



Bridge England Sim Pairs

Thanks to our commentators:

Andy Bowles

Jonathan Cooke

Heather Dhondy

Graham Osborne

Tom Paske

Alex Roberts

Andrew Robson

Nevena Senior

Tuesday
6th February 2018

Thank you for taking part in this Bridge England Simultaneous Pairs. I hope you have enjoyed the event and will take pride in having supported our international teams.

2017 was a year which saw all four of our Junior Teams (U16, U21, U26 Women, U26 qualify for the World Championship taking place in Suzhou, China this summer. Two of the teams won bronze medals (U21 and U26 Women). The teams have a great chance of doing well in China. The EBU provides funding for these teams and this event will help with the funding. In addition we are seeking some sponsorship for the event.

Other important areas, such as development and teaching also require support and that means that the international budgets are never as large as we would wish. No international players receive personal payment from the EBU and they have each committed time and energy to representing their country at the bridge table.

I very much hope you have enjoyed the hands and the expert commentary, which has been supplied by leading internationals, many of whom will be playing for our country this year. I also hope that you will continue to support this event and encourage your club to continue to participate in the future.

Jeremy Dhondy

February 2018

<p>♠ J1082 ♥ K54 ♦ A83 ♣ Q102</p> <p>♠ Q54 ♠ 973 ♥ Q86 ♥ AJ103 ♦ KJ2 ♦ Q964 ♣ KJ98 ♣ 76</p> <p>♠ AK6 ♥ 972 ♦ 1075 ♣ A543</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>10</td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>7</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>11</td> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		10	N	-	-	-	-	12	7	S	-	-	-	-		11	E	1	3	2	1			W	1	3	3	1	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all Andrew Robson</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>South may open 1♣ in third chair, intending to pass partner's response. If so the bidding will go P-P-1♣-P, 1♠-P- P-1NT and the same 1NT contract will be reached. It's not the most dramatic deal of the set, with just one doubleton (East's clubs) and no singleton or void. But every deal counts the same at Pairs.</p> <p>North leads ♠J to ♠K and South does best to switch to ♣3 – partner could easily be leading from a three-card spade suit against 1NT. Declarer may try ♣J, North winning ♠Q and reverting to ♠2, knowing partner holds ♠A as his ♠K won the first trick. South wins ♠A and may gamble by leading ♣4, in which case declarer may misguess, playing ♣9. North wins ♣10 and leads ♠10. Declarer wins ♠Q and leads ♦K but North wins ♦A, cashes ♠8 and leads over ♣2 to ♣A – down one. However, my bet is the defence will play three rounds of spades, whereupon declarer will probably make plus one – East/West +120.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	All pass										
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♠A75
 ♥Q84
 ♦K6432
 ♣A2
 ♠K
 ♥KJ1075
 ♦A7
 ♣KQ986
 ♠Q864
 ♥A932
 ♦J1085
 ♣5

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	13	N	-	3	1	1
16	4	S	-	4	1	1
	7	E	3	-	-	-
		W	4	-	-	-

Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable Andrew Robson

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	Pass	Dble
Redble	3♦	4♣	All pass

After East, holding four more spades than hearts, dredges up a response, the auction appears to be petering out in 2♣. However, South protects with a double given his club shortage and now North can compete to 3♦, forcing East to 4♣ – his fifth club is huge and partner has made a strength-showing redouble.

North's best start is ♣A and another but declarer wins in dummy and leads ♥6. South must duck and declarer may misguess, ♥J losing to ♥Q. North returns ♥8 (best) dummy ruffing and leading ♠2 to ♠K. North wins and leads ♥4, dummy ruffing and leading ♠J for a ruffing finesse, planning to discard ♦7. South covers with ♠Q but declarer ruffs, ruffs a fourth heart and cashes ♠10, throwing ♦7. Ten tricks and E/W +130. N/S would do better to bid on to 4♦, which played by North should be held to nine tricks on a heart lead, but that's tough, as they think they have done well to push E/W to 4♣ which may be a trick too high.

♠J102
 ♥1086
 ♦10954
 ♣AJ8
 ♠A9
 ♥K9743
 ♦K86
 ♣Q95
 ♠KQ65
 ♥QJ
 ♦QJ32
 ♣K43

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

Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable Nevena Senior

West	North	East	South
1NT	All pass		

A spade lead from North will set the contract by one trick, but several players will lead the ♦10, which will allow declarer to make one spade, four hearts and two diamond tricks.

