

Commentary for the u3a Spring Charity Bridge Festival



Monday 22nd May 2023

Dear Bridge player

Welcome to our second national Bridge Festival, uniting and re-uniting u3a bridge players from across the United Kingdom. Games will be played all week both offline locally and online.

All results submitted will be included in the overall national scoring and the names of each day's winning pair will be posted on the [u3a Bridge website](https://www.u3a.org.uk/bridge/) as soon as possible once all the results have been received.

Having raised over £1,000 for last year's charities, we hope you'll help to raise even more for Alzheimer's Research and AgeUK this year.

Thank you for joining in, playing and donating at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/donations.asp>

Have fun, spread the word and enjoy yourselves.

Board 1. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

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

North's 11-count is a clear-cut opener and once the ♠ fit is found, South will have thoughts of slam. 6♠ is not particularly good. If trumps split 3-2, it would simply depend on the ♦ finesse. On the actual split declarer has to be very careful, retaining one of the ♣ honours while taking the ♣ ruff, and then pulling all the trumps before knocking out ♥A. Anyone making it can expect a lot of MPs.

Board 2. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

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

All roads should lead to E/W playing in game in a major. 4♠, despite the poorer trump suit, will be less fraught. Declarer will lose 2♠ and A♣, and success will depend on taking the right view in ♦. 4♥ will also depend on getting the ♦ suit right, but the 4-1 split will mean that the ♠ suit must be tackled before trumps can be drawn. Declarer will be relieved to find the short ♠ suit is in the same hand as the short trump suit.

Board 3. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

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

South will open either $1\heartsuit$ or $1NT$ but should always end up playing $4\heartsuit$. The spotlight is then on West. Those who find a \clubsuit lead will do well in the MP scoring, as on any other lead the second \clubsuit loser will disappear on the long \diamond .

Board 4. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

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

Playing a weak NT, I would open the South hand $1\diamond$, so I had a rebid over $1\heartsuit$. However, usually South will open $1\clubsuit$, and most Wests will overcall $1NT$, but it is a clear minimum for that bid. North should pass, though some may make an aggressive double. Either way, East should put his side into $2\heartsuit$. This could lead to South getting into the auction again with a take-out double. The safest spot for N/S is $3\diamond$, which should make comfortably but some may shoot for a top leaving $2\heartsuit$ doubled. It can be beaten, but I suspect will normally make.

Board 5. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

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

Despite N/S getting into the action first with North opening $1\diamond$ (or possibly $1NT$), E/W should have no difficulty finding their \heartsuit fit and getting to game. The trump split will come as an unpleasant shock, but as long as declarer keeps control while taking out a few rounds, $4\heartsuit$ should make. The $\spadesuit 9$ will prove invaluable.

Board 6. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

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

All roads in most systems will lead to East playing $3NT$. As the cards lie, 11 tricks are easy, $3\spadesuit$, $4\heartsuit$, $2\diamond$, $2\clubsuit$. Barring defensive error, there is no route to the 12th.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

After North opens 1♥ third in hand, West will come in with one of 1♠, double, or a poor INT, depending on taste. INT will probably close the auction, but either of the others should, lead to E/W playing in ♠. 10 tricks are there, but few pairs are likely to reach game. However, even the ♠ part score will score better than those playing in NT.

Board 8. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

Weak NT players will open the North hand INT, and strong NT players will open 1♣ and rebid INT. Either way the final contract is likely to be INT by North with E/W silent. A ♠ lead will be the normal choice, and 8 tricks will be easily available. Most Norths will make more, and the E/W pairs who manage to cash a ♥ and 4♦ tricks before declarer gets to 9 tricks will score well.

Board 9. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

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

The likely contract is 4♠ by East. Whether North opens 1♣ or INT, most Wests will show ♠, and East will drive to game. All the suits split nicely, and the pointed kings are well placed, so 11 tricks should be the normal result. If any declarers are as clever as Deep Finesse, they will be able to pin the doubleton 10 9 and come to 12 tricks. Those that do will get a very good MP score.

