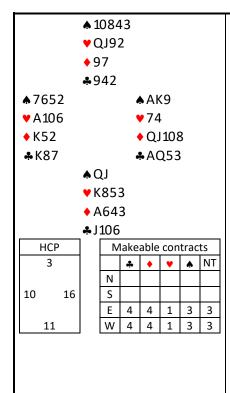
The analysis is based on 5-card Majors, Weak No-Trump, Transfers and Weak Two Openings in 3 suits. Our 1C opening can be 2 cards and our 1D is normally a 5 card suit.



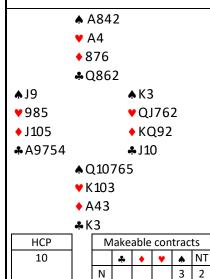
Board 1:	Dealer North	า : Nil All		
West	North	East	South	
	Р	1C	Р	
15	Р	1NT	Р	
3NT	Р	Р	Р	

Good evening my little treasures. Delira and excira to be back with you. Let's see if we can review these hands together, whilst at the same time extemporising on the state of our great little nation, nay the world in general.

All roads lead to 3NT here. A heart lead holds it to 9 tricks [defence get 3 hearts and a diamond], and with hearts the unbid major, this is surely the most likely.

If South leads a diamond [his other 4-card suit], it gives declarer the tempo to knock out the Ace and make 10 tricks for a very good score.

I know you're all over the moon at the prospect of President Trump. Well, I am too. I think we'll be royally entertained. I'm only sorry Boris Johnson didn't make PM – Trump and Bojo would have been the greatest double act since Abbott and Costello.



Ε

1

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12

12

West	North	East	South	
		1H	<b>1</b> S	
2H	3H	Р	3S	

Ρ

Board 2: Dealer East: NS vulnerable

Ρ

Ρ

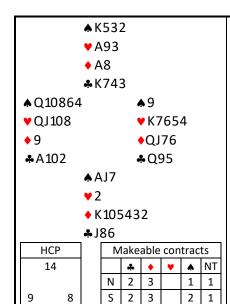
3

1

South's 1S overcall could be as strong as 18 points, so North has to show game interest, which he does by bidding the opponents' suit with 3H. South is nowhere close to a maximum overcall, so will be happy with 3S. There are 9 easy tricks.

If EW get to play in hearts, I expect they'll make 7 tricks. 3H undoubled minus 2 would probably score well.

By the way, our chosen wine for this session is a Chilean Merlot. And before you turn up your noses, reflect on the fact that Chilean wines are derived from grafts from the old, great French vines. These French vines were themselves subsequently devastated by the Great Blight of the 1860s. So you could sensibly argue that Chilean wine is more French than the "French wine" you buy today. Cheers!



F

W

9

3

3

Board 3 : Dealer South : EW Vulnerable							
West	North	East	South				
			Р				
Р	1NT	Р	2NT*				
Р	3D	Р	Р				
Р							

\* Transfer to 3D

I play 4-suit transfers over 1NT – so 2S is a transfer to clubs and 2NT a transfer to diamonds. Passing 1NT only works if the diamonds are running – in which case you may as well play in diamonds anyway. Note that 3D from North, accepting the transfer, says "I have support for diamonds". If South's diamonds are AJxxxx or KQxxxx, he can occasionally pot a thin 3NT.

In passing - if North doesn't like diamonds he bids 3C instead, saying "fine if you want to play in 3D, but I haven't got much support for them".

You make 3D by playing on clubs – the 13<sup>th</sup> club lets you discard your spade loser. But that's not obvious here – there are hands where playing on spades gets you out of a club loser.

I reckon 1NT will go down more often than it makes.