Those playing strong no-trump and five-card majors will get an excellent score here for +110 after the auction 1♥-2♥. South should let 2♥ go at this vulnerability, which is the worst for competing the part-score. Despite 14 high card points the hand is ace-less and too balanced, and ♥QJ are not really worth much on offence. If South does double, North does well to guess to bid 2♠ rather than 3♦: then North/South will do better declaring than defending so long as no one finds a penalty double.

♠732
 ♥954
 ♦AK75
 ♣1085
 ♠A104
 ♥K2
 ♦QJ2
 ♣KJ743
 ♠986
 ♥QJ10
 ♦1094
 ♣Q962
 ♠KQJ5
 ♥A8763
 ♦863
 ♣A

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	7	N	-	2	3	2
14	5	S	-	2	3	2
	14	E	1	-	-	-
		W	1	-	-	-

Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable Nevena Senior

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Dble	2♥	All pass	

I like double on the West hand better than 2♣. KJ743 is a poor suit for a 2-level overcall and ♠A10x will be great if partner has five spades or four good ones.

If West does overcall 2♣ North will bid 2♥ even playing four-card majors, East will compete to 3♣, and South will bid 3♥ with his singleton club. This contract will be easy to make with all the suits breaking well. Occasionally North/South may defend a doubled club contract, which will be held to seven tricks only if North manages to lead or switch to spades – which he might do if he cashes two diamonds and reads South's ♦8 on the second round as suit preference. South can achieve the same result on a heart switch by ducking, but that's hard to find unless he knows North has three small hearts.

<p> ♠AKQ97652 ♥K5 ♦10 ♣Q4 ♠J83 ♠- ♥A432 ♥Q9 ♦J9753 ♦AKQ62 ♣A ♣J109853 ♠104 ♥J10876 ♦84 ♣K762 </p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>14</td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>12</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>4</td> <td>E</td> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		14	N	-	-	-	2	10	12	S	-	-	-	2		4	E	4	7	1	-			W	4	7	1	-	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable Nevena Senior</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>5♦</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>7♦ makes if declarer handles the club suit successfully – ♣A, club ruff and a ruffing finesse against the King will allow three extra club winners to cater for the three heart losers in West's hand. However, neither East nor West has the right hand to push for a slam over 4♠.</p> <p>If North gets tempted by the vulnerability and has a second attempt with 5♠ over 5♦ (after all, making eight spades tricks doubled will cost only 500 instead of 600), he may regret it bitterly, as East will make a forcing pass and West will go on to 6♦.</p> <p>6♠ doubled will cost -800, cheaper than -1370 or -1390, but too expensive compared to -620 or -640.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	Pass	1♦	4♠	5♦	All pass				
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<p>♠ 109872 ♥ J87 ♦ 75 ♣ 983</p> <p>♠ A654 ♠ KQ ♥ K63 ♥ 109542 ♦ K8643 ♦ 1092 ♣ 4 ♣ AQ7</p> <p>♠ J3 ♥ AQ ♦ AQJ ♣ KJ10652</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable Tom Paske</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On the lead of a club by South you can make ten tricks if you are careful. You unblock the king and queen of spades and lead a heart. There is nothing South can do: you will pitch the third diamond on the ace of spades after you have removed both of South's hearts, and can ruff your remaining club loser in due course.</p> <p>In fact, since declarer can set up a long diamond for a discard with a club ruff as the entry to dummy, it takes diamond leads from South to hold the contract to nine tricks. The diamond attack establishes a second trick in the suit before declarer can take a discard on the ace of spades.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♣	1♦	Pass	1♥	1NT	2♥	All pass		
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	18	E	-	3	3	1
		W	-	3	3	1

<p>♠ 864 ♥ 10942 ♦ 96 ♣ K1093</p> <p>♠ QJ93 ♠ K ♥ 65 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ J102 ♦ AKQ8743 ♣ AQ85 ♣ J</p> <p>♠ A10752 ♥ A83 ♦ 5 ♣ 7642</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable Heather Dhondy</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The first problem is what to open the East hand. It is clearly a hand with much potential, however you do not have game in your own hand so 2♣ looks a bit much. If you were playing strong twos, or some version of two bids that allowed you to show an eight playing-trick hand, I would choose that, but if not then I would open 1♦. You are unlikely to be passed out in 1♦ given the amount of distribution you hold so it is worth taking that small risk to give yourself room. As it happens, despite partner holding decent values, you want to be stopping in 3NT.</p> <p>Against 3NT North will probably select a spade, if South has overcalled in the suit. It is essential for South to find the club switch to hold the contract to ten tricks: it does look an attractive switch given dummy's weakness in the suit.</p> <p>Even if the defence holds you to ten tricks, you will score decently for being in the right contract.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♦	1♠	2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
		1♦	1♠														
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass														
3NT	All pass																

