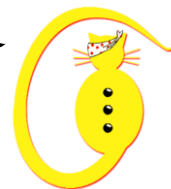


ECatsBridge Simultaneous Pairs for Children in Need

Thursday 11th November 2021



Together we can ...

... and by competing in this Simultaneous Pairs you have once again certainly shown that **together we can indeed do something to help make a difference** to children who really need our help.

Some of you will be playing Face-to-Face and others online but all the results will be included in the overall scoring so don't worry!

Thank you so so much for coming along and joining in, playing and donating – please don't forget the donating bit though, will you – just go to :

<https://www.ecatsbridge.com/donate/>

and you will see how you can do it – if you haven't already done so of course!

Our thanks to Julian Pottage for writing this set for us – I hope you found it interesting (and accurate!).

Take care won't you and stay safe

Anna & Mark

Board 1. None Vul. Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass (1)	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass (2)	1NT	Pass
3♣ (3)	Pass	3♥ (4)	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) North has poor spot cards and an unsupported jack.

(2) North's main suit is poor. It would be better to open 1♥ than to overcall 2♥.

(3) West might raise to 2NT. The jump in clubs is more descriptive.

(4) With only ♦J-x-x, East cannot sensibly bid 3NT. Raising clubs is also unattractive at matchpoints.

(3) NT is makeable, though it could fail on a diamond lead if declarer takes the club finesse early.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠ (1)
Pass	4♣ (2)	Pass	4♦ (3)
Pass	4♥ (3)	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦ (3)	Pass	5♠
All Pass			

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(1) Since 3♠ is forcing after the 2-level response, it is fine to bid this with 18 points.

(2) North can envisage a slam if South has ♠A-K-Q-x-x and the ♥A so cue bids the club control.

(3) . South might check on key cards but gives North the chance to show the ♥K first. North later shows 1 key card.

Normal matchpoint play in trumps is to finesse the queen and later lay down the ace, which works OK here.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South

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

West	North	East	South
3♠	4♥	4♠	3♥ (1) All Pass

(1) At favourable vulnerability South opens a red-blooded 3♥ rather than a weak 2♥.

You can make 11 tricks with spades as trumps even after an unlikely trump lead by taking two heart ruffs early.

5♥ doubled should go down three; declarer's winners would be five trumps, two aces and a diamond ruff.

Board 4. All Vul. Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥ (1)	Pass
INT	All Pass (2)		

(1) Third seat vulnerable it is generally best not to open a weak INT with only 12 points.

(2) North has the right shape to double INT (as takeout of hearts) but is a bit too weak.

The play in INT is a bit of race to make your tricks first. Given time, East-West might make two tricks in spades, three in hearts, one in diamond and two clubs. North-South have nine potential winners: two spades, two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs. Neither side has time to set up everything!

The most likely number of tricks in INT is seven for East-West: one in diamonds and two in each other suit. The defenders will probably manage a long spade to go with the ♠A, the ♥A, the ♦A-K and the ♣K.

North-South might do remarkably well if they can get to play with spades, with 140 available via some good guessing.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North

♠ 9 8 6 5 4 3 ♥ 8 7 ♦ Q 8 7 ♣ 10 5 ♠ A 7 2 ♥ A 5 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ A 9 7 6 2	♠ K J ♥ K Q 6 4 3 ♦ J 10 4 ♣ Q 8 4 ♠ Q 10 ♥ J 10 9 2 ♦ A K 9 2 ♣ K J 3
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West	North	East	South
2♠ (2)	Pass	INT (1) 2NT	Pass All Pass

(1) 12-14 – the soft scattered values suggest INT rather than 1♥.

(2) Range enquiry – West has a 5-card suit but poor spot cards – so not enough to insist on game.