	<b>^</b>	۹32					
	<b>y</b> 9	965					
	<b>•</b> A	Q9	2				
		963					
<b>♦</b> KQ8				10	975	54	
<b>♥</b> AJ72				• KC			
♦ J53				K8			
♣A87				• J1(			
₩ A07		_	•	. O T≀	J		
	٨J	_					
	<b>¥</b> 1	083	3				
	<b>†</b> 1	064	1				
	<b>♣</b> K	(Q5	42				
НСР		N	1ake	able	con	trac	ts
10			*	•	•	•	NT
ſ		N	1				
15 9		S	1				
		Ε		1	3	4	3
6		W		1	3	4	3

Board 4 : Dealer West : Both vulnerable							
West	North	East	South				
1C	Р	1S	Р				
1NT	Р	2D*	Р				
2S	Р	3S	Р				
3NT	Р	Р	Р				

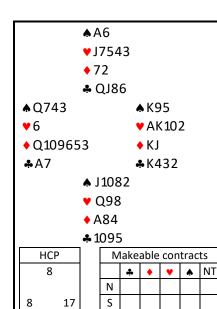
After a 1NT rebid, a handy gadget is to play :-

- a) 2C from responder as a transfer to 2D, showing a hand with invitational values.
- b) 2D from responder [as here] as an artificial game force.

This allows you time and space to sort out whether you belong in a major suit or NT, and possibly in slam.

Here, 2S from West shows 3 card support. East invites game [and invites partner to make the last mistake ©]. West is flat 4-3-3-3 so may opt for 3NT.

A diamond lead from North will result in 10, and possibly 11 tricks [North needs to switch to a club when in with the Ace of spades]. A club lead holds 3NT to 9 tricks. 4S is always delivering 10 tricks I reckon.



Ε

2 4 1 4 3

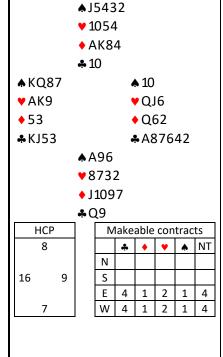
W 2 4 1 4 3

Board 5: Dealer North: Ns vulnerable West North East South Р 1C Ρ 1D Ρ 1NT Ρ 2D\* Ρ Ρ 2H 2S Ρ 3NT Р Р Р

As with board 4, we have the 2D game force after the 1NT rebid. East and West both get to show their majors.

Looks like a spade lead results in 11 tricks, a heart 10 and a club 9.

Now I'm nothing if not upfront with my readership, we all know that. So I can exclusively reveal that since last I beguiled you in this august publication, a dire tragedy has befallen me. To wit, I am in love. It's awful, it's dreadful and there should be a law against it, but there it is. You can call her Tooma [The Object Of My Affections]. So if you detect a certain mellowing of my normal acerbic style, it's all Tooma's fault.



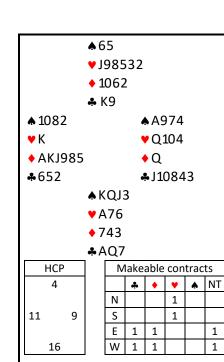
: Dealer East :	Ew vuinera	bie
North	East	South
	Р	Р
X*	2NT*	Р
Р	Р	Р
	North X*	P X* 2NT*

I think North is better to double 1C for takeout rather than bid 1S on that awful suit. Doubling certainly overstates his values, but South has already passed and they're non-vul against vul. Pairs is all about competing in the auction when prudent.

2NT from responder after partner's 1-level opener is doubled shows 10-12 points and at least 4-card support [ie an Acol raise to 3 of the suit]. It allows you to bid 3 of the suit with weaker hands and 4-card trump support, often stealing the pot. Note that in this case 2NT promises at least 5 clubs, because 1C promises only 2.

West actually has 4 clubs so he knows there's a good fit there. He'll bid 3NT to show a strong 1NT opener – and he'll reason that East must have diamonds stopped with his 10-12 point hand.

There are 10 tricks on the lead of the Jack of diamonds. A bright North may win the Ace [ostensibly denying the King], and return a low one [hoping declarer has Q10x and will play the ten], but here East has no option but to put up the Queen.



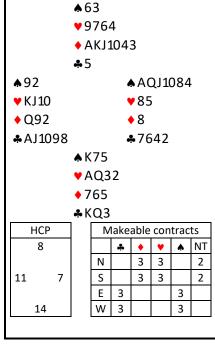
Board 7 : South : Both vulnerable							
West	North	East	South				
			1C				
1D	1H	1NT	Р				
Р	2H	Р	Р				
Р							

Good contest here in the auction.

