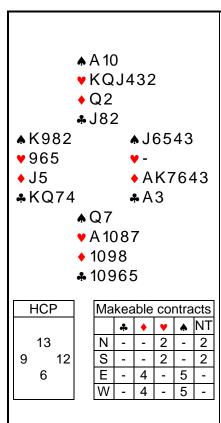
Yeats Country Bridge Congress 2017 Commentary on the Second Session Pairs - FOB

Some food for thought – to help with the discussion in the bar, I am going to assume 4-card majors and weak No-Trump – and I will mention '5-card majors and Strong No-Trump' if it matters.



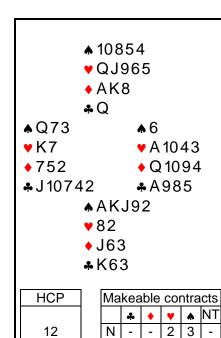
Board 1	: Dealer No	orth : Love	e all
West	North	East	South
	1♥	1♠	2♥
3♥	Pass	4 •	Pass
4 ♠	All Pass		

A straightforward bidding battle to begin with. North-South can make 8 tricks in Hearts and East-West can make 11 tricks in a Spade contract.

So if E/W can get to 4 h they will score well and if N/S can get to play in a Heart contract undoubled they will score well.

The 1 v opening by North is routine but East's overcall will take different forms at different tables e.g. 1 ♠, 2 ♦ or even some form of two-suited gadget like 'Michaels' or 'Ghestem'. Then of course West has to decide how to show his support 2 ♠, 3 ♠, 4 ♠ or via an 'unassuming cue bid'.

It's hard to imagine any E/W pair not getting to 4♠ either voluntarily or by being shovelled into it.



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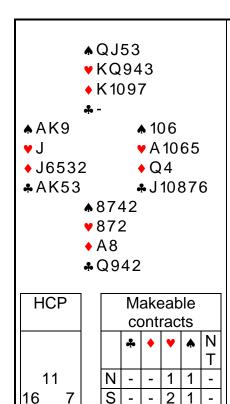
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Board 2: Dealer East: NS vulnerable West North East South Pass 1 🌲 2 🔻 Pass Pass 2♠ Pass 4 All Pass

It is hard to imagine any N/S pair staying out of this doomed 4. Declarer has 4 tricks to lose and indeed might even lose 5 tricks if he is not careful.

A trump lead from West seems to be the only way to let declarer make 10 tricks.



Е

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3 2

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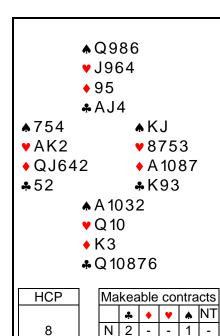
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East	South
	Pass
1NT	2♥
	East 1NT

This should be a partscore battle and as always in partnership such battles. experience and understanding will be key to avoiding a disaster.

Some E/W pairs will force themselves into game most probably 3NT. On a good day the Clubs would be kinder and 9 tricks would roll in - but today they don't and disciplined bidding is rewarded. partial is the top spot for E/W but if N/S get into the auction the Club fit might not come to light.



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- 3 1

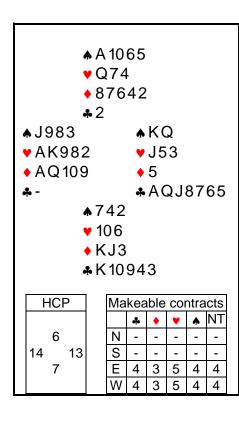
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Board 4: Dealer West: All vulnerable West North South East Pass Pass Pass 1. Pass **1** 🔻 Pass 1 🛦 Pass 2 All Pass

The first 3 passes are automatic and then South has a decision to make – does he 'throw the board in' or does he open?

In hindsight it looks like 'passing' will be a better decision for N/S but those Souths who obey the rule of 15 can be forgiven for opening the bidding (HCP + number of Spades =15+).

