

EBED



Sim Pairs

Commentary by Paul Bowyer

Thursday
13th May 2021

Welcome to the English Bridge Education & Development (EBED) Simultaneous Pairs. The proceeds raised by this event will go to EBED, the national charity for the promotion and development of duplicate bridge. EBED have worked hard in the past year to improve and develop the infrastructure for bridge teaching in England. This has been achieved through initiatives such as the development of our e-learning portal EBS (English Bridge School) and support to enable our trained EBTA (English Bridge Teaching Association) teachers transition to online lessons. EBED also supplies “Bridge for All” teaching materials, organises teacher training and club director training courses, administers the Junior Award Scheme and supports county organisations and individual volunteers at the local level to run youth events. You can read more about EBED’s activities in the current issue of English Bridge and at www.ebedcio.org.uk. If you wish to arrange a donation in favour of the charity, please do so at www.ebedcio.org.uk/donate. Do please encourage your friends to come to play in these events which are open to all and raise vital funds for our work. We sincerely thank you thank you for your support.

Giorgio Provenza
 Chief Executive English Bridge Education & Development,
 Registered Charity No: 1153543

<p>♠ J876 ♥ Q105 ♦ J1098 ♣ 74</p> <p>♠ K2 ♠ A10 ♥ 863 ♥ AK2 ♦ 7654 ♦ KQ2 ♣ AKQJ ♣ 98632</p> <p>♠ Q9543 ♥ J974 ♦ A3 ♣ 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;">16</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</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> <th>N</th> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> </tr> <tr> <th>E</th> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <th>W</th> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		4	16	13	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	3	1	1	4	W	4	3	1	1	4	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>There are some tricky bidding hands in this set of deals – but this isn’t one of them. The auction should be straightforward and may even be shorter than that indicated above if East-West are playing a strong no-trump as it may well proceed 1NT – 3NT.</p> <p>East-West have easy ten tricks available in no-trumps on any lead. An extra trick may come from a sloppy discard from North, but that’s not all that likely. There should be loads of scores of 430 to East-West.</p> <p>An occasional pair may get over-excited by the club fit and overbid to 6♣. That has no play at all and even 5♣ is defeated if North-South sit there patiently and wait for their due. The opening lead of the ♦A from South will provide East with an eleventh trick in clubs but not the twelfth, so an ambitious slam should always fail.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
HCP																																																											
4	16																																																										
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E	4	3	1	1	4																																																						
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	Pass	1♣	Pass																																																								
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass																																																								
3NT	All Pass																																																										

<p>♠ K ♥ KQJ109432 ♦ 87 ♣ 43</p> <p>♠ J8754 ♠ AQ6 ♥ A87 ♥ 6 ♦ Q432 ♦ AJ6 ♣ J ♣ A109652</p> <p>♠ 10932 ♥ 5 ♦ K1095 ♣ KQ87</p>	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>After the 1♣ – 1♠ start to the auction, just how many hearts should North bid? With an eight-card suit it may look right to punt 4♥ but the vulnerability is against such buccaneering tactics. If North does try a full-blooded pre-empt, he may be made to regret it as East might well double and the defenders should take this two down for 500 points and a top match-point score. If North contents himself with a more prudent 3♥, then East may make a take-out double leading to East-West finding their way to 4♠. That's a delicate contract that needs careful handling. Our old friend, <i>Deep Finesse</i>, tells us that eleven tricks are available in spades, but few declarers will find the tricky line of play to secure that result. Bidding and making game in spades will provide a satisfactory result for East-West on this one.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	Pass	1♠	3♥	Dble	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
West	North	East	South														
		1♣	Pass														
1♠	3♥	Dble	Pass														
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass														

HCP		Makeable contracts			
			♣	♦	♥
9		N	-	-	2
8	15	S	-	-	2
8		E	4	4	-
		W	3	4	-
					♠
					NT

<p>♠ K7 ♥ 976532 ♦ Q5 ♣ KQ3</p> <p>♠ 104 ♠ QJ6 ♥ AK8 ♥ 104 ♦ A984 ♦ 1076 ♣ 9876 ♣ AJ542</p> <p>♠ A98532 ♥ QJ ♦ KJ32 ♣ 10</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>South has a marginal opening bid and North a minimum 2♥ response. After that, it seems normal to play the hand in 2♠, the last making contract for North-South. There seems to be no way to avoid losing one spade, two hearts, one diamond and one club, so a score of 110 to North-South is the optimum result. Anyone who bids beyond the two-level with the North-South cards is likely to go minus and do very badly, but there should be little temptation to do so. The only variation may come if West makes a sporting take-out double of 1♠ on his 11 points. Now East may compete to 3♣, putting the cat amongst the pigeons. If he is allowed to steal the deal he may do well if allowed to make eight tricks. However, he may well misguess trumps and fail by two tricks for the kiss of death score of -200.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠	All Pass			
West	North	East	South														
			1♠														
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠														
All Pass																	