After the defenders cash the first four tricks in diamonds against 3NT, declarer can restrict further losers to one by a number of means. The somewhat double-dummy play is by taking an intra-finesse in clubs (low to the eight and then run the queen). A more likely path to eight tricks is to cash the heart tops and exit

with the fourth round, keeping three spades and two clubs in dummy. This sets up a long heart and means South must then lead either into the spade tenace or into the split club tenace.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
Dble (1) 4♠	Pass All Pass	1♥ 3NT	2♣ Pass

(1) With only 6 HCP, West is too weak to bid 2♠ (forcing) so starts with a double.

Looking at only the East-West cards you would expect 4♠ to make – West can expect to discard a diamond on the ♥A and so avoid a third-round loser even without taking a ruff in dummy. The 6-1 club division puts a spanner in the works. So long as the defenders lead a club, or switch to the suit after a round or two of diamonds, North scores the setting trick with a club ruff. Indeed, North would probably lead the singleton club whatever the auction, all the more so after South has bid the suit.

North-South should go down three doubled in 5♦ – not a good result when 4♠ is failing.

Board 7. All Vul. Dealer South

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♥ (1)	Pass
2♥	3♣ (3)	3♥	Dble (2)
All Pass			Dble (4)

(1) Since the hearts are massively better than the spades, East treats the hand as single-suited.

(2) For most, 1♠ would show 5+ spades, so South doubles with four spades.

(3) North has strong clubs. It is fine to bid a level higher than the planned 2♣ in competition.

(4) South has four trumps, a misfit for North's clubs and the other two suits well held.

A trump or the ♦Q work best against 3♥ doubled, resulting in a 500 penalty. If South leads the ♠K and switches to a trump, East can get out for one down by ruffing one round of spades high, drawing trumps and setting up the spades.

By careful play 5♦ is makeable, with just a trump and a heart to lose.

Board 8. None Vul. Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dble (1)	3♣
3♦	All Pass (2)		

(1) East is too weak to bid 2♠. Double is much more flexible than 2♥.

(2) North feels tempted to double in the hope of 300 but East-West might have a better spot to escape to.

(3) ♦ drifts a couple off, as would 3♥ or 3♠. Since 3♣ should go down, failing to double is not too costly.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North

<p>♠ Q 8 7 3 ♥ A 6 5 2 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ Q 5</p> <p>♠ 10 2 ♥ Q J 10 8 4 ♦ A K 10 9 ♣ A 4</p> <p>♠ J 9 5 ♥ 7 ♦ J 7 ♣ J 10 9 8 7 3 2</p>	<p>♠ A K 6 4 ♥ K 9 3 ♦ Q 8 5 4 ♣ K 6</p>
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West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Pass 1
2♥	Pass	2NT (2)	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass (3)

(1) Even at favourable vulnerability South is reluctant to make a weak jump overcall of 3♣ with three jacks.

(2) If you play 2NT as forcing, East can show a balanced raise to 4♥ by bidding 2NT en route.

If you play 2NT as wide-ranging, it can be useful to have 3♣ as a range enquiry, though here a natural 3♦ might work better.

(3) Without knowing about the two-suit fit in the red suits, slam prospects are not too obvious.

With diamonds 3-2, there is nothing to the play in a heart or no-trump contract – just the ♥A to lose. If diamonds are trumps, the defenders can, on an initial heart lead, score a ruff as well as their ace. 6NT is the best spot but very hard to reach.

Board 10. All Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ K Q 9 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ A 10 4 3 2</p> <p>♠ 10 6 4 ♥ A 7 2 ♦ A K J 2 ♣ Q 9 8</p> <p>♠ A J 8 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ 10 4 3 ♣ K 7 6 5</p>	<p>♠ 7 5 3 2 ♥ K J 5 4 3 ♦ Q 9 6 ♣ J</p>
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West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
INT (1)	Pass	2♦ (2)	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

(1) 12-14

(2) Transfer to hearts – the disparity in the majors makes this more attractive than Stayman.

(2) ♥ makes easily, possibly with an overtrick if the defenders do not cash their club trick early. This is because East's singleton club could go away on the fourth diamond and the 3-3 spade split enables declarer to set up a long spade.