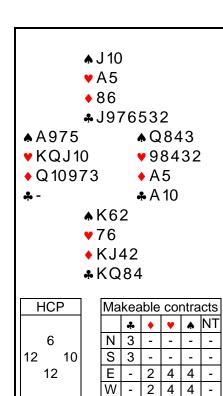
If N/S can get out in 1♠ or if they can manage to make 2♠ they will have earned themselves a great board.



Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
	Pass	1 🚓	Pass	
1♥	Pass	2.	Pass	
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass	
4♥	All Pass			

E/W have 27 HCP and an 8-card fit so they should be able to get to 4♥ with ease....famous last words because anyone making the maximum 11 tricks will score really well.

Those E/W's in 3NT might have an easier run because defending 3NT will not be easy.

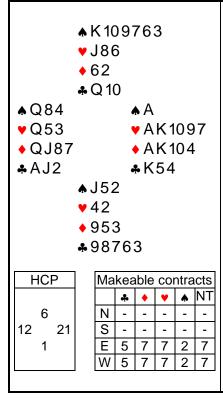


Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3 .	All Pass	

A great hand for the brave – E/W can make 4♥ or 4♠ but yet they might not even get into the auction!

Any N/S's playing a Weak No-Trump might be able to steal this hand from E/W because West does not have an easy bid over South's 1NT opening. (North's 2 response is a 'two-way' bid showing either 11HCP or a 6-card minor).

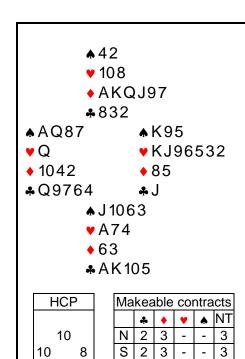
If South does not open 1NT then West should be able to more easily enter the auction and find their major suit fit.



Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable			
West	North	East	South
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
5NT	Pass	7♥	All Pass

When West opens the bidding, East could just blast 6NT – but that would be lazy bidding – because the East hand is such a strong hand with all its points in Aces and Kings and two nice 10's in its two long suit – the East hand is totally undervalued at 21 HCP.

Once East learns that his partner has 3 Hearts, the Ace of Clubs, the Queen of Hearts and no $\bigstar K$ – he can almost certainly count 13 tricks.



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Board 8: Dealer West: Love all

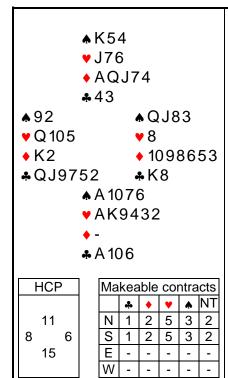
West North East South
Pass Pass 3♥ All Pass

Fortune favours the brave once again. Both sides can make 9 tricks in a red suit but more importantly N/S can make 9 tricks in 3NT.

Some North's might open the bidding with 1 ◆ and indeed the modern trend is to open with 10+ HCP.

In any case, East will either open 3♥ or overcall 3♥. If N/S have the courage to compete to 3NT or 4♦ they will score well.

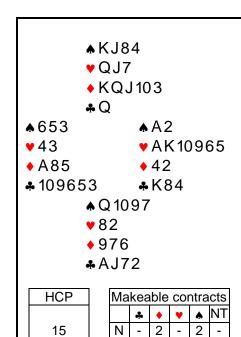
If E/W bid higher than 3♥ they will have a self-inflicted wound.



Board 9: Dealer North: EW vulnerable West North East South Pass Pass 1 🔻 Pass 2 • Pass 2 Pass 3♥ Pass **4** • All Pass

26 HCP and a 9-card Heart fit so another routine 4♥ contract for N/S.

The trick will be to avoid losing 3 tricks and thanks to the •K dropping in two rounds, 3 of declarer's black suit losers can be discarded. This line is unlikely to be found as the simpler ruffing finesse in Diamonds looks more promising.