Board 10. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

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

Another weak INT opener, this time for East. After that life could become chaotic for N/S. Any South who has a natural ♦ overall available will use it, much to the despair of his partner. Any attempt to correct the contract will probably take N/S too high. If South is silenced by not having 2♦ available and regarding 3♦ as too high vulnerable, then North can show both majors, and subside in 2♠, probably making.

Board 11. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

<p>♠ 5 ♥ QJ987 ♦ KJ96 ♣ 972</p> <p>♠ AKJ1043 ♥ 65 ♦ 42 ♣ 1065</p>	<p>♠ 86 ♥ K103 ♦ Q1085 ♣ AK84</p>
<p>♠ Q972 ♥ A42 ♦ A73 ♣ QJ3</p>	

Yet another weak INT, this time for South, and West will show his spade holding. There are 8 top tricks for E/W in ♠. If it is played by West on a non-♣ lead, a ninth can be developed in either red suit. If West can bid spades naturally over INT, then N/S will be silenced, but if, for example, he uses 2♦ to show a major, then North can get in a ♥ bid, possibly leading his side to a good MP score in 3♥.

Board 12. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

<p>♠ Q3 ♥ 7 ♦ K10975 ♣ A6542</p> <p>♠ 85 ♥ 962 ♦ A82 ♣ KQ1073</p>	<p>♠ J106 ♥ AKQ1083 ♦ J4 ♣ J9</p>
<p>♠ AK9742 ♥ J54 ♦ Q63 ♣ 8</p>	

E/W have the balance of values, but only just. It is a part score battle, and the good N/S scores will go to those who compete enough to win the contract or push N/S too high. If North opens 1♦, East could make a jump overcall in ♥. This could force South to overstate his hand. If they end up in ♠, a trump lead could be very damaging, but if they end up in ♦, they could do well.

Board 13. Dealer North. Vulnerability All

<p>♠ 103 ♥ 8532 ♦ J104 ♣ AJ65</p> <p>♠ AK964 ♥ KJ4 ♦ K6 ♣ K103</p>	<p>♠ QJ85 ♥ A976 ♦ 83 ♣ 984</p>
<p>♠ 72 ♥ Q10 ♦ AQ9752 ♣ Q72</p>	

Despite South probably opening 1♦, E/W should have no difficulty establishing their ♠ fit. The more difficult problem will be finding the correct level. 10 tricks are always there thanks to the fortunate lie of the ♥ suit, but any E/W that bid game will probably get well above average.

Board 14. Dealer East. Vulnerability None

<p>♠ A985 ♥ — ♦ J10852 ♣ AK87</p> <p>♠ K ♥ J873 ♦ AQ4 ♣ 106532</p>	<p>♠ J10732 ♥ KQ42 ♦ K7 ♣ Q9</p>
<p>♠ Q64 ♥ A10965 ♦ 963 ♣ J4</p>	

Some players will open the East hand 1♠, and that will put E/W too high already. His partner will respond INT/2♣, depending on system. He will rebid 2♥, and be raised to 3♥ That will become the final contract. In fairness it is not a bad spot, but the 5 – 0 trump break will doom it to 2 down and -100. Any E/W doing better than that will score well.

Board 15. Dealer South. Vulnerability N/S

<p>♠ 9 6 5 2 ♥ Q J ♦ K 9 7 6 ♣ K 8 2</p> <p>♠ A 7 4 ♥ A K 10 3 ♦ A Q 5 4 ♣ J 10</p> <p>♠ 8 3 ♥ 9 8 7 4 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ A Q 7 5</p>	<p>♠ K Q J 10 ♥ 6 5 ♦ 10 8 2 ♣ 9 6 4 3</p>
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At most tables the auction will be 1♦ - 1♠ - 2NT - Pass by E/W with N/S silent. At most tables, North will lead a ♠, and declarer is likely to take 2 rounds ending in dummy, and then try the losing diamond finesse. Now declarer's only legitimate way to 8 tricks, is to find the lucky lie of the ♥Q & J. However, the defence may come to the rescue. When they get round to tackling the ♣ suit, they must cash ♣A on the first round, and North must play the 8 under it, then ♣5 to ♣K, and another ♣ with South's Q7 sitting over dummy's 96.

