

Greetings!

Herewith find attached the analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 24th September 2020, in the **Galway/CBAI Western Region BBO IMP Pairs**.

Last week we had a healthy entry of 16 tables. I was away again for the weekend and with my nose to the grindstone since I returned on Sunday evening I have prepared analysis of just 7 of the 24 hands: 1, 7, 8, 15, 19, 20, 24

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 #1 which is analysed over FIVE pages. This is a fascinating hand with opportunities for declarer (and in some case the defense) to shine and be elevated to Sainly status. Three different game contracts were reached with varying results.

Board #7 is another fascinating contract. Who would have thought that the innocuous ♣ 5 could be such a pivotal card and yet be so under-appreciated by so many declarers!

Board #15 is a cruel hand.

As usual 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 **7 hands**, played at **16 tables**, representing a total of **112 contracts** that I reviewed which in turn converts to **1,456 tricks** that are minutely screened, which amounts to a grand total of **5,824 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
1st October 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 K 10 2		
	♥ 4		
	♦ Q 6 5 3		
	♣ A K J 4		
♠ J 7 6 4			♠ Q 3
♥ K J 8 7 5 3			♥ Q 10 6
♦ 8			♦ J 9 7 2
♣ 10 5			♣ Q 8 7 2
	♠ 9 8 5		
	♥ A 9 2		
	♦ A K 10 4		
	♣ 9 6 3		

NS 6♦; NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +920; NS 6♦

28 hcp should see N/S score some game contract. Indeed the list of makeable contracts shows that 6♦ can be made! But 3NT and 4♠ are the likely spots for most pairs. 3NT is rock solid with 9 tricks via 2 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds (**IF played correctly!**), 2 clubs. On a non-heart lead declarer has time to establish an extra trick in either clubs or spades... BUT, on a heart lead declarer should remember that they are playing IMPS and guaranteeing the contract is the name of the game!

To play diamonds correctly, declarer should cash ♦ A or ♦ K and then play a small diamond to North's ♦ Q. This exposes the 4-1 break and declarer can now safely finesse ♦ 10. Note that if West holds ♦ J972 there is nothing that declarer can do to prevent West scoring a diamond trick. One potential problem is that which arises if declarer discards two diamonds from the North hand on the second and third hearts. In that case declarer can no longer employ the **Safety Play** in diamonds...the North hand would not have a third diamond with which to finesse ♦ 10!

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to **Marian Walsh**, the only N/S declarer to correctly play the diamond suit by leading a diamond to ♦ A and then returning a diamond to ♦ Q, exposing East's holding of ♦ J972 and leaving declarer with a simple finesse of ♦ 10 WITHOUT having to use any of North's black suit winners to access the North hand in order to take a third round finesse of ♦ 10! Marian declared 5♦ as North on the lead of ♣ 2, won by North with ♣ J. Declarer then played a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and continued with a diamond to her ♦ Q. Marian then finessed ♦ 10 and cashed ♦ K, as West discarded three hearts. Declarer next lead ♠ 9 and finessed into East's ♠ Q. West switched to a small heart, declarer rising with ♥ A and continuing with ♠ 8. West fell from grace by covering with ♠ J, declarer winning with ♠ A and then cashing ♠ K on which East made the fatal discard of ♣ 7 thus handing North an unlikely fourth club trick. Declarer emerged with 12 tricks, more than made by any other declarer.

Sinner status to the **East** whose partner had bid hearts TWICE and had led ♥ 7 against South's 3NT, East winning the trick with ♥ Q and then switching to ♦ 2 despite seeing 4 diamonds in dummy **and** where South had bid 1♦!!! **Sinner** status also to **South** who played ♦ 10 which could have been covered by a singleton ♦ J thus reducing declarer's diamond winners to three!!

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 6♦; NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +920: NS 6♦

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table South declared 3 NT after North opened 1♣, South responded 1♦, West overcalled 1♥ and North re-bid 1♠. West led ♥7, East winning with ♥Q. East returned ♥10 which South won with ♥A, discarding a diamond from dummy. Declarer now played a diamond to dummy's ♦Q (cashing ♦A or ♦K first is better because 4-2 break is exposed on the second round and ♦10 can be finessed on third round lead from dummy). Anyway, declarer now played a second diamond to ♦A as West discarded ♣5. Declarer next played a club to West's ♣10 and dummy's ♣A, East following with ♣2. Declarer now has nine tricks in her sights...2 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds via a simple finesse of ♦10, and 2 clubs. BUT, inexplicably, declared next played ♣J, East winning with ♣Q and then putting West on lead with a heart. West cashed 5 hearts to defeat the contract by two tricks! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table South also declared 3 NT after North raised South's 1♦ to 3♦ and where West overcalled 1♥. West led ♠4, declarer ducking in dummy as East won with ♠Q and then switched to ♥Q which declarer ducked. Declarer also ducked the ♥10 which West overtook with ♥J before continuing with ♥K. Declarer discarded a small diamond and a small club on the second and third hearts. On winning with ♥A declarer played a diamond to dummy's ♦Q and returned a diamond to ♦A as West showed out. Declarer can simply play a spade to dummy's ♠A (or ♠K) and then lead dummy's third diamond and finesse ♦10. BUT, declarer continued with ♦K from hand thereby establishing East's ♦J as winner. Declarer could still make the contract by finessing dummy's ♠10. BUT, declarer simply cashed ♠AK and ♣AK and eventually conceded two tricks to West.

