

# **British Winter Sim Pairs**



**Thursday  
13<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

Welcome to the British Winter Simultaneous Pairs, whether you are playing online or Face to Face. I hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert. The commentator for this set of hands is Brian Senior. Please note that the Tuesday event will be in memory of Peter Jordan, the EBU's widely-known and much-loved Competitions department member who for many years was also responsible for running our overseas congresses. Barbara Jordan will be donating trophies for the winners on that day.

This is the start of the 2022 Simultaneous Pairs season, so it's a new year for prizes. Every host club will be entered in to a prize draw made at the AGM in November. So the club at which you have played today has a chance to win one of eight cash prizes of £200. The prize for the overall winners of each Sim Pairs is £100, and we wish you luck in trying to win it.

You can find all the full details, results and last year's prize winners at [www.ebu.co.uk/sims/](http://www.ebu.co.uk/sims/)

You can earn Blue points and they are awarded to the top third of the field. Don't be too impatient for the results! Provisional results will appear quickly but they won't be finalised and nor will the Master Point awards until all results are in and score corrections have been made. This can take up to three weeks. It really helps us if you can keep your scorecard for that period.

Coming up in February (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>) is the Junior Squad Simultaneous Pairs which raises money to help Junior Bridge. I hope you will support this event and look forward to you playing.

Ian Payn, Chairman EBU

<p>♠ Q9 ♥ J ♦ KQJ43 ♣ AQJ96</p> <p>♠ A108753      ♠ J6 ♥ K              ♥ A10986532 ♦ 862            ♦ A109 ♣ 753            ♣ -</p> <p>♠ K42 ♥ Q74 ♦ 75 ♣ K10842</p>		<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>A lively start to the session.</p> <p>North opens 1♦ and East overcalls 4♥. That should shut out South, and West has nothing to add, being happy to be contributing two tricks to the cause.</p> <p>If it ends there, a diamond lead should see the contract defeated by a trick.</p> <p>But from North's perspective 4♥ could easily be making, while North has a second suit that he has not yet shown. A fair number of Norths are likely to bid 5♣ over 4♥, and should be left to play there, the only question being whether East doubles, on the strength of his two aces, or 5♣ is left undoubled. It may look strange to double with a void in the opposition's suit, but this East hand is otherwise worth much more on defence than had he held, say ♥KQJ10xxxx and out.</p> <p>Whether doubled or not, there are three aces to be lost in 5♣, and there should be no difficulty in taking them for down one.</p>																																																					
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<p>♠AJ75 ♥K3 ♦QJ65 ♣A42</p> <p>♠6                    ♠Q94 ♥A1054                ♥986 ♦K943                 ♦A108 ♣10763                ♣KQJ5</p> <p>♠K10832 ♥QJ72 ♦72 ♣98</p>	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>East has a weak NT and will make that call if it fits in with the agreed methods. South is too weak to come in, particularly at this vulnerability, so 1NT will go round to North, who will double.</p> <p>With 7 HCP, West may stick it out, but he will regret doing so when South leads a spade and the defence takes the first five tricks. However, doing so takes out the entry to South's potential heart winners, and the contract escapes for down one. To get the maximum – down two – the defence must switch to hearts before taking the fourth spade. Now there are five spades, two hearts and a club to be won.</p> <p>If EW have a wriggle for this hand-type, they can run to 2♣, which makes, 2♦, which should be down one, or 2♥, which can be down at least two. More likely, however, is that if EW run South will compete in d=spades, where a successful spade play, indicated by the bidding, will lead to +140 and a solid result for NS.</p> <p>A 1♣ opening from East and 1♥ response sees North double, and again South is likely to play a spade partscore.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠AQJ3 ♥842 ♦AK54 ♣84</p> <p>♠10                    ♠986542 ♥QJ10963            ♥K7 ♦J86                   ♦73 ♣J76                   ♣AK10</p> <p>♠K7 ♥A5 ♦Q1092 ♣Q9532</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>It is not obligatory to open the South hand, but many will do so at this vulnerability. If playing weak NT, that is the best choice by far. Opening 1♦ gets the suit lengths the wrong way around, while opening 1♣ risks having to rebid a poor suit. One No Trump, meanwhile, is nicely pre-emptive for when the hand belongs to the opposition, and is a sound basis for a constructive auction if it belongs to NS.</p> <p>North will use Stayman then settle for 3NT, in which there are nine top tricks and a tenth can be made if declarer is willing to gamble on both top clubs being onside (not a sound gamble).</p> <p>The same contract should be reached easily enough if South does open one of a minor.