HCP		Makeable contracts			
			♣	♦	♥
10		N	-	1	2
11	8	S	-	1	2
11		E	2	-	-
		W	2	-	-
					♠
					NT

<p>♠ AKQ5 ♥ A106 ♦ 762 ♣ 1093</p> <p>♠ 642 ♠ 1098 ♥ QJ9 ♥ K53 ♦ 3 ♦ AK84 ♣ QJ8762 ♣ A54</p> <p>♠ J73 ♥ 8742 ♦ QJ1095 ♣ K</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>If North opens a weak no-trump then South should certainly employ Stayman on his 3·4·5·1 hand, intending to pass any response. As it is, he ends up in a fair spot of 2♠, which looks to be a reasonable contract. The defenders can beat it, though, by leading three rounds of diamonds, playing a club to the ace and then playing a fourth diamond. Now declarer has too many losers. An even more effective defence is for East to cash one high diamond and play a low diamond at trick two, ruffed by West. Now a heart switch makes life very awkward for declarer who has to play well for one down. What if 1NT is left in? Well, the defenders can take two diamonds and six clubs for a nasty two down, but this is not easy for them to judge. An initial low diamond lead (not actually recommended) allows declarer to escape for one down.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	All Pass	
West	North	East	South										
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣										
Pass	2♠	All Pass											

HCP		Makeable contracts			
			♣	♦	♥
13		N	-	1	1
6	14	S	-	1	1
7		E	2	-	-
		W	2	-	-
					♠
					NT

<p>♠ 106 ♥ 10 ♦ AJ109875 ♣ 1086</p> <p>♠ J3 ♠ 985 ♥ AKQ42 ♥ 985 ♦ Q2 ♦ K643 ♣ KJ42 ♣ A93</p> <p>♠ AKQ742 ♥ J763 ♦ None ♣ Q75</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>An awkward hand this, with many pairs getting minus scores on the East-West cards. Should you open 3♦ on the North hand? The vulnerability is wrong for a weak pre-empt, but the diamonds are robust and it's match-point pairs, so many will take that action. That should float to West who does best to pass (or find an off-beat take-out double and have East pass). Not many will find that, though, and most will bid 3♥, ending the auction.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> tells us that West can always make nine tricks in hearts, but declarer has to play with exceptional perspicacity to do so if North leads the ♦A. Now the play goes ♦A, diamond ruff and three rounds of spades. West has to ruff the third spade high, cash the ♥A, cross to the ♣A, run the ♥9, take the club finesse, draw trumps and claim when clubs split 3-3. Did the play go like that at any table? I somehow doubt it...</p>	West	North	East	South		3♦	Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
	3♦	Pass	Pass										
3♥	All Pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
5	-	1	-	-	-	
16	-	1	-	1	-	7
12	2	-	3	-	1	
	2	-	3	-	-	

<p>♠ K10 ♥ AJ75 ♦ 10954 ♣ Q65</p> <p>♠ AJ5 ♠ 8742 ♥ 102 ♥ 8643 ♦ Q76 ♦ J8 ♣ AJ872 ♣ K93</p> <p>♠ Q963 ♥ KQ9 ♦ AK32 ♣ 104</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A dull looking deal, especially if North-South are playing a weak no-trump. South will open the bidding with his favourite toy and that should end the auction. Now the only issue is just how many tricks declarer should make.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> smugly tells us that North-South should be held to seven tricks in no-trumps. Yes, but that's because <i>Deep Finesse</i> in its wisdom knows that the right opening lead is the ♣J, which neatly picks up the club suit for five tricks. If any defender actually does that, I suggest there should be a stewards' enquiry.</p> <p>On the more rational ♣7 lead, declarer should play low from dummy and now has a club stopper. With one spade, four hearts, two diamonds and one club, South should make eight tricks for a decent score of 120 points.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1NT	All Pass			
West	North	East	South										
		Pass	1NT										
All Pass													

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
10	-	3	3	2	1	
12	-	3	3	1	1	4
14	1	-	-	-	-	
	1	-	-	-	-	