Saintly status to **Ann Killilea** who took a double finesse in spades to score three tricks in the suit!

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 6♦; NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +920: NS 6♦

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Three N/S pairs played in 4♠ all failing by one, two or three tricks. At one table North opened 1♦ and South responded 2♦ (**Inverted**, promising 4+ diamonds and 10+ hcp). West bid 2♥, North 2♠, East raised to 3♥ which was passed back to North who bid 4♣ which South converted to 4♠...perhaps 5♦ would have been better in the knowledge that North holds only four spades. East led ♥6 to South's ♥A. South continued with ♠9 which ran to East's ♠Q. East continued with ♥10 (should have played ♥Q) as West played ♥K on which declarer discarded ♣4. West erred by not continuing with a heart and instead switched to ♣5, declarer winning with ♣A. Declarer played a diamond to dummy's ♦A and then finessed ♠10. At this stage declarer has the contract in her sights! With four tricks under the belt declarer can now cash two top trumps drawing West's two trumps and then cash three diamonds (PLAYING THE SUIT SAFELY!) and the ♣K for a total of ten tricks. BUT, declarer only cashed one top trump and then led ♦Q which West gratefully ruffed for the setting trick! Careless. **Sinner** status to **North** for not taking full advantage of a defensive error. **Sinner** status to **West** who should have continued with another heart after winning ♥K which would have ensured defeat of the contract.

At another table where North declared 4♠ after West bid hearts and East supported hearts. West led ♥6 declarer rising with dummy's ♥A as West signaled with ♥8 (**Saintly** status awarded to **Isabel Burke**...very few players seem to use signals to encourage or discourage or give count!). Declarer then played a club to ♣J in hand losing to West's ♣Q. East continued with HQ which declarer ruffed in hand with ♠2. Declarer then continued with ♣A followed by ♣K which West ruffed before continuing with a heart which North ruffed with ♠10. Declarer continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦A and then fatally cashed ♦K (setting up East's ♦J as a potential winner) which West ruffed. West continued with a trump, declarer rising with ♠K. Declarer could have cashed ♠A and exited on a club endplaying East who would have to lead a diamond from her ♦J9 conceding both tricks to declarer. BUT, declarer led a club, ruffing with dummy's ♠8 and overruffed by West with ♠J. West played a heart, declarer discarding her losing ♦6 as East ruffed with ♠Q. Declarer won the last two tricks with ♦Q and ♠A for a two trick defeat! Declarer could have made the contract if she had not attempted to cash ♦K but instead played a small diamond to her ♦Q. **Sinner** status to **North**.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

NS 6♦; NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +920: NS 6♦

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At a third table North opened 1♣, South bid 1♦, West overcalled 2♥ (Weak Jump Overcall). North mis-bid with 2NT holding a singleton small heart in her hand! [North could have supported her partner's diamonds.] East bid 3♥ and South bid 3NT. This Passed to North who emerged with a bid of 4♠ which became the final contract. East led ♥6 declarer playing ♥A from dummy. North cashed ♠AK and continued with ♠2 to dummy's ♠9 and West's ♠J as East discarded ♥10. West continued with ♥K followed by ♥J as declarer discarded ♦53 from hand and East discarded ♣2 on the third heart. Declarer ruffed the next heart as East discarded a diamond. Declarer then cashed ♥Q and continued with ♣AK and then a diamond to dummy's ♦K which West ruffed with ♠7 before playing two winning hearts to inflict a three trick defeat on declarer. It is difficult to criticize declarer. If spades broke 3-3 then declarer would have scored 10 tricks via 3 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds, 2 clubs. HOWEVER, a 3-3 spade break occurs only 36 times in 100. Poor odds.

Three declarers played in 4♠, all failing. So how can the contract make? On a heart lead declarer wins with ♥A and then cashes ♦A (a **Safety Play** against East holding ♦Jxxx). Declarer then plays a diamond towards ♦Q in North hand. If West ruffs and continues with a heart declarer ruffs in the North hand and then cashes ♠AK leaving West with ♠J while North holds ♠10 and dummy's holds ♠9...BUT declarer is now a step ahead of West. Declarer now continues with diamond ♦Q...if West ruffs and plays another heart then declarer ruffs and cashes ♦K and then plays a club to North's ♣AK. This line of play yields 2 top trumps, 1 heart ace, plus 2 heart ruffs in the North hand, 2 top diamonds, 2 top clubs AND ♠9 in the South hand. That's ten tricks!