</p> <p>And if South does not open? Then West may make a weak two opening or multi. That is slightly tricky for NS. If North doubles, South will have to drive to game, and the game reached will have to be 3NT, neither of which is quite guaranteed.</p> <p>Plus 430 should be huge, +400 normal, and anything less on the NS cards should score quite poorly. This is a good time to open on a borderline hand.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠96 ♥103 ♦10753 ♣108765</p> <p>♠J872                    ♠AQ1054 ♥876                    ♥Q94 ♦A942                   ♦J86 ♣A9                    ♣Q2</p> <p>♠K3 ♥AKJ52 ♦KQ ♣KJ43</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>Whatever NT is agreed, East will open 1♠ in third seat, both for safety's sake – 1NT is far more dangerous – and to get the main feature of the hand across for competitive and for lead-directing purposes.</p> <p>With 20 HCP, South is far too good to overcall so will start with a take-out double. With four-card support and two aces, it is normal for West to raise to the three level. North will, of course, keep out of it, and South will usually bid a second time.</p> <p>If South makes a second double, North bids 4♣, which can be made by getting to hand with a heart ruff and getting the trumps right.</p> <p>Of course, North would do better to just leave in the double but, with zero defence, that would be a huge gamble.</p> <p>If South's second call is 4♥, he will play there, occasionally doubled by West, who has two aces facing a vulnerable opening bid.</p> <p>Four Hearts looks to be down two – two club losers and one in each of the other suits, yet the double dummy analysis tells us that nine tricks are possible. Well, double dummy analysis requires double dummy play. If the defence start with an unhelpful ace and another spade or diamond, declarer wins and plays the jack of hearts from hand. Either the ♥10 becomes an entry for a club play, or East ducks and there is no heart loser. Hands up all those who found that play? I thought so.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ 97 ♥ 8532 ♦ Q73 ♣ A1073</p> <p>♠ 5432            ♠ AKQ8 ♥ J                ♥ AK6 ♦ A652            ♦ J108 ♣ KQ54            ♣ 986</p> <p>♠ J106 ♥ Q10974 ♦ K94 ♣ J2</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>If playing a strong NT, that will be East's opening bid, and West will use Stayman then raise the response to 4♠.</p> <p>Declarer has four spade tricks, two top hearts and a heart ruff. One trick in each minor is easy, which leaves declarer looking for one more.</p> <p>As the cards lie, declarer cannot afford to be the one to open up the diamonds, as that puts the defence in control and they can come to two tricks in each suit. Neither is leading a low club to the king or queen a winning option as it fails to use the power of the nine-eight. As the cards lie, the winning line is to draw trumps then lead the nine of clubs and run it if South doesn't cover. On regaining the lead, the six of clubs to the jack, queen and ace provides two club winners. Alternatively, if South covers the nine of clubs, declarer must play the king or queen. Whether or not North wins this trick, to be successful, declarer has to lead towards the ♠8, playing North for the ten.</p> <p>That is far from being an obvious play, so those declarers who get a passive trump lead will often struggle. The good news is that the lead of any other suit should see declarer home. The ♥10 loses to the bare jack and declarer gets two discards in dummy and a ruff is the tenth trick; a diamond lead is ducked and there is a winning second round finesse; the jack of clubs is covered and, after drawing trumps, running the nine guarantees a second winner in the suit.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ K862 ♥ A542 ♦ 10873 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ 94                ♠ QJ75 ♥ 109873           ♥ QJ6 ♦ AKQJ            ♦ 6 ♣ J4                ♣ AKQ92</p> <p>♠ A103 ♥ K ♦ 9542 ♣ 108763</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Almost every EW pair should start off with 1♣ from East, a 1♥ response and a 1♠ rebid. Two No Trump is the value bid now with 11 HCP and diamonds rather well held, and East has plenty with which to go on to game. However, to simply raise to 3NT would be an error. West may not have quite such good diamonds as this, and if there is a five-three heart fit 4♥ may be a substantially better contract than 3NT. So East should bid 3♥ to pattern out, and let West make an informed decision as to which game to play.</p> <p>West has weak hearts and powerful diamonds, so to go back to NT is a simple decision. On a diamond lead, declarer will win and play on hearts to set up an extra trick and, with the clubs as they are, that extra trick will be required to make the contract. On a spade lead, declarer will play for one of the ace or king to be onside and will again have nine tricks.</p> <p>Four Hearts has four top losers, and can be beaten by taking those tricks or by organising a club ruff. Two top spades followed by a club switch could even lead to down two if declarer isn't careful – he must take a club discard on a spade winner to avoid conceding a ruff for the fifth defensive trick.