

TRIBES BRIDGE CLUB - 50th ANNIVERSARY: 1971 - 2021

Greetings!

Herewith find attached the analysis of selected hands played last Thursday, 20th May 2021, in the **Tribes Bridge Club BBO IMPs Pairs**.

Another set of interesting hands with several declarer play and defensive problems which many found challenging. This week I have analysed SEVEN hands in varying degrees of detail ranging from one to eight pages: Board# 1, 9, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20

In total there are 22 pages of analysis/comment.

Board#1 a real tussle in the bidding which might see E/W contract 3 NT or 5 ♣ or N/S take a Save in 4 ♠.

Board#9 A fairly routine 4 ♠ by E/W...As East, what did you do when North opened 1 ♦? As West, how did you respond when partner made a Takeout Double of North's opening 1 ♦?

Board#12 As West you may have opened 1 ♣ and partner responded 1 ♠. What did you do next?

Board#13 Did you declare 4 ♥ and misplay it and go down OR did the defense give you an opportunity to make it? Or were you one of the few N/S pairs that gave declarer no chance to make 4 ♥?

Board#18 A fairly straightforward 4 ♠...for most declarers. But some played in 3 NT and could have been given a rough ride if South ducks the first spade!

Board#19 Yes, E/W can make 6 ♥...but no one bid it! And at approx half the tables N/S were allowed to play in 4 ♠ and at a couple of these tables declarer was given an opportunity to make the contract...but failed to seize the moment!

Board#20 One of the most interesting hands. Most N/S pairs contracted 3 NT. At one table it failed by FIVE tricks whereas at a couple of tables it made with an overtrick! But the overall result was roughly 50/50 between success and failure!

Enjoy!

REMEMBER... SUMMER BRIDGE AT GALWAY ON MON, TUES, WED, THURS, SAT, SUN starting next Monday, 31st May and continuing until the winter clubs resume in late September. Host ID on BBO: CBAI125548. All sessions start at 7.45 pm. Entry fee 3BB\$. **ALL WELCOME.**

Paul J Scannell
27th May 2021

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠x-4

There could be a competitive auction on this board. E/W can make 6 NT although 3 NT is more likely to be the final destination. However if N/S can find the spade fit then they are likely to reach 4 ♠ which is a good 'Save' against a game contract by E/W! 4 ♠ fails by a single trick. E/W can also make 5 ♣.

Saints & Sinners

A diamond a contract was played at two tables! At one table South played in 5 ♦ x-44!!! South opened 1 ♦, West overcalled 1 NT (Strong) and North found a bid of 2 ♦ with a singleton ♦ Q opposite a possible 4 card suit! **Sinner** status to N/S. East jumped to 3 NT and South, with a sub-minimum opener bid 4 ♦ despite knowing that West holds good diamonds! West Doubled and North now bid 4 ♥ (if bidding, should bid 4 ♠). West also Doubled this contract and South reverted to 5 ♦ which West Doubled. The defense was benevolent and declarer scored several tricks to which he was not entitled. West led ♥ 6, declarer playing low as East won with ♥ Q. East of course should have switched to a trump but actually played ♥ A, declarer ruffing with ♦ 2. Declarer next led ♣ 4 from hand and West must have been in a daze when she rose with ♣ A despite holding ♣ 6 which would have won the trick!!! This gifted a soft trick to declarer in the form of ♣ K. West, who should have placed ♦ K on the table now made the outrageous continuation of ♥ 9, knowing that dummy's ♥ K will win and that declarer will discard a losing black card!!! Declarer won with H♥ K, discarding ♣ 7 from hand. Declarer continued with ♥ 8, East discarding ♠ J instead of ruffing with ♦ 7 as declarer discarded ♠ 3 and West won with ♥ J. West was now back in the hot seat and had another chance to find the switch to ♦ K...BUT actually continued with ♦ 6, dummy's ♦ Q winning!!!! Declarer now led the winning ♥ 10, East again discarding instead of ruffing as declarer discarded another spade leaving West to ruff with ♦ 10. West now exited on ♣ 4 to East's ♣ 9 and declarer's ♣ K. At this point declarer has scored 4 tricks and this is the position. Declarer holds ♠ K7, ♦ A95 while West holds ♠ AQ, ♦ KJ. Declarer now applied the *coup de grace* to the hapless defenders when he cashed ♦ A and continued with ♦ 5 forcing West to win. West was now endplayed and had to concede yet another trick to declarer when she cashed ♠ A and then conceded the last trick to declarer's ♠ K. Declarer actually scored SEVEN tricks when he should have scored a mere four TRICKS with the defense scoring 2 spades, 1 heart, 3 diamonds, 3 clubs. **Sinner** status to N/S for terrible bidding and **Absolute Sinner** status to E/W for a very poor defense.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠×-4

Saints & Sinners

At another table West opened 1♦ and North bid a conventional 3♣ showing 5/5 (or longer) in the majors. East doubled (not alerted!), South bid 3♠ and West bid 3NT. South persisted with 4♠ and East now bid 5♦ where 5♣ would have been better. North led ♠ 10 to dummy's ♠ J, South's ♠ K as declarer won in hand with ♠ A. Declarer now cashed ♣ A and continued with a club to dummy's ♣ Q and South's ♣ K. South now gave partner a club ruff and North then exited on ♥ 10 which declarer won in hand with ♥ J. Declarer continued with ♦ K, South winning with ♦ A. South now played a spade, declarer winning with ♠ Q. Declarer finessed ♥ Q, South ruffing with ♦ 2. South now played ♦ 4, declarer winning with dummy's ♦ 7. Declarer now cashed ♦ J10, drawing South's ♦ 95, and then entered dummy via ♥ A and cashed dummy's ♣ J10 for a mere two down! **Sinner** status to **East** for not bidding 5♣ instead of 5♦.

At another table East opened 1♣ (not quite matching Rule of 20!). South overcalled 1♦ and West bid 1♥ (might have taken other action if she thought that East would Pass!). North and South Passed but South couldn't resist bidding 1♠ and so rescued the opponents who a moment earlier were contracted to play 1♥ on a 4-3 fit with a 5-1 break! West now bid 3NT and North came to life with a bid of 4♠. East now rashly bid 5♥ and declarer did not play the hand with elan and duly finished FOUR down! Sinner status to East who might have been better to Pass initially and should certainly have Passed 4♠.

