spade discards. On a club lead it's more awkward, indeed declarer will need x-ray vision! Win the club lead, cash two top diamonds and play a spade to ♠ J! This hamstring West who cannot give partner a ruff, cannot cash two hearts (there's a trump still in dummy!). Win any return...let a club switch round to dummy, ruff a heart or win spade with ♠ A. or win trump. Draw outstanding trump and then cash dummy's spades discarding a losing heart on the fourth spade and subsequently finesse a club against West's remaining honour. Yes, x-ray vision really is needed.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **North**, declaring 4♦ after East opened a Weak 2♥ over which South made a Takeout Double (a bit light in strength...**Sinner** status awarded to **South**). West bid 3♥ and North, in the light of his partner's Takeout Double only bid 4♦ when surely she should have at least bid 5♦! East led ♣ 5 and declarer rose with dummy's ♣ J, covered by West's ♣ Q, declarer winning with ♣ K. Declarer next cashed three top trumps, ending in hand. at this point declarer could simply have played ♣ A and another club setting up the two long clubs in dummy on which she could discarded the two losing spades from her hand thus restricting her losses to two hearts and a club. BUT declarer made the strange play of a small heart from hand, East winning and cashing a second heart and then continuing with another heart. [East could have defeated the contract by switching to a spade after winning the second heart thus ensuring that West could cash a spade after winning ♣ Q...**Sinner** status to **East**.] BUT, declarer was still in the driving seat because of East's failure to find the spade switch. All she needed to do was ruff the third heart and play ♣ A and another club to establish the two long clubs in dummy on which she could discard her two losing spades. Declarer did cash the ♣ A as East discarded a heart BUT did not continue with another club and instead played a spade to dummy's ♠ A and continued with another spade, West winning perforce with ♠ K as declarer followed small from hand. West now had her chance to simply cash ♣ 10 to beat the contract but played a heart instead which declarer ruffed before eventually conceding a club to West's ♣ 10. A comedy of errors by North, East and West. **Sinner** status also to **East** and **West**!

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

NS 5♦; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; NS 4♣; NS 1N; Par +400: NS 5♦

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the **North** declaring 4♦ who received lead of ♥K followed by a club switch to dummy's ♣J, West's ♣Q and declarer's ♣K. Declarer now has a simple route to ELEVEN tricks. Ruff her losing heart, draw trumps and play ♣A and another club and discard her two losing spades on dummy's long clubs. Simple! BUT, instead this declarer cashed three top trumps and then played ♣A and another club, losing two hearts and a club and scoring only ten tricks.

Saintly status to **Ann Roche** who found herself in 5♦ after East opened a Weak 2♥. East cashed ♥K and then switched to ♣5, declarer playing ♣6 from dummy as West covered with ♣10, declarer winning with ♣A. Declarer next cashed two top trumps, ending in hand, and then ruffed her losing heart with dummy's ♦Q. Declarer then played ♣7 and West fell from grace by covering with ♣Q as declarer won with ♣K thus establishing dummy's remaining clubs as winners for discarding her losing spades. Declarer duly made 12 tricks and racked up 9.21 IMPs. West should have recognised East's lead of ♣5 as a singleton, or possibly a doubleton, and consequently West should have played low when declarer led ♣7 from dummy. Declarer should also have recognised that East's lead of ♣5 could not be a fourth best lead...the only cards higher than the ♣5 held by the opponents were ♣10 and ♣Q! And when West produced the ♣10 at trick two then declarer should have realised that East could only have a singleton or possibly a doubleton ♣54 or ♣52. Certainly declarer should realise that West must have ♣Q! It was a pity that declarer was not put to the test!

Sinner status to the **North**, declaring 4♦ after East opened 2♥ (Weak) who received lead of ♣5, declarer playing low from dummy as West contributed with ♣10. Declarer won with ♣A and cashed three diamonds ending in dummy. Declarer then led ♣7, West correctly playing low as declarer won with ♣K in hand... Declarer continued with ♣3 to dummy's ♣8 and West's ♣Q. E/W cashed two top hearts and continued with a third heart declarer discarding two spades from dummy and ruffing the third heart in hand. Declarer now led a spade towards dummy's ♠A10 and played ♠10 when East followed low and duly finished one down. Declarer, of course, should have risen with dummy's ♠A and then cashed dummy's winning clubs while discarding the losing spades from her hand. Careless.