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ J97652 ♥ Q874 ♦ 9 ♣ AJ</p> <p>♠ 4                ♠ AQ3 ♥ K10            ♥ J532 ♦ KQ652           ♦ J1074 ♣ Q10543        ♣ 97</p> <p>♠ K108 ♥ A96 ♦ A83 ♣ K862</p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <p>South has a weak NT. If he opens 1NT and West passes, North is not strong enough to look for game. He will probably use Stayman then bid 2♠ over the 2♦ response. Of course, the hands fit together very well and 4♠ is cold – even an overtrick is possible – but stretching to thin games does not pay in the long run at matchpoints, so few should get there.</p> <p>A 1♣ opening will see West overcall 1♦, and East can compete to the three level on the four-card support. The most likely outcome in 3♦ is down one, but few will be allowed to play there as NS compete in spades.</p> <p>The deal should also become competitive after a weak NT opening, because West can overcall 2NT to show a minor two-suiter – the days are long gone when this overcall showed an undefined strong two-suiter.</p> <p>It would be good for NS to have discussed North's options here. Given that 2NT cannot really end the auction, North has the option of bidding immediately or passing then competing in spades. The simple agreement would be to say that a delayed 3♠ was purely competitive, while an immediate 3♠ was at least invitational. Still stronger hands could start with a double then bid 3♠.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ 10973 ♥ KJ9863 ♦ 83 ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ Q2 ♦ 72 ♣ AKQ109754</p> <p>♠ AK2 ♥ 75 ♦ KQ1064 ♣ 832</p> <p>♠ QJ854 ♥ A104 ♦ AJ95 ♣ J</p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>West has to choose an opening bid. One Club makes it far too easy for the opposition to get in, so it should be between 5♣ and a gambling 3NT.</p> <p>If West opens 3NT and East decides to gamble on the opening lead and passes, North's heart lead should lead to down three – not a success.</p> <p>If West opens 3NT and East decides to take out into a pass or correct 4♣, that is the perfect spot, if 4♣ ends the auction.</p> <p>If EW threaten to play in 4♣, South will double for take-out and North respond 4♥. Straightforward defence comes to either a spade ruff or a diamond trick, but not both as the diamond loser goes away on the fifth spade. Double dummy defence sees East win a spade lead with the king and give partner a ruff without cashing the ace. A diamond switch now bets down two. Very well done to anyone who manages that play.</p> <p>My own inclination is to open 5♣. If that is passed out, it is down one – not so good when a 3NT opening often leads to a plus score. But perhaps South will make a take-out double. If so, it isn't easy for North to pass, though perhaps he should do so, not imagining that his side will be able to make 11 tricks when he is so weak.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ K9 ♥ Q983 ♦ AJ64 ♣ 1097</p> <p>♠ 82 ♥ J5 ♦ KQ10 ♣ KQ8654</p> <p>♠ A107543 ♥ A72 ♦ 875 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ QJ6 ♥ K1064 ♦ 932 ♣ AJ2</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>After a pass from North, East opens with a weak 2♠ bid. Don't listen to those who say that you shouldn't open with a pre-empt on hands containing two aces, that idea comes from a younger and, perhaps, more innocent time, before people fully understood the long-term benefit of aggressive pre-emption. Sure, opening 2♠ might cause partner a problem once in a while, but there are two opponents and only one partner to worry about.</p> <p>Two Spades should buy the contract. It can be defeated on a spade or diamond lead, but declarer can duck a heart lead, win the trump switch and take a heart ruff. Playing the king of clubs now sets up a discard for the second diamond loser, and the contract is home.</p> <p>If East does not open, the hand may be passed out. True, West would open in any other seat, but shortage in both majors should cause him to worry about being outbid on a deal where the points are roughly evenly divided. When a club contract is making, so will a major-suit partscore NS.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠ KQ106 ♥ 872 ♦ A652 ♣ A8</p> <p>♠ 432 ♥ A105 ♦ 94 ♣ KQ942</p> <p>♠ J985 ♥ QJ6 ♦ KQ1073 ♣ J</p> <p>♠ A7 ♥ K943 ♦ J8 ♣ 107653</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>There will usually be three passes round to North who, if playing Acoll, will open a weak NT. If left to play there, the most likely outcome is down one, after East has led the ♦K or ♦Q and continued with the other honour to pin dummy's jack. Ducking the ace just once is sufficient to cut the East hand off – unless West is willing to give up a trick to dummy's ♥K. Eventually, unless declarer plays a heart himself, West will be forced to give a sixth trick to dummy.</p> <p>If the EW methods permit East to get into the auction with his five-four shape, this will turn a plus score into a minus. Both 2♦ and 2♠ should be down a trick, though should and will are, as always, two different things, and the defence to 2♦ might well slip up.</p>																																																		
