

British Autumn Virtual Sim Pairs



**Monday
5th October 2020**

Welcome to the 2020 British Autumn Virtual Simultaneous Pairs.

Thank you for playing.

As the return of face to Face Bridge continues to be delayed, I hope that our Sims continue to provide an entertaining diversion. I also hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert. The commentator for this set of hands is Brian Senior.

If you are playing this SIM at a virtual club other than your normal one encourage the committee at your main club to consider running a SIM or two.

You can find the full details and results at www.ebu.co.uk/sims/. You can earn Blue points in these Sim Pairs (in England) and they are awarded to the top third of the field. Provisional master points are shown but the event is not finalised until all results are in and score corrections have been made. This usually takes about three weeks.

Ian Payn, Chairman EBU

<p>♠ J964 ♥ Q64 ♦ K72 ♣ KQ10</p> <p>♠ 72 ♠ K53 ♥ K982 ♥ A105 ♦ 10 ♦ AQ43 ♣ J86532 ♣ A74</p> <p>♠ AQ108 ♥ J73 ♦ J9865 ♣ 9</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="68 1240 188 1429"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="228 1240 470 1429"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		11	17	4	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	2	-	1	-	S	-	2	-	1	-	E	3	-	2	-	-	W	2	-	1	-	-	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>If East opens a strong NT, West may convert to clubs. It is quite important exactly how the partnership goes about doing that, because on this layout it is very important that East become declarer.</p> <p>Against 3♣ by East, the natural lead is a diamond and away goes one of West's spade losers; +110.</p> <p>Against 3♣ by West, the natural lead is a low spade. Declarer can still get home by playing low. If South cashes the ♠A, the ♠K plus a winning diamond finesse provide discards for two hearts from the West hand, while if South does not cash the spade the second spade loser can go away on the diamond. It takes a high spade lead from West to guarantee beating the contract.</p> <p>If East opens 1♦, West will respond 1♥ and East rebid 1NT. That contract should fail, but West will run to 3♣ if the methods permit.</p> <p>If East opens 1♣ and is playing inverted raises, West should ignore the hearts and make a pre-emptive raise to 3♣.</p>
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<p>♠ 84 ♥ AQ10764 ♦ K7 ♣ A102</p> <p>♠ KQJ6 ♠ A32 ♥ K52 ♥ J98 ♦ 102 ♦ QJ654 ♣ KQ76 ♣ J9</p> <p>♠ 10975 ♥ 3 ♦ A983 ♣ 8543</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="68 1912 188 2098"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="228 1912 470 2098"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		13	9	14	4	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	2	-	-	S	-	-	2	-	-	E	-	-	-	1	-	W	-	1	-	1	-	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>If West opens 1NT, North overcalls 2♥ and will often play there. With four outside losers, success or failure will come down to judging which heart finesse to take. As West has opened the bidding, it seems normal to play for the ♥K rather than the ♥J to be onside, and a heart to the queen followed by ace and a third heart brings home eight tricks.</p> <p>East might, I suppose, compete over 2♥. If so, double, getting to 2♠, is more successful than getting to 3♦ via Lebensohl. West can escape for down one in 2♠, while 3♦ is a minimum of two down.</p> <p>If West opens 1♣ and North overcalls 1♥, East may make a negative double, depending on whether they play that to show or to deny four spades, and West if West rebids 1NT and plays there the contract is almost guaranteed to succeed. To beat it, North would have to lead the ♦7 and get a heart through. On the normal heart lead, the contract is quite secure and declarer finds himself playing for overtricks.</p>
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<p>♠ KJ9 ♥ J53 ♦ AK1064 ♣ AQ</p> <p>♠ Q1042 ♠ 876 ♥ 64 ♥ 972 ♦ Q9532 ♦ J7 ♣ J4 ♣ K10983</p> <p>♠ A53 ♥ AKQ108 ♦ 8 ♣ 7652</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>6♥ is an excellent contract on the NS cards, rating to succeed when either black-suit finesse is working.</p> <p>South will open 1♥ and rebid 2♥ over North's 2♦ response. It would be nice now to be playing two-over-one GF, as North could then raise to 3♥, forcing and inviting partner to cuebid. As South is not ashamed of his hand – an ace plus all the top three trump honours – he should be happy to start the ball rolling with 3♠, after which North will at some point take control and bid the slam.</p> <p>Playing Acol, the 3♥ raise would not be forcing so North would have to manufacture a bid, presumably choosing 2♠. Though 2♠ could be natural here, it is quite common to bid it as a NT probe so South should never raise to more than 3♠, making the bid quite safe.</p> <p>With no semblance of a club stopper, no diamond support and only three spades, 3♣ FSF looks to be South's best option. North can admit to some heart support now, 3♥ being forcing in response to FSF, and South can cuebid 3♠ on the way to game. After all, South has a good hand for the simple 2♥ rebid, while North is completely unlimited.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
18	N 3	4	6	4	5
5 4	S 3	4	6	4	5
13	E -	-	-	-	-
	W -	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 6 ♥ AJ1062 ♦ K5 ♣ K10975</p> <p>♠ Q10852 ♠ AKJ943 ♥ 3 ♥ 4 ♦ AQJ4 ♦ 10872 ♣ Q82 ♣ A4</p> <p>♠ 7 ♥ KQ9875 ♦ 963 ♣ J63</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>This one could get rather lively. West has just enough to open 1♠ and North will make a two-suited overcalls at many tables, often a 2♠ Michaels Cuebid to show hearts and another.</p> <p>Both East and South will be more than a little impressed by partner's bid. East is far too strong to settle for a raise to 4♠ but well short of what is required to take control with RKCB or a jump to slam. The obvious start is to make a 4♥ splinter bid, showing spade support, heart shortage and some slam interest.</p> <p>Even when vulnerable, South can afford to go to the five level when holding such magnificent trump support so bids 5♥.</p> <p>The splinter bid set up a force on EW, so with a minimum opening bid, West may double to show lack of enthusiasm for going on, but East's trump support is even more magnificent than South's and he will over-rule and bid 5♠.</p> <p>Will that end the auction? South will be tempted to bid again, but perhaps a disciplined pass is correct.</p> <p>5♥ would be down one. 5♠? Well, there are three losers, but North it takes a heart underlead for a club through to get them all. ♥A then a trump may not be good enough. Declarer can play ace and another diamond and North is endplayed.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11	N 3	-	4	-	-