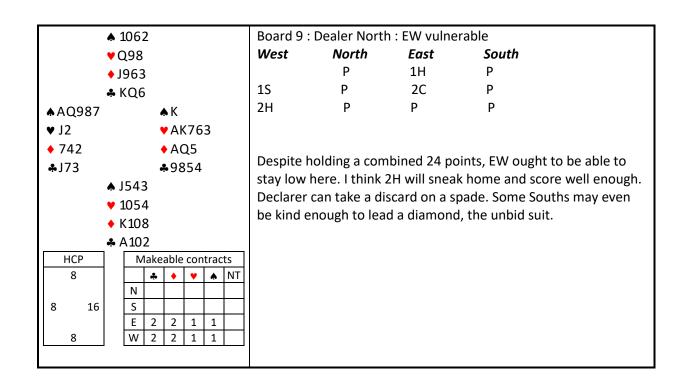
I think 2H is booked for one down. 1NT by EW just has the 7 top tricks on the obvious King of spades lead...but South has 3 discards to find on the run of the diamonds [luckily the 10 falls], so the odd 120 would be a very good score.

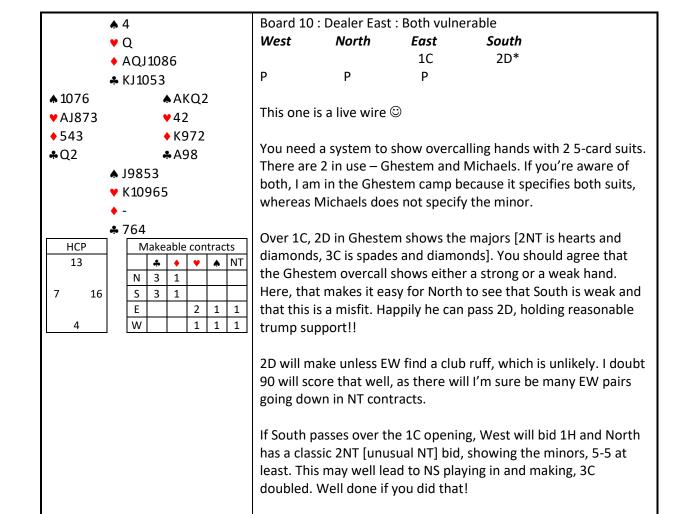
I don't think West should press on to 3D vulnerable. He's got 6 black losers and the bare King of hearts, a suit bid by North. 3D should be 2 down, but would escape for 1 down on a heart lead.

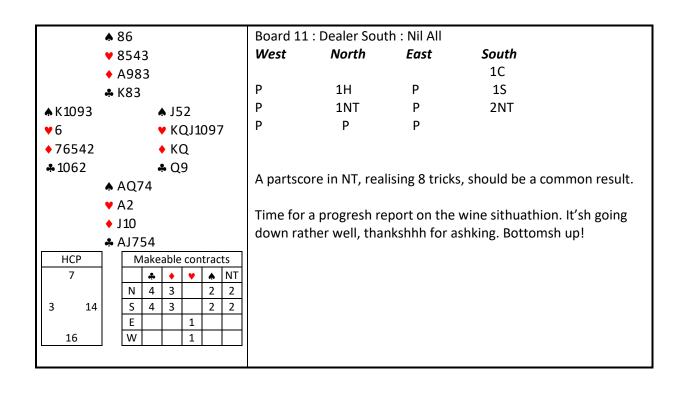
Another old pairs dictum is to concentrate on getting positive scores, and West would do well to heed it here.



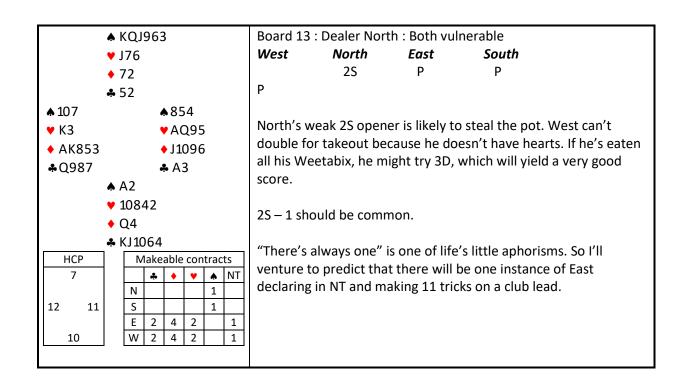
Board 8: I	Dealer West	: Nil all				
West	North	East	South			
1NT	2D	2S	2NT			
Р	Р	Р				
clubs. Sou – he's got	th will think 14 points ar	there are and everyboo	points in light of n awful lot of po ly else has had a appeals as the v	oints in the deck bid before		
8 tricks are the limit, assuming East ducks the spade lead – or wins and switches to a club. South ought to get diamonds right given West's opening bid.						
It looks very hard for NS to find their heart fit – a good score awaits if you manage it!						