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<p>♠K873 ♥Q3 ♦J54 ♣QJ105</p> <p>♠1064                ♠Q5 ♥AJ962              ♥K8754 ♦8                     ♦Q1092 ♣A972                ♣64</p> <p>♠AJ92 ♥10 ♦AK763 ♣K83</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>South opens 1♦, West overcalls 1♥, and North doubles, usually showing four spades. How far will East be willing to go to support his partner's hearts?</p> <p>Some will go for a raise to 4♥, arguing that this is in line with the Law of Total Tricks, which suggests that a 10-card fit can afford to compete to the 10-trick level (the four level). Others will opt for a pre-emptive raise to 3♥, and still others to a slightly more constructive Mixed Raise, if they have one in their kitbag.</p> <p>As South, I wouldn't care how many hearts East bid, I would bid 4♠. Maybe, in an uncontested auction, some would content themselves with a raise to 3♠ – fair enough. But if East raises to 4♥, South cannot afford to be shut out and has to bid 4♠, and, if East raises to only 3♥, South would have to bid 3♠ on hands significantly weaker than the actual one, so North might find it tough to go on to game when he should be doing so.</p> <p>Four Spades should be a comfortable make as the cards lie, with one loser in each side suit. Which means that, with nine tricks available in a heart contract, EW can score a lot of matchpoints if they can guess to save in 5♥ doubled. That's tough to do at Love All; it would be much easier at favourable vulnerability.</p>																																										
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<p>♠J76 ♥1052 ♦AKQ8 ♣QJ3</p> <p>♠KQ52                ♠10 ♥KQ83                ♥A97 ♦J643                 ♦1097 ♣2                     ♣AK10765</p> <p>♠A9843 ♥J64 ♦52 ♣984</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Some decisions for the various players on this one.</p> <p>Should West open the bidding? I would open 1♣ with 4-1-4-4 or 4-4-1-4, because in each case I would have an easy rebid if partner responded in my shortage. I am less enthralled at the prospect of having to rebid 2♦ after 1♥ – 2♣, and still less enthralled at the prospect of having to find a rebid after 1♦ – 2♣ if playing five-card majors. I'm not going to say that it is wrong to open the West hand at favourable vulnerability, but it could easily go wrong.</p> <p>If West passes, North will open either a weak NT or, if playing 1NT as strong, one of whichever minor the system requires – but what if West does open 1♥, what then? Thirteen HCP suggests a double, but the distribution suggests a pass. I guess I would double, but it isn't compulsory to do so.</p> <p>This deal actually illustrates perfectly the danger of opening 1♥ on the West cards. When West rebids a second suit, East will assume that this shows a fifth heart, and will jump to 4♥, which can be down a couple even with trumps three-three.</p> <p>If West passes and North opens 1NT, South will transfer to spades if East doesn't come in. Two Spades is down three, while if East does overcall, eight tricks is the limit in any contract his side reaches. On this deal, silence is golden.</p>																																										
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<p>♠Q83 ♥KQ9 ♦1074 ♣K952</p> <p>♠964                    ♠AJ1075 ♥763                    ♥84 ♦K6                     ♦932 ♣QJ874                ♣1063</p> <p>♠K2 ♥AJ1052 ♦AQJ85 ♣A</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>Six Hearts needs only a little more than the diamond finesse on this deal. Still, it does need more than just a finesse, so in an ideal world we would stop in game.</p> <p>South opens 1♥ in third seat and, playing Acol, North responds 2♣. South rebids a quiet 2♦, a one-round force in modern style, and North jumps to 3♥. Cuebidding style comes into South's next call but let's say that he cuebids 4♣. After all, give North the ♦K instead of the ♣K, and 12 tricks are cold. However, when North now signs off in 4♥, bypassing the easy diamond cuebid, South can assume the ♦K to be missing and give up on slam. Note that, with ♠A and ♥KQ, North might not sign-off, instead going on with a 4♠ cuebid.</p> <p>If playing five-card majors, Drury is a popular convention when facing a third- or fourth-seat opening of 1♥/♠. This time North's 2♣ response to 1♥ will show a better hand than a simple raise to 2♥. Again, South can bid 4♣ over this to see if North can cuebid 4♦. When North signs off in game, once again South can give up on slam.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ 10854 ♥ 1043 ♦ K1076 ♣ 65</p> <p>♠ K76                      ♠ 93 ♥ J862                      ♥ AKQ ♦ AJ82                      ♦ Q54 ♣ J3                          ♣ A10984</p> <p>♠ AQJ2 ♥ 975 ♦ 93 ♣ KQ72</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>East has a strong NT and, if that is what he opens, West will check for a four-four hearts fit then bid 3NT when none materialises. Alternatively, East opens 1♣ and rebids 1NT over West's 1♦/♥ response – South has the wrong shortage to get involved. Again, West will raise to 3NT.</p> <p>The opening lead could be critical to the chances of 3NT being successful.</p> <p>A low club lead gives declarer a second club trick, while also warning him off playing on the suit. He will win and take a losing diamond finesse but, with the ♠A onside, there are nine tricks.</p> <p>A spade lead gives declarer nothing he cannot make for himself – the ♠K – while also establishing two extra spade winners for the defence, and dooms the contract.</p> <p>But perhaps, with a strong balanced hand on his right, South will seek a passive lead, hoping not to give anything away. That will mean leading whichever red suit has not been shown by dummy. That should be fine for the defence. Though North will have to duck the nine of diamonds lead, permitting declarer to win the queen, there are still only eight tricks and South has plenty of time to attack spades should declarer play on clubs.</p>																																																						