(3) ♣ would go down one; the normal play in trumps in accordance with restricted choice principles even without West's INT opening is to cash the ♣K first and then finesse the ♣10 when a quack drops from East.

Board 11. None Vul. Dealer South

<p>♠ 6 4 ♥ A 9 2 ♦ K J 10 2 ♣ A J 8 5</p>	<p>♠ K Q 10 8 ♥ K Q 4 3 ♦ — ♣ Q 7 4 3 2</p> <p>♠ J 9 3 2 ♥ J 10 7 5 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ A 7 5 ♥ 8 6 ♦ A Q 9 7 3 ♣ K 10 9</p>
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West	North	East	South
			INT (1)
Pass	2♣ (2)	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT (3)	All Pass	

(1) 12-14

(2) Stayman; this asks for 4-card majors.

(3) If North were to bid 2NT just inviting game South would go to 3NT anyway with mid-range points and the nice diamonds.

(3) NT looks like it should make exactly with two clubs, a diamond and a heart to lose. If West decides to lead the ♦2, an overtrick is possible.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ 9 8 6 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ A 7 6 3 ♣ A Q 8</p> <p>♠ A 5 ♥ A 10 8 ♦ Q J 5 2 ♣ K 9 5 3</p>	<p>♠ K Q 10 4 3 ♥ J 7 ♦ 10 8 4 ♣ 10 7 4</p> <p>♠ J 7 ♥ K Q 9 6 5 2 ♦ K 9 ♣ J 6 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
INT (1)	Pass	2♥ (2)	Dble (3)
Pass	Pass	Rdble (2)	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

(1) 12-14

(2) Transfer and repeat transfer to spades after West has denied three spades by passing 2♥ doubled.

(3) In my methods either hearts or hand that would have doubled INT.

An unlikely low diamond lead would defeat 2♠. On the more normal heart lead, the defenders score one trick in hearts and two in each minor but no diamond ruffs because declarer can draw South's trumps.

(3) ♥ can go down but might make if West gets in with a third-round trump winner and has only clubs left to lead.

Board 13. All Vul. Dealer North

<p>♠ K 10 8 7 ♥ Q 7 ♦ K J 10 ♣ A K 8 5</p> <p>♠ J 6 4 ♥ K J 8 6 2 ♦ 6 2 ♣ 7 6 2</p>	<p>♠ A Q 5 2 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 9 7 5 ♣ Q 10 9 4</p> <p>♠ 9 3 ♥ A 5 4 3 ♦ A Q 8 4 3 ♣ J 3</p>
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West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
	3NT (1)	All Pass	

(1) 15-16 in my usual methods (a stronger hand would bid a forcing 2NT).

If South were to declare 3NT, a club lead would give the defenders time to make a club, a heart and two spades. With East on lead, they cannot manage all those four tricks and an overtrick should result. Indeed, if the ♣J captures the ♣10 at trick one and declarer runs dummy's ♠9 at trick two, East needs to win with the ♠Q and switch to a heart to stop 11 tricks.

Board 14. None Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ Q 6 3 2 ♥ 10 9 6 3 ♦ J 8 6 ♣ 9 7</p> <p>♠ J 10 7 ♥ Q 4 2 ♦ K Q 10 ♣ A 10 8 5</p>	<p>♠ K ♥ J 8 7 5 ♦ 9 7 3 2 ♣ Q J 6 3</p> <p>♠ A 9 8 5 4 ♥ A K ♦ A 5 4 ♣ K 4 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠

All Pass (1)

(1) West is too flat to act and, even allowing for a 'transferred king', East is too weak to do so.

West will do well to find a lead against 1♠ that does not cost a trick. The ♦K would allow declarer to win with the ♦A and later score dummy's ♦J. The ♠J lead would crash East's ♠K, exposing the ♠10 to a finesse. The ♠7 and a heart are the safest leads, though declarer can still arrange to endplay West at least once to generate a ninth trick. The ♠Q will be an entry for ruffing the third round of hearts, meaning that West may have to make a losing lead when in with the third round of trumps.