Board 16. Dealer West. Vulnerability E/W

<p>♠ K 10 9 6 3 ♥ A J 10 6 ♦ K Q J ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ 5 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ A 10 6 4 3 2 ♣ K Q J</p> <p>♠ A J 4 2 ♥ K 9 5 2 ♦ 9 8 ♣ A 7 2</p>	<p>♠ Q 8 7 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 7 5 ♣ 10 9 8 6 5 4</p>
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West will open 1♦, and on this type of hand, the best action for North is a 1♠ overcall, planning to double on the next round to show the ♥ suit. On this occasion, East will pass, partner will show a good quality raise, and game will be reached. The normal line in trumps is to cash the A & K. In view of the opening bid, it wouldn't be unreasonable to play for West to have the ♠Q, but there is no good reason to take the finesse the successful way. Declarer also has to negotiate the 2-way finesse in ♥, but for the same reason is likely to get this one right.

Board 17. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

<p>♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ 10 8 6 3 ♣ 9 3</p> <p>♠ J 9 8 ♥ K ♦ K Q J 5 4 ♣ A J 6 5</p> <p>♠ 10 6 5 ♥ A 10 5 4 2 ♦ 2 ♣ Q 10 7 2</p>	<p>♠ K 3 2 ♥ J 7 6 3 ♦ A 9 7 ♣ K 8 4</p>
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E/W are likely to end up in 3NT, and the important card for E/W is the ♥7. E/W have 8 top tricks, with the ♣ finesse working. Say South leads a small ♥, then the ♥K provides the 9th trick. If the ♥A takes the first trick in that suit, then a ♥ to the queen and the ♥9 back, that ♥7 stops South from overtaking and running his suit. In that situation the 9th trick will eventually come from the ♠K.

Board 18. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

<p>♠ 7 ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ A J 10 4 2 ♣ A 8 6 4</p> <p>♠ A Q J 10 3 ♥ 5 4 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ K 10 5</p> <p>♠ K 8 5 2 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ 9 6 ♣ J 9 3</p>	<p>♠ 9 6 4 ♥ J 10 7 3 ♦ K 8 5 ♣ Q 7 2</p>
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Any plus score on this hand is likely to be above average. N/S might get to play in INT, while E/W might attempt to declare in a ♠ part score. Neither is likely to meet with success.

Board 19. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

<p>♠ K 10 6 2 ♥ A 10 7 6 ♦ 10 8 7 4 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ A J 9 8 ♥ J 8 5 2 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ A 4</p>	<p>♠ Q 5 4 ♥ K 9 3 ♦ 6 5 ♣ Q 10 9 6 2</p>
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<p>♠ 7 3 ♥ Q 4 ♦ A K J 2 ♣ K J 8 7 5</p>	
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Another part score competition. If S opens a minor and West doubles because of his holdings in the majors, E/W would be booked for a negative score, costing 100 per undertrick. The best N/S contract is in ♦ where they might make 110. Many will be held to 8 tricks, not enough to beat 1 down by E/W.

Board 20. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

<p>♠ 3 ♥ 10 9 7 5 4 2 ♦ K Q 5 3 ♣ 9 8</p> <p>♠ K Q 8 6 5 ♥ 3 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ J 6 5 4</p>	<p>♠ J 2 ♥ A K Q J ♦ 10 8 7 6 4 ♣ K 7</p>
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<p>♠ A 10 9 7 4 ♥ 8 6 ♦ J ♣ A Q 10 3 2</p>	
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West will open 1♦ or INT. He might even try 1♥, as there is no good rebid over 1♦ - 1♠. South will be keen to tell everyone about his holdings in the black suits. His partner will not be excited, and he could well end up in 2♠ or 3♣ doubled. If E/W do get to 3NT, they should fail. Declarer will probably aim to set up the ♦ suit, and lose 2♣, 2♦, and 1♠. Double dummy, it can be seen that North will never get in, and declarer can make 3NT by playing on the black suits, end-playing South.