East Deals
E-W Vul

NS 5♦; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; NS 4♣; NS 1N; Par +400: NS 5♦

It's easy to make eleven tricks in 5 ♦ on the lead of a heart rather than a club. A heart lead followed by a club switch means that declarer can ruff the losing heart before drawing trumps and conceding a club. When the club is led declarer must draw trumps and will not be able to score a heart ruff.

One N/S pair was allowed to play in 1 NT and scored eight tricks when E/W blocked the heart suit! East led ♥ K and continued with ♥ Q and when it held East found herself still on lead. East should have anticipated the problem that would ensue if she continued with ♥ J and where West had started with four hearts headed by the ♥ A...West would duck and then the suit would be blocked. East should continue with ♥ 7, which East knows has the same status as the ♥ J109 but which West does not and will therefore win with ♥ A and return his fourth heart thus enabling East to score two more heart tricks. But at the table East made the 'natural' play of continuing with ♥ J and West was happy to duck...until declarer showed out and suddenly West realised the problem but by now it was too late! East could have avoided that situation by continuing with ♥ 7 at trick three! Indeed, once dummy hit the table East could see that he could afford to switch to ♥ 7 at trick two, West forced to rise with ♥ A and continuing with a small heart! **Sinner** status to **East**.

South Deals
Both Vul

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

♠ K Q 6 3

♥ Q 7 4 3

♦ 6 4

♣ A 8 4

3 ♠ or the more likely 2 NT is the limit with the E/W cards. But then that's easy to say when you can see all four hands. Expect some E/W pairs to reach the NT game...and some to make nine or more tricks. Note that a major suit lead from South may hand declarer a tempo as well as an extra trick. A club lead from North or South should lead to defeat of the contract!

Saintly status to **Sean Glynn**, declarer in 3 NT, who received the lead of ♠ 3, North contributing the ♠ 9 as declarer won with ♠ J. Declarer now ran the ♦ 9 into North who won with ♦ J and continued with ♠ 4, declarer playing low from hand as South won with ♠ Q. South continued with ♥ 3 and declarer won with ♥ J as North contributed ♥ 10. Declarer next cashed ♦ A and continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦ K, South discarding ♣ 4. Declarer then cashed ♥ A and continued with two more rounds of diamonds discarding ♣ 6 and ♣ K from hand as South discarded ♣ 8 and then fatally the ♠ 6 leaving her with a singleton ♠ Q. Declarer next led ♠ 8 from dummy and rose with ♠ A in hand dropping South's ♠ Q. Declarer then played ♠ 10 and South was now faced with making a discard from ♥ Q7, ♣ A and fatally chose ♥ 7, leaving her with a singleton ♥ Q. Declarer then played ♥ K, dropping South's ♥ Q and finally declarer cashed ♥ 8 for a grand total of eleven tricks. Well done declarer. Discarding ♣ A instead of ♥ 7 would have saved a trick!

Absolute Sinner at one table where West declared 3 NT on the lead of ♣ 5 (I prefer the lead of ♣ 10 from North's holding...it's much more helpful to South). But at this table declarer committed the MAJOR SIN of playing dummy's ♣ K, South winning with ♣ A and continuing with ♣ 8 through dummy's ♣ J7 with North sitting over dummy with ♣ Q1093. N/S took the first five tricks! Declarer's mortal sin was to play ♣ K when playing low would have guaranteed a club trick for declarer! N/S also subsequently scored ♠ Q and a diamond as the contract failed by three tricks. The contract always fails on a club lead but playing low from dummy on the opening lead would have seen declarer score eight tricks!