At two tables E/W reached 5♣. At one table South opened 1♦ and West made an inappropriate Takeout Double (only holding two spades... West of course should have overcalled 1NT, perfect on her hand!). North Passed and East, forced to respond to partner's Takeout Double made a woefully underwhelming bid of 2♣ instead of the much more descriptive bid of 3♣. South passed and West now bid 2NT. North, who didn't seize the opportunity to bid on the previous round (or even open the bidding!) now bid 3♠. East bid 4♣ and West raised to 5♣. South led ♥ 7 to dummy's ♥ 9, North's ♥ 10 and declarer's ♥ Q. Declarer now played three rounds of clubs, ending in dummy. Declarer then led ♥ 4 and North, eye off the ball, played ♥ 8 instead of ♥ 5, declarer winning with ♥ A. Declarer now finessed ♦ J, losing to North's ♦ Q. And now the contract cannot be defeated! North returned a spade to declarer's ♠ J and South's ♠ K. Declarer duly discarded her losing ♥ 3 on ♠ Q and conceded a diamond to South's ♦ A. A lucky make.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠×-4

Saints & Sinners

3 NT was contracted at SIX tables with declarers making nine, ten, eleven, or, in one case, twelve tricks. At one table West opened 1♦, North overcalled 1♠, East bid 2♣, South bid 2♠, West rebid 2 NT and East raised to 3 NT. North should have been thinking of 4♠ given his 6-5 distribution. North led ♠ 2 (♠ 10 is more appropriate!), South covering dummy's ♠ J with ♠ K and declarer won with ♠ A. Declarer finessed ♥ Q and then led ♣ Q and South erred by covering with ♣ K...[**Note:** look at dummy with ♣ QJ10985...what is the point of covering with ♣ K. For instance declarer might be holding a doubleton ♣ Ax in which case South's ♣ K will take the third club. Silly to cover. You cover an honour to promote a trick in your own hand or partner's!] Declarer cashed all her clubs and then led a diamond, South erring by rising with ♦ A, crashing partner's ♦ Q and establishing three diamond winners for declarer who now claimed all the remaining tricks. **Sinner** status to **South** for covering ♣ Q and rising with ♦ A. If South ducks the diamond and declarer finesses to North's ♦ Q then North will return a spade and South can win the next diamond and cash a spade leaving declarer with ten tricks and not twelve!

At one table West declared 3 NT after South opened 1♦. North led ♦ Q and South ducked. Declarer can now make twelve tricks via 2 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds, 6 clubs! **BUT**, declarer, perhaps conscious of the fact that she was playing in an IMPs competition, won with ♦ K and then cashed ♣ A and continued with a club, South winning the third round with ♣ K. South now cashed ♦ A and then switched to a small spade, declarer winning with ♠ Q. Declarer claimed the rest and so emerged with eleven tricks.

At another table West opened 1♦, East bid 2♣, West rebid 2 NT and East raised to 3 NT. North led ♠ 10 to dummy's ♠ J, South's ♠ K and declarer's ♠ A. Declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then led ♣ Q, South playing low. Declarer won the third club in hand with ♣ A and then led ♥ J from hand. It would have been interesting to see what declarer does if North plays low! If declarer plays low from dummy then declarer's goose is cooked because she can no longer access dummy's clubs and the contract would fail! **BUT**, North rose with ♥ K as South discarded ♦ 9!!! North led ♦ Q to South's ♦ A and declarer claimed the rest. If North continued with a spade after winning with ♥ K declarer will score ten tricks, not eleven. **Sinner** status to **South**

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠×-4

Saints & Sinners

At a third table South opened 1♦, West correctly overcalled 1NT and North bid 2♠. East bid 3♣, South bid 3♠ and West bid 3NT. Unfortunately for the defense North led ♥5, declarer winning in hand with ♥9. Declarer now cashed ♣A and continued with a club to dummy's ♣10 and South's ♣K. South now switched to ♠K, declarer winning with ♠A. Declarer next finessed ♥Q and then cashed dummy's club winners. In the end game declarer led a diamond from dummy and South rose with ♦A, crashing partner's ♦Q and having to concede the last two tricks to declarer's ♠Q, ♦K. North took a chance in leading a heart instead of a spade, a suit supported by partner, and duly paid a price. On the other hand, if South held ♥Q instead of ♠K then North might have struck gold!

At another table West opened 1NT and East raised to 3NT. North led ♠2 to dummy's ♠J, South's ♠K and declarer's ♠A. Declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥A and then led ♣Q, South correctly playing low. Declarer repeated the club finesse and duly won the third club in hand and then led a heart towards dummy, North rising with ♥K. North now continued with ♠10 (the card I would have led at trick one), declarer winning perforce with ♠Q. Declarer next played a heart to dummy's ♥Q and then cashed dummy's winning clubs. South was wide awake and discarded all her small diamonds, retaining just ♦A, ♠7 as N/S won the last two tricks to hold declarer to ten tricks. **Saintly** status to **South, Muire McLoughlin** and **partner, Francis Byrne**. Yes, declarer could have made another trick, or maybe two, by finessing ♥Q but that wasn't what transpired at the table!

At the sixth table West opened 1♦, East bid 2♣, West bid 2NT and East raised to 3NT. North led ♠10 to dummy's ♠J, South's ♠K and West's ♠A. Declarer cashed ♣A and then continued with a club to dummy's ♣8 and South's ♣K. South continued with a spade to declarer's ♠Q. Many players at this juncture would simply continue with a club to dummy's four winners...**BUT**, this declarer looked further ahead and finessed ♥Q. When it won, nine tricks were assured. South duly rose with ♦A at trick eleven and then played a spade to North's ♠10. North then cashed ♥K to hold declarer to nine tricks. Well played and well defended...**Saintly** status to declarer **Enda Glynn** and to **South, Sheila Baynes** and partner **Norma O'Connell**.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠×-4

