



The Irish Bridge Union Autumn Simultaneous Pairs

Wednesday 9th November 2016

Dear Friends

Thank you for taking part in the Irish Bridge Union Simultaneous Pairs 2016. I hope you had an enjoyable game.

The IBU Simultaneous Pairs provides us with a great opportunity to compete nationwide within the relaxed confines of our local clubs as well as a fun evening. You can see how you did at www.ecatsbridge.com/sims. The accompanying booklet contains expert analysis by Brian Senior who will guide us through the hands and give us pointers for improvement - bridge is enjoyable, of course, but more so the better we get!

The IBU is committed to encouraging greater participation in our sport. One of the challenges is to persuade more players to take the game outside their club and try tournament play in regional congresses as well as national competitions. The IBU All-Ireland Club Pairs takes place on 13th & 14th May 2017 and the IBU Seniors Congress, hosted by the CBAI's North Eastern Region in Cavan, is scheduled for 21st to 23rd March. These are friendly and enjoyable tournaments open to all player categories including Novice, Intermediate B, Intermediate A and Master. We also look forward to the ever popular Burke and O'Connor Inter-County Teams Championships on the weekend of 25th February 2017

In addition to the development of bridge, your participation in Simultaneous Pairs and IBU competitions supports Ireland's representation at international level. This year our Open, Women, Senior, Mixed and Youth teams competed at European Championships in Hungary and Latvia as well as the World Bridge Games in Poland.

I look forward to meeting many of you at IBU events during the season.

John Bergin

President Irish Bridge Union



Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

East opens 1♣, South overcalls 1♦ and West bids 1♠. When North now raises to 2♦, East's natural call is 2♥. South may compete to 3♦, which is down one. If South does not compete, West should pass 2♥, which plays very nicely and should be made.. 2♠, meanwhile, could be defeated by repeated diamond leads, the fourth round after declarer plays the second round of trumps permitting the ♠K and ♠Q to be made separately.

Board 2. NIS Vul. Dealer East.

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

North opens 1♦ and South's 1♠ response will surprise West more than a little. He may be able to bid a natural 2♠ anyway, in which case North will double to show extras and South show his diamond support. If North now goes in with 3♠, South bids the cold NT game. Where West passes over 1♠, North will reverse into hearts then bid 3NT over South's 3♦. Nine tricks can be made whoever is the declarer.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

The suits are in the wrong order for South to stretch to open the bidding – a 2♣ response to 1♦ requires a 2♦ rebid – so West will get to open 1♣ and rebid 1♠ over East's 1♦ response. East is too good for a jump to 3NT at this point so should bid 2♥, F5F, then bid 3NT over West's 3♣. With the club queen providing an entry for North, and the ♥A offside, a heart lead should beat the contract. Unlucky, as 3NT is a normal contract, and 5♣ could be down two..

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

If West opens 1♥, North will overcall 1NT and East compete with 2/3♥. With the ♠Q marked in the North hand, nine tricks should not be a problem. If West opens a weak no trump, North will double. Will East stand it or wriggle – he has three suits but also 9 HCP? 1NT is down even if North gives a trick by leading the ♣Q rather than the better choice of the ace. But if East stands the double South will probably run to 2♣. East may double for take-out and the heart fit is found.

Board 5. NIS Vul. Dealer North.

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

I'm not sure that the North hand, with 10 HCP and some distribution but a weak long suit, quite fits into either a 1♥ or 2♥ opening, so he may pass. East has a weak no trump and perhaps South will bid – but only if he has the methods to show spades and another. Where N/S will end up depends on what convention, if any, they are playing. They make 3♣ or 2♥ but can be beaten in 2♠. Meanwhile, E/W make 2♦. They are likely to get to 3♦ where East opens 1♦.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