South Deals
Both Vul

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table East declared 3 NT on the lead of ♥ 3, declarer winning with ♥ J as North contributed ♥ 10. Declarer cashed ♦ A and continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦ 8 and North's ♦ J. North returned a heart, dummy winning perforce with ♥ A. Although at this point declarer can only count eight tricks (1 spade, 3 hearts, 4 diamonds) the contract cannot be defeated. All declarer needs to do is finesse a spade into South...and South will then be endplayed! A club return promotes declarer's ♣ K; a spade return gives declarer a second spade trick; and a heart return is into declarer's ♥ K8! But, declarer made the mistake of cashing her diamond winners, discarding two spades from hand as South discarded two clubs. Declarer next led ♠ 2 and finessed ♠ J into South who won with ♠ Q. South fell from grace by continuing with ♥ Q, gifting declarer a fourth heart trick and the contract!

BUT, if South had exited with a small spade declarer would have won performe and would have to guess how to continue. If declarer cashed ♥ K and continued with a small heart then South would win with ♥ Q, cash ♠ K and ♣ A and the contract would have failed. However, if declarer played a small club from hand then South would win performe, cash ♠ K but would have to return a heart which declarer would win with ♥ K and then cash ♣ K. But which route would declarer have taken after winning with ♠ A? Unfortunately we will never know!

At one table South opened the bidding with 1 ♣ which North raised to 2 ♣. East made a Takeout Double and West bid 2 ♦ over which East bid 2 NT. South now came to life again (on his 11 hcp!!!) with a bid of 3 ♠. This duly went three light. **Sinner** status to **South** for his bidding and to **E/W** for not applying a Penalty Double.

At another table West found herself declaring 2 NT on the lead of ♣ 5 and also committed the MAJOR SIN of rising with dummy's ♣ K. N/S also scored the first five tricks but North did not find the killing spade switch and instead played a heart which saw declarer score four heart tricks. BUT declarer failed to establish additional diamond winners and the contract duly failed by two tricks. 2 NT is rock solid for eight tricks as long as declarer does not misplay on the initial club lead. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

South Deals
Both Vul

♠ 9 4
♥ 10 6 5
♦ Q J 7
♣ Q 10 9 5 3

♠ 8 7 2
♥ A 9
♦ K 10 8 5 2
♣ J 7 2

♠ A J 10 5
♥ K J 8 2
♦ A 9 3
♣ K 6

♠ K Q 6 3
♥ Q 7 4 3
♦ 6 4
♣ A 8 4

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table where East also declared 3 NT, South led ♥ 3, declarer beating North's ♥ 10 with ♥ J. Declarer then cashed ♦ A and ran ♦ 9 into North's ♦ Q. But, at this table **Ann Roche** found the switch to a small club, declarer playing low from hand to guarantee one club trick as South won with ♣ A and then continued with ♣ 8 to declarer's ♣ K. This would have been a fatal blow to declarer if South held ♠ A instead of ♠ KQ but alas for the defense that was not to be! Declarer now had nine tricks via 1 spade, 3 hearts, 4 diamonds, 1 club! **Saintly** status to **Ann** for her imaginative switch.

South Deals
Both Vul

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

♠ K Q 6 3

♥ Q 7 4 3

♦ 6 4

♣ A 8 4

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table, after three Passes, East opened 1 ♦, South overcalled 1 ♠ when a Takeout Double would have been much more descriptive and more helpful to partner. West closed the auction with a bid of 2 ♦. South fond the disastrous lead of ♣ 4...it is seldom beneficial to lead away from an Ace in a suit contract! Declarer won with his ♣ K and fell from grace for not playing a club at trick two in order to secure a ruff in hand of dummy's third club. Instead declarer played two top trumps and then played a second club, North winning with ♣ Q. Now North fell from grace by not cashing her winning ♦ Q and then cashing ♣ 10 and continuing with a fourth club! Instead North literally gifted declarer the club ruff by returning ♣ 10 which declarer gratefully ruffed with his now singleton ♦ 9. Declarer next continued with a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then finessed ♥ J into South's ♥ Q. South was now forced to continue with ♠ K... returning a heart would have seen declarer discard dummy's two losing spades. Declarer won with ♠ A and continued with ♥ K, discarding a spade from dummy and then declarer played the winning ♥ 8 and could have thrown his second losing spade from dummy but clearly unaware that the ♥ 8 was winner declarer ruffed with ♦ 5 which North overruffed with ♦ Q and continued with a spade to South's ♠ Q. **Sinner** status to **East, North, South** all spurning opportunities during the play.