East-West will fare far better if they manage to secure the contract. They might make 9 tricks with clubs as trumps because North cannot get in to give South a heart ruff. If, in a desperate attempt to put North on lead, South were to underlead the ♠A, 10 tricks could result: declarer could use the available entries to lead twice towards West's diamond honours and take finesses in the trump suit.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ J 2 ♥ 9 8 4 3 ♦ A ♣ A Q J 7 5 3</p> <p>♠ A Q 10 8 7 4 ♠ K 9 ♥ 7 ♥ A K J 10 6 2 ♦ 6 5 4 3 ♦ K J ♣ K 8 ♣ 10 4 2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 6 5 3 ♥ Q 5 ♦ Q 10 9 8 7 2 ♣ 9 6</p>
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West	North	East	South
1♠ (1)	2♣	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣ (2)	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

(1) With the 6-4 shape and the good suit, West is too strong for a non-vulnerable weak two.

(2) 3♥ would not be forcing so East bids North's suit to create a force and find out more.

When North leads the ♦A against 4♠, South should probably not play the ♦2 because North might read that as a suit-preference signal denoting the ♣K. As it happens North might well switch to the ♣A since South could have a singleton club rather and the ace switch is OK unless declarer has a small singleton, which is unlikely as South might have raised clubs with K-x-x. If North does not cash the ♣A at trick two, declarer can make the rest of the tricks with a reasonable view in hearts. Taking the heart finesse and risking a club through the king is sufficiently unattractive that most will drop the ♥Q.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ Q 10 6 ♥ A K 6 5 3 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ A 2</p> <p>♠ 9 7 5 3 ♠ A 8 2 ♥ 9 8 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ 5 3 2 ♦ K J 10 4 ♣ K J 10 9 ♣ 6 4 3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K J 4 ♥ 10 7 2 ♦ 9 8 6 ♣ Q 8 7 5</p>
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West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥ (1)	Pass	INT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Some would (because of the 5-card suit) treat the North hand as 20 points – fine if you have a way to show 20-21 but if a 2NT opening shows 20-22 then that seems a wide enough range already.

The location of the minor-suit kings means that many scores will be failing contracts. If West is on lead and starts with a diamond, or if East is on lead and starts with a club, even INT fails. Conversely, if West leads a club or East leads a diamond, this would concede both a trick and a tempo, allowing 9 tricks to make. Who says you should lead your best suit against a no-trump contract? West will probably prefer a spade, because that is a major, in which case South can make 8 tricks.

Board 17. None Vul. Dealer North

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K 10 7 2 ♥ A 10 3 ♦ J ♣ A 9 7 5 2</p> <p>♠ A Q J 8 6 3 ♠ 4 ♥ 6 ♥ K J 9 8 7 2 ♦ Q 9 6 ♦ K 7 5 3 ♣ 10 6 3 ♣ Q 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 9 5 ♥ Q 5 4 ♦ A 10 8 4 2 ♣ K J 8</p>
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West	North	East	South
All Pass	1♣	2♥	2NT (1)

(1) South has tricky bid after East's weak jump overcall but cannot pass in case North has a strong NT hand.

With the ♠A, ♥K and ♣Q all onside, North-South can make 9 tricks in no-trumps. They can also make 9 tricks with clubs as trumps quite easily and have a tough chance for 10 tricks by endplaying West after any lead other than the ♠A.

If West is in 2♠, the defenders can beat it by three tricks if they take diamond ruffs and switch to a trump; this leaves declarer with just five trump tricks in hand and prevents dummy from ruffing the third round of clubs

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ K J 7 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ K Q 7 5</p> <p>♠ 9 8 6 5 ♥ J 3 ♦ A Q 8 6 2 ♣ 8 6</p> <p>♠ A 10 ♥ K Q 10 7 2 ♦ J 4 ♣ A 9 4 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 4 2 ♥ A 9 6 4 ♦ 9 7 3 ♣ J 10 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT (1)	Pass	2♣
All Pass		Pass	3NT

(1) At matchpoints North prefers showing the diamond stopper and balanced hand to raising clubs. Jumping to 3NT would not be ridiculous as South has opened in second seat at unfavourable vulnerability.