Saints & Sinners

At another table West opened 1 NT, North bid 2♣ showing the majors, East bid 3 NT and South bid 4♠. West led ♥ 4 to East's ♥ Q. East switched to ♣ Q and declarer played ♣ K from hand, West winning with ♣ A. West now continued with ♦ K, declarer winning in hand with ♦ A. Declarer now ruffed a club in dummy and then led a heart and ruffed in hand. Declarer ruffed another club in dummy and then ruffed another heart, East's ♥ A falling. Declarer now ruffed a diamond in dummy. This was now the position: Dummy held ♠ 1098, ♥ K10 while declarer held ♠ K7, ♦ 954. East held ♠ J, ♦ 7, ♣ 1098 and West held ♠ AQ, ♥ J, ♦ J10. Declarer has already scored 6 tricks and E/W have won 2. There is one way for declarer to score three more tricks ...but declarer took a different route! Declarer led ♥ K and East ruffed with ♠ J as declarer overruffed with ♠ K. Declarer now led ♦ 4 and ruffed with dummy's ♠ 8. Declarer then led ♥ 10 and ruffed in hand with ♠ 7 leaving West to score ♠ AQ. Nine tricks to declarer...**BUT**...if East does not ruff with ♠ J and discards ♦ 7, his last diamond, then East will be able to score ♠ J separately from West's ♠ AQ unless declarer leads a spade after ♥ K scores, or was declarer going to ruff ♥ K with ♠ K or ♠ 7? In that case East will score ♠ J when declarer leads a diamond from hand...and West will also score ♠ AQ. The one way for declarer to score three of the last five tricks is to lead a spade instead of playing ♥ K. This will ensure that East cannot score ♠ J separately from West's ♠ AQ... **BUT**, this line could be disastrous if West holds ♠ AQJ. Possible, yes...Probable, no! Playing it the way he did declarer knew that he would definitely score eight tricks...a good return when your opponents can make 3 NT or 5♣!

At a third table South declared 4♠ after North showed a major two suiter. At this table West made the potentially disastrous lead of ♣ 3, declarer winning in hand with ♣ K! Declarer can now make 4♠ by ruffing two hearts in hand thus losing just 2 spades and 1 heart! **BUT**, declarer led a spade from hand at trick two, West winning with ♠ Q as East's ♠ J fell. West switched to ♥ 4 and declarer rose with dummy's ♥ K. **BUT** declarer is still on target to make ten tricks. Only declarer can beat the contract now...West should have cashed ♠ A when she got the chance! East won with ♥ A and then attempted to cash ♥ Q, declarer ruffing in hand. With only ♠ A outstanding declarer can simply cross-ruff in diamonds and hearts eventually using dummy's ♥ 10 as an extra trump. But declarer next played a trump and ended up a trick short. **Sinner** status to **declarer** and **West**.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

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

EW 6N; EW 5♣; NS 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♦; Par -800: NS 7♠×-4

Saints & Sinners

At a fourth table South also declared 4♠ after North showed a major two suiter over West's 1♦ opening bid. At one point in the play declarer failed to ruff East's ♥A and finished two down as a consequence. A momentary lack of concentration.

At a fifth table North declared 3S after South opened 1♦ and West overcalled 1NT. North bid 2♠, East bid 3♣ and South closed the auction with 3♠. East led ♣Q declarer rising with dummy's ♣K, covered by West's ♣A. West continued with a club, declarer ruffing with ♠2. South should now play a heart and then ruff two hearts in dummy, establishing ♥K10 as winners and should make nine tricks...**BUT**, declarer led ♠4 to East's ♠J, dummy's ♠K and West's ♠A. West would have been better advised to cash ♠Q but actually continued with ♥4 and declarer erred by playing ♥K, East winning with ♥A. East switched to ♦8, declarer winning with dummy's ♦A. With only ♠A outstanding declarer can simply cross-ruff in hearts and diamonds and will just lose to West's SQ...**BUT**, declarer, after winning with ♦A, played a spade and nine tricks were no longer possible. [**Note**: In this situation when a cross-ruff is possible and where there is only one master trump outstanding it is absolutely pointless to sacrifice two trumps that could be used in the cross-ruff simply to force West to play her ♠Q. That play cost declarer TWO tricks and the contract which could no longer be made.] Declarer deservedly finished two down. **Sinner** status to **declarer** and to West who should have cashed SQ when she had the opportunity.

And as for 6NT? Take finesses in spades, hearts, clubs and then play a diamond to ♦K, dropping North's ♦Q and thus scoring two diamond tricks!

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 4N; EW 4♥; EW 3♠; EW 4♣; NS 1♦; Par -630; EW 4N=

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

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

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

♠ J 9 5 3 2		♠ K									
♥ K J 4		♥ Q 9 6									
♦ Q 8 6 3		♦ K 10 9 4									
♣ A		♣ K Q 8 7 2									
	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A Q 8 7 6 4
	N										
W		E									
	S										
		♥ 8 5 3									
		♦ J									
		♣ 10 6 3									
		♠ 10									
		♥ A 10 7 2									
		♦ A 7 5 2									
		♣ J 9 5 4									

EW 4♠; NS 3♦; NS 3♣; EW 1N; NS 1♥;

Par -300: NS 5♣×-2; NS 5♦×-2

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

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

E 4N; E 5♦; E 3♥; W 4♦; W 2N; W 2♥; E 2♣; NS 1♠; W 1♣;
Par -630: E 3N+1


Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

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

NS 2♠; EW 2♣; NS 1♥; EW 1♦; Par +100: EW 3♣×-1

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♣; EW 2N; EW 2♥; EW 2♦; Par -1430: EW 6♠=

Yes, E/W can make 6♠ or even the inferior 6♣ which succeeds because of the lucky 3-3 club break! There are two issues about bidding this hand and they relate to actions by East and West. The first arises when North opens 1♦...what should East do? Some will overcall 2♣ but the better action is to make a Takeout Double which gets three suits into play. A Takeout Double of a suit shows SUPPORT for the other three suits. East's hand admirably fits that description. Making a simple overcall in clubs could see the majors being lost in the subsequent auction. The next issue is what action West should take if partner makes a Takeout Double of North's 1♦ opening bid? West should jump to 4♠ in the knowledge that East has at least three spades and an opening bid. West's nominal 12 hcp is boosted by the fifth spade. To bid a mere 2♠ could see East Pass with minimum values for his Takeout Double. Don't take the chance. Bid the spade game directly.

Saints & Sinners

Sinner status to the **FOUR Easts** who overcalled 2♣ instead of making a Takeout Double.

Saintly status to the SIX players in the East seat, **Rory Timlin, Bernie Morrissey, Anne Treacy, Roasleen O'Muircheartaigh, Ali Zaki, Eugene Gath**, who made a Takeout Double instead of bidding 2♣.

Sinner status to all the **West players who failed to jump directly to 4♠** after partner's Takeout Double of North's 1♦. **Saintly** status to the one West who did bid 4♠ in this situation...**David Walsh**.