<p>♠ J107 ♥ 2 ♦ 97542 ♣ 6532</p> <p>♠ 3 ♠ 986542 ♥ J1073 ♥ K ♦ AKJ108 ♦ 63 ♣ Q107 ♣ AKJ9</p> <p>♠ AKQ ♥ AQ98654 ♦ Q ♣ 84</p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This is a nasty hand with North-South likely to come a cropper at many tables. The last making contract for South is 2♥ but few will manage to alight there and many will find themselves at a higher level. The auction above shows one possible route to staying at a low level, but in all honesty it doesn't convince.</p> <p>Many will open the South hand with something other than 1♥, maybe a Benjamin-style 2♣, and this may propel them beyond their comfort zone. Some may be able to stop in 2♥ after 2♣-2♦-2♥ but that's a fortunate result as really 2♥ ought to be forcing for one round having opened 2♣.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> points out that the hand really belongs to East-West in clubs or diamonds. Quite how they might reach 3♣ or 3♦ I have no idea and, in any case, South is unlikely to cede the contract.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♥	Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥	All Pass			
West	North	East	South														
			1♥														
Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥														
All Pass																	

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
1	-	-	2	-	-	
11	-	-	2	-	-	11
17	3	3	-	1	2	
	3	3	-	1	2	

<p>♠ AJ10 ♥ 85 ♦ KJ642 ♣ QJ3</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ J6432 ♦ A10973 ♣ K10</p> <p>♠ K9874 ♥ K9 ♦ Q85 ♣ A42</p> <p>♠ Q653 ♥ AQ107 ♦ None ♣ 98765</p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥*</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>An interesting part-score deal with a variety of results being possible. If North-South are playing a weak no-trump, North should open one of those in second seat and that should float round to West (might South risk Stayman? He might, but what would he then do over North's 2♦?)</p> <p>West might pass out 1NT but this is pairs, and you don't tend to score that many match-points by defending at the one-level. The 2♥ call in the auction above is <i>multi-Landy</i> showing hearts and a minor, allowing East an easy pass. South may, of course, double 2♥ but can he be sure that's for penalties? Nowadays all these doubles tend to be for takeout and there is plenty of scope for an accident.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> says 1NT makes for North-South and 2♥ one down, so -50 should be good for East-West. However, there is much to the play in both contracts and there will be many different scores on this board.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass	2♥*	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass										
2♥*	All Pass												

HCP		Makeable contracts	
12	12	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
8	8	N	3 - - 1 1
		S	3 - - 1 1
		E	- 2 1 - -
		W	- 2 1 - -

<p>♠ Q1097 ♥ K9874 ♦ 752 ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ K63 ♥ 632 ♦ J63 ♣ J764</p> <p>♠ A5 ♥ QJ10 ♦ A1094 ♣ AK103</p> <p>♠ J842 ♥ A5 ♦ KQ8 ♣ Q852</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This may well turn out to be a damp squib of a deal with East's opening bid being passed out. By the way, should you open 1♣ or 1♦ on those East cards? Just how long is a piece of string?</p> <p>South has nothing to say over East's opening bid, West isn't really worth a response and North can scarcely protect on 5 points as he may be kicking over a hornet's nest, so 1♣ (or 1♦) may well end the auction. Those Wests who do respond (maybe by raising 1♣ to 2♣) may well pave the way to a minus score for their side. East might now bid some number of no-trumps and toil away there.</p> <p>It's hard to see East making more than seven tricks in no-trumps after a spade lead, so 2NT and the wildly ambitious 3NT look doomed to fail.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♣	All Pass	
West	North	East	South						
Pass	1♣	All Pass							

HCP		Makeable contracts	
5	18	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
5	12	N	- - 2 2 -
		S	- - 2 2 -
		E	2 1 - - 1
		W	1 1 - - 1

<p>♠ 6 ♥ K73 ♦ Q84 ♣ AQJ1094</p> <p>♠ KQJ52 ♥ J1086 ♦ A5 ♣ K7</p> <p>♠ A93 ♥ AQ2 ♦ K10976 ♣ 62</p> <p>♠ 10874 ♥ 954 ♦ J32 ♣ 853</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥*</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>East-West have an easy game here, the problem being overtricks. The favourable disposition of the red suits means that West can make twelve tricks in spades as his ♣K is protected from the opening lead. Indeed, if North makes a passive lead, West can make all thirteen tricks by ruffing out the diamonds. 6♠ is a repulsive contract, of course, and no one should be anywhere near it. Those playing a weak no-trump may be foiled here by their system of transfers as it may well mean that East becomes declarer. A club lead allows North to bag the first two tricks, holding declarer to eleven, and a score of 650. However, this may boil down to whether North sticks his oar in with 3♣, as in the auction above. If he holds his peace, South may look elsewhere for his opening lead (a trump?) and East may secure the twelve or thirteen tricks obtained elsewhere.</p>	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	2♥*	3♣	Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠	All Pass
West	North	East	South														
		1NT	Pass														
2♥*	3♣	Pass	Pass														
3♥	Pass	4♠	All Pass														