With the friendly layout, including the ♦A-Q onside and clubs 3-2, declarer can make at least 11 tricks by guessing to lead twice towards the king-queen of hearts (rather than finessing the ten). In fact, if East ducks the ♥A twice, declarer can make 12 tricks by finessing the ♠10 – this is the safe way to finesse in spades anyway because the fall of the ♥J rather suggests that East has the remaining hearts. It would be brilliant for West to drop the jack from J-x-x – sadly the cards deny this option!

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South

<p>♠ A K Q 4 ♥ A J 6 3 ♦ 10 5 ♣ K 8 4</p> <p>♠ J 9 6 3 ♥ K 8 ♦ Q 8 2 ♣ A J 10 6</p> <p>♠ 10 7 5 2 ♥ 10 9 7 4 ♦ 7 4 3 ♣ Q 9</p>	<p>♠ 8 ♥ Q 5 2 ♦ A K J 9 6 ♣ 7 5 3 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Dble	1♠	2♦	2♥
Pass	Pass	3♦	All Pass (1)

(1) South can see a two-suit fit in the majors but also an awful lot of losers and a defensive ♣Q-x.

If South leads a club (unlikely) or if North switch to a club at trick two after a spade lead at trick one, the defenders can score a club ruff to stop the overtrick in 3♦. If clubs are trumps, a score 130 is unstoppable. If West declares a no-trump contract, thus protecting the ♥K-x from attack, a score of 120 is available. North can get out for down one in 3♠ but 3♥ can go two down.

Board 20. All Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ 6 3 ♥ A K J 6 ♦ A 9 6 ♣ A Q 8 2</p> <p>♠ J 7 4 ♥ 9 8 7 4 3 2 ♦ — ♣ 10 9 6 3</p>	<p>♠ A 9 ♥ Q 5 ♦ K Q 10 8 7 4 2 ♣ K J</p> <p>♠ K Q 10 8 5 2 ♥ 10 ♦ J 5 3 ♣ 7 5 4</p>
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West	North	East	South
1♥	2♦	Dble (1)	Pass
3NT (2)	Pass	4♠	All Pass

(1) The same situation as West encountered on board 6 – East is too weak for a forcing 2♠.

(2) After East's double, 2NT would not be forcing, so West bids 3NT to ensure reaching game.

If South leads a heart, East can easily escape for down one in 4♠. Indeed if North fails to grab the ♠A on the first round of trumps and give South a diamond ruff, 4♠ might make. If South leads a club, which is more likely on the auction I have given, declarer may need to cash the ♥A-K to discard a club to avoid a two-trick defeat.

Curiously East could make 3NT (with an overtrick) if declarer reads the position right by endplaying North via a low diamond exit once the spades are good to create the ♦J as an entry to them. If West declares a no-trump contract, a low diamond lead would kill the

long spades, though a more normal $\heartsuit K$ lead would set up the $\heartsuit J$ and potentially result in 11 tricks.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North

\spadesuit 10 5 \heartsuit K Q 10 8 3 \diamondsuit 6 4 \clubsuit A 6 4 3 \spadesuit A Q 8 7 4 \heartsuit J 4 2 \diamondsuit 10 9 5 \clubsuit J 9 \spadesuit 6 \heartsuit A 9 5 \diamondsuit K Q J 3 \clubsuit Q 10 8 7 5	\spadesuit K J 9 3 2 \heartsuit 7 6 \diamondsuit A 8 7 2 \clubsuit K 2
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West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 \spadesuit	Dble
3 \spadesuit (1)	4 \heartsuit	Pass	Pass
4 \spadesuit	Dble (2)	All Pass	

(1) Those playing 5-card majors might leap all the way to 4 \spadesuit .

(2) It sounds like it will be a disaster for North-South if 4 \spadesuit makes doubled or undoubled – but if it is going two down then there could be a big difference between 100 and 300.