The auction looks straightforward enough. South opens 1♣ and it goes 1♦ – 1♥ – 1♠ (FSF) – 1NT – 3NT. West will lead a low spade, East winning the ace and returning the suit. Declarer will win the third spade and look for the extra tricks he requires to come to nine. Not knowing that the hearts are three-three, he may think he needs two extras. The diamond finesse is a better bet than clubs due to the presence of the ten, though in practice the contract is made whichever finesse is tried.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

E/W will usually have the auction to themselves. If West opens with a weak no trump, East will look for a major-suit fit. I suspect that many will treat their hand as invitational, giving value to both the five-four shape and the three tens, any of which could be of value. If declarer gets the position right, he can make nine tricks in hearts, eight in any other denomination. Those who get to game should score poorly, therefore, with +140 and the occasional +150 scoring well.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Where West opens a 15-17 no trump, East will just raise to game. The unrevealing auction gives North no reason to lead other than a diamond, and with no free gift there should be only eight tricks. An Acol pair might bid 1♥ – 2♦ – 2NT – 3♥ – 3NT. Would that persuade North to lead one of his strong three-card holdings? Probably not – I would go passive and let declarer do his own work. A club lead, however, would give the ninth trick.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

If South opens 1♠, West may make a Michaels Cuebid, 2♠ showing hearts and a minor. North will raise to 2♠ and East compete with 3♥. N/S can make 3♠, while E/W make 3♥. South, then, needs to compete to 3♠ to win the matchpoints. If South opens 1NT, West will show hearts or hearts and a minor, according to his methods. Either should see East compete to 3♥ but it will be important for N/S that North finds a take-out double of 2♥, such that South can compete in spades.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

East is too strong for either a weak or a strong no trump so will open 1♥, or perhaps 1♣ if playing five-card majors. 1♣ sees South overcall 1♦ and North may respond either 1♥ or 1NT. Though he has a lot of high cards, East is very low on playing strength, and does best to go quietly. N/S can make seven or eight tricks in any denomination. A 1♥ opening may be passed out and East's fate may be decided by the opening lead, a diamond being helpful while a spade is good for the defence.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

When South opens 1♠, West may scrape up a 2♥ overcall. The practical bid on the North cards is a jump to 3NT and, though he may have some worries whether this is the right spot, South will pass, trusting to partner's having a double heart stopper to justify taking up all the bidding space. On the lead of the ten of hearts, North should see that he will not have time to set up the spades so must play on diamonds. If he ducks a diamond at trick two, he keeps his communications open and has nine easy tricks.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

11 tricks can be made in either a heart or a no trump contract, with communications easier with the aid of the trump suit. North opens 1♥ and if South responds 1♠ rebids 2♣, over which South jumps to 3NT. If South's first response is 2♦, North will rebid 3♣, game-forcing, and again South will bid 3NT. In both cases, North may be worried at not having shown the sixth heart. If he goes on to 4♥ he will play there, but with high cards in the short suits most will leave partner to play 3NT.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

If playing strong no trump, this is what South will open and he will play there. If playing weak no trump, South will usually open 1♦ and West may make a take-out double, though the distribution is uninspiring. North may respond 1♠, 2♦, or just pass, and it isn't clear what the final contract will be with so many possibilities. N/S can make seven or eight tricks in any denomination, with 2NT or 2♠ played by South the highest-scoring spots.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

West may open 1♣ in third seat, planning to pass and response. North will double and East respond 1♦ or 1♥ according to style and system. It will be tough after this start for N/S to get to 2♣, the only thing they can make. Where West does not open, North may open a strong no trump and play there, his fate depending on the opening lead – a red suit puts the defence on top, while a spade gives the contract. A 1♠ opening leads to a minus score, while 1♣ works well only if 2♣ is a limit raise and North passes (which he should).