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	3	N	-	-	-	-
10	19	S	-	-	-	-
	8	E	2	5	3	2
		W	2	5	3	2

<p>♠ AJ3 ♥ A98542 ♦ A6 ♣ KQ</p> <p>♠ 72 ♠ 965 ♥ KQJ ♥ 10 ♦ Q10873 ♦ J542 ♣ 654 ♣ J10932</p> <p>♠ KQ1084 ♥ 763 ♦ K9 ♣ A87</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all Heather Dhondy</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This raises the age-old question of whether to open 1♠ or 1NT with the South hand. Opening 1NT risks failing to find the five-three spade fit, however opening 1NT gets the strength and shape of your hand more accurately described in one bid. Pay your money and take your choice. Whichever route you take, North is going to be interested in a heart slam, which requires only the two-two break, so it's a poor but not terrible contract.</p> <p>Should West double? As it happens North/South have nowhere to run, but West can't be sure of that, so will probably pass. Anyone managing to stop short of slam will score well and their opponents will feel rightly aggrieved with the percentage they receive!</p>	West	North	East	South				1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥	All pass	
West	North	East	South																		
			1♠																		
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥																		
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦																		
Pass	6♥	All pass																			

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	18	N	3	2	5	5
8	2	S	3	2	5	5
	12	E	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ QJ8 ♥ Q1062 ♦ KQJ ♣ 1084</p> <p>♠ A1097 ♠ K32 ♥ J9 ♥ K543 ♦ A1092 ♦ 54 ♣ QJ7 ♣ 9653</p> <p>♠ 654 ♥ A87 ♦ 8763 ♣ AK2</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable Heather Dhondy</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A simple enough auction but how many tricks will be made? The two of hearts will be a popular opening lead, with some choosing a diamond. On a heart lead, declarer appears to have three spades, a heart, two diamonds and a club for seven tricks, but this is an illusion. Declarer needs to keep cards in all the suits, and has no discard to make on the third round of hearts. One suit has to go, which is likely to be diamonds, and declarer will probably play on spades. The misery is compounded when the final heart is cashed and the inevitable diamond switch comes. In practice, declarer is likely to be held to five tricks. To make six he must attack clubs when he wins dummy's ♥K, then the diamond blockage and favourable club position come to his aid.</p> <p>Declarer has better chances on a diamond lead: declarer ducks and North must switch to hearts at once to make six tricks difficult.</p>	West	North	East	South	1NT	All pass																																								
West	North	East	South																																												
1NT	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: small;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td> <td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td></td> <td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>6</td> <td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td></td> <td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td> <td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	11		N	-	1	1	-	1	12	6	S	-	1	1	-	1	11		E	-	-	-	1	-			W	1	-	-	1	-	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																									
11		N	-	1	1	-	1																																								
12	6	S	-	1	1	-	1																																								
11		E	-	-	-	1	-																																								
		W	1	-	-	1	-																																								

<p>♠ K3 ♥ J32 ♦ A109 ♣ AJ862</p> <p>♠ Q108 ♠ AJ9654 ♥ AKQ74 ♥ 98 ♦ J ♦ 532 ♣ KQ97 ♣ 104</p> <p>♠ 72 ♥ 1065 ♦ KQ8764 ♣ 53</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable Jonathan Cooke</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>2NT by South shows a long minor suit and no interest in game. It tells North to bid 3♣ which South plans to correct to 3♦, showing the weak single-suiter in diamonds. But here West will double the 2NT bid, showing a strong hand, and East jumps to 4♠.</p> <p>South might lead a club, hoping partner has two club tricks, the ace of spades, and one side trick. Or, he may choose to lead ♦K. That lead almost provides a blue-print for the location of the high cards. Declarer's basic plan is to ruff a diamond in dummy, finesse in trumps, and later discard his last diamond on a top heart. Eleven tricks should be a common result.</p>	West	North	East	South		1NT	Pass	2NT	Dble	3♣	4♠	All pass																																		
West	North	East	South																																												
	1NT	Pass	2NT																																												
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<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: small;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td> <td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td><td></td> <td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>5</td> <td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td></td> <td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td> <td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	13		N	-	1	-	-	-	17	5	S	-	1	-	-	-	5		E	2	-	5	5	-			W	2	-	5	5	-	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																									
13		N	-	1	-	-	-																																								
17	5	S	-	1	-	-	-																																								
5		E	2	-	5	5	-																																								
		W	2	-	5	5	-																																								