The significant difference with the above line of play is that West (holding 4 trumps) is forced to ruff before declarer and thus declarer retains control of the trump suit. If declarer ruffs a heart in the North hand too early then he cedes trump control to West and the contract ultimately fails!

This is a difficult hand to play in 4♠...5♦ is easier. Declare in the first example was guilty of lack of concentration when she had ten tricks within reach and failed because she didn't play the second top trump before cashing her club and diamond winners.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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


NS 6♦; NS 4N; NS 4♠; NS 5♣; Par +920: NS 6♦

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table North declared 5♦ with no opposition bidding. West made the unfortunate (for the defense) lead of ♣ 2 which gives declarer a soft club trick. Declarer then played a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and returned a diamond to her ♦ Q, East's holding now exposed. Declarer next finessed ♦ 10 and cashed ♦ K. Declarer then led ♠ 9 and finessed it into East's ♠ Q. East now switched to ♥ 6, declarer rising with dummy's ♥ A and then led ♠ 8 which West covered with ♠ J, declarer winning with ♠ K. On ♠ A East made the fatal discard of ♣ 7 which gave declarer a fourth club trick! Declarer emerged with 12 tricks! **Saintly** status to declarer, **Marian Walsh**.

At another table North declared 5♦ after bidding diamonds and then spades while West overcalled in hearts, supported by East. East led ♥ Q which declarer won with dummy's ♥ A. Declarer then ruffed a heart in hand and continued with ♦ Q and a diamond to dummy's ♦ K as West discarded a heart. Declarer continued by running ♠ 9 to East's ♠ Q. East now played ♦ 9, declarer winning with dummy's ♦ 10 and continuing with ♦ A and then finessed ♠ 10 and cashed ♠ AK for eleven tricks. **Saintly** status to North (**Frank Reynolds**). **HOWEVER**, upon winning ♠ Q, if West continues with a heart declarer is forced to ruff with his last trump BUT cannot finesse against East's ♦ J9. Declarer can only proceed by playing on clubs or spades. If declarer attempts to cash ♠ AK East can ruff and exit on his last diamond and will duly score ♣ Q (or West will score ♠ J) for the setting trick. Alternatively, if declarer continues by playing on clubs East will win the third round and now East is in a hopeless position. If he exits on his fourth club declarer can discard a spade from dummy whilst winning in hand with ♣ J and then cashing top spades and eventually East will have to ruff and dummy will overruff and that gives declarer eleven tricks via 4 trumps in dummy, ♥ A and 2 heart ruffs in hand, 3 clubs, 1 spade. But if partner holds ♠ K and declarer started with ♠ AJ102 then this line will fail as partner will win the third spade and force dummy with another heart thereby promoting East's ♦ J as the setting trick. Sometimes defensive decisions are this complicated. As East, I think I might take my chances by exiting with the heart rather than the diamond. If declarer plays on spades after ruffing the third heart then the contract definitely fails. Not easy.

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 5N; NS 5♠; NS 5♥; NS 1♦; NS 1♣; Par +660: NS 3N+2

Board 6
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

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

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

5 ♠ can make...6 ♠ can too...with a little help from the defense! This is a cruel hand. Give West an additional small club or even a small heart, and one less diamond, and 6 ♠ would be unbeatable! The slam can make on a trump or heart lead and should fail on a club or diamond lead. The stumbling block for declarer is the lack of entries to dummy to repeat the spade finesse! But, for the lack of an additional club or heart, it can actually fail!

Saints & Sinners

Absolute Sinner status to the East who passed partner's 3 ♦ Game Try.

Sinner status also to the **E/W pair** who languished in a contract of 1 ♠ after West opened 1 ♦, East responded 1 ♥ and West re-bid 1 ♠. Certainly East could have bid 2 ♠ but perhaps West, in order to avoid the possibility of East passing 1 ♠, might have made a 100% forcing re-bid of 2 ♠.

Six E/W Pairs bid the small spade slam. At only two tables was the contract successful. At one table North led her singleton ♠ 10. Declarer subsequently entered dummy via a club ruff and was able to repeat the spade finesse. Slam made. An unfortunate lead by North but not a sin. It was unfortunate that she found partner with ♠ K65 sitting under declarer's ♠ AQJ93.