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<p>♠ A982 ♥ AKQ5 ♦ 832 ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ 7                              ♠ 54 ♥ 1082                      ♥ J7643 ♦ AK1064                      ♦ J97 ♣ 10973                      ♣ Q65</p> <p>♠ KQJ1063 ♥ 9 ♦ Q5 ♣ AKJ8</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <p>NS can make all 13 tricks in a spade contract – except on a diamond lead, of course, which holds them to 11.</p> <p>When North responds 2NT, a constructive game raise, to South's 1♠ opening, there are two perfectly legitimate approaches which South could take.</p> <p>Firstly, South could do what North is expecting and describe his hand. Whether that means rebidding a natural 3♣ or showing the heart shortage really doesn't matter. A scientific approach should discover that nobody has a diamond control and, at worst, the partnership stops safely at the five level. Of course, the defence has been listening in to the careful exploration of the hand and knows to lead diamonds, whatever West's diamond holding.</p> <p>Or, South can jump to 4NT to check on key cards then, when he finds that just one is missing, blasts 6♠ without worrying about what controls might be present or missing. Essentially, this approach is saying that South thinks that, if he survives the opening lead, he should have 12 tricks. By not going round the houses to check on controls, he leaves West with a blind lead. Today, that approach leads to disaster, as West has the most automatic diamond lead and continuation imaginable, but on another day it might lead to an overtrick or even an 'impossible' slam coming home.</p>																																																						
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<p>♠ K1064 ♥ AJ4 ♦ A10 ♣ Q874</p> <p>♠ 9832                      ♠ A75 ♥ Q1086                      ♥ K5 ♦ 4                              ♦ KQ6532 ♣ AKJ5                      ♣ 32</p> <p>♠ QJ ♥ 9732 ♦ J987 ♣ 1096</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <p>West is just short of opening values so North will get first crack at the board. If playing weak NT, that will be North's bid and, if East passes, so will South. This start is one where West can use Landy, showing both majors, when having only two four-card suits rather than the normal five-four or better. That will get East to declarer 2♠, which is down one – at least at double dummy.</p> <p>But East may come in over 1NT. Few can overcall a natural 2♦ these days, so they may try 3♦ instead. That is likely to end the auction and be down one.</p> <p>The way for EW to go plus after North opens 1NT is to pass then defend carefully. What about when North opens 1♣?</p> <p>East now has an easy entry to the auction via a 1♦ overcall. South passes and, disliking diamonds but having a decent amount of high-card strength, West can bid in an attempt to improve the contract. Some, who need five cards to bid a new suit in response to an overcall, will bid 1NT, which works just fine as it ends the auction. Those who are less straightjacketed by their agreements, will be able to respond 1♥, which finds a fit in either major. Not this time, alas. East may rebid 2♦, as the lack of a high club makes 1NT look a little risky. Two Diamonds ends the auction and should make for +90, the same score as is available, double dummy, in 1NT.</p>																																																						
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<p>♠AQJ742 ♥A92 ♦J5 ♣76</p> <p>♠10                      ♠K865 ♥K73                    ♥QJ64 ♦742                    ♦KQ ♣QJ9542               ♣AK10</p> <p>♠93 ♥1085 ♦A109863 ♣83</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>4</td></tr></table> <table><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>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	HCP		12	18	6	4	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	-	-	-	S	-	1	-	-	-	E	4	-	3	-	1	W	4	-	3	-	1	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>North will open 1♠ and East overcall 1NT. That will often be that, with the vulnerability discouraging further competition in either of NS's long suits. If South leads the nine of spades, declarer's eight comes into play, providing a second spade stopper, and allowing time to establish an overtrick. If, however, South leads from the long diamond suit, that establishes sufficient winners that declarer has to run for home with one diamond and six club tricks, else run the risk of being defeated.</p> <p>On the actual deal, West does better to transfer to clubs, where there are just three aces to be lost. Plus 130 should score well unless too many NSs compete and concede -200 or more. Two Diamonds is down only one, and nobody has a double. Minus 100 beats the opposing club contracts and also those who lead a spade against 1NT. Two Spades, however, can be beaten by two for a disastrous -200, except that West is likely to come riding to his opponents' rescue by competing with 3♣. Minus 130 will still be pretty poor for NS, but not as bad as -200.</p>