<p>♠ AQ4 ♥ KQ ♦ K52 ♣ AQJ83</p> <p>♠ J952 ♠ K1083 ♥ 98732 ♥ 1065 ♦ 84 ♦ 96 ♣ 94 ♣ 10652</p> <p>♠ 76 ♥ AJ4 ♦ AQJ1073 ♣ K7</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all Jonathan Cooke</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>7NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>After South's opening bid, North will expect to play in slam. The question is: which slam? 2♣ is more likely to find out than a jump shift. The 3♦ rebid from South is game forcing, shows a six-card suit, and an above average opening bid. North now takes control, setting trumps, checking for aces, and then bidding the grand slam. Those who play Roman Key Card Blackwood can show two key cards with the queen of trumps, as in the auction shown. Even if a black king is missing, there are usually sufficient outside tricks to bring the tally to thirteen – the only hand that South could have which doesn't give thirteen cashing tricks is ♠ Kxx ♥ AJ ♦ AQJ10xx ♣ xx. Even then all is not lost; the club finesse might work. What might East lead? ♦9 is my choice, as that's least likely to give anything away.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣	Pass	3♦	Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass	7NT	All pass																							
West	North	East	South																																												
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HCP		Makeable contracts																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																									
21		N	7	7	3	3	7																																								
1	3	S	7	7	3	3	7																																								
15		E	-	-	-	-	-																																								
		W	-	-	-	-	-																																								

♠ J865
 ♥ KJ97
 ♦ K2
 ♣ Q65
 ♠ Q2 ♠ 1093
 ♥ Q1063 ♥ A5
 ♦ AJ9 ♦ Q8643
 ♣ J1043 ♣ A97
 ♠ AK74
 ♥ 842
 ♦ 1075
 ♣ K82

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

Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable Jonathan Cooke

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Most tables will pass this deal out, or, with each player holding a balanced 10-count, a mini no-trump (10-12) by any hand might buy the contract. The most likely candidate for this is West, since few will be playing a mini by South at unfavourable vulnerability.

Against 1NT by West, North will probably lead a spade rather than the riskier heart. South wins with the king, declarer's two telling him that the defence has four spade tricks. But there's no hurry to cash them, it's better to lead through declarer while he can, so he switches to ♥8, which runs to dummy's ace. Declarer takes a losing diamond finesse, and an alert North now leads ♠8 to South's ace, dropping declarer's queen. South leads a heart to North's nine, and North cashes two more spades, South winning the last with ♠7. A further heart lead beats the contract by two tricks – well defended!

♠ 742
 ♥ QJ9532
 ♦ A2
 ♣ Q2
 ♠ 98 ♠ J6
 ♥ A8 ♥ K74
 ♦ KQ109754 ♦ J8
 ♣ K10 ♣ AJ9843
 ♠ AKQ1053
 ♥ 106
 ♦ 63
 ♣ 765

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	9	N	-	-	1	2	-
12	10	S	-	-	1	2	-
	9	E	4	4	-	-	-
		W	4	4	-	-	-

Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable Graham Osborne

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♥	2♣	2♠
3♦	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	4♦	All pass

An interesting part-score battle. All four suits may well get mentioned on the first round of the auction. West will rebid his diamonds at the three level and South will repeat his spades. Now finer judgement is required. Defending 3♠ will be worth less than their diamond part-score but it far from obvious for East to try 4♦ and surely West has bid out his hand. What factors might suggest that East should bid on? Most importantly at this vulnerability, East needs to defeat the contract by two tricks doubled to compensate for the diamond part-score he expected to make. He can't be sure 4♦ is making but he may be onto a bad thing already when the opponents bid on to 3♠ and that makes 4♦ a reasonable gamble.

♠ 63
 ♥ J76
 ♦ KQJ3
 ♣ J863
 ♠ Q1054 ♠ AKJ7
 ♥ 3 ♥ 92
 ♦ 107652 ♦ A8
 ♣ K75 ♣ Q10942
 ♠ 982
 ♥ AKQ10854
 ♦ 94
 ♣ A

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	8	N	-	-	4	-	2
5	14	S	-	-	4	-	2
	13	E	3	1	-	3	-
		W	3	1	-	3	-

Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all Graham Osborne

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	4♥
All pass			

A popular sequence will be for East to open 1♣ and South's 4♥ overcall to end the auction. This is an easy make and it should be equally easy for the defence to come to their three tricks. Are any variations possible? Firstly, East might try an offbeat 1NT opening. Now will South start with a double? This is unlikely to be passed out (which incidentally would lead to a good score for East/West) but may cause enough confusion for North/South to miss game. Secondly if South starts slowly with a 1♥ overcall, West may chance a negative double at the attractive vulnerability which may pave the way to a profitable 4♠ save. If declarer starts the club suit by leading low towards the king he will be only one off, but even two off doubled will be better than conceding 4♥.