11 12	S 3	-	4	-	-
6	E -	4	-	4	1
	W -	4	-	4	1

<p>♠ 10543 ♥ QJ94 ♦ K10 ♣ 743</p> <p>♠ AJ9872 ♠ - ♥ 106 ♥ K873 ♦ J92 ♦ AQ7 ♣ 108 ♣ KJ9652</p> <p>♠ KQ6 ♥ A52 ♦ 86543 ♣ AQ</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>When East opens 1♣, South will overcall 1NT – even if that five-card suit had been a major, nobody would want to overcall in it. West should now compete with 2♣. Bid over an opposing 1NT overcall this is not a forcing bid, instead just showing competitive values and, usually, a six-card suit, though five cards is a possibility on occasions.</p> <p>North will pass and East will feel a little uncomfortable. Passing out 2♣ will often see the contract go down two – but East may run to the comfort of his own six-card suit.</p> <p>Double dummy, 3♣ can also be defeated by two tricks. South leads a diamond, declarer winning and playing a low heart from hand. A second diamond is followed by a second heart, and North's only way to get to partner's hand is by leading a club through. South wins, gives North his diamond ruff, and a second club back prevents declarer from taking a heart ruff. Though the ♥A now appears when declarer leads the last small heart, that is three heart losers, two clubs and one diamond ruff – down two.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
6	N -	1	1	1	-
6 13	S -	1	1	1	-
15	E 1	-	-	-	-
	W 2	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ QJ43 ♥ 75 ♦ 9 ♣ AJ10753</p> <p>♠ A82 ♠ 1076 ♥ AQ84 ♥ KJ93 ♦ AJ52 ♦ K763 ♣ 86 ♣ Q9</p> <p>♠ K95 ♥ 1062 ♦ Q1084 ♣ K42</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">15</td><td style="text-align: center;">8</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		8	9	15	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	-	1	-	S	3	-	-	1	-	E	-	2	2	-	1	W	-	2	2	-	1	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>If West opens a strong NT, East will use Stayman then, I guess, raise the 2♥ response to 3♥ to invite game, an invitation which West should decline. Alas, there are four black-suit losers and the four-one diamond split means that there is no way to avoid a diamond loser so 3♥ is down one. If North comes in with a club bid, East can make a take-out double and once again the heart fit will be found. East will not like the doubleton ♣Q so will take a pessimistic view and allow West to play as low as is permitted by the opposition. If West opens 1♥, North will often overcall 2♣ and East should raise to just 2♥. The hand was always closer to a maximum simple raise than a minimum jump raise, and now that the ♣Q looks to be of questionable value it is clear to bid only 2♥. But South can compete with 3♣ and that is unbeatable as NS's combined 16 HCP fit together very nicely, so East will have to take the push to 3♥ anyway.</p>
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<p>♠ 1096 ♥ 86 ♦ Q864 ♣ Q964</p> <p>♠ J32 ♠ K8754 ♥ 32 ♥ Q1095 ♦ A1092 ♦ J ♣ K732 ♣ AJ8</p> <p>♠ AQ ♥ AKJ74 ♦ K753 ♣ 105</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">17</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		4	11	8	17	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	2	1	-	1	S	-	2	1	-	1	E	-	-	-	2	-	W	-	-	-	2	-	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <p>South opens 1♥ and there will be two passes to East. Should East overcall 1♠? It would be automatic to do so but for the heart length. The problem is that if East is long in hearts that means that West may be short in the suit, yet West couldn't find a bid over 1♥. Maybe West also has some heart length, or maybe the West hand is quite weak? I suspect that not many Easts will allow themselves to be dissuaded by the above thoughts from overcalling 1♠ and South may double or bid 1NT. Either way, West has a raise to 2♠ and that should end the auction. Were South to be left to declare 1♥, that contract could be brought home with careful play, and the same applies to 2♠ by East. Say that South leads three rounds of hearts, hoping to see North over-ruff the dummy. Knowing the ruff to be coming, declarer discards a club at trick three and North ruffs then plays a spade through. South wins the queen and plays a fourth heart, but this time declarer ruffs with the jack and plays a second round of trumps and has eight tricks.</p>
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<p>♠ QJ973 ♥ Q942 ♦ A9 ♣ 76</p> <p>♠ 8 ♠ AK642 ♥ A653 ♥ K ♦ Q107 ♦ J865 ♣ A9532 ♣ Q84</p> <p>♠ 105 ♥ J1087 ♦ K432 ♣ KJ10</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td><td style="text-align: center;">13</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10</td><td style="text-align: center;">8</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9	13	10	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	-	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	2	3	-	1	1	W	2	3	-	-	1	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>East will open 1♠ after two passes and, if playing Acol, West will respond 2♣ and East rebid 2♦. In modern tournament Acol, that is a one-round force and, with nothing else being remotely descriptive, West will bid 2NT. Facing a passed hand, East might pass that and North will lead a low heart. With communications very awkward for playing on clubs, declarer will instead set about the diamonds. When he wins the next defensive heart pay he can try a club to the queen but that loses and declarer will have to scramble for seven tricks, eight being well out of reach. However, East might convert 2NT to 3♣, which should not be forcing facing a passed hand, any strong hand being able to go via FSF. Communications are better in a club contract but if North gets a diamond ruff 3♣ too will be down a trick. The winning spot is a diamond partscore. If playing strong NT and five-card majors, it may well go 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦. If West can convince himself to pass that, the defence cannot prevent an overtrick so, strangely, the four-three fit plays a trick better than the eight-card fit.</p>