Sinner status to the **four E/W pairs** that failed to reach the spade game. In one case North opened 1NT and East bid 2♣ and West, not a Passed hand, bid 2♠. East Earns special opprobrium for Passing despite her good four card spade support for partner's 5+ spade suit, and good cards in the other unbid suits as well as a singleton diamond!

All declarers emerged with twelve tricks...bar one, a BBO robot, who took a first round spade finesse into South and so lost an extra trick.

Board 10
East Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 5N; NS 5♥; NS 5♣; NS 3♠; NS 4♦; Par +660: NS 3N+2

Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

NS 4♠; NS 4♥; NS 5♣; EW 1♦; Par +420: NS 4♥=; NS 4♠=

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♣; EW 5N; W 5♥; E 4♥; EW 1♦; Par -980; EW 6♠=

E/W can make 6♣ or 6♠. West will open 1♣ and East will bid 1♠. West's rebid will depend on the bidding system in use and whether E/W are using **Splinters** or even **Exclusion Blackwood**. If not then West should bid 4♠. Note that 6♠ is not that straightforward. Given that there seems to be an unavoidable heart loser declarer must play the spade suit for NO loser! There are two ways to play the spade suit for no loser. Basically declarer must assume that North holds ♠K. If North holds a doubleton ♠Kx then it doesn't really matter whether declarer leads ♠J or simply finesses ♠Q. BUT if the spades break 3-1 then it makes a lot of difference if North holds ♠K10x with South holding ♠x where x = ♠3 or ♠2 OR if South holds ♠10 and North holds ♠K32. In these instances declarer must lead ♠J and let it run if North does not cover. And if North covers and ♠10 does not drop then declarer has to guess whether to finesse against North now holding ♠10x by finessing ♠9. As it turns out the actual layout on this hand means that irrespective of whether declarer finesses ♠J or ♠Q because South's ♠10 will fall and that solves declarer's problem. **NOTE:** If North did hold ♠K10x then declarer **MUST** lead ♠J and if North covers with ♠K then declarer must finesse ♠9 on the second round to avoid losing a trick to North ♠10! And, of course if North holds a singleton ♠K then it is vital that declarer leads a small spade towards ♠AQ954 rather than ♠J which would cost a trick if South started with ♠10xx. Poor declarer has lots to think about! And unless there are clues from the bidding or play of side suits it does come down to a guess as to whether you play North for ♠K, ♠Kx, ♠Kxx, ♠K10x, ♠K1032... Happy guessing!

Saints & Sinners

Only one E/W pair reached 6♠. West opened 1♣, East responded 1♠ and West raised to 4♠. East moved forward with 4NT and West showed her one ace. East settled in 5♠ but presumably West decided that her diamond void was worth an extra trick and bid 6♠. South cashed ♥A and continued with a heart, dummy's ♥J winning the trick. Declarer now finessed ♠Q, South following with ♠10. Declarer now has the contract in the bag. All she needs to do is ruff a diamond in dummy and then lead ♠J, or simply finesse ♠9, and then cash ♠A... **BUT**, declarer decided that ♠10 was not a true card, i.e. that South had started with ♠102 or ♠103. Declarer cashed ♠A and then realised that she had made a mistake and now had to lose a spade to North's ♠K! **Sinner** status to declarer.

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

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

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

EW 6♠; EW 6♣; EW 5N; W 5♥; E 4♥; EW 1♦; Par -980; EW 6♠=

Saints & Sinners

Game in spades, or higher, was reached at all twenty tables. A contract of 5♠ was reached at two tables where E/W explored a slam but in the end both pairs settled in 5♠. At both of these tables West opened 1♣ and East bid 1♠. At one table West jumped to 4♠ and East now bid 5♦ (cuebid) and West bid 5♥ (cuebid). East, perhaps worried about his three small clubs, bid 5♠ and West Passed. Nearly there!

At the second table club West jumped to 4♦ over East's 1♠ response. The 4♦ bid was alerted by West as showing a void in diamonds but where East wasn't sure. East bid 4NT and West showed 1 keycard and East settled for 5♠. Also nearly there!

Two declarers contracted 4♠ and emerged with thirteen tricks. At one table South led ♠ 10 which picked up North's ♠ K. Declarer drew trumps and then led a heart, South following with ♥ 2 as declarer won with ♥ J. Declarer now cashed five clubs discarding his losing heart and a diamond from hand and then ruffed a heart in hand, cashed DA and ruffed the losing diamond in dummy. When declarer leads the ♥ 2 South, looking at dummy's heart holding and the threatening clubs, should rise with ♥ A and concede the remaining tricks to declarer! **Sinner** status to **South**.

At the other table South led ♦ 10, declarer ruffing in dummy and then leading ♠ J which she finessed when North failed to cover. Declarer then finessed ♠ Q and re-entered dummy via a club to dummy's ♣ A. Declarer now played another trump, dummy's last, and beat North's ♠ K with ♠ A. Declarer next played a club to dummy's ♣ K and then led ♥ K...and South ducked. And that was it. Declarer cashed dummy's remaining clubs and discarded ♥ 8, ♦ J from hand and claimed thirteen tricks. **Sinner** status to **South** who should have known when North followed to the second club that declarer had at least two discards available on dummy's long clubs! South should have grabbed ♥ A when she had the chance.

At one table declarer cashed ♠ A instead of taking spade finesse. Declarer lost a trick to South's ♥ A ...and then lost a heart to South's ♥ 9 while discarding ♦ J from hand despite club winners in dummy on which losing diamonds could have been discarded. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 3♥; EW 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par -140: EW 1♥+2

Yes, E/W can be held to nine tricks in a heart contract and to seven tricks in a NT contract! But beating 4♥ becomes impossible if South cashes ♣ AK! On the other hand, cashing ♣ A (or ♣ K) and switching to a diamond will lead to at least a one trick defeat. In fact, as long as South does not cash a second top club declarer will always fail in 4♥ because declarer has nowhere to park all the club and diamond losers! Defending against 3NT N/S will have to be accurate...a club lead from North assures defeat of the contract. Any other lead will see declarer score at least nine tricks via 3 spades, 5 hearts, 1 diamond. A diamond lead can see declarer score ten tricks!