HCP		Makeable contracts	
12	13	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
14	1	N	- - - - -
		S	- - - - -
		E	- 4 5 5 1
		W	1 5 6 6 5

<p>♠ 109 ♥ Q10542 ♦ J106 ♣ J62</p> <p>♠ AKQ8753 ♠ 42 ♥ 97 ♥ AKJ3 ♦ K4 ♦ A875 ♣ KQ ♣ A108</p> <p>♠ J6 ♥ 86 ♦ Q932 ♣ 97543</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>4♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>4NT*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♠*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>5NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7NT</td> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>An easy grand slam for East-West – at least, easy to make as there are fourteen top tricks. How to bid it? Well, in the auction above 4♣ is a cue-bid (after a jump rebid all changes of suit are cue-bids agreeing partner’s suit). 4♦ shows a high card in partner’s suit and 4NT is Key-card Blackwood. 5♠ shows two “aces” and the queen of trumps and 5NT is a grand slam try, confirming all the aces are present.</p> <p>Knowing East has three aces, West can count thirteen tricks and can bid 7NT with confidence. (He should bid the grand slam in no-trumps rather than in spades for the extra match-points, of course).</p>		West	North	East	South					Pass	1♠	Pass		2♦	Pass	3♠	Pass		4♣*	Pass	4♦	Pass		4NT*	Pass	5♠*	Pass		5NT	Pass	7NT	All Pass										
	West	North	East	South																																							
				Pass																																							
1♠	Pass		2♦	Pass																																							
3♠	Pass		4♣*	Pass																																							
4♦	Pass		4NT*	Pass																																							
5♠*	Pass		5NT	Pass																																							
7NT	All Pass																																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">4</td> <td style="width: 50%;">16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		4	16	17	3	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <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>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	5	5	7	7	W	4	5	5	7	7
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<p>♠ J103 ♥ J63 ♦ 1072 ♣ KJ76</p> <p>♠ 982 ♠ AQ65 ♥ 9874 ♥ 1052 ♦ A983 ♦ Q ♣ A5 ♣ Q10983</p> <p>♠ K74 ♥ AKQ ♦ KJ654 ♣ 42</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A tricky hand this, with strong no-trumpers better placed than those playing a weak no-trump. Those playing a strong no-trump will presumably open one of those in fourth seat and secure the contract in that spot.</p> <p>Weak no-trumpers will open 1♦ and have to decide whether to raise North if and when he responds 1NT on his miserable 6 points. As usual in match-point pairs, it doesn’t pay to push the boat out – 2NT is a precarious spot.</p> <p>Yes, <i>Deep Finesse</i> says eight tricks are available in no-trumps on the North-South cards but there are many slips ‘twixt cup and lip. Played by South after a heart lead, declarer may decide to lead a diamond to the Ten and subsequently misguess clubs. Played in no-trumps by North, after a club lead and club return, declarer may make the error of taking the ♣K and leading the ♦10. These plays will result in minus scores for declarer.</p>		West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦		Pass	1NT	All Pass																												
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<p>♠ J32 ♥ J10 ♦ Q432 ♣ K1087</p> <p>♠ KQ964 ♠ 10875 ♥ Q42 ♥ 986 ♦ J98 ♦ K105 ♣ A9 ♣ 632</p> <p>♠ A ♥ AK753 ♦ A76 ♣ QJ54</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>North-South have a combined 25 points yet can make no game. 4♥ is probably the best shot but seems destined to lose one heart, two diamonds and one club. 3NT simply has no source of tricks and 5♣ lacks power.</p> <p>Is it possible to stop low enough to obtain a plus score? Well, the auction above is cautious but possible. After 1♥ from South and a 1♠ overcall, North may dredge up a take-out double. South may do something dramatic now but may settle for an encouraging, but non-forcing, 3♣. If so, North should pass hurriedly.</p> <p>In practice, many will go overboard on the North-South cards, conceding 100 or even 200 points.</p>		West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠	Dble	Pass	Pass	3♣	All Pass																										
	West	North	East	South																																							
		Pass	Pass	1♥																																							
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W	-	-	-	1	-																																						