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<p>♠ K63 ♥ AK ♦ AKJ4 ♣ KQ102</p> <p>♠ 109852 ♠ A ♥ QJ654 ♥ 732 ♦ 76 ♦ Q98 ♣ 7 ♣ AJ9543</p> <p>♠ QJ74 ♥ 1098 ♦ 10532 ♣ 86</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">23</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3 11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		23	3 11	3	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	3	-	2	2	S	1	3	-	2	2	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Too strong for a 2NT opening, North will open 2♣ and rebid 2NT over the 2♦ negative waiting response. I am assuming here that East will be put off by the vulnerability from getting involved with his six-card club suit, but no doubt some intrepid souls will overcall 3♣ and play there doubled for -800. I trust that everyone knows for their partnership what double means from opener if it goes 2♣ - (3♣) - Pass - (Pass) - Dble?</p> <p>Anyway, unless East does overcall, almost everyone will play 3NT from the North seat. This is defeated quite trivially by a heart lead, West ducking one of the first two rounds of the suit, but East may lead a club. That gives declarer a club trick and he plays a top diamond followed by a low spade, catching East's bare ace. It is too late for East to switch to a heart now - that is the way to avoid overtricks, but declarer has nine simply by playing the king of clubs from hand to establish the queen.</p>
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<p>♠ AK5 ♥ 32 ♦ A10542 ♣ A84</p> <p>♠ J3 ♠ 842 ♥ Q9765 ♥ J4 ♦ Q6 ♦ J973 ♣ 10932 ♣ KQJ5</p> <p>♠ Q10976 ♥ AK108 ♦ K8 ♣ 76</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">15</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">5 8</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">12</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		15	5 8	12	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	4	3	5	4	S	1	4	3	5	4	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>South will open 1♠ and rebid 2♥ over the 2ds response. North is far too good for a raise to 4♠, while a jump to 3♠ would not be forcing playing Acol. That leaves 3♣, FSF, and South should bid 3♦ over that. Now North can set trumps by bidding 3♠, but South will just sign off in 4♠ and that will be that.</p> <p>Playing two-over-one, North could agree spades at either the two- or three-level over 2♥, depending on partnership style. South will like the ♦K but little else about his hand. He may admit to holding that card in a cuebidding auction, but then will settle for game.</p> <p>Say that West leads a club against 4♠. Declarer could play to ruff hearts in dummy, but that will often lead to the loss of a trick to the ♠J and, on the actual deal, will see East over-ruff the third round. The alternative line is to try to establish diamonds, playing three rounds and ruffing. When both spades and diamonds divide evenly that produces 12 tricks. In real life, however, West over-ruffs the third diamond, but declarer can still set up the fifth diamond and draw trumps ending in dummy to cash it.</p> <p>The simple line for 11 tricks on this layout is to ruff two hearts high and settle for one club and one spade loser.</p>
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<p>♠ J76 ♥ 87 ♦ AJ3 ♣ 108532</p> <p>♠ 53 ♠ A82 ♥ A10643 ♥ QJ5 ♦ K9 ♦ Q7654 ♣ AJ74 ♣ 96</p> <p>♠ KQ1094 ♥ K92 ♦ 1082 ♣ KQ</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">12 9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">13</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> </table>	HCP		6	12 9	13	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	1	-	S	-	-	-	1	-	E	1	2	3	-	2	W	1	2	3	-	2	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>If South opens a weak NT, West will often overcall 2♥, though that will be a considerably more attractive option if it shows hearts and a minor than if it is just natural with that ropey heart suit.</p> <p>If 2♥ goes back to South and South competes with 2♠, East in turn will compete with 3♥, which is cold as the cards lie. 2♠, meanwhile, should get out for down one on the NS cards.</p> <p>If South opens 1♠, West will once again have to overcall on a suit that doesn't really justify the bid - but at Love All, passing is also dangerous and, at matchpoints, we have to take risks or we are not competing the partscore often enough.</p> <p>If West overcalls 2♥, North competes with 2♠ and East in turn competes with 3♥. That should be it, though were South to bid a third spade, EW would need to double to protect their equity, as it is sometimes known. As they are making +140, to defend 3♠ undoubled for +100 will be a very poor result. Double, however, and +300 will be a near top.</p>
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<p>♠ A1073 ♥ AKQ96 ♦ J105 ♣ J</p> <p>♠ J9 ♠ Q86542 ♥ J2 ♥ 43 ♦ KQ94 ♦ 632 ♣ A9543 ♣ 108</p> <p>♠ K ♥ 10875 ♦ A87 ♣ KQ762</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>2</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	15		N	3	3	5	1	4	11	2	S	3	3	5	1	5			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Swap the minors round so that West could open 1♦ with the intention of rebidding 2♣, and the hand might well be opened. Here, however, the suits are in the wrong order, and who would want to open 1♣ and be forced to repeat such an empty suit?</p> <p>If West passes, North will open 1♥ and an aggressive East might make a weak jump overcall of 2♠. Why not try to get in the way when your opponents are known to have at least game values between them?</p> <p>Nothing that EW can do will prevent NS from getting to their heart game. South might bid 3♠ on the way to 4♥, but neither player can afford to go beyond game so 4♥ should be the almost universal contract – just as should be the case if West does open the bidding.</p> <p>On a black-suit lead, declarer can come to 12 tricks – five hearts, two spades, two spade ruffs, two clubs and the ♦A. On a diamond lead, declarer has to duck and now there is a trick to be lost in each minor.</p> <p>There is no reason why East should find a diamond lead, unless West has doubled a diamond cuebid.</p>