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<p>♠875 ♥KQ963 ♦8 ♣10973</p> <p>♠KQ1096               ♠J3 ♥-                        ♥A8542 ♦Q105                ♦AJ974 ♣AQJ54               ♣8</p> <p>♠A42 ♥J107 ♦K632 ♣K62</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>11</td></tr></table> <table><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>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	HCP		5	10	14	11	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	5	1	5	3	W	3	5	1	5	3	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Switch the vulnerabilities, and I might open a slightly racy 2♥ with the North hand. Vulnerable, that is not a consideration, even if playing 2♥ as a weak two-suiter. East too, though close to opening values, will usually pass, except that he does have a hand suitable for a 2♥ opening if playing that, Lucas-style, as a two-suiter. And, after two passes, South has no reason to open the bidding either, so West gets to open 1♠. What should East respond? If he plans to pass a 2♠ rebid, he should respond 2♦, as that caters to finding a fit in either red suit. If, however, he is willing to bid twice on a potential misfit, he should respond 2♥, planning to follow up with 3♦ over 2♠. That, being by a passed hand, can be played as non-forcing and genuinely two-suited, and I would pass 3♦ with the West cards, though 3NT would be a close second choice.</p> <p>Three No Trump can be made, as club leads hurt declarer not at all, and the long heart-hand has no entry. Meanwhile, 11 tricks are possible in either a spade or a diamond contract, though that requires some double dummy play. A spade contract on a diamond lead, for example, requires that declarer rise with the ace then discard a diamond on the ace of hearts and take the club finesse. Ace of clubs, a club ruff, then the jack of spades, brings in 11 tricks.</p>
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<p>♠K103 ♥105 ♦876 ♣76532</p> <p>♠5                      ♠AQJ62 ♥KQJ8                ♥74 ♦KQ52                ♦J10943 ♣AKQ9               ♣4</p> <p>♠9874 ♥A9632 ♦A ♣J108</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>20</td><td>9</td></tr></table> <table><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>3</td><td>3</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>5</td></tr></table>	HCP		3	8	20	9	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	5	3	3	5	W	4	5	3	3	5	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>East has a second successive hand that is suitable for a weak two-suited opening. If he does open 2♠, weak two-suiter, West may explore via a 2NT asking bid, or may just make a practical jump to 3NT. With the king of spades onside, the defence can come to nothing more than the two red aces.</p> <p>Most Easts will have to pass, however, as will South. West opens – well, what does West open? I know some will opt for 2NT. This is a bid which I hate and despise, and on the actual deal risks the partnership getting to a diamond contract when East transfers then shows the second suit. The only way to salvage the matchpoints is now for it to go: 2NT – 3♥ – 3♠ – 4♦ – 4NT, natural and to play.</p> <p>But if not 2NT, no other start is ideal either. Say that West opens 1♣, making it as easy as possible to find a fit in any of the three suits. East responds 1♠ and now West has a problem, because it is a very popular agreement that a jump to 3NT is now always based on long strong clubs, i.e. a hand too good for a 3♣ rebid. West can gamble that this misdescription will not see partner bidding on in search of a club slam, or can underbid by jumping to only 2NT, showing 18-19. The latter would be my preference, and today I would survive, as East would show the diamonds and now a firm 3NT would end proceedings – but this too is far from ideal, as on another day East will have two aces and 6♦ will be cold.</p> <p>Once again, a 4-4-4-(1) hand is a problem.</p>