Saints & Sinners

At three tables East declared 4♥ and South cashed two top clubs and continued with a third club to declarer's ♣ Q. All three declarers took their eye off the ball and duly, and deservedly, failed by one trick. Each declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ A, and returned a heart to their ♥ K. At this point the contract can no longer be defeated...except by declarer. All three declarers continued with a third heart to South's ♥ Q. South now switched to ♦ 7 and now the contract can no longer be made! All that declarer needed to do after winning the second heart was cash ♠ KQ and then continue with a third heart. In fact, better still is to cash ♠ KQ before playing a heart to dummy's ♥ A. This allows declarer to make a **Safety Play** of finessing ♥ 10 on the second round thus catering for the possibility of North holding ♥ QJ53. **BUT**, once declarer unblocks ♠ KQ then when South wins the third heart and switches to a diamond, declarer can rise with dummy's ♦ A and cash ♠ A, discarding ♦ 9 from hand. By failing to unblock the ♠ KQ the three declarers were forced to take the losing diamond finesse and duly finished one down! **Sinner** status to the **three declarers**.

At a fourth table South also led ♣ A but then switched to ♦ 7 at trick two. Declarer finessed ♦ Q which lost to North's ♦ K. North now played ♣ J, declarer covering with ♣ Q as South won with ♣ K and then cashed ♣ 10. Declarer has now lost four tricks and could not avoid losing a trump trick and so finished two down. **Sinner** status to **declarer** who could have saved one trick by rising with dummy's ♦ A, cashing ♠ KQ and then playing a heart to dummy's ♥ A and cashing ♠ A, discarding the losing diamond from her hand. **Saintly** status to N/S, **Marian Walsh & Patsy O'Flynn**.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

<p>♠ A 10 7 6 ♥ A 2 ♦ A Q 8 3 ♣ 8 7 3</p>		<p>♠ 9 5 3 ♥ 5 3 ♦ K J 10 6 4 ♣ J 6 5</p> <p>♠ K Q ♥ K 10 9 8 7 4 ♦ 9 2 ♣ Q 4 2</p> <p>♠ J 8 4 2 ♥ Q J 6 ♦ 7 5 ♣ A K 10 9</p>
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EW 3♥; EW 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par -140; EW 1♥+2

Saints & Sinners

At another table East opened 1♥. West responded 1♠ and East rebid 2♥. West is faced with a problem because if she now bids 3♦ she is suggesting 5+ spades! West might have bid 2♦ at first opportunity and can then bid 2♠ (Forcing) at next opportunity. West jumped to 3NT, This can be defeated by TWO tricks if North leads a club...but North led ♦ J and declarer romped home with eleven tricks when South won a heart, cashed ♣ A and then reverted to diamonds!

At four tables 4♥ succeeded. South cashed ♣ AK and switched to ♦ 7, declarer rising with ♦ A. Declarer cashed ♠ KQ, continued with ♥ K and then played a heart to dummy's ♥ A. Declarer then cashed ♠ A, discarding her losing diamond from hand. **Saintly** status to **David Walsh**.

At another table East opened 2♥, South made a Takeout Double (I would prefer to have the red suit holdings reversed before making a Takeout Double with the South hand). West jumped to 4♥ and South cashed ♣ AK and continued with a third club to declarer's ♣ Q. Declarer now played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then returned a heart to her ♥ K. Declarer next cashed ♠ KQ and then played a diamond to dummy's ♦ A and cashed ♠ A, discarding the losing diamonds from her hand. [Note: in the light of South's Takeout Double perhaps declarer should have taken the precaution of guarding against the possibility of North holding ♥ QJ53. To that end declarer should cash ♠ KQ and then play a heart to dummy's ♥ A and finesse ♥ 10 (declarer doesn't need to cash ♠ A before finessing the ♥ 10...BUT does need to unblock ♠ KQ in case South wins the second heart and returns a diamond before ♠ KQ are unblocked! **Saint** or **Sinner** or both?

At a third table East opened 2♥ (weak) and West jumped to 4♥. South cashed ♣ AK and continued with a third club, declarer winning in hand with ♣ Q. Declarer played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then finessed ♥ 10, losing to South's ♥ J. South heard the bidding but didn't listen when he continued with ♣ 9, North discarding ♠ 3 as declarer ruffed in hand! [Note: North cannot have another trump...East has shown six.] This gave declarer the opportunity to BELATEDLY unblock ♠ KQ and then discard her losing diamond on dummy's ♠ A. If South had returned a diamond after winning with ♥ J the contract would have failed. **Sinner** status to **South**. **Saintly** status to declarer, **Margaret Treacy**, for executing the **Safety Play** in hearts but with rebuke for not first unblocking ♠ KQ.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

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

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

Saints & Sinners

At another table East Passed and West opened 1♦. East now jumped to 2♥, West bid 3♥ and East bid 4♥. South cashed ♣ AK and continued with ♣ 10, declarer winning with ♣ Q. Declarer now played a heart to dummy's ♥ A and then played a heart to her ♥ K. Declarer next cashed ♠ KQ and then played a heart to South's ♥ J. South switched to ♦ 7 and declarer rose with dummy's ♦ A and discarded her losing diamond on dummy's ♠ A.

At eleven other tables East contracted a heart partscore with declarers emerging with eight, nine, or ten tricks! At one table East opened 2♥ and that became the final contract. South cashed ♣ A and then switched to ♦ 7. Declarer finessed ♦ Q, losing to North's ♦ K. North continued with ♣ J and South won two tricks with ♣ K10. South now continued with ♥ Q and when the dust had settled declarer had lost five tricks. **Sinner** status to **declarer** who could have restricted her losers to four tricks!

At one table declarer arrived at a four card ending where dummy held ♠ A10, ♦ AQ while declarer held ♥ 98, ♦ 92. Declarer now led ♦ 2 and clearly had a blank when she finessed ♦ Q which lost to North's ♦ K. Concentration is vital! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table South cashed ♣ AK and switched to ♦ 7. Declarer failed to rise with ♦ A and duly lost four tricks! Declarer must always be aware of options that enable him/her to avoid taking an unnecessary finesse! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table East passed and West opened 1 NT. East bid 2♦ and West bid 2♥ which East Passed. East has a good six card heart suit and 10 hcp and is worth 3♥. North found the piercing lead of ♣ 5 which South had difficulty in recognising. South rose with ♣ K as declarer followed with ♣ 3. South switched to ♦ 7 and declarer did well to rise with ♦ A as North followed with ♦ 4...the ♦ 6 mightn't have gone astray!!! Declarer now cashed two top hearts and played a third heart to South's ♥ Q. South erred by cashing ♣ A and then switching to ♦ 5. Nine tricks to declarer. Reverse South's last two plays and declarer emerges with just eight tricks. **Sinner** status to **declarer** who could have unblocked ♠ KQ before playing trumps. **Sinner** status also to **N/S**.