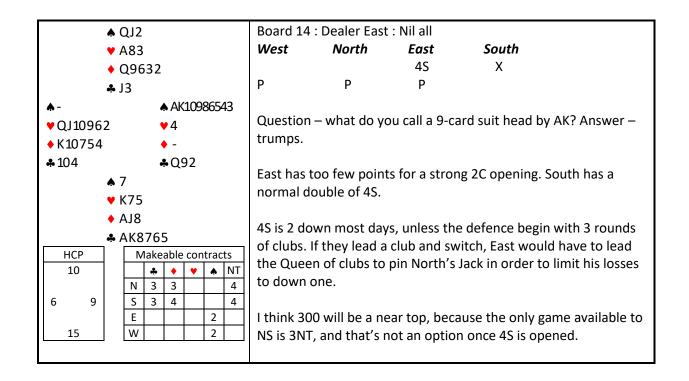


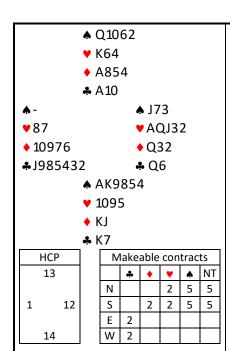




<b>^</b>	K94	2					Board 12	2 : Dealer Wes	st : NS vulne	rable		
•	K10	43					West	North	East	South		
•	3						1NT	Р	2C	Р		
*	A74	3					2D	р	2S	Р		
<b>♠</b> Q10			<b>N</b> J8	763	3		Р	Р				
<b>♥</b> 65		•	<b>/</b> A(	ე92	<u>)</u>							
♦ AK106			84	-				•		"semi-balanced", and it's		
<b>♣</b> KQ1052		4	•9					normal enough to treat it as if it were a "normal" balanced hand.				
<b>^</b>	Α5						The alternative is to open 1C and plan to rebid 2C when partner					
•	J87						responds	s in a major.				
•	QJ9	75					20 6					
*	J86						2S from East, after the 2D answer to Stayman, shows 5 spades and 4 hearts, and no further interest.					
HCP	N	1ake	able	con	trac	ts	and 4 ne	arts, and no i	urther inter	est.		
10		*	•	*	٨	NT	2C chaul	d maka Any	diamand ruf	f[c] North coarse are really	ط+i، ، ،	
	N							•		f[s] North scores are really	/ WILII	
14 7	S	2	2	1	2	1	naturait	rump tricks a	iiyway.			
9	W		2	1	2	1						
J												







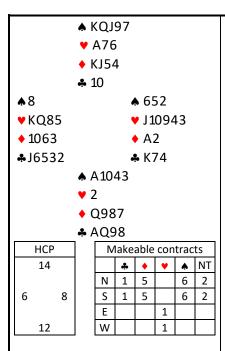
Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable							
West	North	East	South				
			<b>1</b> S				
Р	2NT*	Р	3S				
Р	4C	Р	4D				
Р	4H	Р	4NT				
Р	5S	Р	6S				
Р	Р	Р					

Have to admit I'd be likely to go overboard and bid slam here.

2NT is the widely-used Jacoby response to a major suit opening. It shows 4-card support and game values. 3S shows a non-minimum opener, usually promising a sixth spade. 4C 4D and 4H are cuebids. 4NT is Blackwood and 5S shows 2 of the 5 Aces plus the Queen of trumps.

Sadly, 6S has no play - the duplication in hearts and clubs is a bummer.

If you play in 4S, careful play will realise 11 tricks.