Board 8

West Deals

None Vul

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

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

Holding a combined 27 hcp N/S should reach 4 ♠. Note that on a heart lead from East, making 3 NT will depend on declarer bringing home the diamond suit for FIVE tricks! Cash ♦ Q and then run ♦ 9 unless East covers in which case win in dummy and return to hand with a club and finesse ♦ 7. But perhaps ten tricks in 4 ♠ is much easier.

Saints & Sinners

Six N/S pairs failed to reach the spade game and played in a partscore. **Sinner** status to all **Souths** who failed to steer North to the spade game. **Absolute sinner** status to the **South** who raised his partner's opening bid of 1 ♠ to 2 ♠ with his 10 hcp and three trumps....some might bid 3 ♠ instead of 2 ♠ with the South hand. When North bids 3 ♠ spades South has an absolute raise to 4 spades.

At two tables West opened with a Weak 2 ♥ and North Doubled for takeout. South bid 3 ♦ and North bid 3 ♠. This is a strong bid by North. With a weaker hand North would have overcalled 2 ♠ at first opportunity. Sinner status to the two Souths who failed to raise to 4 ♠.

At three other tables West opened 2 ♥ and North overcalled 2 ♠. The three South Passed where they might have made an **Unassuming Cue Bid** of 3 ♥ inviting partner to bid the spade game with a less than minimum overcall. At the very least the Souths might simply have raised North's 2 ♠ to 3 ♠ which experienced players would play as being a weak, pre-emptive raise, but which which many less experienced players would play as being constructive.

Thirteen of the fourteen declarers in a spade contract made ten tricks. **Sinner** status to the **North**, declaring 2 ♠ who emerged with only nine tricks. East, in response to partner's Weak 2 ♥ opening led ♥ Q, East following with a low heart as declarer won with ♥ K. Despite three possible entries to dummy, declarer led ♠ 10 from hand, East winning with ♠ Q and continuing with ♥ 2 to West's ♥ A. West continued with ♥ 10 and now declarer erred by ruffing in hand with ♠ 4 instead of ruffing in dummy. Declarer next lead ♠ K which West won with ♠ A. Another heart lead saw declarer ruff with ♠ 7 which East overruffed with ♠ 8. If declarer had ruffed the previous heart in dummy and then led a spade West would have risen with ♠ A, leaving declarer with ♠ KJ7. Declarer could ruff the fourth heart with ♠ K (or ♠ J) and draw East's ♠ 8 and claim.

Board 9

North Deals

E-W Vul

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

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

4 ♠...the **Power of Shape**. North will open 1 ♠ and South will raise to 2 ♠. North should now simply bid 4 ♠ with the huge two suiter including a super club suit. **Sinner** status to **any North who did not rebid the spade game with this hand!** The play should also be straightforward... win any lead and play trumps...and then play clubs. Declarer should score eight black tricks and two red aces. If declarer starts taking finesses in hearts or clubs they could find themselves in difficulty! Remember that the format of this game is IMPs and NOT MPs...guarantee your contract and then worry about overtricks!

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the **North** who failed to bid 4 ♠. At one table North opened 1 ♠ and partner responded 2 ♠. North then bid 3 ♠ and that became the final contract.