At the second table where the slam made, North found the safe lead of ♣ Q, declarer winning in hand with ♣ A and then entering dummy via a club ruff. Declarer then finessed ♠ J...and suddenly realised the problem...she had no means of re-entering dummy to repeat the spade finesse, North's ♠ 10 ominously looking like a singleton! Declarer continued with ♦ J from hand, North following with ♦ 6 and when South failed to win with ♦ A declarer was home. Declarer continued with a diamond to South's now stiff ♦ A and suddenly declarer was home. South was now endplayed! A spade return would give declarer a free finesse; a heart would give declarer an entry to dummy; a club would give declarer a ruff and discard and the vital entry to dummy. South could have avoided this situation by winning the first diamond with ♦ A and exiting on ♦ 10, thus preventing declarer from accessing dummy to take the crucial second finesse in the trump suit. **Sinner** status to **South**.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At another table North made the fatal lead of ♠ 10, declarer winning in hand with ♠ J, cashing ♣ A and entering dummy with a club ruff. After cashing ♥ AK declarer led ♠ 7 and when South followed with ♠ 6 declarer rose with ♠ A. Rising with ♠ A means that declarer is playing North to have led ♠ 10 from an original holding of ♠ K10! **Absolute Sinner** status to declarer, a wily player who has a propensity for playing too fast!

At three other tables the respective declarers were given an opportunity to succeed but all spurned the chance with a fatal discard at trick one. In all cases North found the unfortunate (for the defense!) lead of ♥ Q. The reason that this is fatal for the defense is because it offers declarer a second entry to dummy, a necessary requirement in order to repeat the spade finesse!

So, why did the three declarers fail to make the small slam? Because all three discarded the precious ♣ 5 on the opening heart lead which was the only means of re-entering dummy!

Sinner status to the **three declarers**.

Planning the play of a hand involves thinking beyond the current trick! In this case declarer should consider the possibility of having to repeat the trump finesse and in that context the particular issue as to how to re-enter dummy! A club ruff was the only option and that vanished when declarer discarded the ♣ 5 at trick one.

Sinner status to the **West** at another table who declared 4♠ on the lead of ♥ Q and only made ten tricks! Declarer discarded ♣ 5 from hand on the heart lead and then played a club to her ♣ A at trick two instead of taking a spade finesse. Declarer continued with ♦ J, South winning with ♦ A and continuing with ♦ 10, declarer winning with ♦ Q. Declarer then continued with ♠ A and followed up with a small spade from both hands, South winning with ♠ 10 and then cashing ♠ K...three trick to the defense where they should only have scored one! Careless by declarer.

At another table North led a heart, declarer winning in dummy whilst discarding the crucial ♣ 5 from hand. and finessing ♠ J. Declarer then cashed ♠ A losing a trick to South's ♠ K.

Board 7
 South Deals
 Both Vul

♠ A Q J 9 3	♠ 10	♠ 8 7 4 2			
♥ —	♥ Q J 9 3 2	♥ A K 10 8 5			
♦ K Q J 7 3 2	♦ 6 5	♦ 9 8 4			
♣ A 5	♣ Q J 8 4 2	♣ 7			
<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>			N	W E	S
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ K 6 5				
	♥ 7 6 4				
	♦ A 10				
	♣ K 10 9 6 3				

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At only one table did West, declaring a contract of 4♠, actually make twelve tricks. Declarer received the lead of ♥Q, winning with dummy's ♥A whilst discarding ♦2 from hand. Declarer IMMEDIATELY finessed ♠Q and then cashed ♣A and next ruffed ♣5 in dummy before leading another trump. South made the silly play of rising with ♠K which declarer beat with ♠A before, drawing trumps and conceding a diamond to South's ♦A. **Saintly** status to **West, Enda Glynn**. Unfortunately E/W failed to reach 6♠ after West opened 1♦, North overcalled 1♥, East and South Passed and North re-bid 3♠ which West raised to 4♠. Difficult to get to 6♠ after North's overcall!

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

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

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

E/W can make ten tricks in NT. Ten tricks are also available in 4♠ and surprisingly 4♥. If East opens 1♦ and South bids 1♥ (or 2♥) West can make a Takeout Double which for some partnerships will promise four spades. With five spades West would bid the suit. If North Passes then East has to find a sensible bid. Bidding NT with ♥J94 is not a sensible bid. The opponents might be in a position to cash 5 or 6 heart tricks. My preference would be to **cue-bid** the opponents suit showing a strong hand but with no alternative bid...it would deny four spades. West can then bid 3NT.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to all the **East players** who bid NT in response to partner's Takeout/Negative Double of South's heart overcall. It got lucky on this hand because West turned up with ♥KQxx.

Sinner status to the **West** who declared 4♠ after South overcalled in hearts and North bid clubs. North led ♦7 (♦10...interior sequence, is better) and declarer made a major error by ducking, South winning with ♦K. N/S proceeded to cross ruff in hearts and diamonds as they took the first six tricks, scoring ♦K, ♥A and four ruffs. Declarer lost a seventh trick when she spurned the club finesse despite North having bid the suit! Rising with ♦A at trick one, drawing trumps and then playing on hearts and finessing clubs twice, sees declarer emerge with at least ten tricks!