<p>♠ 10742 ♥ Q72 ♦ A97 ♣ KJ8</p> <p>♠ Q ♠ J85 ♥ J ♥ K108643 ♦ K854 ♦ J102 ♣ A1097652 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ AK963 ♥ A95 ♦ Q63 ♣ Q3</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable Graham Osborne</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♥</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>East has a minimum but perfectly acceptable weak two in hearts. That leaves South with a close decision between a 2♠ overcall and 2NT. Each action has its pros and cons: a 2NT overcall may bury a spade fit and delivers only one heart stop, but the queens in the minors look very no-trumpy. With a 4333 shape and help in hearts, North will probably raise a 2NT overcall to game, but naturally a 2♠ overcall is more likely to lead to the suit game.</p> <p>To beat 4♠ by force, West needs to lead ♣A and a second round for partner to ruff, leaving declarer with a loser in each red suit. After the singleton ♥J lead declarer can find his way home if he guesses spades correctly. In no-trumps, declarer has ten tricks with good guessing (the same as in 4♠ but nothing can get ruffed off!). In practice, I suspect making any game will score well.</p>	West	North	East	South			2♥	2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass	
West	North	East	South										
		2♥	2NT										
Pass	3NT	All pass											

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10		N	-	1	1	3	4
10	5	S	-	1	1	3	4
15		E	1	-	-	-	-
		W	1	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ K65 ♥ J5432 ♦ 108 ♣ 1094</p> <p>♠ A9 ♠ 1032 ♥ Q ♥ K10976 ♦ AKQ42 ♦ 975 ♣ J8765 ♣ 32</p> <p>♠ QJ874 ♥ A8 ♦ J63 ♣ AKQ</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable Alex Roberts</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Diamonds or Spades? In either case the defence must work hard to hold declarer to eight tricks: in diamonds, the simple defence is to lead trumps, preventing declarer ruffing a club in dummy. If West makes a two-suited overcall, this is likely to happen as South will be on lead. However, if West bids diamonds and then clubs, North is likely lead to lead a spade. Declarer wins and leads a club, the defence continues spades, declarer ruffs and leads another club, and now South must cash ♥A and play a fourth round of spades to promote a trump trick.</p> <p>Against spades, West must switch to a club before cashing a second diamond in order to secure a club ruff for his partner.</p> <p>Either West or South may well bid higher. If West overcalls an unusual 2NT then East may play in 3♦, showing a profit even against accurate defence so long as he's not doubled.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♠	2♦	2♠	All pass	
West	North	East	South										
			1♠										
2♦	2♠	All pass											

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
4		N	-	-	1	2	1
16	3	S	-	-	1	2	1
17		E	1	2	-	-	-
		W	1	2	-	-	-

<p>♠ 964 ♥ AQJ32 ♦ Q943 ♣ 8</p> <p>♠ K87 ♠ Q10532 ♥ K94 ♥ 105 ♦ J7 ♦ A865 ♣ K9763 ♣ 102</p> <p>♠ AJ ♥ 876 ♦ K102 ♣ AQJ54</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable Alex Roberts</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>P</td> <td>3♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>East's overcall is very aggressive but with a reasonable five-card suit and an entry, it will likely be desirable to receive a spade lead against no-trumps. South should make a take-out double with his three-card heart support and hard values, rather than rebid 1NT (if you play support doubles showing three-card support that's even better). When West raises spades North must double and rebid 3♥ to invite game (a direct 3♥ would just be competing the parts-core).</p> <p>The play of the hand shouldn't cause too many problems – declarer should plan to take the heart finesse twice and also ruff a spade. After achieving this, declarer will have to choose how to play the minors to try for an eleventh trick, but it would be foolish to risk the tenth when you expect +620 to be a good score.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠	Dble	2♠	Dble	P	3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass			
West	North	East	South																						
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣																						
Pass	1♥	1♠	Dble																						
2♠	Dble	P	3♣																						
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥																						
All pass																									

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9		N	2	4	5	1	2
10	6	S	2	4	5	1	2
15		E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

♠ 96
 ♥ J742
 ♦ AK975
 ♣ 94
 ♠ K3 ♠ Q7
 ♥ A1095 ♥ K86
 ♦ J103 ♦ 862
 ♣ AJ87 ♣ K10532
 ♠ AJ108542
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ Q4
 ♣ Q6

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

Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable Alex Roberts

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Dble	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	Pass	3 ♣	All pass

At this vulnerability, it is clear for East to compete to 3♣ — he might bid directly over 2♦ to make South's life harder. Against 3♣, unless the defence opens up hearts declarer will have three losers in diamonds and one each in spades and hearts for one off.