Absolute Sinner status to the declarers that failed to make 4 ♠:

1) At one table East led ♦ 3, West playing ♦ Q (**Sinner** status awarded for denying possession of ♦ J) declarer winning perforce with ♦ A. Declarer correctly played a trump, East winning the second round with ♠ A and continuing with ♦ K which declarer ruffed. Declarer now has a simple route to ten tricks....cash another top spade, drawing West's outstanding trump, and then play clubs from the top. Declarer will score 4 trumps, four clubs and two red aces. But this declarer made the fatal mistake of finessing dummy's ♥ Q losing to West's ♥ K who continued with a third diamond on which declarer discarded a club from hand whilst ruffing in dummy. Declarer next cashed ♥ A and then played a club to her ♣ A. At this point declarer can cash another top trump and then concede a club to East and then claiming the rest of the tricks. BUT declarer attempted to cash ♣ K which West gratefully ruffed before continuing with another diamond which declarer ruffed. Declarer was now bound for a one trick defeat but then compounded matters by cashing her remaining trump and then playing a club to East's ♣ Q who cashed the ♥ J for a two trick defeat of a contract that is rock solid for ten tricks against any defense but not secure in the face of misplay by declarer!

At two tables declarer made 4 ♠+1 when East found the lead of ♣ 3. Unlucky for E/W

North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ K Q 9 4 3
♥ 8 7
♦ A
♣ A K J 10 9

♠ 6 5 2
♥ K 4 3
♦ Q J 8 6 5 2
♣ 5

♠ A 7
♥ J 6 5 2
♦ K 9 4 3
♣ Q 6 3

♠ J 10 8
♥ A Q 10 9
♦ 10 7
♣ 8 7 4 2

Saints & Sinners - (continued)

Absolute Sinner status to North.

♠ 8. for some strange reason declarer now played a diamond to her ♦ A before continuing with a second trump to East's ♠ A. East now attempted to cash ♦ K declarer ruffing with ♠ 9. Declarer is still safe...simply cash a top spade drawing West's last trump and then play clubs from the top. BUT, declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then led a club which West ruffed with ♠ 6. Despite this declarer was still safe! West returned a heart and all declarer needed to do was ruff, cash ♣ A felling East's now singleton ♣ Q and claim the rest of the tricks! BUT, declarer, perhaps forgetful that East now had a singleton ♣ Q, discarded a club on the heart return and that was the setting trick for the defense. Careless play by **declarer** who is awarded **Absolute Sinner** status.

It is absolutely vital that declarer thinks through a hand, not just the first few tricks, and forms a plan as to how the hand should be played. To quote **Roy Keane** (not sure if he plays bridge!) ...*'Fail to prepare...prepare to fail...'*

Board 9

North Deals

E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners - (continued)

Absolute Sinner status is also awarded to the declarer (North) who failed to make even nine tricks in a spade contract! East led ♦ 9, dummy playing low as West, unnecessarily and incorrectly played ♦ Q denying ♦ J, (**Sinner** status awarded). Declarer won with ♦ A and continued with two rounds of spades, East winning the second round perforce with ♠ A. East attempted to cash ♦ K which declarer ruffed with ♠ 9. Declarer now had a clear path to ten tricks. Cash a top spade, drawing West's last trump, and then play clubs from the top. BUT, declarer finessed ♥ Q losing to West's ♥ K. West continued with a diamond as declarer discarded a club from hand whilst ruffing with dummy's last trump. And declarer was still on course for ten tricks...simply play a club to hand, cash a top trump, drawing West' last trump, and then play clubs from the top! BUT declarer cashed dummy's ♥ A, played a club to ♣ A in hand and then attempted to cash ♣ K...which West gratefully ruffed. West continued with a diamond which declarer ruffed and now, holding ♠ Q, ♣ J109, declarer simply needed to concede a club to East's ♣ Q and then ruff any return and cash her two winning clubs. BUT, declarer cashed her ♠ Q and THEN played a club and East gratefully won with ♣ Q and then cashed ♥ J6 to restrict declarer to eight tricks! Very careless play by declarer.

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

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

Board 11

South Deals
None Vul

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

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

E/W can make 2 NT but should NOT make 3 NT. After a spade lead from South, playing IMPs it is all about defeating the contract. South must assume that North has a red suit ace and also started with three spades or even a doubleton ♠ Kx if declarer won the first tricks with ♠ A.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to all N/S pairs who allowed 3 NT to make!