Declarer will normally lose five tricks (two in each red suit and the $\clubsuit A$) in a spade contract. If North switches to a low club and declarer guesses wrong, a sixth loser is possible. If North switches to a low club at a point when East has a fourth-round diamond winner set up, a successful guess would avoid the club loser altogether.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East

\spadesuit K 5 3 \heartsuit J 9 4 3 \diamondsuit K 8 5 4 \clubsuit 8 3 \spadesuit — \heartsuit A Q 10 7 6 5 \diamondsuit 10 9 3 \clubsuit A Q 5 4	\spadesuit Q J 10 9 4 2 \heartsuit 8 \diamondsuit A J 7 \clubsuit K J 10 \spadesuit A 8 7 6 \heartsuit K 2 \diamondsuit Q 6 2 \clubsuit 9 7 6 2
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West	North	East	South
	1 \spadesuit	Pass	1 \heartsuit
Pass	Pass	Pass	2 \clubsuit
Pass	2 \diamondsuit (1)	Pass	3 \heartsuit (2)

Pass 3NT (3) All Pass

(1) With those good intermediates North is too strong for an invitational 3 \spadesuit .

(2) A simple 2 \heartsuit would just be keeping the bidding open (as forced by the 2 \diamondsuit fourth-suit-forcing).

(3) North lacks the room to show the sixth spade and the diamond stopper(s) so follows Hamman's rule (which says that if 3NT is one of the options then bid 3NT).

On a diamond lead (easier to find from the West seat) the defenders can make a long diamond to go with the $\spadesuit A-K$ and the $\diamondsuit Q$ to stop the overtrick in 3NT. On any other lead declarer can come to 10 tricks.

Board 23. All Vul. Dealer South

\spadesuit A K 10 8 \heartsuit 6 \diamondsuit K 6 5 2 \clubsuit 10 8 6 2 \spadesuit 7 \heartsuit A 2 \diamondsuit A Q J 4 \clubsuit Q J 9 5 4 3	\spadesuit J 5 2 \heartsuit Q 10 9 8 4 3 \diamondsuit 10 8 7 \clubsuit 7 \spadesuit Q 9 6 4 3 \heartsuit K J 7 5 \diamondsuit 9 3 \clubsuit A K
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West	North	East	South
	Pass	Dble 1	1 \clubsuit
2 \spadesuit	Pass	3 \spadesuit	2 \clubsuit
4 \spadesuit	All Pass		Pass

(1) East might prefer 1 \spadesuit – the suit is poor, however.

If trumps were 2-2, declarer in 4 \spadesuit would need either the $\diamondsuit A$ onside or a winning heart guess. With trumps 3-1 (and North threatening to ruff a club), success actually depends upon favourable outcomes in both red suits. The knowledge that South has the values for an opening bid increases the chance the $\diamondsuit A$ is onside and is likely to help declarer guess the hearts correctly.

Board 24. None Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ Q 9 5 3 ♥ A 10 7 4 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K J 10</p> <p>♠ 10 7 ♥ — ♦ A K 6 5 4 2 ♣ A Q 9 8 7</p> <p>♠ A K 2 ♥ K Q 9 8 5 2 ♦ J 8 ♣ 6 4</p>	<p>♠ J 8 6 4 ♥ J 6 3 ♦ 10 9 7 ♣ 5 3 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
1♦	Dble	Pass	4♥ (1)
5♣ (2)	Dble	5♦	Pass (3)
Pass	Dble (4)	All Pass	

(1) South might decide the hand is too slammish for an immediate 4♥ and cue bid 2♦ first.

(2) West has to guess – sacrificing at equal vulnerability might or might not be the winning action. If you are going to bid 5♣ (or 4NT since the diamonds are longer than the clubs) then you want to do so quickly and confidently.

(3) After North doubled 5♣, South's pass sounds forcing.

(4) North does have four hearts but also quite a few soft values in West's suits.