<p>♠ Q10 ♥ 1096 ♦ AJ43 ♣ J943</p> <p>♠ A873 ♠ KJ542 ♥ 75 ♥ AQJ42 ♦ Q1052 ♦ 97 ♣ AK6 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ 96 ♥ K83 ♦ K86 ♣ Q10872</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>4♠ is the normal spot on the East-West cards and should be reached at all tables by one means or another. In the auction above, 3NT is a “pudding raise” showing four-card spade support, a balanced hand and around 12-14 points. Different pairs will have different methods to show this type of hand, but all roads should lead to Rome.</p> <p><i>Deep Finesse</i> says ten tricks are the limit in spades as declarer should lose one heart and two diamonds, picking up the trumps without loss. True, but South will do very well to find a diamond lead. If he leads a normal club, or even a trump, East will get a diamond loser away and will score an overtrick. 450 to East-West is a much more likely score than 420 I would have thought.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♠	Pass	3NT*	Pass	4♠	All Pass
West	North	East	South										
		1♠	Pass										
3NT*	Pass	4♠	All Pass										

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8		N	1	-	-	-	-
13	11	S	1	-	-	-	-
		E	-	2	4	4	3
8		W	-	2	4	4	3

<p>♠ 43 ♥ K109 ♦ J863 ♣ A632</p> <p>♠ AQJ76 ♠ K95 ♥ 7652 ♥ A83 ♦ K7 ♦ 1095 ♣ J7 ♣ 9854</p> <p>♠ 1082 ♥ QJ4 ♦ AQ42 ♣ KQ10</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This is an awkward deal, especially for West. South may well open with a weak no-trump, giving West a small problem. Passing doesn’t seem right with 5-4 in the majors but making a bid to show a major two-suiter seems wrong with such suit disparity. If West makes a bold 2♠ overcall he will find a fortunate dummy that allows him to garner the requisite eight tricks. If he bids something else (2♣, say, to show both majors) his system must allow East to show no preference by responding 2♦, allowing West to bid 2♠. Passing 1NT, by the way, will have West gaining a modest score of 50 for one down, but a poor match-point score against the 110s his way.</p> <p>Strong no-trumpers will open 1♦ and West has an easy 1♠ overcall, raised to 2♠ by East, reaching their optimum spot. North has the opportunity for an excellent score now by competing to 3♦.</p>	West	North	East	South				1NT	2♠	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
			1NT										
2♠	All Pass												

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8		N	2	3	-	-	-
11	7	S	2	3	-	-	-
		E	-	-	1	2	-
14		W	-	-	1	2	-

<p>♠ AJ104 ♥ A ♦ KQJ107 ♣ 932</p> <p>♠ 8632 ♠ K975 ♥ Q4 ♥ J1092 ♦ A542 ♦ 63 ♣ KJ10 ♣ A74</p> <p>♠ Q ♥ K87653 ♦ 98 ♣ Q865</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A part-score deal with a variety of possible outcomes. North-South have to ensure that they don’t go overboard on this misfit and South has to find a suitable bid after the obvious 1♦ – 1♥ – 1♠ start to the auction. If he rebids his six-card heart suit (as some will) he should be left there. The defenders should be able to take two trumps, one diamond and three clubs to beat that by a trick.</p> <p>The best (at least, the most successful) bid is 1NT. If North passes that then there is no way East-West can get at it. There is a useful source of tricks in diamonds and declarer can always scramble seven tricks in one way or another. Indeed, if the defenders are not sharp enough, South may make eight tricks for a fine score of 120 points.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	All Pass			
West	North	East	South														
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥														
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT														
All Pass																	

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15		N	2	2	1	-	1
10	8	S	2	2	1	-	1
		E	-	-	-	1	-
7		W	-	-	-	1	-

<p>♠ 75 ♥ AQ82 ♦ KJ6 ♣ 7532</p> <p>♠ 932 ♠ AJ ♥ K7653 ♥ 10 ♦ 1093 ♦ Q7542 ♣ A9 ♣ KQ1084</p> <p>♠ KQ10864 ♥ J94 ♦ A8 ♣ J6</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A difficult to judge part-score deal, this one. <i>Deep Finesse</i> says East-West can make 3♦, although the play of the hand is far from straightforward. North-South, though, can make 3♠ through a lucky arrangement of the major-suit cards.</p> <p>Quite how the bidding should progress is not at all clear. 1♦ from South and 1♠ from South are clear enough and after that...? West may well show some hearts with a take-out double, North may show some muscle with a 1NT bid and East shows some shape with a 2♣ bid. 3♦ may be justified now as West knows East is shapely and West does not want to sell out cheaply.</p> <p>Which of North or South should take the push to 3♠? It isn't clear that either should as they may well be trading a plus for a minus. Decisions, decisions. Scores on both sides of the traveller?</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	1♦	1♠	Dble	1NT	2♣	2♠	3♦	All Pass		
West	North	East	South														
	Pass	1♦	1♠														
Dble	1NT	2♣	2♠														
3♦	All Pass																