North/South pairs that are left to play in 2♠ will take eight or nine tricks – West must make an attacking lead of a heart or a club to take five defensive tricks, otherwise declarer gets an early discard on diamonds. I would expect +110 to be a good score and +140 to be an excellent score.

♠ 82
 ♥ A864
 ♦ 54
 ♣ KQJ82
 ♠ AKQJ1064 ♠ 97
 ♥ Q753 ♥ K102
 ♦ 8 ♦ K962
 ♣ 3 ♣ 10954
 ♠ 53
 ♥ J9
 ♦ AQJ1073
 ♣ A76

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10		N	4	4	-	-
12	6	S	4	4	-	-
12		E	-	-	-	3
		W	-	-	-	3

Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable Andy Bowles

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♦
4 ♠	Dble	All pass	

Several results are possible, depending on how high West overcalls, and what North and South do next.

On this occasion fortune favours the circumspect, but with a 7-4 shape facing a passed partner West may well overcall 4♠, even at unfavourable vulnerability. North, knowing that his side has the balance of the points, will probably double. South, holding a fairly balanced hand with two aces, has no reason to go anywhere.

It's best if the defenders don't touch hearts, leaving declarer to his own devices. A thoughtful declarer may win the second round of trumps in dummy with the nine, and lead a heart to the queen. If he trusts South's nine to be from J9 or 98, he may guess to play the king next, but most declarers will finesse ♥10 and go two down.

If North/South play the hand, the bad breaks in both minors mean that the limit is a part-score. Playing in clubs, even taking ten tricks is awkward, whatever the double-dummy solver may say.

♠ AQJ4
 ♥ KJ10865
 ♦ A95
 ♣ -
 ♠ 1065 ♠ 832
 ♥ 94 ♥ Q72
 ♦ KQ10 ♦ 642
 ♣ K6542 ♣ A1097
 ♠ K97
 ♥ A3
 ♦ J873
 ♣ QJ83

HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15		N	2	4	5	5
8	6	S	2	4	5	5
11		E	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-

Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable Andy Bowles

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

The South hand, with its poor spots and scattered high-cards, is not worth an opening bid, though that won't stop some people.

There is something to be said for the old-fashioned auction Pass - 1♥ - 2NT - 4♥, but nowadays most pairs will take a slower route. After South's two-level response, North is worth a game-forcing reverse. South bids Fourth Suit Forcing to suggest uncertainty about the best strain, and that's enough for North to insist on hearts.

In 4♥, declarer will probably lose a heart trick, playing the suit the natural way, and unless the defence goes badly wrong there are two inescapable diamond losers.

<p> ♠ K53 ♥ K95 ♦ AKJ3 ♣ A104 ♠ J972 ♠ A864 ♥ 1076 ♥ 82 ♦ Q976 ♦ 54 ♣ 93 ♣ KJ752 ♠ Q10 ♥ AQJ43 ♦ 1082 ♣ Q86 </p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Andy Bowles</p> <p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some pairs will find the 5-3 heart fit and score 450, losing a club and a spade. At match-points, however, with extra strength and lots of queens, South should probably prefer to put his partner in 3NT. How well that works will depend on the lead.</p> <p>If East makes the normal lead of his five-card suit, declarer will take a diamond finesse, and later play a spade to make eleven tricks. If East is a committed major-suit leader he will lead a spade, declarer will naturally play the ten, and West's jack should mean that declarer makes only ten tricks. However, West may need to discard carefully on the run of the hearts, keeping all his diamonds and at least two spades to protect his partner from a throw-in.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass			
West	North	East	South														
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥														
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT														
All pass																	

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	18	N	3	4	5	2	5
3	8	S	3	4	5	1	5
	11	E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

<p> ♠ KJ853 ♥ 9 ♦ KJ643 ♣ J8 ♠ AQ6 ♠ 1094 ♥ J7542 ♥ AQ10 ♦ Q9 ♦ 87 ♣ A109 ♣ KQ742 ♠ 72 ♥ K863 ♦ A1052 ♣ 653 </p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Andrew Robson</p> <p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>West opens a fourth chair 1NT – not 1♥ on such a poor suit, although here 1♥ would work better. North should bid with his five-five shape with reasonable suits – he is non-vulnerable after all. Assuming he has no way to show a major-minor two-suiter, he simply bids 2♠. This gives East a problem, especially if he is playing Lebensohl (meaning 2NT would be a weak get out into a suit, rather than natural). Playing Lebensohl, East may jump to a practical 3NT, hoping clubs will run; playing natural, he may try 2NT. The trouble is that North, having bid spades, may try the sneak attack of a diamond. South will win ♦A and may switch to ♠7 but with diamonds wide open and the heart finesse wrong, declarer will garner at most five clubs and two aces. Indeed if he tries the heart finesse, he should go more than one down in 2NT, N-S +100. My bet is that most of the plusses will be North-South's way with no game making for East/West.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	2♠	2NT	All pass
West	North	East	South										
	Pass	Pass	Pass										
1NT	2♠	2NT	All pass										