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<p>♠ AKJ3 ♥ Q10 ♦ QJ98 ♣ J86</p> <p>♠ 975 ♠ Q10842 ♥ 85 ♥ 96432 ♦ 10643 ♦ K ♣ Q1072 ♣ A4</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ AKJ7 ♦ A752 ♣ K953</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>9</td><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	14		N	5	6	5	3	5	2	9	S	5	6	5	3	5			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>If North opens a weak NT, East may overcall with a bid to show both majors. West will give preference to spades but 2♠ doubled is down four on accurate defence for –1100 with neither East nor West having really done anything criminal.</p> <p>Similarly, if North opens 1♦ and East overcalls 2♦, both majors, he puts his side in grave danger. Not that it is obligatory to bid with the East hand, which would look a whole lot better were the red suits ♥Kxxxx ♦x so that the king had greater value.</p> <p>NS can make 6♦, but left to themselves they will normally get to everyone’s favourite contract of 3NT.</p> <p>If East finds a heart lead, declarer should come to 11 tricks, picking up four diamonds and leading up to the king of clubs.</p> <p>If East leads the stronger major, spades, that gives declarer a third spade winner and now the same line of play produces a third overtrick. What will +690 look like as a result? Well, that rather depends on how many EW pairs have gone for a penalty.</p>
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<p>♠ A7652 ♥ A9 ♦ 7653 ♣ Q7</p> <p>♠ K109 ♠ Q3 ♥ K8653 ♥ J104 ♦ A4 ♦ Q108 ♣ J92 ♣ AK1086</p> <p>♠ J84 ♥ Q72 ♦ KJ92 ♣ 543</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	10		N	-	-	-	1	-	11	12	S	-	-	-	1	-			E	4	-	4	-	2			W	4	-	4	-	2	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>East has a weak NT and, if that is the chosen opening bid, West will transfer to hearts and follow through with 2NT, inviting game and a choice of denominations.</p> <p>East has a minimum for the opening so should decline the game invitation and, with three-card heart support and a potential weakness in spades, will sign off in 3♥, which of course West should respect.</p> <p>The cards lie well for EW, such that 10 tricks can always be made in a heart contract and 11 are possible on most leads if declarer gets the hearts right.</p> <p>To ensure their third defensive trick, South will have to lead a spade and North switch to a diamond. Otherwise, declarer can play hearts for one loser by playing the jack then the ten to pin North’s nine, and has five club winners so that the diamond loser goes away from dummy.</p> <p>If East opens 1♣ and West responds 1♥, North can overcall 1♠ and South raise to 2♠. West will bid on and may at some times drive to game if East has supported hearts. With West as declarer, a diamond lead creates the third defensive trick immediately. 4♥ making will score well, but 3♥+1 may be well below average.</p>
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<p>♠ J2 ♥ 1064 ♦ KQ752 ♣ 954</p> <p>♠ Q875 ♠ K6 ♥ AJ72 ♥ Q53 ♦ 83 ♦ AJ964 ♣ A82 ♣ J63</p> <p>♠ A10943 ♥ K98 ♦ 10 ♣ KQ107</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <p>South opens 1♠ and North responds 1NT. When South now bids 2♣, some Norths may be tempted to introduce their diamonds, but really this should suggest either a sixth diamond or only a singleton spade. On the actual hand it is correct to give preference to 2♠, which is likely to end the auction.</p> <p>Not that 2♠ is a joy to play, mind you. EW can make at least seven tricks in all five denominations, and 2♠ can be down two if the defence gets the position right. However, that may be easier said than done. Say that West leads the eight of diamonds to the king and ace, is it clear to East what to do now, and if East returns a low heart and West wins the jack, will he know what to do next?</p> <p>Theoretically, declarer has no entry to dummy so will be playing from his own hand all the time, but in practice the defence will have to be just right to not let declarer escape for down one.</p>																																									
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<p>♠ Q76 ♥ Q42 ♦ J9632 ♣ 87</p> <p>♠ KJ ♠ 532 ♥ 765 ♥ 109 ♦ AK105 ♦ 74 ♣ AQ109 ♣ K65432</p> <p>♠ A10984 ♥ AKJ83 ♦ Q8 ♣ J</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Say that West opens a strong NT. East may transfer to clubs and South could cuebid 3♣ to show a major two-suiter – with a more general take-out hand South could just wait until 3♣ was reached then double.</p> <p>That suits North well enough as, though he doesn't have much, what he does have are the queens of both partner's suits. Whether North chooses to play in 3♥ or 3♠ doesn't really matter as both contracts come home exactly when declarer plays West for the ♠K because of the opening bid.</p> <p>But perhaps West will compete to 4♣, despite the fact that East might have nothing. 10 tricks are making in a club contract, declarer getting spades right because South has shown most of the NS high cards with his cuebid.</p> <p>If West opens 1♦, that may be passed round to South, who makes a Michaels Cuebid to show the majors. This time, the clubs may not get into the auction so that NS will be permitted to play where they choose.</p> <p>And if West opens 1♠? Then an inverted raise to 3♣, pre-emptive, makes life more awkward for South. He can double for take-out then convert 3♦ to 3♥ and that should get the job done. If he instead cuebids 4♣ to show the two-suiter, 4♥/♠ will be down one.</p>																																									