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

South opens 1♣ and North responds 1♠. East is a bit good for an overcall so starts with a double and South rebids his clubs. With five-card heart support, West may dredge up a 2♥ bid despite the lack of good high cards, and North will either repeat the spades or support clubs. 5♣ makes easily as the defence can only lead one round of trumps, while nine tricks is the limit in spades, or indeed in hearts by E/W.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

West opens 1♥ and North overcalls 2♦ or 3♦. The former sees East bid a comfortable 2♥ and West goes on to game. The latter sees East forced to stretch to a less comfortable 3♥. Now West should cuebid on the way to game but then trust East's sign-off, allowing for the 3♥ to have been made under pressure. 11 tricks can always be made if declarer plays carefully, though the four-one spade split means that an endplay against North may be required.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

How would you deal with the East cards? My choice would be to open 2♣ and rebid 4♥ over a 2♦ response. Yes, I might be a trick short, but even facing nothing I will put the defenders to the test when I run all those hearts. On the actual deal, West will make a 3♣ positive response, East rebid 4♥ as planned, and West use Key-card. On finding no key cards missing he bids 7NT, cashing 13 of his 19 top tricks. This looks to be one of the easiest grand slams ever.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

N/S make 2♠ but E/W have a heart game, with an overtrick available if played by East to protect the club position. Some Easts will open a 12-14 no trump and South double. Whatever West does, North will run to 2♠ and West bids 4♥. This route should get to game. Where East passes as dealer, South opens 1♣, West overcalls 1♥, and North passes. West has a constructive raise to 3♥ but, facing a passed hand, West may not go on to game as he hates the idea of a club lead up to his ten-to-three.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

This one is easier for the five-card majorities, as it starts 1♣ – 1♠ and South splinters with 4♦ then accepts North's sign-off in 4♠. The Acol auction starts 1♣ – 1♦ – 1♥, and North may bid 1NT. Is 2♠ still FSF for your partnership, in which case does North raise to 3♠ to show four cards in the suit? Actually playing in the fourth suit is always a bit tricky, and I can imagine a few pairs coming to grief on this deal. There are 11 tricks in 4♠ but 3NT is an uphill struggle and will usually fail.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

West opens 1♦ and North overcalls 1♥ – the hand really isn't worth an Unusual 2NT when vulnerable – so East has an easy 1♠. West raises to 2♠ and East goes on to game. South's heart lead sets up a second defensive trick. A handful of tournament pairs will be able to double 1♥ to transfer to spades and get the contract played by West. With the heart position protected, the favourable diamond position provides discards for the heart loser and 12 tricks in all, and a lot of matchpoints.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

There are 11 tricks in either major, though it is much better to play in hearts. In 4♠, a trump lead leaves declarer requiring to overtake, draw trumps and play on clubs. The ace-doubleton means he gets a discard for his diamond loser. The play in hearts is routine. If North opens 1♥ and rebids 3♣ South will think of slam but the lack of a trump fit should see them stop safely. Would 1♥ – 1♠ – 4♥ show a hand too good to open 4♥ for you, or a hand improved by the spade response, the traditional Acrol meaning?

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

While either East or South might open their flat 11-count, at most tables it will be West who opens 1♠. 6♦ is a lucky make but I suspect not everyone will bid to game. After 1♠ – 2♣ – 2♦, East has to decide between 3♦ and 2NT. The former may see West commit to diamonds and jump to game. The latter sees him more likely to rebid 3♦ and now it is up to East. With top cards, East should choose to play 5♦ rather than 3NT, but 3NT is where the matchpoints are to be found.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

There is no reason to open that ropey 11-count so South passes and North opens 1♣. East will overcall, either 1♥ or perhaps a weak 2♥ – he has some very dubious values and is facing a past partner, while the hearts are not good enough for the more pre-emptive 3♥. South will bid his spades and North no trump, raised to game by South. Alternatively, North opens a strong no trump and plays 3NT after East has bid hearts and South shown spades. With no good reason to drop the bare king, 10 tricks is the likely outcome.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

West is a little too weak for a 2♥ opening for you? OK, fair enough. North opens 1♣ and East doubles. South bids 1♠ and West may bid 2♥ – more is dangerous as partner always expects high cards if you jump around. That will be enough to silence North, but South can compete to 3♣ and if E/W compete further they will be defeated. N/S can make 4NT, but lack the values to get to game, and also 4♣. +130 will be a common result. E/W are down one in 3♥.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