If diamonds were 3-1, 5♦ could easily be going down 500. As it is, declarer can make 9 tricks and show a profit against defending 4♥. The club layout is such that South cannot misguess the suit in a heart contract, so 10 tricks result.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North

<p>♠ 9 4 2 ♥ 7 6 3 2 ♦ K Q 8 5 2 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ A K 10 7 5 3 ♥ J 10 ♦ 3 ♣ J 10 9 3</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ K Q 5 ♦ A J 10 9 ♣ Q 8 6 5 2</p>	<p>♠ Q J 8 ♥ A 9 8 4 ♦ 7 6 4 ♣ A K 7</p>
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West	North	East	South
	Pass	INT (1)	Pass
2♥ (2)	Pass	2♠	Dble (3)
Rdble (4)	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

(1) 12-14

(2) Transfer to spades.

(3) Takeout – bidding 2NT to show the minors would not be terrible. With the singleton spade South does not want to let East-West play quietly in 2♠ if that is what West is planning.

(4) Bidding 3♠ directly would sound only competitive so West redoubles first to make 3♠ invitational.

4♠ makes with one trick in each side suit to lose. Reasonably careful play avoids losing a club ruff in addition.

With the ♣A-K short and the ♥A onside, North-South can get out for one down in 5♦ doubled.

Board 26. All Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ Q 5 3 ♥ 8 5 2 ♦ K 9 3 2 ♣ K J 4</p> <p>♠ A K J 4 2 ♥ A 9 7 6 ♦ J ♣ Q 10 7</p> <p>♠ 9 8 7 ♥ K 4 ♦ Q 7 5 4 ♣ A 9 8 6</p>	<p>♠ 10 6 ♥ Q J 10 3 ♦ A 10 8 6 ♣ 5 3 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♥	All Pass (1)	INT	Pass

(1) East is close to raising to 3♥. At matchpoints it rarely pays to press for thin games.

With spades 3-3 and trumps 3-2 with king onside, you can make 10 tricks with hearts as trumps even on a diamond lead. You can ruff the spades good and finesse in trumps.

Board 27. None Vul. Dealer South

<p>♠ K Q ♥ 7 6 4 ♦ Q 7 3 2 ♣ 9 5 3 2</p> <p>♠ 8 7 5 3 2 ♥ 5 ♦ K 8 6 5 ♣ Q J 6</p>	<p>♠ J ♥ A Q 9 8 3 2 ♦ A J 10 9 4 ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ A 10 9 6 4 ♥ K J 10 ♦ — ♣ A K 8 7 4</p>
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West	North	East	South
			1♠ (1)
Pass	INT	2♥ (2)	3♣ (3)
Pass	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	4♣ (4)	All Pass	

(1) Opening 1♠ with 5-5 in the blacks has become so standard that it almost needs no comment.

(2) With the major suit longer than the minor, East bids the hearts rather than a Michaels 2♠.

(3) South's good shape justifies the bid. A stronger hand would double.

(4) Selling out to 3♦ could be right but nobody vulnerable is a poor vulnerability for defending.

A club contract plays well, with 11 tricks available on a heart lead and 12 available on a non-heart lead – West has to follow suit helplessly as all of dummy's hearts go away on the spades.

4♦ is makeable if you twice finesse North for the ♦Q (ruffing one heart high so as to enable an entry).

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ 7 3 2 ♥ K J 10 9 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ J 9 5</p> <p>♠ A K 8 6 4 ♥ 4 ♦ A Q 10 5 ♣ K 7 6</p>	<p>♠ J 9 ♥ 8 6 5 3 2 ♦ K J 9 8 2 ♣ 8</p> <p>♠ Q 10 5 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ 4 ♣ A Q 10 4 3 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♣
2♦	Pass	4♦ (1)	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

(1) East has such good support for diamonds that this justifies the jump.

The defenders have two aces to take against 5♦. It is most unlikely that South would duck the first club with the singleton visible in dummy. A heart lead followed by an unlikely spade switch seems the only other way South might lose the ♣A.