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<p>♠ K43 ♥ 764 ♦ K52 ♣ J1054</p> <p>♠ Q7 ♠ AJ652 ♥ Q32 ♥ AJ9 ♦ AJ1083 ♦ Q97 ♣ A83 ♣ 76</p> <p>♠ 1098 ♥ K1085 ♦ 64 ♣ KQ92</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>East will open either 1♠ or 1NT. 1♠ will be automatic if playing a strong NT. If playing weak NT there is a choice to be made. I know some players hate to open 1NT when holding a five-card major, others do it whenever they are 5-3-3-2, irrespective of suit quality. I like to compromise and open 1M with a very strong suit, 1NT with a very weak suit, and look at the all-round texture of the hand with a middling-strength suit.</p> <p>This East hand qualifies as a middling suit and I would open 1NT, treating it as balanced rather than a single-suiter. Of course, those playing strong NT who can open 1♠ and rebid 2NT over a 2♣/♦ response are able to make the best description of the hand.</p> <p>It looks as though most roads lead to 3NT, sometimes by East, less often by West. I suppose that there will be the occasional 4♠ where East opens 1♠ and rebids 2♠, but even that is as likely to end up in 3NT.</p> <p>Whoever is on lead, a club looks normal. That puts the defence ahead of the game and eight tricks should be the limit when the diamond finesse loses.</p>																																									
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<p>♠ 964 ♥ J82 ♦ A742 ♣ 732</p> <p>♠ A10 ♠ J532 ♥ A10963 ♥ Q5 ♦ 10953 ♦ KQJ ♣ AJ ♣ Q1096</p> <p>♠ KQ87 ♥ K74 ♦ 86 ♣ K854</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>There will be those who upgrade the East 11-count to opening bid status, perhaps using the ♣109 as an excuse. That will mean that game is reached as a matter of routine.</p> <p>Facing a weak NT, West will transfer to hearts then bid 3NT – there is no point in introducing the weak diamond suit – and East will choose to play in 3NT.</p> <p>If East opens 1♣ then rebids 1NT, West can use checkback and settle for 3Nt when East shows only a doubleton heart.</p> <p>But East will often not open the bidding. If the non-vulnerable East does not open, certainly the vulnerable South should not open his 11-count, leaving it to West to open 1♥ and rebid 2♦ over the 1♠ response. East will invite game with 2NT, and now will West go on to game, bearing in mind that partner passed as dealer?</p> <p>As the cards lie, there is no defence. Indeed, the defenders will have to be careful not to let through an overtrick. Yet it is far from automatic to get to game and those who stop short should not feel that they have done anything terrible – it will just look that way when they see their matchpoint score.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ J ♥ A6 ♦ K9865 ♣ Q9643</p> <p>♠ Q765 ♠ A1094 ♥ 983 ♥ K754 ♦ Q104 ♦ A2 ♣ KJ2 ♣ A108</p> <p>♠ K832 ♥ QJ102 ♦ J73 ♣ 75</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>It isn't clear where this one will be played. Firstly, the North hand is not an opening bid in any other situation, but third-in-hand at favourable vulnerability? Many will open 1♦, or even a weak 2♦.</p> <p>Either of those opening bids should see East double and West respond as cheaply as possible in spades – no, the eight-count is not worth a jump, not with 4-3-3-3, a weak main suit, generally soft values including Q10x in the suit opened by an opponent. It looks as though EW always get to a spade partscore and nine tricks are possible after North has opened the bidding.</p> <p>If North passes and East opens a strong NT, West passes and North overcalls 2NT, both minors. South will respond 3♦ and that is at least a couple down and usually more. If there is no double, the third undertrick will be key to beat those scoring +140 in a spade contract.</p> <p>If East is left to play in 1NT South will lead the queen of hearts, though the two would be better double dummy. Nine tricks are now possible, while an unlikely diamond lead (unless North has bid the suit, of course) should hold the contract to eight.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ J874 ♥ J754 ♦ AQ85 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ A109 ♠ 632 ♥ K6 ♥ AQ10 ♦ KJ42 ♦ 1096 ♣ QJ104 ♣ K876</p> <p>♠ KQ5 ♥ 9832 ♦ 73 ♣ A932</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>If West opens a weak NT, that will silence everyone.</p> <p>North has three four-card suits from which to choose. A spade holds the contract to seven tricks immediately, while a heart gives North a second chance to find a spade attack when in with the queen of diamonds, which would again mean only seven tricks. A diamond, the lead we were all taught to make as beginners – fourth-highest of your longest and strongest – gives declarer a diamond trick and that is the eighth.</p> <p>I would not lead a diamond. The defenders have sufficient strength between them to expect to have another chance if a diamond attack is required, so why risk giving declarer a trick to which he is not entitled – this is matchpoints, remember, where that trick could be all that the deal is about. I would choose between the two majors and, as spades are fractionally stronger than hearts – give partner KX9 to see how holding the eight might on occasions be relevant – I would lead the four of spades.</p> <p>If West has to open 1♣ or 1♦, East will respond 1NT and become declarer. A spade lead is unlikely now, but South may lead a low club or a heart (I would choose the latter) and see a discard from partner on the second club and that should help South to find the best switch.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ J9 ♥ A62 ♦ 42 ♣ AQJ1052</p> <p>♠ 432 ♠ A876 ♥ J4 ♥ 105 ♦ AKQ76 ♦ 10853 ♣ 764 ♣ K93</p> <p>♠ KQ105 ♥ KQ9873 ♦ J9 ♣ 8</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>7</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	12		N	3	-	4	1	1	10	7	S	3	-	4	1	1			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>North opens 1♣ and South responds 1♥. Non-vulnerable, it would seem reasonable for West to overcall 2♦, both for the lead and to take a little bidding space away from the opposition.</p> <p>Those playing strong NT and five-card majors will often be playing Support Doubles now, North doubling to show three hearts. East may raise to 3♦ but South has an easy 4♥ bid, ending the auction. Assuming that the defence takes its diamond winners, there are 10 tricks for +620.</p> <p>If not playing Support Doubles, North should pass over 2♦. East will again raise to 3♦ and South can either bid 3♠, a reverse so forcing, or double for take-out. Either should see the heart fit confirmed and the cold game reached.</p> <p>If a wild EW pair sacrifice in 5♦ doubled, a club lead and two club ruffs leads to down five and -1100. Even without the ruffs, the contract is down four for -800.</p>