Exalted Saintly status to **Deirdre & Orla** who combined to defeat 3 NT, the only table at which it failed of the eight where 3 NT was reached! South led ♠ Q and when it held continued with a spade to North's ♠ K and declarer's ♠ A. Declarer now played on clubs, winning the fourth round in dummy and then leading ♦ J which North covered with ♦ Q declarer winning with ♦ K as South discarded a small heart having previously discarded her diamonds on declarer's clubs. Declarer now cashed her fifth club and N/S made no mistakes, both discarding hearts. Declarer then played a heart to dummy's ♥ K and North's ♥ A. North then played her third spade and South won the last two tricks to defeat the contract by one trick. Excellent defense.

At another table East declared 3 NT on a small spade lead to North's ♠ K and a spade continuation.. Declarer cashed five top clubs ending in dummy (South carefully retaining her three spades whilst discarding three diamonds..**Saintly** status awarded). **Sinner** status to **North** who discarded the priceless ♠ 6 on the fifth club...the only route to South's spade winners! Declarer next led a SMALL diamond from dummy and North made another fatal and careless play of ♦ Q instead of playing ♦ 10, or ♦ 9 or ♦ 8! Declarer now emerged with ten tricks when declarer played on hearts and North could not play a spade to her partner!

At another table East also declared 3 NT after North opened 1♦. South led ♦ 6 (Top of Nothing) and declarer beat North's ♦ 8 with ♦ A. Declarer then cashed five clubs with South discarding her remaining two diamonds, a heart and a spade while North discarded three hearts. Declarer, winning the last club in dummy, now played ♥ K, North winning perforce with ♥ A. North could now have saved a trick by switching to a spade but instead found the fatal play of ♦ Q, establishing dummy's ♦ J as a winner as declarer won with ♦ A. Declarer emerged with ten tricks. **Sinner** status to **North** for conceding the overtrick. I've seen worse opening bids than the North hand...unlucky on that count!

Board 11

South Deals
None Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table East declared 3 NT on the lead of ♠ Q, declarer winning with ♠ A. Declarer next cashed ♣ AK followed by ♦ AK (establishing two winners for North via ♦ Q10!). Declarer continued with three clubs winning the last with dummy's ♣ 9, South discarding two spades while North discarded two hearts and then, fatally, the winning ♦ 10, whilst retaining the losing ♥ 10! And suddenly the contract could no longer be defeated. N/S could cash 2 spades, 1 heart and 1 diamond but then had to concede the last trick to declarer's HQ. **Absolute Sinner** status to **North and South**, both of whom had it in their grasp to retain cards that would have resulted in the defeat of the contract! Particular lack of concentration from North for discarding the winning ♦ 10 whilst retaining the useless ♥ 10!

At another table E/W reached 5 ♣. South led ♠ Q declarer winning with ♠ A. Declarer cashed two top trumps and then made the unusual play of ♥ Q from her hand, North winning with ♥ A. North cashed ♠ K and continued with a spade which declarer ruffed. Declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ K and then played a diamond, North following with ♦ 8 and declarer winning with ♦ A. Declarer now ruffed a heart in dummy and then led ♦ J, North covering with ♦ Q. All players were now down to three cards. Declarer held ♦ 3, ♣ J10; Dummy held ♦ 7, ♣ 98; North held ♥ 10, ♦ 109; South held ♠ 85, ♥ J. When declarer led ♣ J South discarded ♠ 5 and North discarded ♦ 9. Declarer then led ♣ 10 and South discarded ♠ 8 and North SEEMED to be faced with a decision. In fact this is a no-brainer but defenders often face this type of situation and try and guess instead of rationalising the choice. In this case North seems to have two winners...♦ 10 and ♥ 10 and doesn't know which one to keep. BUT, the ♥ 10 is NOT a winner because either declarer or partner holds the ♥ J and so the decision is clearcut. Discard the ♥ 10 and hold the ♦ 10. If declarer holds the ♥ J then North's ♥ 10 will not score a trick. But if declarer's last card is a diamond then North will win the trick. North discarded the ♦ 10 and declarer scored the last trick with dummy's ♦ 7! **Sinner** status to **North**.