Board 14
East Deals
None Vul

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

EW 5N; EW 5♠; EW 5♣; EW 3♥; NS 2♦; Par -460: EW 4N+1

Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

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

NS 4♥; EW 3♠; NS 4♣; EW 2♦; Par +100: EW 4♠×-1

Board 16
West Deals
E-W Vul

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

EW 7♥; EW 6N; EW 4♠; EW 5♦; EW 5♣; Par -2210; EW 7♥=

Board 17
North Deals
None Vul

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

E 2N; EW 2♠; W 1N; NS 2♣; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -100: NS 3♣×-1

Board 18
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 3N; W 4♣; E 3♣; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -420; EW 4♠=

4 ♠ can be made on any lead. On a non-diamond lead declarer can establish a heart for the discard of a diamond or a club from the East hand. Declarer should only lose 1 spade, 1 heart, and one minor suit trick. On a diamond lead declarer can discard a club on dummy's ♦ A after North wins with ♦ K. 3 NT can also make but declarer needs to be careful if South ducks the first spade! Declarer should not play a second spade and instead should switch to clubs.

Saints & Sinners

One E/W pair reached the dizzy heights of 6 ♠ and finished two down. **Sinner** status to **E/W**.

At another table East declared 4 ♠ on the lead of ♦ 9, North winning with ♦ K and continuing with a diamond to declarer's ♦ Q. Declarer, oblivious to the fact that she could subsequently discard a club from hand on dummy's ♦ A, now finessed ♣ J, losing to North's ♣ Q. North continued with a diamond, declarer discarding a club from hand as dummy's ♦ A won the trick. Declarer now finessed ♠ J, losing to South's ♠ K. South continued with a club to dummy's ♣ A and then played ♠ 10 and didn't overtake with ♠ A (or ♠ Q) in hand and draw the remaining trumps. Declarer continued with ♣ K and discarded ♥ 3 from hand as South ruffed with ♠ 8. Declarer duly lost a trick to ♥ A and suffered a two trick defeat. **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At another table East also declared 4 ♠ on the lead of ♣ 2 [**Note:** it always pays to enquire of opponents re their leads and discards. In this case N/S lead low from a doubleton!] North won with ♣ Q when declarer played low from dummy and declarer won the club continuation with ♣ J and failed to overtake with dummy's ♣ K (or ♣ A) in order to take the spade finesse. Declarer played a low spade from hand, dummy's ♠ J winning when South followed low. Declarer now played a spade to her ♠ A and continued with a spade to South's ♠ K. South continued with ♦ 9 and declarer took her eye of the ball again when she played low from dummy instead of rising with DA and cashing three clubs discarding her losing diamond from hand. North won with ♦ K and returned a heart to South's ♥ A for a one trick defeat. Declarer had three opportunities to make the contract... 1) rising with ♣ A at trick one, 2) winning the second club in dummy, 3) rise with ♦ A when South switches to ♦ 9 after winning with ♠ K. **Absolute sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 18
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

EW 4♠; EW 3N; W 4♣; E 3♣; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; Par -420; EW 4♠=

Saints & Sinners

Three Wests declared 3 NT and two Souths gave declarer an easy rise by winning the first spade finesse. **BUT** at one table the play took a different route. East opened 1 ♠ and West bid 2 ♣. East rebid 2 ♠ and West jumped to 3 NT. North led ♦ 3, declarer correctly playing low from dummy to guarantee two diamond tricks, as declarer won with ♦ 10. Declarer now finessed ♠ J and South DUCKED! Declarer, oblivious to the potential danger, repeated the finesse and South won with ♠ K. If South continues with a diamond N/S will eventually score 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds and a club! All South needs to do is to avoid giving declarer access to dummy via ♥ J. If South returns a diamond declarer may duck, North winning with ♦ K. A third diamond sees declarer on lead with ♦ A. Declarer cannot access dummy's spade winners. At best declarer will score 1 spade, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs. Yes declarer can score two more clubs **BUT** not before conceding a club to North which sees N/S score 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 1 club. **BUT**, after winning with ♠ K, South did not continue with a diamond and instead cashed ♥ A...and suddenly the pendulum swung in declarer's favour. But declarer had to be alert...and she was! Declarer played ♥ Q on South's ♥ A and could no longer be prevented from accessing dummy and enjoying the four spade winners!

I have to award **Saintly** status to South, **Mary Lonergan**, for her excellent duck of the first spade. If she had continued with diamonds instead of cashing ♥ A and N/S defended carefully thereafter then 3 NT would have failed.

And I also have to award **Saintly** status to **Sheelagh McInerney** who was quick to react when South cashed ♥ A on which she played ♥ Q thus enabling dummy's ♥ J as an entry for the spade winners. I suspect that a lot of less experienced players would have followed automatically with ♥ 2 from hand and would only spot the unblock later!

At another table an identical defense occurred up to the point where South won the second spade with ♠ K. South did continue with a diamond, North winning with ♦ K, **BUT** North then switched to hearts and declarer was now able to play on clubs before N/S had established their second diamond winner and declarer escaped with nine tricks!

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

EW 6♥; EW 6♦; EW 2N; NS 1♠; NS 1♣; Par -1100: NS 6♠x-5

Yes, E/W can make 6♥, although few pairs are likely to reach the Small Slam. If West opens a weak 2♥ then East's hand is HUGE! Four trumps opposite a known six card suit, a five card diamond suit headed by ♦A10, a singleton club, and ♠A!!! On the other hand N/S have a great save in spades and with favourable vulnerability! The auction should be a real ding-dong battle!

Saints & Sinners

At two tables South and West Passed and both North's opened 1♠ (Rule of Twenty). East at both tables overcalled 2♦ and South at one table bid 3♠ and that became the final contract. It is difficult for West and East to compete over 3♠. At the other table South only bid 2♠ and West now competed with 3♦ which was Passed to South who now bid 3♠ and that closed the auction. At this table, given West 3♦ bid, perhaps East could now bid 3♥ and that would have got the heart suit into the auction. Both declarers emerged with nine tricks and were the only N/S pairs to register a plus score. **Saintly** status to N/S particularly the South who jumped to 3♠ thus cutting E/W out of the auction!

At eight tables N/S declarer a spade contract at the 4 or 5 level. One North declared 5♠x and suffered three trick defeat when East scored a club ruff.