Saintly status to **Enda & Sean** for their bidding sequence. Sean opened 1♦, South bid 1♥ and Enda made a Negative Double promising four (but not more!) spades. Sean now bid 2♥ (Cuebid showing strong hand and denying four spades). Enda jumped to 3NT. North led ♠J, declarer winning in dummy and leading a diamond at trick two, South winning perforce. South fell from grace by cashing ♥A thus establishing three heart winners for declarer who duly emerged with eleven tricks. **Sinner** status to **South!**

Saintly status to **William** who played a deceptive ♠J on the second round of spades when defending 3NT which resulted in him scoring a trick when declare subsequently finessed ♠9 into North, William winning with ♠10!

Board 9
North Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

EW 4♦; EW 1N; NS 1♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♣; Par -130: EW 3♦+1

Board 12
 West Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 6♠; NS 4N; NS 4♥; NS 3♦; NS 2♣; Par +1430; NS 6♠

6♠ is almost impossible to bid with any degree of confidence. Also, note that on a diamond lead declarer will have to finesse ♣ J in order to discard two losing diamonds from the South hand!

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 6♠; NS 3N; EW 3♥; NS 1♦; S 1♣; Par +800; EW 7♥×-4

6♠ can make but declarer needs to take a very specific line...If a club is not led then declarer can play a diamond to the ♦ A and follow with ♦ Q discarding the singleton club from hand. Declarer can then ruff a heart in dummy and discard the other losing heart on dummy's ♦ J. The alternative line, which I might have chosen at the table...ruff a losing heart and then ruff a diamond in hand to ruff second losing heart, which East would overruff, actually fails!

Saints & Sinners

One N/S pair bid to ♠S which never has a chance. Declarer ultimately finished two down.

Two N/S pairs reached 6♠... and both failed! At one table South opened 1♠, West overcalled 3♥. North was stuck for a bid in the absence of a Negative Double option (which would have been perfect!) bid 3♠. East bid 4♥ and South used Blackwood and settled in 6♠. West led ♥ 10 and East covered dummy's ♥ Q with ♥ K. At this table declarer now has an extra piece of information which should have swayed his approach to the play. Declarer cashed ♠ A and continued with a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and then ruffed ♦ 8 in hand. Declarer next ruffed a heart with dummy's last trump and then led D♦ 10 ruffing in hand. Declarer cashed all his trumps and eventually lost 2 clubs at the end. At the very least declarer should have tried to ruff her two losing hearts in dummy. Cashing ♠ A at trick 2 removed that option, which would have failed anyway. West's 3♥ bid suggests a possible 7 card heart suit in which case East has only two hearts. After winning ♥ A declarer can play a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and then lead ♦ Q, discarding her losing club if East follows with a low diamond. Declarer can then ruff a heart in dummy and discard her other heart on dummy's ♥ J.

At the other table N/S reached 6♠ with no opposition bidding. West led ♥ 10 covered by dummy's ♥ Q and East's ♥ K as declarer won with ♥ A. At this table declarer ruffed a heart at trick two and then cashed ♦ A and ruffed a diamond in hand. Declarer then led her last heart and ruffed with dummy's ♠ 6 and was overruffed by East with ♠ 8. Declarer subsequently lost a club trick and finished one down. In my view declarer was unlucky to find the outstanding hearts breaking 7-2. An unlucky outcome for declarer.

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 6♠; NS 3N; EW 3♥; NS 1♦; S 1♣; Par +800: EW 7♥×-4

Saints & Sinners (continued)


At another table South opened 4♠, West bid 5♥, and North closed the bidding with 5♠. West led ♥10, perhaps suggesting that East held ♥J, East covered dummy's ♥Q with ♥K, declarer winning with ♥A. Declarer simply needed to ruff a heart in dummy and she had eleven tricks via 9 spades in hand, ♥A and a heart ruff, and ♦A. BUT, declarer cashed three rounds of trumps and then played a diamond to dummy's ♦A, led ♦Q from dummy and discarded a losing heart. Declarer subsequently lost a heart and a club and finished one down! Careless. **Sinner** status awarded to **South**.

At another table South also opened 4♠ and West overcalled 5♥ which was Passed Out. North led ♠6 which declarer ruffed. declarer played a heart to North's ♥Q, dummy's ♥K and declarer's ♥A. South switched to ♦4, declarer following with ♦2 as North won with ♦8. North next cashed ♦A as South discarded ♣4. North inexplicably continued with ♠2 and declarer ruffed, drew trumps and then cashed clubs discarding ♦K from hand and finished a mere one down. **Absolute Sinner** status to **North** who a) should have Doubled 5♥ and b) should have given her partner a diamond ruff and thereby secured a two trick defeat.