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<p>♠98 ♥AQ983 ♦643 ♣984</p> <p>♠Q10763      ♠AK42 ♥K104      ♥J7 ♦KQ      ♦109852 ♣QJ3      ♣A2</p> <p>♠J5 ♥652 ♦AJ7 ♣K10765</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>9</td></tr></table> <table><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>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr></table>	HCP		6	12	13	9	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	1	-	-	S	1	-	1	-	-	E	-	2	-	3	2	W	-	2	-	3	2	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <p>If playing a weak NT, that should be West's choice of opening. East will use Stayman and, upon finding a spade fit, will raise to game.</p> <p>If playing a strong NT, West will, of course, have to open 1♠. East will often respond 2NT, game-forcing with four or more spades, and West may just jump to 4♠ to show a hand with no suitability for slam.</p> <p>Four Spades is a perfectly good contract, and the one we would all wish to be in if we could see both our own and partner's hand. However, the club finesse is not working and there is no winning guess in hearts. Double dummy, then, the defence can always prevail and beat the contract by a trick. And if North leads a club, that should surely be what happens, South winning the ♣K and switching to a heart.</p> <p>But North does have to find that club lead. If North instead leads a diamond or a spade, declarer can set up the diamonds for two club discards and now the contract is home, losing only two hearts and the ace of diamonds.</p> <p>It is technically better to lead the stronger minor, as the nine-eight will occasionally interact better with partner's holding than will the ♦ 6-4-3, but a fair number will guess badly and choose a diamond.</p>
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<p>♠J108642 ♥4 ♦2 ♣AQJ106</p> <p>♠3      ♠KQ975 ♥KJ98762      ♥10 ♦A74      ♦Q983 ♣92      ♣743</p> <p>♠A ♥AQ53 ♦KJ1065 ♣K85</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>17</td></tr></table> <table><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>4</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>3</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		8	7	8	17	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	3	1	3	3	S	4	3	1	3	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>West has a normal 3♥ opening, which presents North with something of a problem with his shapely 8-count. Well, that is the job that pre-empts are supposed to do, so we should have no sympathy for North's predicament. North may pass, pointing to the low point-count. The bidding will run round to South, who will probably overcall 3NT. There is plenty of play in this contract, but it cannot actually be beaten if declarer reads the hand correctly. The only plausible alternative on the South cards is to pass and hope to collect a few 50s. The number looks to be three, with declarer held to five trump tricks plus the ace of diamonds for -150. Minus 150 may not look too bad with 3NT a possible make on the NS cards, but the problem is that plenty of NSs will be going minus when North insists on playing in one of his suits. Can you blame him? Even if North passes over 3♥, he is likely to transfer to spades over South's 3NT, and that spade layout is just too much to overcome, 4♠ being down at least one.</p> <p>And North will often bid over 3♥. He may show the two-suiter, but I would prefer a simple 3♠ overcall. If I'm going to bid, it is in the hope that partner has some spade support, not that we can get to 5♣, and 3♠ puts less momentum into the auction. South may content himself with a cautious 3NT facing a 3♠ overcall, but will North be willing to pass that?</p>
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<p>♠J2 ♥73 ♦K953 ♣AQJ104</p> <p>♠1097      ♠K86 ♥Q106      ♥AJ954 ♦AJ42      ♦1087 ♣K75      ♣96</p> <p>♠AQ543 ♥K82 ♦Q6 ♣832</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr></table> <table><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>4</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>4</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		11	8	10	11	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	2	-	4	2	S	4	2	-	4	2	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Most Norths will open at the prevailing vulnerability. Many will open 1♣, happy to rebid their chunky suit, and will have to do so when South responds 1♠. South should bid 2NT over the 2♣ rebid, and that should end the auction. With the ♠K onside, there are always at least eight tricks, and if West leads a diamond there is likely to be at least a ninth. The above, of course, assumes an uncontested auction, but many Easts will overcall 1♥, even at adverse vulnerability. South can now show five spades by bidding the suit, and West cuebids 2♣ to show a constructive raise to at least 2♥. North has no reason to bid now but, when East converts to 2♥, South will either make a take-out double or make the value bid of 2NT. The latter is passed out and a heart lead holds South to +120. If South doubles 2♥, a 3♣ response works just fine and scores +130. A 3♦ response works less well and South has to bid on, risking going minus. North could, of course, respond 2NT, two places to play, if that agreement is in place, and that sees South bid 3♣, ending the auction.</p> <p>Playing a weak NT, there is a good case for opening 1NT with the North hand. If EW have a major-suit fit, the 1NT opening will have useful pre-emptive effect, making it harder for them to get together. Meanwhile, if it is NS who should be playing a major-suit contract, South's transfer response will see North become declarer, protecting both the diamond and club positions from the opening lead.</p>