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

<p> ♠ J93 ♥ 10752 ♦ KQ4 ♣ 975 ♠ 875 ♠ AK104 ♥ J964 ♥ 8 ♦ 1052 ♦ AJ873 ♣ AJ3 ♣ K106 ♠ Q62 ♥ AKQ3 ♦ 96 ♣ Q842 </p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Nevena Senior</p> <p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>With six high-card points, a flat hand and a bad suit, there is no need for West to enter the auction immediately after South's double. North will respond 1♥ and East will show his extras by doubling for take out. West can now show some values by bidding 1NT, which will most likely become the final contract.</p> <p>If North leads the ♥2, South should win and play a low one back. Declarer will most likely get the layout wrong by playing the nine in the hope that South holds the ten. This will allow five tricks for North/South – not bad considering that East/West can score 130 in diamonds if declarer plays the minors successfully.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♦	Dble	Pass	1♥	Dble	Pass	1NT	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
		1♦	Dble														
Pass	1♥	Dble	Pass														
1NT	All pass																

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	6	N	-	-	-	-	-
6	15	S	-	-	-	-	-
	13	E	1	4	1	3	3
		W	1	4	1	3	3

<p>♠ Q764 ♥ J85 ♦ 864 ♣ 1032</p> <p>♠ K1095 ♠ J82 ♥ AQ103 ♥ K742 ♦ 107 ♦ KJ32 ♣ 754 ♣ 86</p> <p>♠ A3 ♥ 96 ♦ AQ95 ♣ AKQJ9</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all Tom Paske</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Whilst this isn't the perfect shape for a 2NT opener, and there is a risk of missing a minor suit slam, it does simplify the auction. This is especially important at match-points where giving as little information as possible about your hand to the opponents often results in extra tricks. West will lead ♠10 which will give you your 9th trick as long as you are brave enough to try the diamond finesse. A superb +150!</p> <p>If South choses to open 1♣ it is likely to end the auction – East should pass it out rather than risk pushing North/South into a higher-scoring contract. Declarer can come to nine tricks so long as he preserves ♣10 as an entry to dummy until ♠Q has been established.</p>	West	North	East	South				2NT	All pass			
West	North	East	South										
			2NT										
All pass													

HCP		Makeable contracts						
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
	3		N	3	2	-	1	2
9		8	S	3	2	-	1	2
	20		E	-	-	1	-	-
			W	-	-	1	-	-

<p>♠ AQ8 ♥ A863 ♦ A5 ♣ J975</p> <p>♠ 1095 ♠ 63 ♥ Q105 ♥ K42 ♦ KQ643 ♦ J1087 ♣ 32 ♣ Q864</p> <p>♠ KJ742 ♥ J97 ♦ 92 ♣ AK10</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable Heather Dhondy</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Playing a weak NT, your 1NT rebid will be around 15-17. It is normal to play a version of checkback in this sequence, finding the five-three spade fit. On a diamond lead against 4♠ you need to be slightly careful with your entries, but you are able to guarantee the contract by drawing trumps and playing clubs from the top. The only time this will cost you is if East holds Qxx, when taking the club finesse would have gained you an overtrick. As against that, you will gain if West holds Qx.</p> <p>Some pairs will play in 3NT where the brave declarers will take the club finesse in an attempt to match the ten tricks you're bound to make in 4♠, so you should actually prefer to see the club queen offside. On this lie, fortune favours boldness in 3NT rather than accuracy in 4♠.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass			
West	North	East	South																		
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠																		
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣																		
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠																		
All pass																					