At yet another table South also opened 4♠ and West overcalled 5♥ which North Doubled. The defense was similar to that outlined above but at this table North gave his partner the diamond ruff after cashing ♦A. The contract failed by two tricks.... +300 to N/S. **Saintly** status to **North (Frank Reynolds)** for Doubling 5♥. Should South pull the Double to 5♠...this is always a difficult decision. Partnerships really need to differentiate between a pre-emptive Weak 4 level opening as opposed to a Strong 4 level opening. This hand falls into the latter category. **Namyats** (sometimes known as **South African Texas**) denotes an opening of 4♣ or 4♦ which shows a strong hand with hearts (4♣) or spades (4♦) and 8-9 tricks. This helps the partnership to better decide whether or not to pursue a slam. A pre-emptive 4♥ or 4♠ is reserved for weaker hands.

At three other tables South declared 4♠ and the respective declarers simply cashed three trumps and then led a diamond to dummy's ♦A to chalk up ten tricks and +620.

Board 17
 North Deals
 None Vul

♠ Q J 9 6 5 3 2	♠ 10 8	♠ —
♥ 6 3	♥ K Q 9 7	♥ A J 5 2
♦ 4	♦ 9 8 7 3 2	♦ A K Q 6
♣ Q 8 5	♣ A 10	♣ 7 6 4 3 2
<div style="display: inline-block; text-align: center;">  </div>		
♠ A K 7 4		
♥ 10 8 4		
♦ J 10 5		
♣ K J 9		


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

Board 18
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

Board 19
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

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

4 ♠ by N/S can be beaten on the lead of ♥ K, followed by a second heart to West's ♥ A and a third heart, ruffed by East. But if this defense is NOT found then declarer can make 4 ♠. Declarer can score 4 trumps in the North hand, 3 (or even 4) diamonds, 1 top club and 1 club ruff in the South hand...AND has a 75% (actually a 100% given the actual layout) chance of scoring a heart trick. To make a heart trick declarer needs to lead towards South's ♥ QJ74 twice and as long as the top honours are split declarer can establish a trick! The position of ♣ J also makes 4 NT a makeable contract. Note that the South hand is rich in intermediate cards in spades and diamonds.

Saints & Sinners

Four N/S pairs reached the spade game. At one table, East led ♣ A and switched to ♦ 4 (♦ 6 or ♦ 7 would be better and more helpful to partner). Declarer beat West's ♦ Q with ♦ A and continued with ♣ K and a club ruff. At this point declarer is staring at two heart losers and must therefore assume that the spade finesse is working. Declarer should simply finesse ♠ 10 and then finesse ♠ J and draw West's last trump with ♠ A. Declarer can now count 4 trumps, 4 diamonds, ♣ K and a club ruff (already in the bag). BUT, declarer took her eye off the ball and instead played on diamonds with West ruffing the third round with ♠ 2. The defenders duly cashed two top hearts for one down. Careless play from a player who is normally a thoughtful declarer! **Sinner** status awarded.

At another table North declared 1 NT after South responded 1 ♦ to North's opening 1 ♣. East led ♣ 4, dummy's ♣ Q winning. Declarer then finessed ♠ 10 and cashed three more spades East discarding two small diamonds and thus telling declarer who held ♦ Q! Declarer then led ♦ 4 (leading ♦ J would have been better) rising with dummy's ♦ K and returning a diamond and winning with ♦ A when West's ♦ Q appeared. Declarer next cashed the blocking ♦ J. Declarer next led a heart East rising with ♥ K and then exiting on a heart to West's ♥ A. West now played ♣ 3 and declarer followed with ♣ 10 from hand which East ducked...and that was the end of the defense as declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ J and then cashed ♦ 10 as East discarded the ♣ A!!! **Sinner** status to **East** for disclosing the diamond position and also for not cashing ♣ A. **Saintly** status to declarer, **Siobhan**, for making the most of her assets! Eleven tricks to declarer.

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Similar defense at another table except when West switched to a club after winning ♥ A declarer fell from grace by playing ♣ K and losing the next three tricks. East is marked with ♣ A when ♣ Q won the opening lead, **Sinner** status to **declarer** who scored only eight tricks instead of ten!

However, **Sinner** status to both of the **East**s **defending 1 NT** who should have let partner win the first heart and continue with a club, clearing the suit while East still held ♥ K. Why did East rise with ♥ K...afraid declarer had ♥ A? Hardly, when declarer has already been identified with ♠ AQJ, ♦ AJ, ♣ K, i.e. 15 hcp. With ♥ A declarer would have 19 hcp and would be re-bidding 2 NT/3 NT.