At another table where East declared 5C, North made no mistake in a similar three card ending and discarded the heart and won the setting trick with ♦ Q. **Saintly** status to **Carmel Morahan**. Needless to say, those defenders who play **Count Signals** will have the added benefit of knowing declarer's distribution thus making it easier to arrive at the correct decision.

Board 12
 West Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

Board 13

North Deals

Both Vul

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

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

Making 4 ♠ may prove difficult although declarer can score 5 trump tricks, 3 hearts and 2 clubs. BUT declarer might lose three diamonds and ♥ A or even lose trumps control given South's trump holding of ♠ 9875. 4 ♠ will need careful handling!

Saints & Sinners

Outrageous 1 ♦ opening by North at one table. **Sinner** status awarded even if it did lead to South bidding 1S over East's Takeout Double and resulted in E?W contracting 3 NT which failed by four tricks.

Saintly status to those declarers who brought home 4 ♠.

Board 14

East Deals

None Vul

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

NS 6♥; NS 6♦; NS 5N; NS 3♣; NS 1♠; Par +980: NS 6♥

Yes, N/S can make 6♦ and even 6♥. In either small slam, on a club lead, declarer must take the spade finesse to discard the losing club from the North hand. But I suspect that not too many N/S pairs, if any, will reach either contract.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **two N/S pairs** that failed to bid game!

South Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 10 7 6 4 2
♥ A Q 9 8
♦ K 10 5
♣ 3

♠ A 9 5
♥ 10 5
♦ A 6 4 2
♣ K 9 8 6

♠ Q
♥ J 7 4 3 2
♦ Q J 9
♣ Q 10 7 5

♠ K J 8 3
♥ K 6
♦ 8 7 3
♣ A J 4 2

W N E S

N/S can make 4 ♠ but many will fail to bid the game. And some may fail to make ten tricks! Note that careful play of the trump suit is required...leading ♠ 10 from the North hand will result in declare losing two spade tricks! Note also... if East actually held ♠ AQ95, it would require the lead of ♠ 10 (or a first round finesse of ♠ 8) to prevent East from scoring two trump tricks! But, the odds favour a 3-1 (or even 2-2) rather than a 4-0 break. And there is even the possibility that the hand will be Passed Out!

At one table South opened 1 NT (12-14) and this was passed out. North should have bid 2 ♣ (Stayman) and passed either a 2 ♥ or 2 ♠ response from South and bid 2 ♠ over a 2 ♦ response. North might make a forward move if South responds 2 ♠.

Only three N/S pairs reached 4 ♠ albeit that another N/S pair played in 3 ♠ x which made for a score of +730 and a huge 10.79 IMPs

At one table North declared 4 ♠ having also bid hearts at the three level. East led ♦ Q, West rising with ♦ A and returning a small diamond to declarer's ♦ K. Declarer then made a series of strange plays which ultimately led to her downfall! At trick three declarer led her singleton club to dummy's ♣ A and then led ♥ 6 to her ♥ Q and followed up with a heart to dummy's now stiff ♥ K. (Playing three rounds of hearts and discarding dummy's losing diamond would have been a more rational play!). Declarer next ruffed a club in hand and then played a small spade to East's ♠ Q, dummy's ♠ K and West's ♠ A. West returned a diamond to East's ♦ J and now East found the killing play of a third heart, knowing from the bidding that West was void in hearts at this stage, and West ruffed with ♠ 5 when declarer discarded a club from dummy. Careless declarer play. **Sinner** status awarded to **North**.

Board 15

South Deals

N-S Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table South declared 4 ♠ after North used Stayman over South's opening 1 NT. West led ♥ 10, declarer winning in hand. Declarer then made the unusual play of leading a small spade from hand, in effect conceding two trump tricks to the defense! East won with ♠ Q and made the unusual play of ♥ J despite seeing ♥ AQ8 in dummy! Declarer won with dummy's ♥ Q and played a spade to her ♠ J and West's ♠ A. West returned her last spade, declarer winning in hand. The contract can still be made but needs very precise declarer play. Declarer must NOW play a diamond to dummy's ♦ K and can then cash dummy's two winning hearts discarding her two remaining diamonds from hand, eventually losing a diamond or a club. Even if West rises with ♦ A declarer is still home. BUT declarer cashed ♣ A and ruffed a club in dummy, cashed two hearts discarding a club and a diamond from hand. BUT now declarer had to play a diamond FROM dummy and lost two tricks. **Sinner** status to **South**.