Board 21. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

<p>♠ A 2 ♥ A J 9 5 3 ♦ K 8 5 2 ♣ 8 7</p> <p>♠ K J 9 3 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ 7 6 ♣ A Q 4 3</p>	<p>♠ 8 6 ♥ 10 6 ♦ J 10 4 3 ♣ K J 9 6 2</p>
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<p>♠ Q 10 7 5 4 ♥ K 8 2 ♦ A Q 9 ♣ 10 5</p>	
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The auction will usually start 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♥ by N/S, with E/W silent. Disciplined Norths will now pass, leaving them in the correct spot. Justice will normally prevail as those who bid on to game will normally fail; the ♠ are lying badly, and the ♦ don't break. Double dummy the 'obvious' finesse of ♦9 allows Deep Finesse to make it, but mere mortals shouldn't without some help from the defence.

Board 22. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

<p>♠ K Q 5 ♥ K Q 10 ♦ K 9 6 ♣ A K 10 8</p> <p>♠ 9 4 3 ♥ J 8 7 5 2 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ 6 4</p>	<p>♠ A 10 7 6 2 ♥ 6 ♦ J 10 7 3 2 ♣ J 7</p>
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<p>♠ J 8 ♥ A 9 4 3 ♦ 5 4 ♣ Q 9 5 3 2</p>	
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The vulnerability should deter any East who has in his armoury an opener showing ♠ & a minor. This should leave the field clear to North to open 2NT, and after a Stayman auction, he should end up in 3NT. The MPs will be determined by East's choice of lead. On a ♦ lead, declarer will take his 5♣ and 3♥ tricks along with his ♦K, for 9 in total. On a ♠ lead, he cannot be stopped from making 10.

Board 23. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

Most tables will reach 3NT by West, North probably showing in the auction he has most of the outstanding honours. On the ♦K lead there are 5 top losers, but declarer should take the first trick, only wrong if North has 7 of them, and then run his ♣ suit. He can enjoy watching N & S squirm as they seek discards, while he has easy ♠ discards in dummy. Depending on how many ♦ discards there have been, he can either set up a ♥ winner or take the ♠ finesse.

Board 24. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

If North is playing a system that allows this hand to be a 2♠ opener, he will do well. East will bid 2NT and play there, and if South is dutiful and leads his partner's suit, declarer will be in trouble. If he ducks, South will probably switch to a diamond, and declarer will come to the 6 top tricks he started with. If North passes, and East opens a strong 1NT, then South will lead either a ♣ or a top ♥, after either of which the contract rolls home.

Board 25. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

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

With N,S quiet throughout, East will probably end up playing 3NT. After a ♠ lead to the ♠J and ♠K, declarer has 9 easy tricks. After 4 ♣ tricks, declarer wants to keep North off lead to avoid an immediate decision in ♥, or a ♠ through him. This means he should guess correctly in ♦, for his 10th trick. Now South can be end-played in ♠ to give declarer his 11th trick in ♥, for a well-earned good score.

Board 26. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

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

If E/W aren't playing Lucas 2s (that major and a minor), the bidding will be passed round to North. I prefer 1♣ to 1♠ for opening this hand shape. Those who do, will reach 5♣ by North, which makes 11 tricks for +400. Those who open 1♠ will probably reach 3NT by South. Fortunately for declarer a ♥ lead from the West hand is inevitable, and when East gets in with ♠A, he has no ♥ to put Partner in with. Again +400 for N/S. The ♦ lead, if found, destroys 3NT.

Board 27. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

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

Despite only a combined 18-count, 4♥ by N/S cannot be stopped by the defence and depends only on declarer playing the ♣ suit the right way round (up to Q on 1st round of the suit, and duck the second round). If South opens 1♥ and West doubles, North should bid 4♥, not expecting it to make. There will be tables where West will double, and possibly get -590, and others where he will take 5♦, only 1 off.

Board 28. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

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

An exciting last Board for N/S. With a 4-card major to an honour, I don't like a first in hand 3♦ by West, but on this hand it would certainly work. North will open 1♥, and if South splinters in ♦, it will be just the news North wants to hear, and the unstoppable 6♥ slam will be reached. It might still be bid after a 3♦ opener, but it is more difficult.