'Counting, counting...all the time...'

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

S 6N; NS 6♣; N 5N; NS 4♥; NS 4♦; NS 2♠; Par +1440: S 6N

Yes, 6 NT by South can make whereas only 5 NT can be made if North is declarer...a spade lead by East is more devastating than a spade lead from West. If West leads a spade then declarer can establish a second spade trick to go with 2 hearts (successful finesse of ♥ Q), 3 diamonds, 5 clubs to give a total of 12 tricks. If East leads a spade then West wins with ♠ Q and a spade return sees East play low and declarer has to win with ♠ A, perforce and East is still holding ♠ K. On the lead of a spade from West, dummy's ♠ J forces East's ♠ K, South winning with ♠ A and being in a position to subsequently lead towards dummy's ♠ 109 to force a second spade trick. Making 6 ♣ is easier. *In fact it takes the lead of ♠ Q to prevent declarer from making all thirteen tricks...a small spade lead from West eventually sees West squeezed in three suits! Leading ♠ Q enables West to discard two small spades while East holds the master ♠ K.*

Saints & Sinners

Saintly status to South, **Rhona**, who emerged with thirteen tricks in her 5 ♣ contract when West lead ♠ 3, West covering dummy's ♠ J with ♠ K, declarer winning the trick with ♠ A. Declarer played a diamond to dummy's ♦ K and then drew three rounds of trumps, West discarding ♠ 8 on the second round and then found himself squeezed on the third round. Discarding ♠ Q would promote dummy's ♠ 109; discarding a diamond would enable declarer establish her fifth diamond as a winner; discarding a heart would see declarer establish dummy's ♥ 3 as a winner! West discarded a heart and declare subsequently finessed ♥ Q, cashed ♥ A and ruffed ♥ 2 in hand thereby establishing dummy's ♥ 3 as a winner.

At another table, **Norma O'Connell** declared 5 ♣ with the North hand on the lead of ♦ 6 and in a similar fashion West felt that she was squeezed and discarded a heart on the third club whereas West could have discarded her ♠ Q with East still holding the master ♠ K. Note that at this table West did not have the benefit of seeing the North hand and therefor didn't know for sure that North held four hearts.

At one table South declared 6 NT on the lead of ♦ J. Despite South bidding diamonds, West erred by discarding a heart and 2 diamonds on declarers play of the club suit. West subsequently failed to cover declarer's ♥ 10 and declarer duly scored all thirteen tricks. **Sinner** status to **West**.

Board 20
 West Deals
 Both Vul


♠ Q 8 3	♠ J 10 9	♠ K 7 6 5 2									
♥ K J 7 6	♥ A Q 3 2	♥ 9 8 4									
♦ J 10 9 7 3	♦ K	♦ 6 5									
♣ 8	♣ Q 9 6 3 2	♣ J 5 4									
<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; line-height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>				N		W		E		S	
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ A 4	♠ A 4	♠ A 4									
♥ 10 5	♥ 10 5	♥ 10 5									
♦ A Q 8 4 2	♦ A Q 8 4 2	♦ A Q 8 4 2									
♣ A K 10 7	♣ A K 10 7	♣ A K 10 7									

S 6N; NS 6♣; N 5N; NS 4♥; NS 4♦; NS 2♠; Par +1440: S 6N

Saints & Sinners (continued)

At one table West overcalled North's 1 ♣ opening with a very inappropriate VULNERABLE overcall of 1 ♠ on a very poor suit and with a total of a mere 4hcp...**Sinner** status to **North**. South felt a need to bid 3 ♦ when 2 ♦ (100% forcing...South has not previously bid!) would have been better. North bid 3 NT and South now deployed Gerber and finally propelled North to 6 NT. East made the extraordinary lead of ♠ K (instead of a small spade) and was extremely lucky to find his partner with ♠ Q! Although 6 NT by North is not included in the list of makeable contracts, declarer, by virtue of the extraordinary lead, was actually in a position to score twelve tricks. Declarer could have won the opening lead, finessed ♥ Q and continued with ♠ J giving herself 2 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds, 5 clubs. But declarer went astray in the play and duly ended one down. **Double Sinner** status to **East** for his overcall and opening lead.

Board 21
 North Deals
 N-S Vul

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

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

Board 22
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

NS 2♠; E 2♥; NS 1N; NS 2♣; W 1♥; NS 1♦; Par +110: NS 2♠

Board 23
South Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Board 24
 West Deals
 None Vul

♠ 2	♠ A Q 7 3	♠ 10 6 5			
♥ 6	♥ 8 5 4 2	♥ A K J 9 7			
♦ A J 8 6 5	♦ K 7 2	♦ 9 4			
♣ A K 10 8 5 4	♣ Q 3	♣ J 9 2			
<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; text-align: center; width: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>			N	W E	S
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ K J 9 8 4				
	♥ Q 10 3				
	♦ Q 10 3				
	♣ 7 6				

EW 5♣; EW 2N; EW 2♥; EW 3♦; NS 1♠; Par -400; EW 5♣

5 ♣ can make as long as declarer takes the right view in the trump suit! Also, a non-spade lead would give declarer the chance of making twelve tricks! N/S can make only seven tricks in spades...expect some N/S pairs to overbid...for which they should be punished!