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<p>♠ A2 ♥ 97 ♦ A9743 ♣ A853</p> <p>♠ Q1053 ♠ KJ764 ♥ A ♥ 10865 ♦ J1062 ♦ K85 ♣ KQ62 ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ 98 ♥ KQJ432 ♦ Q ♣ J974</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>7</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	12		N	3	-	3	-	2	12	7	S	3	-	3	-	2			E	-	1	-	2	-			W	-	1	-	2	-	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>After a pass from East, South will open either 2♥ or 3♥. The weak two bid would be the traditional choice, but six-four hands are often worth an extra trick in the play and, with little defensive potential, the bigger pre-empt is tempting as it puts more pressure on the opposition.</p> <p>If South opens 2♥, West will double for take-out. East is worth an invitational jump to 3♠, but West has a bare minimum so declines the invitation.</p> <p>If South opens 3♥, it is less clear for West to double. True, the hand is the ideal distribution, but partner is a passed hand and EW are vulnerable. To double is more dangerous at this level, but could still be right – it is unlikely that East will be able to act if West does not double.</p> <p>If West doubles a 3♥ opener, East should bid 4♠. On a heart lead North will have to win the first spade and play ace and another diamond to be certain of beating the contract, otherwise it is possible to make the dreadful game. An opening diamond lead, however, means two ruffs and down two for a very bad EW score.</p> <p>With two heart losers (unless declarer is psychic), making 3♥ will require declarer to pick up the clubs for one loser. That is certainly not impossible – either starting by leading the jack, or low to the ten and jack then finesse against West's second honour, will do the trick.</p>
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<p>♠ 9875 ♥ 7 ♦ J753 ♣ A963</p> <p>♠ AKQ102 ♠ 43 ♥ Q109 ♥ KJ8432 ♦ 108 ♦ Q64 ♣ Q54 ♣ K10</p> <p>♠ J6 ♥ A65 ♦ AK92 ♣ J872</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>9</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	5		N	3	3	-	-	-	13	9	S	3	3	-	-	-			E	-	-	3	1	1			W	-	-	3	1	-	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <p>If South opens 1NT, West may pass as there is the possibility of running the spades on defence while having a lot of potential losers if he bids 2♠.</p> <p>Passing works very well as seven tricks are the limit in a spade contract, at least at double dummy, though more will often be made in practice, while after the pass East can overcall 2♥, and nine tricks are always available.</p> <p>If South opens 1♣/♦ then of course West will overcall 1♠. Depending on how many cards the opening bid promised in the suit, North may raise to the two level or, if facing four-plus cards, make a pre-emptive raise to the three level.</p> <p>The simple raise will achieve nothing, as East has an easy 2♥ bid. Even if NS compete further, West can support hearts at the three level for a comfortable +140.</p> <p>The pre-emptive raise puts on a lot more pressure. East may refuse to be shut out and bid 3♥, but now West may raise to game, and there are four top losers. And if East is not willing to bid at the three level so passes, West is a little too balanced to bid a second time so 3♣/♦ will buy the contract.</p> <p>As the cards lie, 3♣/♦ can be made. Club can be played for one loser by starting with a low card away from the ace. If declarer plays East for K10/Q10 doubleton, the defence is powerless.</p>
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<p>♠ A107 ♥ A42 ♦ A65 ♣ AJ32</p> <p>♠ Q8543 ♠ 9 ♥ K1095 ♥ Q76 ♦ 94 ♦ KQJ ♣ 84 ♣ KQ10975</p> <p>♠ KJ62 ♥ J83 ♦ 108732 ♣ 6</p>	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>If North opens a strong NT, East may overcall 3♣. That will often conclude the auction. Should an aggressive South make a take-out double, North will leave it in.</p> <p>3♣ doubled is touch and go. Double dummy, the contract can be beaten by a trick, but it is easy to see how it might make if declarer gets the heart right – which it is, of course, natural to do given the paucity of entries to the dummy.</p> <p>If North's system requires a 1♣ opening, that will silence many Easts who will not have a natural club overcall available to them. South should respond, probably 1♠ for most pairs, and North rebids 1♠. Now East can bid the clubs, but 2♣ will let South compete with 2♦, which for most pairs will promise five diamonds but not necessarily a fifth spade – a hand with five spades and four diamonds would make a take-out double.</p> <p>If NS get to play a diamond partscore they can make nine tricks for +110. Despite the bad trump split, it is also possible to make 2♠, while in the unlikely event that North is left to play in 1NT that is also unbeatable.</p>																																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">17</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">5 13</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">5</td></tr> </table>	HCP		17	5 13	5	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	3	-	2	1	S	-	3	-	2	-	E	2	-	-	-	-	W	2	-	-	-	-