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10	-	-	2	3	1
7 12	-	-	2	3	1
11	1	3	-	-	-
	1	3	-	-	-

<p>♠ 632 ♥ AQ106 ♦ J1064 ♣ 97</p> <p>♠ KQ84 ♠ 1097 ♥ J ♥ K94 ♦ KQ985 ♦ A732 ♣ K102 ♣ QJ4</p> <p>♠ AJ5 ♥ 87532 ♦ None ♣ A8653</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>An old-fashioned ACOL style sequence may secure the optimum result for East-West on this deal. After two passes, West opens 1♦ and East raises that to 3♦. West has no reason to bid on and East-West can steal the deal in that spot. 3♦ should make for the loss of a trick in each suit.</p> <p>Variations? Well, some players may open that South hand with 2♥ (<i>Lucas</i> style) showing 5-4 or better in hearts and a minor. West may make a take-out double and North may raise defensively to 3♥, maybe stealing the deal in hearts. With clubs 3-3, South can set the suit up and make the contract for a fine score of 140 points.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	3♦	All Pass
West	North	East	South										
		Pass	Pass										
1♦	Pass	3♦	All Pass										

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
7	-	-	2	-	-
14 10	-	-	3	-	-
9	-	3	-	1	1
	-	3	-	1	1

<p>♠ Q985 ♥ 932 ♦ J9854 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ K ♠ J72 ♥ K86 ♥ A4 ♦ 62 ♦ AK73 ♣ AQJ8653 ♣ K1072</p> <p>♠ A10643 ♥ QJ1075 ♦ Q10 ♣ 9</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♥*</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♣</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Hands 19 and 20 provide a brace of slams, relatively easy to make but maybe tricky to bid. Here, 6♣ is easy for East-West but reaching it may be complicated by spade intervention by North-South. Much may depend on East-West's bidding methods; if East responds 1♦ to an opening bid of 1♣ things may get messy. In the auction above 3♥ and 4♦ are cue-bids as is 4♠ but these are all marginal decisions.</p> <p>Maybe East would do better to respond 2NT to 1♣, showing four-card club support and showing game values. It's a common enough method over a major-suit opening bid but it has its place over a minor, too. Food for thought...</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	Dble	2♣	2♠	3♥*	3♠	4♣	Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♠*	Pass	6♣	All Pass
West	North	East	South																						
			Pass																						
1♣	Pass	1♦	Dble																						
2♣	2♠	3♥*	3♠																						
4♣	Pass	4♦*	Pass																						
4♠*	Pass	6♣	All Pass																						

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
3	-	-	-	-	-
13 15	-	-	-	-	-
9	6	2	-	-	5
	6	2	-	-	5

<p>♠ A6 ♥ A92 ♦ J104 ♣ A10763</p> <p>♠ QJ ♠ 542 ♥ J7 ♥ 1043 ♦ K73 ♦ Q9852 ♣ QJ9542 ♣ K8</p> <p>♠ K109873 ♥ KQ865 ♦ A6 ♣ None</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Here, North-South have a decent slam in hearts available. The preposterously fortunate spade layout means that a grand slam makes in both spades and hearts, but no one would seriously want to play in 7♥ or 7♠. In fact, bidding a small slam may prove problematic.</p> <p>In the auction above, the jump to 4♥ shows 5-5 or better in the majors and is a mild slam try. With three aces, two of which are in partner's suits, North has an excellent hand for co-operating in any slam venture. 5♣ and 5♦ are cue-bids and North's jump to slam is justified by his major-suit holdings. I'm going to stick my neck out and suggest that less than half the field will bid this one. We'll see...</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♦*	Pass	6♥	All Pass	
West	North	East	South																		
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥*																		
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥																		
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♦*																		
Pass	6♥	All Pass																			