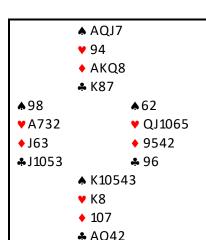


Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable						
West	North	East	South			
Р	<b>1</b> S	Р	2NT*			
Р	3D	Р	4NT			
Р	5S	Р	6S			
Р	Р	Р				

As with board 15, 2NT is the Jacoby response, game forcing with 4-card trump support. 3D is natural, and now South's hand is huge. They've got a fit in two suits, and he's got Ace and singleton in the other two.

6S makes easily, you can ruff 2 hearts in the South hand. Even the club finesse works if you needed it, which you don't. So you have a cold slam on 26 combined points [24 really, since the club Queen isn't needed].

There's a case for bidding 6D rather than 6S, because the long spade in North could yield a vital discard. Unluckily, a spade ruff beats 6D. If you were in 6D-1, I'd suggest you keep your money in your pocket at Cheltenham next month!



	₩ AQTZ								
	НСР			Makeable contracts				ts	
	19				*	•	>	<b>^</b>	NT
				Z	4	4	1	5	2
6		3		S	5	5	2	6	6
				Е					
	12			W					

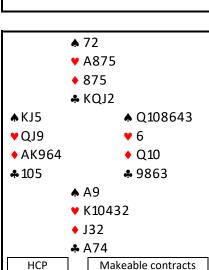
Board 17	: Dealer Nor	th : Nil All	
West	North	East	South
	1C	Р	<b>1</b> S
Р	<b>4</b> S	Р	4NT
Р	5S	Р	6S
P	P	P	

Lawksamercy – 3 slam hands in a row! I reckon they're juicing the dealing machine!!

You need to play 6S from South, because if North plays it a heart lead beats it.

Once North's diamonds are on the table as dummy, East will hold his 4 diamonds, saving the overtrick. West might lead his heart Ace anyway.

If you were in 6S-1, then as with the previous board, I'd suggest you keep your powder dry at Cheltenham! But since I like you so much, here's a tip. Look for horses in handicaps trained by Dan Skelton, and fill yer boots ©.



10

12

14

	N	Makeable contracts				
		*	•	٧	٨	NT
	N	1		2		1
	S	1		2		1
	Ε		2		3	
	W		2		3	

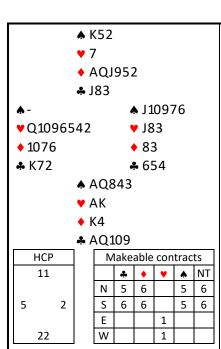
Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
		Р	1NT	
Χ	XX	2S	Р	
P	P			

A spade partscore should be common enough, and 8 tricks should be normal [though beware my "there's always one" rule, which says that someone will be allowed to make 10].

If South opens 1H rather than 1NT, NS may be allowed to play in 3H, and one down in that contract should be a good score.

Do you ever despair of your children? I do, all the time. Just recently we were out at dinner when my eldest [26 and counting] announced that in her considered opinion, the Twin Towers had been destroyed by the CIA. Whilst I was scanning the floor for my jaw, numbers 2 and 4 [23 and 14] pitched in to say that this was common knowledge – the USA needed some justification for going after Bin Laden.

Reeling at this point, I fixed my gaze on number 3 [22 and counting] — a first-class honours Engineering graduate, possessed of a fine [and expensively educated] enquiring mind. "That's complete rubbish" he pronounced. I was close to tears, I don't mind telling you. "Quite right, my boy. Just like those halfwit conspiracy theories about the JFK assassination or the moon landings". At which point he pulled a face and said "well......I'm not convinced about the moon landings". If this is rock'n'roll, I want my old job back.



Board 19 : Dealer South : EW Vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
			2NT	
Р	3S*	Р	3NT	
Р	4D	Р	4H	
Р	<b>4</b> S	Р	4NT	
Р	5D	Р	6D	
Р	Р	Р		

There are a couple of important aspects arising in the bidding of this hand.

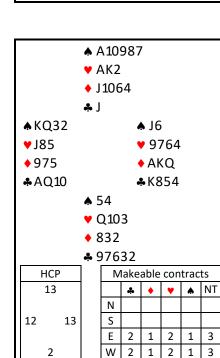
First, you have to open 2NT as South, because there are many hands where North will not be able to respond to a 1S opening, but you are cold for game.