At another table North also declared 5♠x but only suffered a two trick defeat because East heard the bidding but didn't listen intently! West opened 2♥, North bid 2♠, East jumped to 4♥ and South bid 4♠ which was Passed back to East who bid 5♥. North bid 5♠ and East Doubled. East got off to the best lead for the defense when she led her singleton club. Declarer won in hand and played a spade towards dummy, East following low. East won the second spade with ♠A as West discarded ♥3 and then cashed ♥A as West followed with ♥2 (did you spot that?) **Saintly** status to **Roddy Wyer** for showing his six card suit, both in the bidding and also in the play of his first two cards in the suit!). East now cashed ♦A and then continued with ♥K...Yes, she heard partner open 2♥ (six card suit) and could see a doubleton in dummy and couldn't work out that declarer could only have one heart! A diamond continuation instead of ♥K would see West win and give East a spade ruff for three down! **Sinner** status to **East**.

Board 19
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

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

EW 6♥; EW 6♦; EW 2N; NS 1♠; NS 1♣; Par -1100; NS 6♠×-5


Saints & Sinners

At six tables North declared 4 ♠. At five of these tables declarer emerged with nine tricks. At four tables the contract was Doubled.

Not one E/W pair reached 6 ♥. This is understandable at those tables where West elected to Pass rather than open 2 ♥ or a Multi 2 ♦.

At two tables South and West Passed and both North's opened 1 ♠ (Rule of Twenty). East at both tables overcalled 2 ♦ and South at one table bid 3 ♠ and that became the final contract. It is difficult for West and East to compete over 3 ♠. At the other table South only bid 2 ♠ and West now competed with 3 ♦ which was Passed to South who now bid 3 ♠ and that closed the auction. At this table, given West 3 ♦ bid, perhaps East could now bid ♥ and that would have got the heart suit into the auction. Both declarers emerged with nine tricks and were the only N/S pairs to register a plus score. **Saintly** status to N/S particularly the South who jumped to 3 ♠ thus cutting E/W out of the auction!

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 6♣; NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; Par +1370: NS 6♣=

6 ♣ can make...declarer ruffs two diamonds in hand and thus sets up dummy's diamond suit through outrageous good fortune! 5 ♣ might be a more likely contract and can also succeed by ruffing two hearts in the North hand and then cashing ♣ K and ruffing a diamond in hand to cash ♣ A and thus lose just a heart and a trump to East's ♣ 10. But the natural spot is 3 NT which can make by finessing C♣ J, thereby amassing nine tricks via 3 spades, 1 heart, 5 clubs!

Saints & Sinners

Two N/S pairs reached 4 ♠!!! At one table North opened 1 ♦, South responded 1 ♥H and North rebid 2 ♦. South bid 3 ♣ and North now bid 3 ♠! North should have bid 3 NT. If North held 4 spades then she would have bid 1 ♠ over South's 1 ♦ response. South was now in an awkward position and presumably trusted North to hold at least 4 spades and thus felt that 4 ♠ might be safer than 3 NT. But really the fault lies with North's 3 ♠S bid. Even if playing 4SF (4th Suit Forcing) North is better advised to bid 3 NT as she holds a double spade stopper and South may have no spade stopper! West led ♦ K and believe it or not declarer can now make nine tricks! Ruff the lead with dummy's ♠ 6. Cash ♥ A and ruff a heart and ruff then another diamond with ♠ J. Cash ♣ K and ♣ A, in that order, and ruff another heart with ♠ Q and then ruff another diamond with ♠ K and then ruff a heart with ♠ A...nine tricks! But that's playing for one down from the get-go. Note that with the North hand holding a singleton heart and South having a diamond void it is highly unlikely that spades and clubs will break evenly! Perhaps advisable to make the best of the bad contract! HOWEVER, at the table declarer discarded ♣ 2 on the lead of ♦ K and East switched to ♣ 8, West's ♣ Q and declarer's ♣ K. Declarer now led ♦ Q, East covering perforce with ♦ A as declarer ruffed with ♠ 6. [Note: Some partnerships lead K from a doubleton AK] Declarer now cashed ♠ J and overtook with ♠ K in hand and then cashed ♣ J and continued with ♦ J, East ruffing with ♠ 4 as declarer overruffed with dummy's ♠ K. Declarer now played ♣ A, West ruffing with ♠ 8. Now the defense was clinical. West cashed ♦ 10 9 as North followed and East and South discarded hearts! West continued with ♥ Q, dummy's ♥ A winning the trick. Declarer now played dummy's winning ♣ 4 and ruffed in her hand with ♠ 3 as East overruffed with ♠ 7. Declarer duly scored ♠ Q but finished a deserved THREE down. **Sinner** status to **North** for poor bidding and declarer play!

Board 20

West Deals

Both Vul

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

NS 6♣; NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; Par +1370; NS 6♣=

Saints & Sinners

At a second table North opened 1♦ and South incorrectly bid 2♣ instead of 2♥ (which promises 5+ hearts) and for some reason known only to North, opener rebid 2♠ instead of bidding 2♦. South now compounded matters by jumping to 4♠! East led ♦A, declarer ruffing with dummy's ♠6. Declarer now finessed ♣J and then led ♦Q, East covering perforce with ♦K as declarer ruffed with dummy's ♠J. Declarer next cashed ♥A and ruffed a heart with ♠3. Declarer now ruffed a diamond with dummy's ♠K as East discarded ♣8. Declarer next cashed ♣A and then led a heart and discarded ♦6 as East won with ♥K. Declarer subsequently scored ♠AQ and duly finished one down. **Sinner** status to **North** for poor bidding. Whereas it is accepted practice to occasionally bid a 3 card minor it is taboo to bid a 3 card major while representing it as a four card suit!

At another table North opened 1♦, East overcalled a very dubious 1♠ (missing all four top honours!). South bid 2♥ and North bid 2NT. South bid 3♣ and North, who might have bid 3NT actually bid 4♣ which South raised to 5♣. West led ♠8 and declarer erred by winning in hand instead of winning in dummy! Declarer cashed ♥A and ruffed a heart with dummy's ♣6. Declarer re-entered his hand with a diamond ruff (mistake...he's short trumping himself... should have used a spade!) and now finessed ♣J, cashed ♣K and ruffed another diamond in hand with ♣9. Declarer then cashed ♠K and played a spade to dummy's ♠A. Declarer now led ♦Q, East ruffing with ♣10 as declarer overruffed with ♣A and then led a heart, East winning with ♥K and duly cashing ♠109 for one down. **Sinner** status to **declarer** who failed to make eleven tricks despite putting himself in the position to score TWELVE tricks!!! Clear thinking is an indispensable asset for a declarer (and defenders!). At the point that declarer ruffs a second diamond in hand with ♣9 this is the position: Dummy holds ♠AQ, ♦QJ76 while declarer holds ♠K6, ♥764, ♣A. East holds ♠10975, ♥K, ♣10 and West holds ♠2, ♥Q10, ♦1098. At this point declarer has scored seven tricks and lost NONE. Declarer now cashes ♣A, drawing East's last trump while discarding ♦6 from dummy. Declarer now cashes ♠K and continues with a spade to dummy's ♠Q and then cashes ♦QJ, conceding the last trick to West's ♦10. Twelve tricks to declarer!