HCP	Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
13	N	1	3	7	7	7
10	S	2	3	7	7	7
	E	-	-	-	-	-
12	W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ Q982 ♥ KJ83 ♦ J9 ♣ Q75</p> <p>♠ AJ75 ♠ 43 ♥ Q972 ♥ 65 ♦ AK10 ♦ Q8652 ♣ 104 ♣ A983</p> <p>♠ K106 ♥ A104 ♦ 743 ♣ KJ62</p>	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>After the Lord Mayor's show... After the excitement of two slam hands, we have this dull affair. If West opens 1NT in fourth seat he will surely play there. With five diamonds and two aces he has seven on top and only a defensive slip will allow an extra, so 90 points to East-West seems the limit. Some will open that South hand, though, in third seat. If South opens 1♣, West should double and North may bid 1♥. East should try 2♦ and that may float to North who may go to the well again with a take-out double. That may lead to South bidding 2♥ and North-South finding their optimum contract. <i>Deep Finesse</i> says that eight tricks can make in hearts; maybe so, but three rounds of diamonds make it an extremely awkward proposition and declarer has to handle matters really well to emerge with eight tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
	Pass	Pass	Pass										
1NT	All Pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9	N	1	-	2	2	-
14	S	1	-	2	2	-
	E	-	2	-	-	1
11	W	-	2	-	-	1

<p>♠ KJ876 ♥ 52 ♦ KQ62 ♣ Q5</p> <p>♠ 1053 ♠ AQ9 ♥ A1093 ♥ J4 ♦ 5 ♦ A109843 ♣ AK983 ♣ 102</p> <p>♠ 42 ♥ KQ876 ♦ J7 ♣ J764</p>	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>East-West have a combined 22 points, so a part-score seems to be the limit of their ambition. Perhaps that's right, but the cards lie well for them and maybe they can judge that.</p> <p>One way to reach the makeable 3NT is via the auction above. After 1♦-1♥ and a 1♠ intervention from North, East should pass. That goes round to West who should make a take-out double. When East bids 1NT to show his spade stopper, West may take a pot at game. After all, he has an opening bid himself with a possible source of tricks in clubs. Nine tricks can come from three spades, one heart, one diamond and four clubs, provided East views the clubs correctly. Yes, <i>Deep Finesse</i> says you can make an overtrick – good luck with that!</p>	West	North	East	South			1♦	Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
West	North	East	South																		
		1♦	Pass																		
1♥	1♠	Pass	Pass																		
Dble	Pass	1NT	Pass																		
3NT	All Pass																				

HCP	Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11	N	-	-	-	-	-
11	S	-	-	-	-	-
	E	4	3	4	3	4
7	W	5	3	4	3	4

<p>♠ AQ3 ♥ 986 ♦ A107 ♣ Q1096</p> <p>♠ 1098654 ♠ 72 ♥ None ♥ KQ4 ♦ K96 ♦ 532 ♣ KJ83 ♣ A7542</p> <p>♠ KJ ♥ AJ107532 ♦ QJ84 ♣ None</p>	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>North-South have an obvious and easy game contract here with 4♥ being a trivial contract to make. The issue is all about overtricks and, with the diamonds lying favourably, twelve tricks are available. Not that you'd want to be in a slam with these cards as it's well under 50%. Declarer does, though, have to take the safety-play in trumps to make the maximum out of the hand. Laying down the ace of trumps will give East two trump tricks, declarer a pair of red ears and North-South a poor match-point score. After a spade lead, South should either take that on table with the queen and run the ♥6 or, just as good, take the lead in hand and play a low heart from hand to see how trumps are lying. Subsequently he can pick up the remaining heart honour with a finesse and claim the rest when the ♦K is onside.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass	
West	North	East	South														
			1♥														
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥														
Pass	4♥	All Pass															

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
12	N 1	5	6	1	4
7 9	S 1	5	6	1	4
12	E -	-	-	-	-
	W -	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ K5 ♥ AJ7642 ♦ 873 ♣ J4</p> <p>♠ A1073 ♠ J9842 ♥ 53 ♥ Q109 ♦ AJ10 ♦ 9 ♣ AKQ10 ♣ 9872</p> <p>♠ Q6 ♥ K8 ♦ KQ6542 ♣ 653</p>	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>East-West have a thin but makeable 4♠ here, losing one trump and two hearts. The issue is whether pairs will reach that contract, much depending on style and system. Where West, playing four-card majors, opens 1♠ East-West are likely to get there as five-card trump support and a singleton diamond is worth a raise any day of the week. Where West opens 1♣ and North intervenes in hearts (1♥? 2♥?) it all gets murky and now it's not at all clear how the auction might proceed. Certainly, West will make a take-out double sometime in the auction but that doesn't necessarily mean that East-West will reach game.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass
West	North	East	South										
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass										
3NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass										

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9	N -	1	1	-	-
18 3	S -	2	1	-	-
10	E 4	-	-	4	2
	W 4	-	-	4	2