The second point is that you need to be able to bid minor suit slams after a 2NT opener. I play 3S as showing slam interest in a minor – it directs partner to bid 3NT, then 4D is a slam try in that suit. If South doesn't like diamonds, 4NT is a signoff.

Even the spade ruff at trick one doesn't beat 6D, as long as you play small from dummy – as you should.

God between us and all harm, that's four slams in five hands!! Maybe the apocalypse is upon us.

If you played in 6S/7S or 7D – what can I say? There ain't no justice.

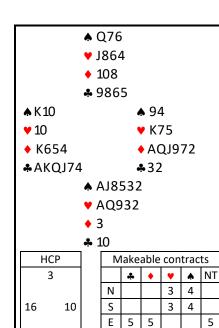


Board 2	0 : Dealer Wes	st : Both vuln	ierable
West	North	East	South
1NT	Р	2C	Р
<b>2S</b>	Р	3NT	Р
Р	Р		

3NT making 9 tricks should be the order of the day.

Maybe North will double or venture 2S – will he get out for 2SX-2?? Will EW play 1NT redoubled +2?? Will Jorry Oddums remember being in the IRA? Will Mayo ever win an All-Ireland??? Good news - Daniel O'Donnell is now playing bridge in Donegal!!!

You see - now you've got me all agitated and upset. Tooma is not best pleased and no mistake. I have to go to lie down for a while. Perchance to dream.



W 5 5

11

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Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
	Р	1D	3C*	
4NT	Р	5D	Р	
Р	Р			

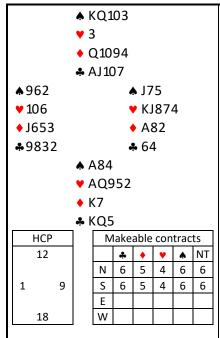
Oooooohhhhhhhmmmmm - ah, peace and tranquillity are restored after that awful last board.

I love watching PMQs at Westminster – I had a sheltered upbringing. So I refer the Honourable Member to the answer I gave on board 10!

3C is Ghestem again, showing the majors 5-5.

West can see a slam if partner has two Aces for his opener, but there's just the one. 5D making is normal.

From the Twilight Zone, I can see South leading a major suit against 3NT by East, resulting in plus 4!!!!

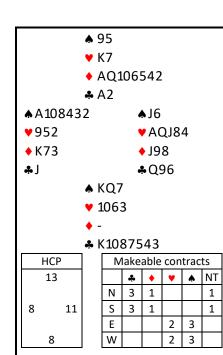


Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
		Р	1H	
Р	<b>1</b> S	Р	2NT	
Р	3NT	Р	Р	
P				

South's 2NT shows 18-19, but North has a singleton in partner's 5-card suit, so ought to be content with game.

Many learned treatises have been written, attesting to the proposition that leading from Jxxx against a NT contract is not a good idea. I have long since been persuaded that this is true — and a diamond lead here lets out 12 easy tricks. I'd lead a club — South can still come to 12 tricks but it isn't nearly so easy.

Stick around, folks – I'm giving yiz pearls here.

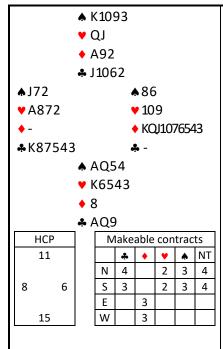


Board 23 : South : Both vulnerable					
West	North	East	South		
			Р		
<b>2S</b>	3D	3S	Р		
Р	Р	Р			

Those of you who know me will appreciate that my bidding style is not that of a shrinking violet, to put it mildly. Why then, I hear you ask, do I pass up the opportunity of opening 3C as south?

The answer, sadly, is that I'm getting conservative and disciplined in my old age. I don't like to pre-empt in front of partner when I've got two 3-card majors; what if he's got 11-15 points and a 5 or 6 card major?? Second, if I pre-empt vulnerable in a minor suit, I like to have the agreement that it promises two of the top three honours. For these and all my sins, I'm a passer.

As it happens, 3C making is going to be a near top, since EW can make 3S. I think East is just about worth 3S here on the bidding given.