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

<p>♠ 1073 ♥ J764 ♦ 10873 ♣ J8</p> <p>♠ A542 ♠ Q9 ♥ AK95 ♥ 1032 ♦ - ♦ 965 ♣ A9643 ♣ Q10752</p> <p>♠ KJ86 ♥ Q8 ♦ AKQJ42 ♣ K</p>	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable Jonathan Cooke</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>4♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♣</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>After West's take-out double, North should make himself awkward by raising diamonds despite his very weak hand. East is too weak to bid at the three level, but when South bids on and West doubles again, East owes his partner a bid with his promising club suit. West is delighted to hear his partner volunteer clubs, and will raise to game.</p> <p>With ♣K dropping, declarer makes twelve tricks by drawing trumps and playing three rounds of hearts to establish the nine for a spade discard.</p> <p>The auction times less well for East/West if South bids a simple 3♦ rather than 2♠. Now East/West may play their making slam in 4♣ only.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♦	Dble	2♦	Pass	2♠	Dble	3♦	4♣	Pass	5♣	All pass		
West	North	East	South																		
	Pass	Pass	1♦																		
Dble	2♦	Pass	2♠																		
Dble	3♦	4♣	Pass																		
5♣	All pass																				

HCP		Makeable contracts						
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
	2		N	-	3	-	1	-
15		4	S	-	3	-	1	-
	19		E	6	-	2	-	1
			W	5	-	2	-	1

♠AQ85
 ♥-
 ♦9765
 ♣Q8752
 ♠K42 ♠97
 ♥QJ9875 ♥A643
 ♦843 ♦KQJ
 ♣10 ♣J963

 ♠J1063
 ♥K102
 ♦A102
 ♣AK4

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	8	N	4	4	-	5	3
6	11	S	4	4	-	5	3
	15	E	-	-	2	-	-
		W	-	-	2	-	-

Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all Graham Osborne

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All pass			

If South opens 1♠ playing four-card majors then North has a decision how high to rise. I suppose there will be votes for two, three and four spades, with the 2♠ raisers likely to miss game. Strong no-trumpers will get to 4♠ after a no-trump opening and Stayman, with North raising the 2♠ response to game. To score well in 4♠ declarer will need to find an eleventh trick. On the ♥Q lead the easiest way to manage this is to duck the lead to the ace. Then declarer will be able to draw trumps with the aid of a finesse, and ruff the clubs good when the suit doesn't break, losing just the ace of hearts and a diamond.

Some Wests may try 3♥ over 1♠, especially opposite a passed partner. Then North, with his useful heart void, should take the strain by jumping to 4♠.

♠873
 ♥K10842
 ♦K75
 ♣96
 ♠K105 ♠QJ642
 ♥76 ♥Q3
 ♦QJ10983 ♦A
 ♣85 ♣AKQ102

 ♠A9
 ♥AJ95
 ♦642
 ♣J743

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	6	N	-	-	2	-	-
6	18	S	-	-	2	-	-
	10	E	3	2	-	4	-
		W	3	2	-	4	-

Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable Alex Roberts

West	North	East	South
			Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Pre-emptive bids are great when they pre-empt your opponents but on this deal, West's 2♦ opening leaves East with a headache. With such a strong hand, it seems that East should look for game. The blockage in diamonds would prove problematic for no-trumps and so the only likely game is in spades. A non-forcing 2♠ bid should suffice, planning to pass 3♦. With a balanced minimum, some Wests may pass 2♠, but with good support a raise is perfectly reasonable, and East then bids game.

With three small diamonds, South may reason that an aggressive lead is required and so lead ♥A. After two rounds of hearts, North will likely switch to a club. Declarer must guess well now, and on this layout she must play South for the doubleton ♠A by playing two rounds of spades, retaining a high spade in dummy. If instead she takes a club ruff at once, South can win the second spade and give his partner a club ruff. Bidding and making 4♠ on this difficult hand should score well.

♠AQ8
 ♥9
 ♦9853
 ♣AK1064
 ♠K74 ♠J965
 ♥AJ ♥K853
 ♦KJ72 ♦A6
 ♣J972 ♣Q85

 ♠1032
 ♥Q107642
 ♦Q104
 ♣3

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

Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable Andy Bowles

West	North	East	South
1NT	All pass		

After West opens a weak no-trump, North/South will probably find themselves unable to intervene. Most pairs play a 2♣ overcall as artificial, and the South hand is too weak for a 2♥ overcall.

Against 1NT North will probably lead a low club. Although that helps declarer to make two clubs tricks, in due course North will set his clubs up, and take three clubs and two spades.

Will South play any part in the defence? Perhaps. Declarer will probably play to establish spade tricks rather than relying on red-suit finesses. Suppose that he wins the first club with ♣8 in dummy, then plays a spade to the king. North clears the clubs, and declarer leads another spade towards dummy. If North plays low smoothly, declarer may well play the nine, and now the defence have three spades and three clubs for a fine score. But if declarer does play ♠J he may now place South with the red queens and take nine or even ten tricks for a fine score his way.