It would be nice to add the ten of spades, but you can't have everything, and North looks like a normal 3♠ opening to me at favourable vulnerability. It is not obvious that anyone has anything to add to that, though South could raise the pre-empt or West could make a very aggressive bid in pass-out seat. E/W can always defeat 3♠ by drawing trumps to prevent a diamond ruff. Declarer then establishes hearts for a club discard so is just down one.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

East will open 1♠ and South overcall 2♣. West is a bit short on high cards but might take the opportunity to show his seven-card suit – it rates to be now or never. North can raise to 3♣, East show the hearts, and South may jump to 5♣. That is down one, but that need not be a bad result at all, given that E/W can make 4♥, and East is going to be bidding strongly at most tables even if West passes at his first turn.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Missing high cards lie well for E/W but badly for N/S. E/W have 11 tricks in either major, while N/S have only seven in a minor, so had better not sacrifice, despite their double fit. West will open 1♥ and North may overcall 2NT. After East shows a good heart raise, South will surely bid at least 4♣ and maybe 5♣. Fortunately for N/S, West will go on to 4♥ or 5♥ as necessary and, despite the wasted high cards in the dummy, succeeds due to the kind spade position.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

Even if playing a weak 2♦ opener, this West hand seems to slip into the cracks between 1♦ and 2♦, so most will pass. It will be South who opens in fourth seat with 1♠. If West passes again, North responds 1NT and is raised to 2NT. He of course declines the invitation. Declarer wins the likely heart lead in hand and runs the jack of spades, eventually making four spade tricks and nine in all. It is less clear what happens where West overcalls 2♦ but he would be between two and three down if left to play there.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

When North opens with a weak no trump, South will transfer to spades then happily raise to game when North breaks the transfer by jumping to 3♠ to show four-card support in a good hand. The only difference for those playing a strong no trump is that South is likely to become declarer in the spade game. The cards lie very well for N/S and 12 tricks should be made via the double club finesse.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

Switch the suit lengths around and east might open but it is not so convenient to show both suits with the actual combination so the borderline hand passes – the texture is all wrong for a weak no trump opening. West opens 1NT and North doubles. If strength-showing, East redoubles and N/S are in trouble. South can run to 2♥, but East will double that for +300. E/W are close to 3NT but accurate defence beats it after a club lead from North, South winning the fourth club and pushing a spade through.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

♠	6	♠	J9
♥	AQ96	♥	10754
♦	A1085	♦	KQ6
♣	A1065	♣	9832
♠	KQ853	♠	A10742
♥	83	♥	KJ2
♦	72	♦	J943
♣	QJ74	♣	K

The to-scoring contract is for N/S to play in 4♥, but 3NT is the more likely resting spot. The auction may go 1♠ – 2♣ – 2♦ – 3NT. No, it isn't compulsory to open the South hand with its bare king, but most people do so these days. East has no reason not to lead the unbid suit, but there is no joy there for the defence. Declarer takes the double diamond finesse and sets up his ninth trick for a solid +600, the same score as is achievable in 5♦.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

♠	A6	♠	87
♥	109843	♥	QJ76
♦	Q875	♦	J42
♣	85	♣	KJ107
♠	KQ1095432	♠	J
♥	K	♥	A52
♦	9	♦	AK1063
♣	Q96	♣	A432

Swap around the vulnerabilities and West would open 4♠. Some may still do so but 3♠ will also be a popular option. If West opens 3♠, South will double and North respond 4♥, which can be defeated a trick, either by promoting a third trump trick by playing a third round of spades, or by starting with clubs and forcing declarer twice. South will also double a 4♠ opening. Now North may pass, not expecting to make anything at the five level. That is a big winner – even 3♠ can be beaten if North gets a club ruff.

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