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<p>♠ QJ87 ♥ 1097 ♦ Q652 ♣ KQ</p> <p>♠ 1093 ♠ A65 ♥ AKQ6 ♥ 53 ♦ K1094 ♦ A73 ♣ 72 ♣ J10863</p> <p>♠ K42 ♥ J842 ♦ J8 ♣ A954</p>	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>There will be three passes to West. Often, West will open with a weak NT and play there. Alternatively, a 1♣ or 1♦ opening will see East respond 1NT and declare the same contract.</p> <p>North will usually lead a spade. It is normal for declarer to duck twice and win the third spade. There is no possibility to set up and cash a club trick, so the best hope is to play three rounds of diamonds, establishing an extra trick whenever the suit is three-three or an honour falls. Sure enough, the jack falls on the second round and the ten knocks out North's queen. Now some luck is required and, after North cashes the thirteenth spade, it duly materialises when the clubs prove to be blocked. North can cash the ♣KQ but must then put declarer in to claim the rest; seven tricks for +90.</p> <p>With East as declarer, South will lead a heart or a club. The former takes all the pressure off as declarer wins and plays three rounds of diamonds – seven tricks without needing the club blockage. On a club lead, North wins and declarer falsecards with the six in an attempt to make it look as though South has a fifth card in the suit. That may persuade North to cash the second honour, and now declarer has the entries to set up and cash a club for his seventh trick.</p>																																									
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<p>♠ K532 ♥ J2 ♦ AQ85 ♣ A73</p> <p>♠ A9874 ♠ - ♥ 3 ♥ AKQ109764 ♦ K93 ♦ J74 ♣ K865 ♣ 109</p> <p>♠ QJ106 ♥ 85 ♦ 1062 ♣ QJ42</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>East has one of the more obvious 4♥ openers I have seen and there will be two passes to North.</p> <p>The North hand would double a 1♥ opening or a 2♥ opening, and might even double a 3♥ opening, but it is far from automatic to double a 4♥ opening. Yes, North has 14 HCP and the shortest suit is hearts, but this is a case where passing is dangerous but so is doubling. I suppose I'm saying that I wouldn't blame anybody for passing and neither would I blame anyone for doubling (unless it didn't work, of course).</p> <p>If North doubles, South will respond 4♠ and West will be delighted to double. That does not invite East back to the party so the double will end the auction. After two rounds of hearts and a club switch, seven tricks looks to be the likely outcome; -800.</p> <p>If North quietly passes out 4♥, South will lead the queen of spades. That permits East to take a discard in hand. He can pitch a diamond then play for either missing ace to be onside, or he can pitch a club then lead a low diamond towards the jack, needing either the queen or ace to be onside and no outstanding ruff.</p> <p>Obviously, the latter is the winning choice, but the danger of a ruff makes it the inferior one in theory.</p>																																									
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<p>♠ J63 ♥ 543 ♦ Q965 ♣ J97</p> <p>♠ KQ9 ♠ A8754 ♥ AQ10 ♥ J872 ♦ AK83 ♦ - ♣ K52 ♣ AQ86</p> <p>♠ 102 ♥ K96 ♦ J10742 ♣ 1043</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">21</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>7</td><td>4</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>7</td><td>4</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>7</td></tr> </table>	HCP		4	11	21	4	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	7	4	7	7	7	W	7	4	7	7	7	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>There is an assortment of making grand slams available on this deal but they all require friendly breaks plus a winning finesse, so should not be bid. Small slam, however, is a different matter.</p> <p>West will open 2NT and East do whatever his agreed methods suggest for this distribution. Playing four-card Stayman, 3♣ followed by 3♥ over 3♦, Smolen and showing five spades and four hearts would be a good start. West can now agree spades by bidding 3♠ and East will cuebid, after which it is hard to see how slam can be missed – East has so many controls that any sort of enthusiasm from partner will do the trick.</p> <p>Is it possible to reach the top spot of 6NT? Maybe, but it will have to be West who converts 6♠ to 6NT. Suppose that, over 3♠, East has the option of either bidding 3NT to ask partner to start cuebidding, or of bidding a shortage at the four level. On this deal East would bid 4♦ over 3♠. That would not in itself excite West but, when East eventually drove to 6♠, it might well be that West would see no benefit in playing in spades, so could try 6NT, not just for the extra 10 points, but also because occasionally a bad spade split might beat 6♠ while 6NT was still makeable.</p>
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<p>♠ 6 ♥ 9852 ♦ K9742 ♣ K86</p> <p>♠ AQ10942 ♠ KJ75 ♥ 103 ♥ AJ64 ♦ QJ8 ♦ A ♣ 54 ♣ AQJ10</p> <p>♠ 83 ♥ KQ7 ♦ 10653 ♣ 9732</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">20</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td><td style="text-align: center;">5</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>7</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>7</td><td>6</td></tr> </table>	HCP		6	20	9	5	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	5	1	3	7	6	W	5	1	3	7	6	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>West has a book example of a weak two bid, and East is too good to just settle for a raise to game. A 2NT asking bid will elicit the information that partner is in the top half of his range, possibly with good spades, or possibly with a diamond high-card feature, according to the detail of the agreement.</p> <p>If West has good spades, it is hard to see how slam can be worse than being on the club finesse, and it may be a good deal better, so after some exploration, East should bid 6♣.</p> <p>13 tricks are available courtesy of the club finesse and, on a passive lead, declarer will take and retake the finesse and soon claim those 13 tricks. But what about a club lead? That could be a singleton, so should declarer spurn the finesse? He still makes 12 tricks so this does ensure the contract, short of South ruffing the ace. I would say that declarer should take the finesse. Most pairs should be in slam, and attacking leads away from kings are quite normal against small slams. The finesse will only lead to defeat if the lead is a singleton.</p> <p>What about a heart lead? On a high spot card, declarer should rely on the club finesse. But if a cunning North leads the ♥2 – wouldn't you play low then take a second heart finesse rather than finesse in clubs? Unlucky.</p>