At one table South opened 1 NT (12-14) and North bid 2 ♣ (Stayman), South bid 2 ♠ and North invited with 3S....and suddenly, out of the blue, in rushed East with a Double. All passed and declarer duly emerged with nine tricks and a score of +730 and 10.79 IMPs. **Sinner** status to **East**. And I still can't figure out what the Double was supposed to mean!

Saintly status is bestowed on **Marlene & Michael** who bid to 4 ♠ where North was able to show her singleton club and South then bid the spade game. West led ♥ 10 and declarer won with dummy's ♥ A and continued with a spade to East's ♠ Q, declarer's ♠ K and West's ♠ A. West now continued with ♥ 5 as declarer played ♥ 8 from dummy...and East made one of those automatic plays that she wouldn't have made if she had put her thinking cap on! East covered ♥ 8 with ♥ J as declarer won the trick with ♥ K, with dummy's ♥ 9 now promoted as winner! **STOP...** When dummy first hit the table East should have noted dummy's heart suit...Given her own holding East knows there are only four hearts outstanding. West led ♥ 10 at trick one and has now also shown up with ♥ 5. Also, declarer played ♥ 6 on first trick and given South's 1 NT opening declarer must hold the only other outstanding heart...♥ K. S, East should NOT cover dummy's H8 with the ♥ J because declarer will have to win with ♥ K anyway! And that will also ensure that dummy's ♥ 9 will not become a winner because East's ♥ J will be sitting over it! **Sinner** status to **East**! Declarer made 11 tricks.

Board 16
 West Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

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

Board 18

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

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

South can make 3 NT (+1) whereas North can be held to eight tricks...a diamonds lead from the East hand scuttles 3 NT by North whereas a diamond lead by West gives N/S two diamond tricks. Delicate communications between the two hands may prove difficult for some declarers!

Two Souths made 4 ♠ and one North made 4 ♥. Six Souths failed in 4 ♠!

Board 19

South Deals

E-W Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 6♣; EW 5♥; EW 4♠; EW 5♦; Par -1440: EW 6N

It would be outrageous to bid and make 6 NT (or 6 ♣) on this hand although I suspect that many who might bid it might not score the twelve tricks. Declarer can score 2 spades, 2 hearts, 4 diamonds and 4 clubs!

Board 20

West Deals

Both Vul

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

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

N/S can make 3 NT but declarer will need to read things right on a club lead. Note the fortuitous lie of the defenders diamond honours! North's ♠ 10 must be finessed and diamonds must be played from the top! Expect a variety of results with anything from seven to ten tricks being made!

Saints & Sinners - incomplete analysis

If North declares a NT contract and East leads ♣ J to West's ♣ K and West continues with ♣ 9...declarer should cover with ♣ Q thereby protecting ♣ 86!

Saintly status to any declarer who made 3 NT with the N/S cards.

Board 21

North Deals

N-S Vul

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

EW 4♠; N 4♣; S 3♣; EW 1N; EW 1♥; NS 1♦; Par -200; N 5♣×-1

E/W can make 4 ♠ thanks to the fortuitous lie of ♦ J and the fact that North holds the three outstanding Aces, and hence all of West's Kings are scoring! Some Norths may open 1 ♦ and not find the better 6-3 club fit! Will West get into the action with his spades, particularly if East overcalls in hearts!

Board 22
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

NS 2N; NS 3♣; S 1♠; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; Par +120: NS 1N+1

Board 24

West Deals

None Vul

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

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

Interesting that 4♥ can make whereas 4♠ should fail. And E/W can compete in diamonds! Have you a system whereby you can bid diamonds with the West hand, particularly where the opponents intervene, whilst also showing either a weak hand where you wish to play in a partscore **or** a strong hand that wants to play in game? If not, then check out **'Lebensohl'**.