Board 24 : Dealer West : Nil all				
West	North	East	South	
Р	Р	4D	Χ	
Р	Р	Р		

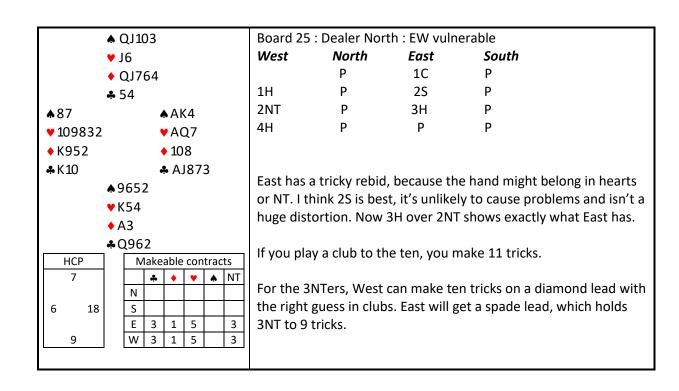
With those hearts, I would not open the North hand - yuk!

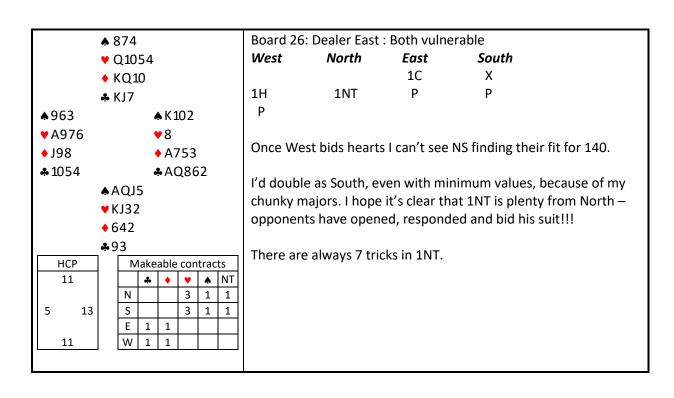
If you opened only 3D as East, the words "lily" and "livered" spring to mind.

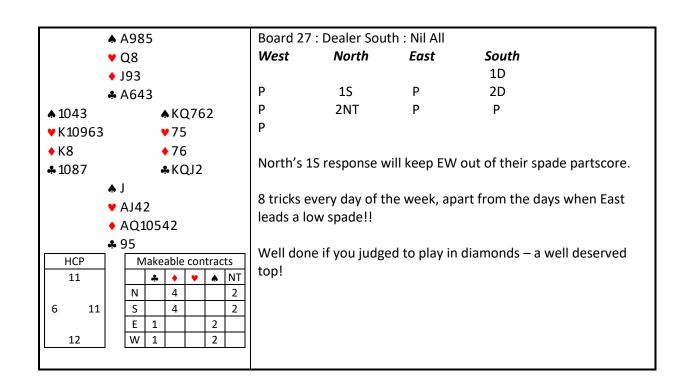
Over 4D, NS are fixed and have little option but to take the money – one down [unless South kicks off with the Ace of clubs ?!?].

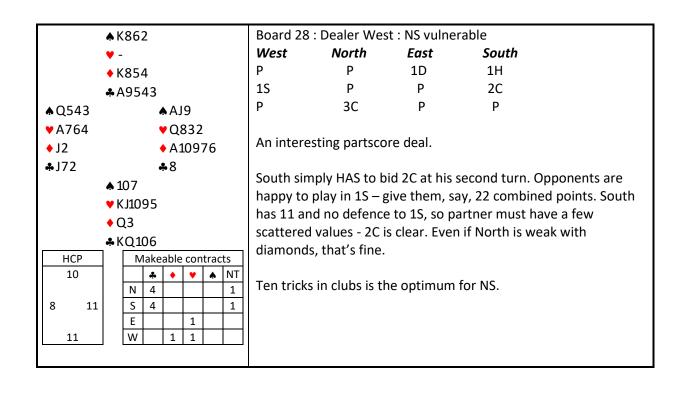
You'd like to play in 4S as NS wouldn't you? However, the cruel lie of the cards dooms it – diamond ruff, two club ruffs and the heart Ace. Jeez Louise!!

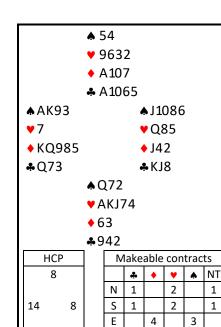
If you've read the wonderful Victor Mollo books about the Hideous Hog and his pals, then as East against 4S you'd lead the THREE of diamonds – suit preference for a club return  $\odot$  .