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<p>♠ 972 ♥ KJ8 ♦ AQJ4 ♣ KJ5</p> <p>♠ 65 ♠ A10843 ♥ 753 ♥ Q102 ♦ 98632 ♦ K10 ♣ A96 ♣ Q74</p> <p>♠ KQJ ♥ A964 ♦ 75 ♣ 10832</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">15</td><td style="text-align: center;">11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">10</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		15	11	4	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	1	2	1	2	S	2	1	2	1	2	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>If North opens a strong NT he will be raised to game via Stayman.</p> <p>Alas, though NS have the requisite combined 25 HCP 3NT is doomed to fail by at least a trick.</p> <p>East will lead a low spade and will soon get in to continue the spade attack. With three suits all featuring failing finesses, declarer will have to let East in again and this time the established spades can be cashed. That is enough to ensure down one, but two down will be common enough – three spades and one in each of the other suits, or perhaps three spades, two clubs and one diamond, depending on which suits declarer chooses to play on.</p> <p>If North opens 1♣ or 1♦, East can overcall 1♠ and South will make a negative double to show the hearts. What should North do? It looks faintly ridiculous to keep bidding new suits when 3-3-4-3, so I would bid 1NT, showing the shape and overcall strength, and accept that I might have to play 1NT with no spade stopper. There is room for South to check to make sure North has a stopper before committing to 3NT.</p>
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<p>♠ 542 ♥ J764 ♦ 92 ♣ Q1085</p> <p>♠ K8 ♠ AQ76 ♥ KQ1085 ♥ A9 ♦ J1084 ♦ Q653 ♣ J2 ♣ 976</p> <p>♠ J1093 ♥ 32 ♦ AK7 ♣ AK43</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>12</td><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	3		N	2	-	-	1	-	10	12	S	2	-	-	1	-			E	-	3	2	-	1	15		W	-	3	2	-	1	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>If East opens a weak NT, South has enough to double. West will be quite content with that and may even redouble if that shows strength in the partnership methods. North, however, will not be so happy and, with or without an opposing redouble, may run to 2♣.</p> <p>2♣ is unbeatable and no doubt someone will play in 2♣ doubled and score a top for +180. However, neither East nor West has a suitable club holding to make a penalty double or to leave in a take-out double, so this should be a very rare result.</p> <p>More likely is that West will declare 2♥ and make exactly.</p> <p>If East opens 1♦, South may overcall 1NT and West double. Again, North may run. Ideally, he will be playing a method where 2♣ shows clubs and another suit – after all, a simple natural 2♣ would not fare well if South’s clubs and hearts were switched around. Today, however, 2♣ is the place to be. West may again bid 2♥, or may prefer 3♦ if East’s opening guaranteed an at least four-card suit.</p>
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<p>♠ J1093 ♥ 62 ♦ 10732 ♣ J62</p> <p>♠ AK87652 ♠ - ♥ 9 ♥ J10854 ♦ - ♦ AKQ854 ♣ K10973 ♣ A8</p> <p>♠ Q4 ♥ AKQ73 ♦ J96 ♣ Q54</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>14</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td></td><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	2		N	-	-	-	-	-	10	14	S	-	-	-	-	-			E	4	3	3	4	2	14		W	4	3	3	4	2	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <p>When South opens 1♥ – and, yes, even if playing weak NT I would prefer to show this strong suit rather than open 1NT – West should make the practical bid of 4♠. Yes, it is possible that the hand should be played in clubs, and possibly even in a club slam facing as little as ♣AQxx and nothing else, but a seven-five hand will belong in the longer suit far more often than not, and 4♠ requires a trick fewer than does 5♣.</p> <p>And, of course, West cannot be thinking solely about the EW prospects when playing the hand. Right-hand-opponent has just opened in one of West’s short suits. Any lesser overcall than 4♠, whether a simple overcall or a two-suited bid, makes it so much easier for North to start to describe his hand. Yes, I know, this North hand is going to be described quite beautifully by passing, whatever West does, but imagine if the North and East hands were switched.</p> <p>With club losers going away on the top diamonds, 4♠ makes exactly. NS, of course, can make nothing.</p>
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<p>♠ A10 ♥ J10987 ♦ AJ ♣ 9753</p> <p>♠ 9753 ♠ 62 ♥ AK62 ♥ Q3 ♦ 975 ♦ Q103 ♣ A4 ♣ KQ10862</p> <p>♠ KQJ84 ♥ 54 ♦ K8642 ♣ J</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>9</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td></td><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	10		N	-	2	-	3	-	11	9	S	-	2	-	3	-			E	2	-	1	-	-	10		W	2	-	1	-	-	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <p>You could make case for this deal being passed out.</p> <p>West has AAK but nothing else and is vulnerable. Most would not want to open a weak NT with such a hand, though 1♣ is a little safer so the strong no-trumpers are more likely to open.</p> <p>North will overcall at the one level if that is an option, but will certainly not open the bidding.</p> <p>Switch the vulnerabilities around and East might open 3♣ – I would at favourable – but vulnerable against not it is either pass or open 1♣ for the lead.</p> <p>And if there are three passes to South, the five-five shape is good but should South open with 9 working HCP. There is a big danger of partner, who also has about a quarter of the deck, bidding too much.</p> <p>Well, North has 9 out of 10 HCP in South’s suits so that 3♠ can be made, or 2♦. EW, meanwhile, have five losers in a club contract if North gets the diamond ruff. Simply because they own the boss suit, spades, I would expect NS to go plus more often than their opponents.</p>
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