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **North** who let 5 ♦ make! North led a small spade (I would have been inclined to lead ♠ A and continue with a small spade) to South who had overcalled 1 ♠. South won the trick and continued with a spade which declarer ruffed. Declarer next played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then cashed ♥ K, discarding a club from hand. Declarer then led ♦ 9 which South covered with ♦ 10, declarer following with ♦ J...and North fell from grace by ducking. Declarer seized the lifeline that had been thrown to her and cashed ♦ A and then played a third diamond felling both outstanding diamond honours. If North had won the first diamond then declarer would not have been able to access dummy to take a subsequent finesse against South's ♦ Q and would duly have lost a second trump to South. **Sinner** status to **East** who supported West's diamonds with her doubleton instead of showing preference for clubs.

Sinner status to the **West**, declarer in 5 ♣ who finessed ♣ J into North despite the fact that South had overcalled 1 ♠ thereby increasing the likelihood that if clubs were not 2-2 that South was more likely to be short.

Sinner status to the **North**, defending 5 ♣ after West had opened 1 ♣ and rebid 2 ♦, who led ♦ 2 into declarer's second suit! Declarer duly made twelve tricks.

Sinner status to the **East** at another table where West opened 1 ♣, East bid 1 ♥, South overcalled 1 ♠ and West made a **Reverse Bid** of 2 ♦ suggesting a hand with 16+ hcp. North bid 3 ♠ and South made a silly raise to 4 ♠...South has minimum values for the initial 1 ♠ overcall and a precariously positioned ♦ K given West's bidding. East should have Doubled the final contract. **East** also incurs an **Additional Sinner** status for not giving his partner a heart ruff after cashing ♥ AK, West showing out on the second round. Declarer escaped for two down and a loss of -100 instead of three down and a loss of -500.

Board 24
 West Deals
 None Vul

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

EW 5♣; EW 2N; EW 2♥; EW 3♦; NS 1♠; Par -400; EW 5♣

Saints & Sinners (continued)

Sinner status to the **North** who heard partner make a simple 1 ♠ overcall and yet proceeded to bid 3 ♠ and then 4 ♠ despite the E/W bidding, The contract was duly doubled and suffered a deserved three trick defeat at a cost of -500.

At one table West opened 1 ♦ and subsequently became declarer in 4 ♣ (mistakenly recorded as 5 ♣ after I made an error in applying an adjusted score. Mea culpa!) and where South overcalled 1 ♠, supported by North. North led ♠ A and continued with ♠ Q, South overtaking with ♠ K as declarer ruffed. Declarer cashed ♥ A, discarding a diamond from hand and then finessed ♦ J into North's ♦ K. North returned a spade which declarer ruffed in hand. Declarer continued with ♦ A and another diamond which she ruffed in dummy with ♣ 9 (**Saintly** status to **West**). Declarer next ruffed a heart in hand with ♣ 8 and then led her last diamond which she ruffed with dummy's ♣ J. Declarer next played a club to ♣ A in hand and cashed ♣ K, dropping North's ♣ Q and scored the final trick with ♣ 10. Eleven tricks made... and **Sinner** status to **West** (declarer) and **North**. Why so? Because both players went asleep during the play... At the point that declarer cashed ♦ A and ruffed the next diamond in dummy with ♣ 9, with both opponents following suit, declarer should have realised that the last diamond in her hand was a winner and didn't need to be ruffed in dummy! Declarer should have cashed clubs from the top, dropping North's ♣ Q, and then claimed the remaining tricks. Ruffing the last diamond left her open to an overruff by whichever defender held ♣ Q! And that's what North should have done when declarer led the fourth diamond ...she should have ruffed in with ♣ Q ahead of dummy! Concentration is vital.

Sinner status to the **West**, declaring 3 ♣ on the lead of ♥ 5 (**Saintly** status to **Frank Reynolds**...for leading the second highest card from a suit of 4+ without an honour) who won with ♥ A and failed to cash ♥ K discarding her losing spade and instead played THREE rounds of trumps ending in dummy.and then cashed ♥ K ...and discarded a diamond instead of her losing spade! Declarer ended up with ten tricks instead of the twelve that she should have made on the heart lead! Declarer should have discarded her losing spade at trick two, and then played on diamonds, ruffing the third diamond in dummy thereby establishing the two long diamonds in her hand as winners!