Counting, counting...all the time!

Board 20

West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 6♣; NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; Par +1370: NS 6♣=

Saints & Sinners

At another table North opened 1♦, East overcalled 1♠, South bid 2♥, North rebid 3♦ and South closed the auction with 3NT. West led ♠ 8, declarer winning in hand with ♠ J. Declarer now led a club...and rose with dummy's ♣ K! If playing ♣ K instead of finessing ♣ J started declarer on the slippery slope then leading ♦ Q accelerated that path! East won with ♦ K and continued with ♥ 5, declarer playing low as West won with ♥ 8. West, surely aware that East now had a stiff ♦ A, continued with ♦ 10 and declarer erred by covering with dummy's ♦ J, East winning with ♦ A leaving West with two winning diamonds! East now played ♥ K and declarer rose with ♥ A. Declarer can still make her contract if she cashes ♣ A, dropping West's ♣ Q...**BUT**, declarer played a small club from hand, West's stiff ♣ Q winning. West now cashed ♦ 98 and then played ♥ Q...on which declarer discarded the winning ♦ 7!!! West cashed ♥ 10 and then the now promoted ♦ 5. Declarer won the last trick with dummy's ♠ A but finished FIVE down! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

A contract of 3NT was played at sixteen other tables. At two tables declarer made an impossible eleven tricks whereas at nine tables declarer emerged with nine tables. And at five tables declarer failed by one trick.

At one table East overcalled 1♠ and duly led ♠ 5 against North's 3NT declarer winning with ♠ Q. Declarer continued by cashing ♣ K and then finessing ♣ J, losing to West's ♣ Q. West now switched to ♦ 8 (♦ 10 is more informative for partner) and declarer rose with dummy's ♦ Q and East's ♦ K as declarer discarded ♥ 2. East now cashed ♦ A, establishing dummy's ♦ J as a winner. East now played ♥ 5, declarer rising with dummy's ♥ A. Declarer now cashed dummy's ♣ A94 as West discarded ♠ 2, ♦ 5, ♥ 9 as declarer discarded ♦ 64 from hand. Declarer now cashed ♠ K and West fell from grace by discarding ♦ 9, promoting declarer's ♦ 7. Declarer now played a spade to her ♠ A and then cashed ♦ J7 as E/W discarded ♥ KQJ10 between them! **Sinner** status to **E/W**.

At a second table East led ♠ 10, dummy's ♠ J winning. Declarer cashed ♣ A and continued with a club to West's ♣ Q and declarer's ♣ K. Declarer cashed ♣ J and then led ♦ Q (a dangerous play if West holds ♦ A9x and East holds ♦ K108x ...the defense can now cash 4 diamonds)...**BUT**, East won with ♦ K and cashed ♦ A and declarer now has ten tricks. **Sinner** status to **East**.

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul

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

NS 6♣; NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; Par +1370: NS 6♣=

Saints & Sinners

At nine tables North, or in two cases South, declared 3 NT on a spade lead. All declarers played the club suit to best effect and duly emerged with nine tricks via 3 spades, 1 heart, 5 clubs! No Saints and no Sinners.

At five other tables declarer failed to make 3 NT, At one table West, a BBO Robot, led ♦ 10 despite the fact that North had bid diamonds TWICE! Declarer consigned herself to failure when she discarded ♣ 2 at trick one. Declarer could not recover from that very costly discard. Why declarer would preserve a suit consisting of ♥ A7642 opposite a singleton ♥ 3 as opposed to ♣ A9432 opposite ♣ KJ6 is puzzling! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

At three tables East overcalled 1 ♠ and West duly led a spade. The three declarers won in dummy and then cashed ♣ K and subsequently lost a club to West's ♣ Q and there was no recovery after that and the contract failed by one trick. With four top tricks available in the major suits, declarer needs to bring in five tricks from the club suit. The best line is to lead small towards dummy's ♣ KJ6 and hope that West holds, ♣ Qxx or ♣ Qx or even ♣ Q. Cashing ♣ K and running ♣ J will only work where East holds ♣ Q10 or ♣ Qxx AND West holds ♣ 10 or ♣ 10x. Odds favour the former layout, i.e. West holding ♣ Q, ♣ Qx or ♣ Qxx. **Sinner** status to the **three declarers**.

At a fifth table, West led ♥ 10 (**Saintly** status to **Bernie O'Callaghan** for finding the correct lead from ♥ Q1098). East played low when she should have risen with ♥ K just in case partner had led from ♥ A1098 instead of ♥ Q1098. Declarer ducked and West continued with ♥ 9 and again East ducked and thus blocked the suit! East continued with ♥ K, declarer winning with ♥ A. Declarer has now lost two heart tricks and clearly didn't give things much thought when she played a fourth heart losing to West's ♥ Q. Yes, this established declarer's fifth heart as a winner but that wasn't much use when West switched to a diamond and East cashed ♦ AK to leave declarer one down after a mere six tricks had been completed! **Sinner** status to **declarer**.

Board 21
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

♠ J 10
♥ Q 10 5
♦ Q 9 6 4 3
♣ A 9 6

EW 5N; E 5♠; W 4♠; EW 4♥; EW 5♣; EW 2♦; Par -460; EW 3N+2

Board 22
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

Diagram: A green square with 'N' at the top, 'S' at the bottom, 'W' on the left, and 'E' on the right.

EW 1♠; EW 1♥; EW 1♦; EW 1♣; Par -80: EW 1♥=; EW 1♠=

Board 23
South Deals
Both Vul

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

EW 3♠; EW 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 3♣; EW 1N; Par -140: EW 3♠=

Board 24
West Deals
None Vul

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

EW 2♥; EW 2♦; NS 1♠; Par -100; NS 2♠×-1