<p>♠ 1065 ♥ K8754 ♦ K3 ♣ 1052</p> <p>♠ AJ32 ♠ Q8 ♥ 2 ♥ 10963 ♦ A1094 ♦ Q852 ♣ J764 ♣ AK8</p> <p>♠ K974 ♥ AQJ ♦ J76 ♣ Q93</p>	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>An interesting part-score deal with a typical match-point pairs competitive auction possible. After two passes, South may open 1NT and North may well transfer to hearts. Over South's forced 2♥ West may seize the chance to make a take-out double with his ideal shape and East-West can now steal the deal in 3♦. Where South, playing a strong no-trump and five-card majors, opens 1♣ it may be much more difficult for East-West to dip their toes into the water. North-South may have an uncontested auction of 1♣-1♥-1NT-End. A diamond lead (removing dummy's entry to the long hearts) makes this a very awkward spot and 1NT will surely fail, maybe by two tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥	Dble	Pass	3♦	All Pass
West	North	East	South														
	Pass	Pass	1NT														
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥														
Dble	Pass	3♦	All Pass														

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
6	N -	-	1	-	-
10 11	S -	-	1	-	-
13	E 3	3	-	1	1
	W 2	3	-	1	1

<p>♠ A1092 ♥ K54 ♦ J74 ♣ 1052</p> <p>♠ KQ87 ♠ J643 ♥ 10 ♥ AQ863 ♦ K86 ♦ A1093 ♣ KJ864 ♣ None</p> <p>♠ 5 ♥ J972 ♦ Q52 ♣ AQ973</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>This looks to be an unlucky hand for East-West. 4♠ is a good spot for East-West but the 4-1 trump break may make life just a little too hard. Having said that, North has an awkward lead to find and may let the contract through easily by leading a diamond.</p> <p>In fact, <i>Deep Finesse</i> says that the only opening lead that defeats 4♠, amazingly enough, is the ♠A followed up with the ♠2. Few will find that defence, so perhaps 4♠ will make at some tables, although the play is far from easy to predict.</p> <p>An interesting one, this deal, with many twists and turns in the play. I hope you enjoyed the battle!</p>	West	North	East	South			1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass
West	North	East	South														
		1♥	Pass														
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass														
2NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass														

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8	N	-	-	-	-
12	S	-	-	-	-
9	E	2	3	3	2
	W	2	3	3	2

<p>♠ K3 ♥ A53 ♦ 1032 ♣ J10642</p> <p>♠ Q542 ♠ A108 ♥ 97 ♥ 10862 ♦ QJ5 ♦ AK87 ♣ AQ75 ♣ K3</p> <p>♠ J976 ♥ KQJ4 ♦ 964 ♣ 98</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>East-West have a combined 25 points, so may well reach 3NT on their cards. In theory that has no chance whatever as North-South can take four heart tricks and can sit and wait patiently for a spade trick to beat the hand by one.</p> <p>However, after the auction above, South may not wish to pursue a heart-attack given that East has shown four of them. A spade lead is disastrous for his side and may hand the contract to East if declarer guesses correctly at trick one. Even after the ♥K lead, South has to avoid leading another top heart as the suit will become blocked. Thus, there is scope for a defensive accident or two on this hand.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass
West	North	East	South																		
			Pass																		
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass																		
2♣*	Pass	2♥	Pass																		
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass																		

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8	N	-	-	-	-
11	S	-	-	-	-
7	E	2	3	2	2
	W	2	3	2	2

<p>♠ 97 ♥ K82 ♦ J943 ♣ QJ107</p> <p>♠ AK852 ♠ QJ1043 ♥ AQJ103 ♥ 94 ♦ 106 ♦ AK ♣ 4 ♣ A532</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ 765 ♦ Q8752 ♣ K986</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A stone-cold slam is available to East-West on this deal with twelve tricks a simple matter to rake in and thirteen tricks depending on the heart finesse. It's wrong here, so a small slam is the limit.</p> <p>How might the hand be bid? Well, so much depends on system and style. In the auction above 2NT agrees spades and is game-forcing. 3♥ is natural, 4♣, 4♥ and 5♦ are cue-bids and 6♠ is, perhaps, slightly lazy. Maybe West should investigate a grand slam, which would be cold if East had the decency to hold the ♥K.</p> <p>The play is trivial, it being a case of "draw trumps, take a heart finesse and claim the rest".</p>	West	North	East	South	1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♥*	Pass	5♦*	Pass	6♠	All Pass		
West	North	East	South																		
1♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass																		
3♥	Pass	4♣*	Pass																		
4♥*	Pass	5♦*	Pass																		
6♠	All Pass																				

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
7	N	-	-	-	-
14	S	-	-	-	-
5	E	1	1	5	6
	W	1	1	5	6



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