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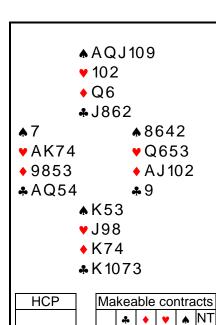
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Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable			
West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	2♥	2♠
All Pass			

Another partscore battle and another one that requires discipline. Both sides are vulnerable so neither side can afford to go down in a doubled contract and suffer the dreaded -200 score.

In practice however N/S might make 9 tricks in Spades as it takes top class defence from E/W to negotiate the killing Diamond ruff for East. East needs to find an early Diamond lead and West has to duck this early Diamond lead.



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Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all			
West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 ♦	1 ♠	Dbl	2♠
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

4 v is not an easy contract to reach and indeed E/W will probably do best to double N/S and take 300 off them in a 2 ♠ contract.

East will start proceedings with a 'negative' double showing his 4 Hearts. West with his 6-loser hand should jump to 3♥ if South stays quiet and then East has an easy raise to 4♥ with his 7-loser hand.

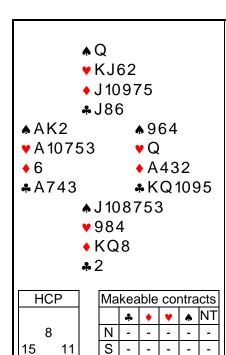
If South raises to 2♠, it might not be so clear to East whether or not the 3♥ is competitive or serious?

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- | 5 | 4

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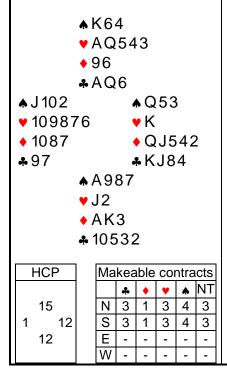
6 1 2 2 3

6 1 2 2 3

Board 12: Dealer West: NS vulnerable West North South East **1** 🕶 Pass Pass 2* 2♠ Pass 4. 3 • Pass Pass 4 • Pass All Pass **6***

Slams in a minor are always hard to bid and even harder to play so quite a few pairs will end up in 3NT where there are 9 easy tricks and where is always the chance of gift from the opponents in the form of a 10th trick.

Making 12 tricks in Clubs requires a bit more effort from declarer either by ruffing 3 Diamonds in the West hand or ruffing 2 Diamonds and setting up the Heart suit.



Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable

West North East South

1 ♥ Pass 1 ♠

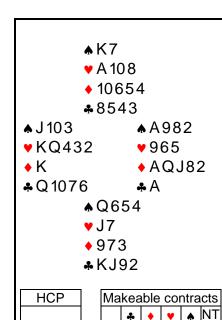
Pass 1NT Pass 3NT

All Pass

Most N/S's will land in 3NT.

Spare a thought for any East who decides to 'Double' the 1♥ opening – South should then 'Redouble' and then the roof will collapse on E/W. The singleton ♥K and the fact that he does not hold 4 Spades should dissuade East from entering the auction.

On the normal Diamond lead, North will be struggling to make more than 8 tricks – if declarer drops the Singleton ♥K then hold your cards up next time.



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4 4 4

2 4

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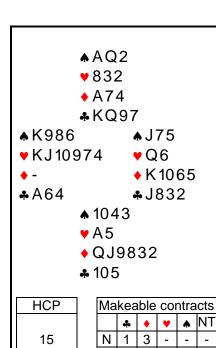
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Board 14: Dealer East: Love all West North South East Pass 1 • Pass Pass **1** 🕶 1 🌲 2NT Pass 3♥ **Pass** All Pass **4** 🕶

All roads lead to 4♥ - although there will be pairs who will not realise they have a Heart fit and instead play in 3NT.

4♥ will require a bit of skilful negotiation but the Spade spots are sufficiently strong that declarer should be able to hold his losers to one Spade and two Hearts.