4

3

W

10

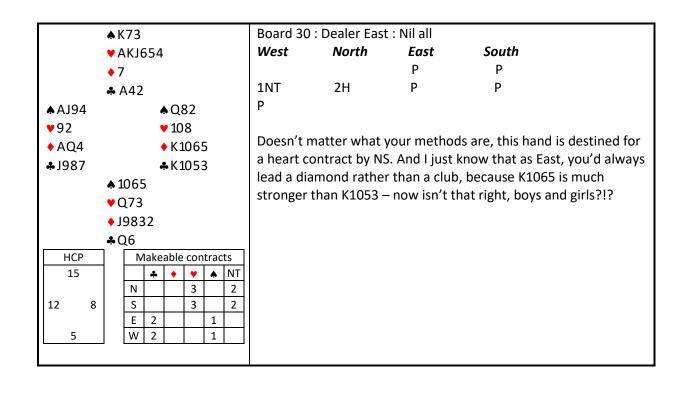
Board 29 : Dealer North : Both vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
			1H	
Χ	3H	3S	Р	
Р	Р			

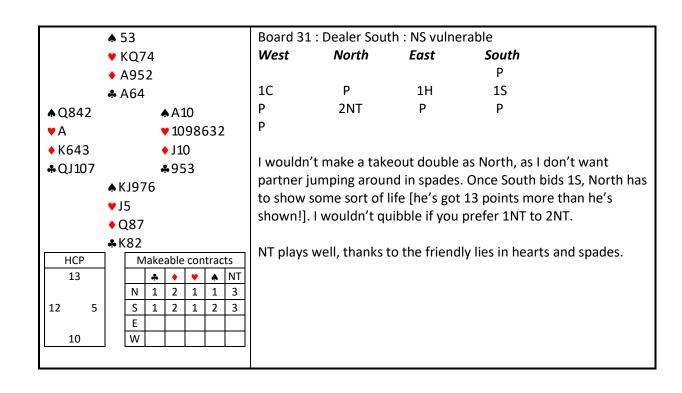
A good contest between the major suits here.

If you haven't heard of the Law of Total Tricks, I can tell you it's well worth a read. Essentially it says that there are the same number of tricks as there are trumps between the hands. In this case, NS have 9 hearts and EW have 8 spades, so the Law says there are 17 tricks available. That means that if NS make 3H then EW make 2S, and if EW make 3S then NS make 2H.

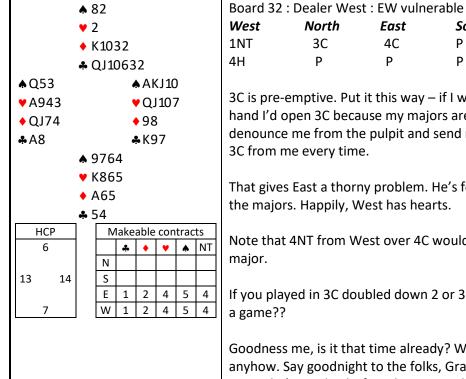
That being so, East knows that 3S could make, and is at worst one down versus a making 3H. It's a close call but I'm a 3S bidder.

3S has 9 tricks and 3H has 8 – isn't the Law a wonderful thing!!





North



3C	4C	Р				
Р	Р	Р				
3C is pre-emptive. Put it this way – if I were dealer with that						
hand I'd open 3C because my majors are very weak. You can						
denounce me from the pulpit and send me to Coventry, but it's						
	P otive. Put it to 3C because	P P  ptive. Put it this way – if a 3C because my majors				

South

East

That gives East a thorny problem. He's forced to bid 4C, showing the majors. Happily, West has hearts.

Note that 4NT from West over 4C would be signoff, denying a major.

If you played in 3C doubled down 2 or 3 – when are you free for a game??

Goodness me, is it that time already? Well, the wine's all gone anyhow. Say goodnight to the folks, Gracie. It's goodnight from me and it's goodnight from him. Hasta luego. Vamos muchachos!! Onwards and upwards. Death to the infidel. Aprés moi le deluge. Up the Republic.