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<p>♠ J32 ♥ 43 ♦ AK52 ♣ A984</p> <p>♠ Q964      ♠ 87 ♥ QJ86      ♥ AK952 ♦ 43      ♦ 7 ♣ K73      ♣ Q10652</p> <p>♠ AK105 ♥ 107 ♦ QJ10986 ♣ J</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>12</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		12		N	-	4	-	3	2	8	9	S	-	4	-	3	2	11		E	2	-	1	-	-			W	2	-	1	-	-	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>East has yet another of those weak two-suiters. If he is playing that 2♥ is a two-suiter, he will make the bid and South probably doubles. West raises pre-emptively to 3♥, and North makes a responsive double. Trusting that partner would have just bid a decent spade suit, South responds 4♦, and North may raise to game. Five Diamonds is on the spade finesse, and when that loses the contract is down one.</p> <p>Most Easts, however, will have to pass, so South will get to open 1♦. Playing inverted raises, North can respond 2♦, invitational or better, and it is then unclear whether the doomed game will be reached or not, but my bet would be that the majority will get to game after this start. Playing limit raises, Acol-style, North may feel he is just too good to raise to 3♦, so will instead respond 2♣. He will have an awkward bid over South's 2♦ rebid, as he has no major-suit stopper to show as a NT probe. In fact, this may be one of those times when life is made easier if East overcalls, as at least then there may be a cuebid available to North.</p>
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<p>♠ 6 ♥ AQ642 ♦ A432 ♣ K96</p> <p>♠ A7543      ♠ QJ1092 ♥ KJ95      ♥ 3 ♦ K7      ♦ QJ86 ♣ 82      ♣ AJ3</p> <p>♠ K8 ♥ 1087 ♦ 1095 ♣ Q10754</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>13</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>11</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		13		N	1	-	1	-	-	11	11	S	1	-	1	-	-	5		E	-	1	-	4	-			W	-	1	-	4	1	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>West has just enough for a 1♠ opener. North now has to decide whether to overcall 2♥, getting the fifth heart into the game but risking playing in an inferior fit, or doubling, thereby finding whatever fit is available, but losing the fifth heart. I expect most to opt for the overcall.</p> <p>It doesn't actually matter all that much which option North selects, as East has excellent spade support and sufficient strength that NS are going to be outbid anyway. East is too good for a simple raise to 4♠, and should instead jump to 4♥, a splinter bid, showing heart shortage as well as the fact that 4♠ is being bid to make.</p> <p>Not only is West minimum for the 1♠ opening, but he also has wasted values in hearts, so a sign-off in 4♠ is automatic.</p> <p>An opening club lead sets up a third defensive winner, leaving declarer dependent on the trump finesse for his contract. The ♠K is onside, so that means 10 tricks for +420. But if declarer can play on diamonds before the ♣A is knocked out, his club loser goes away and he comes to an overtrick for +450 and quite a lot more matchpoints.</p> <p>Should North find the club lead? It's hard to say that a lead from king to three is an obvious choice, but neither is the lead of either red suit, and any side-suit lead can cost a trick.</p> <p>So too can a singleton trump lead, but that may be the least dangerous in terms of costing a trick in the suit led. It does, however, cost a crucial tempo on the actual deal.</p>
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<p>♠ 96 ♥ AQ7652 ♦ 10985 ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ AKQ542      ♠ 73 ♥ 93      ♥ KJ1084 ♦ J63      ♦ K7 ♣ A10      ♣ K765</p> <p>♠ J108 ♥ - ♦ AQ42 ♣ QJ8432</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>6</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>10</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		6		N	-	1	-	-	-	14	10	S	1	1	-	-	-	10		E	-	-	2	4	3			W	-	-	2	3	3	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>When West opens 1♠, North might make a weak jump overcall of 3♥ were the vulnerability reversed. Vulnerable against not, however, it would be a brave, or foolhardy, according to the outcome, action to take, and I would expect few over the age of 21 to do so. Equally, a simple 2♥ overcall is too dangerous as partner will bid on the assumption that it promises about an ace more than North actually holds. So North will pass and, if playing Acol, East will respond 2♥. The vulnerability may also keep South quiet.</p> <p>If West rebids only 2♠, he may play there. There are 10 tricks on a club or diamond lead but only nine on ace and another heart due to the defensive ruff.</p> <p>But some Wests will like the excellent spade suit enough to jump to 3♠, forcing. East is likely to convert that to 3NT, and normal play, looking for a ninth trick in hearts rather than diamonds, brings the contract home.</p> <p>If playing two-over-one GF, East will have to respond 1NT, and now it is convenient for South to overcall 2♣. West will rebid 2♠, and the board will be decided by whether or not East goes on – presumably with a natural 2NT, which West would raise to game.</p>
HCP		Makeable contracts																																															
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																											
6		N	-	1	-	-	-																																										
14	10	S	1	1	-	-	-																																										
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