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Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable

West North East South
Pass

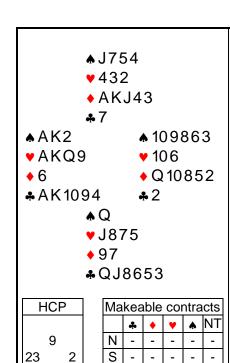
1 ▼ Pass 1NT Pass

2 ▼ Double Pass 3 ◆ All Pass

If South is playing a 'weak two' in Diamonds then N/S problems are solved immediately when South opens 2.

If South is forced to pass as dealer and West opens 1♥, then North is stuck. Does he 'Double' showing 4 Spades or does he bid 1NT showing Heart stoppers?

If he Passes now, should be 'double' the next time? As long as South leads twice towards his Club Honours and twice towards his Diamond Honours he will emerge with 9 tricks in his 3♦ contract.



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E 2 3 4 4 3

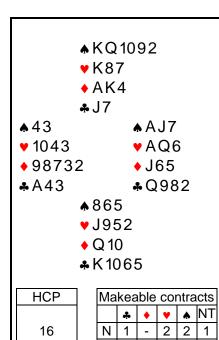
W 2 3 4 4 3

Board 16: Dealer West: EW vulnerable West North South East 2* Pass Pass 2 • 2NT Pass Pass 3♥ 4. Pass 4 All Pass

This time finding the 5-3 Spade fit will leave life much easier on E-W. For sure it will be easier to make 10 tricks in Spades than to make 9 tricks in No-Trump.

West opens 2♣ and East responds 2◆ and now West has to decide what to rebid 2♥? 3♣? Or 2NT?

There is no right answer and all rebids should unearth the fact that East has a 5-card Spade suit. West's 4♣ bid above is a cue bid showing the ♣A and expressing interest in a Spade slam even opposite a 2♠ negative. However East is not interested and the bidding subsides in 4♠.



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Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all			
West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Another hand where East will do well to bite his tongue – he doesn't have 4 Hearts, he doesn't have 15-17 and he has the dreaded 4-3-3-3 so he is well advised not to 'double' the 1 opening.

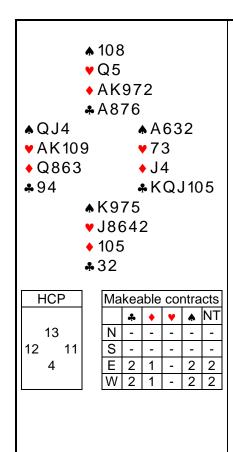
South does well to respond 2♠ (even playing 4-card majors) with his 3-card support and a doubleton.

North should not bid again over the 2♠ - his 5-3-3-2 shape is not a pretty sight either. Now the spotlight returns to East but he still has the same bad hand that he had on the first round and he should just let the hand go.

Of course any E/W buying the hand in an undoubled Diamond partscore will score very well.

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Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable

West North East South
Pass Pass

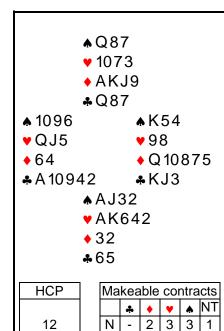
1 ◆ Pass 1 ♠ All Pass

Strange bidding? Maybe it is.

Some East's will open 1♣ with that beautiful Club suit and if that happens it will be hard for E/W to stop short of 3NT. On paper that contract goes down on a Diamond lead (as long as South's ◆10 is played on the first round) but how many Souths will do that? So 3NT might make a number of times.

Why didn't West open 1NT? He must be a student of the sound principle of not opening a weak No-Trump third in hand.

Why did West pass 1♠? Why not?



S

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Board 19	: Dealer S	South: EVV	vulnerable
West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Bidding 4♥ on the N/S cards is stretching it a bit – neither player has enough to bid 4♥ and maybe North doesn't even have enough to bid 3♥?

There are 4 inescapable losers and there is no chance even of a mis-defence – there is nothing the defence can do to give declarer his 10th trick.

1 3 3 1

