

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

East-West can make 6♣ easily. However, there may be problems in bidding the hand and many will fail to reach the top spot. I wouldn't open that East hand (4.4.4.1 hands play poorly in general) and, even if you do, the normal choice would be 1♦, which will dampen West's ardour. Some Souths will be allowed to open with a weak 2♦ and that will add to the general confusion. 3NT and 4♠ will make for East-West and may be more common contracts than 6♣.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

East-West can make 4♥ here but it is a poor spot, dependent on both a 3-2 trump break and taking the right view in Diamonds. 4♦ is also available on the same guess. Against a Heart contract some Souths may expose the Diamond position by leading one but that would be an ill-judged selection holding a likely trump trick. A Spade lead (or even an aggressive Club) is a much better choice. Some pairs will play in INT by East, making eight or possibly nine tricks.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

East-West have Hearts and most of the points and North-South have the Spade suit. So we are set for competitive auctions that may end up anywhere. As the cards lie, East-West can be held to just eight tricks in Hearts after a Club lead from North or a Spade lead from South and a Club switch. North-South can always make nine tricks in Spades. Many will play in 4♥ down one or two by East, I suspect, although some will misguidedly sacrifice in 4♠.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

What do you open as West? Certainly it's wrong to pre-empt with a 1.5.0.7 shape and 1♣ doesn't appeal so Pass may be best. Now North will open 1♠ and East will bid 2♥... What now? Actually, it isn't that wild to try your luck with a raise to 6♥ on that West hand facing a vulnerable overcall. Few will do that, I suspect, but many will forge their way to a slam. 6♠ by North-South will cost 800 in theory but only if West gets a Diamond ruff. -500 may well be good.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

A gentle enough hand with East-West able to make either of the two obvious Games: 4♠ and 3NT. 4♠ must lose two trumps and a Heart, so the maximum score available there is 420. 3NT can also always make ten tricks for 430 and might, at a pinch, make eleven after a Heart lead from South. Perhaps many will just bid: 1♥ – 1♠ – INT – 3NT and that's the most sensible auction. If East opens a strong No-trump they might bid: INT – 2♥ – 2♠ – 3NT – Pass.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

In theory this is a part-score deal with North-South able to make 3♣ and East-West no more than 3♠. To hold East to nine tricks, though, South has to lead Ace and another Diamond or to switch to that after holding the first trick with the ♣K. Many North-Souths, however, will sacrifice in 5♣ Doubled down two over 4♠ – whether that is a good score or a very bad one will depend on how many East-West pairs manage to avoid the Diamond ruff and record 620.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

East-West have an easy slam available (6♦) if they can bid it. Much may depend on whether North decides to make a two-suited overcall and whether East-West try to penalise the resulting contract, maybe collecting 500 or 800. Reaching a slam clearly isn't easy – East will be conscious of his three low Spades and West will be worried about his exposed ♥K and possible Club losers. An interesting test of bidding with many pairs likely to settle for 3NT+2.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

The last deal (Hand 7) had a laydown slam to East-West – this time we have a farcical one. Yes, East-West can actually make 6♦ but only with an anti-percentage line in trumps and with the benefit of the Club finesse. What may well happen, though, is that North-South gaily overbid and reach 4♠ (which is going at least one off) and East-West “sacrifice” in 5♦, finding that the contract cannot be defeated. South may compound a bad Board by Doubling.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

The obvious contract on the North-South cards is 3NT and it is hard to see any pair outside an asylum playing in anything else. The whole issue of the hand is about making overtricks. On a low Heart lead from West declarer can win and play a small Heart back to West's ♥J. Now South can afford a losing Spade finesse and still make eleven tricks. A Diamond switch from West is no good, giving eleven tricks in a different way. All roads seem to lead to 3NT+2.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

The computer has given East-West three good slams in the first seven hands so has redressed the balanced a little by giving North-South a grand slam. 7♥ and 7NT can both make, always provided that declarer takes the right view in Hearts by cashing the ♥K first. If East has done something over-aggressive in the bidding (3♠, anybody?) then declarer should get it right. If not, it is an open shot and my sympathies lie with any declarer failing in 7♥ or 7NT. Tough.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Some nice looking hands but no one can make very much on this hand. Played in Hearts North-South can only just make eight tricks but the hand is more likely to be played in Diamonds by West. A Heart lead and continuation will, with careful defence, produce a trick in each suit for the defenders so the maximum making contract for East-West is 3♦. Some Wests will make more tricks than that as it may not be easy for the defence to see the need to force the dummy.

Board 12. NIS Vul. Dealer West.

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

Some interesting bidding decisions here, especially at the vulnerability. East-West can make a thin 4♥, except if East plays it and South leads a Diamond. North-South, meanwhile, can make ten tricks in Clubs with careful play. That makes 5♣ Doubled a decent, if dangerous, sacrifice. Of course, it is possible that the bidding dies young in a part-score but what part-score that might be is near enough impossible to tell. Scores all over the place, I suspect.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

♠ 9 5 ♥ A K 6 3 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ 10 9 4 3 ♠ A Q 3 ♥ 5 ♦ J 10 5 2 ♣ A K 8 7 5 ♠ K J 7 ♥ 10 9 8 7 4 2 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ J	♠ 10 8 6 4 2 ♥ Q J ♦ 9 8 7 ♣ Q 6 2
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With the points split 21-19 you wouldn't expect anyone could make anything much on these cards – even more so when you note that the ♣J is waste paper and the ♠K is a dead duck. Nevertheless, North-South can make 4♥ standing on their heads. Meanwhile, East-West can make next to nothing in Spades or Clubs. All the interest will be in the bidding and that might end up in anything from part-scores in either direction to 4♥ Doubled and made.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

♠ 9 6 5 4 2 ♥ K J 5 3 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ A ♠ A ♥ A Q 7 4 ♦ K 9 8 4 ♣ J 10 5 2 ♠ Q 8 7 ♥ 10 9 6 ♦ Q 10 5 ♣ K Q 7 6	♠ K J 10 3 ♥ 8 ♦ A J 7 2 ♣ 9 8 4 3
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This deal belongs to East-West in a minor-suit part-score. East-West can make 3♣ or 3♦, despite the Club break, and 110 should be decent. Those who play in No-trumps may manage to scrape together eight tricks but accurate defence can hold East-West to just seven. Of course, some Norths may overbid their hands, excited by the 5-5 shape. If, however, they play (or make South play) in anything beyond the two-level they may be Doubled and down plenty.

Board 15. NIS Vul. Dealer South.

♠ A 8 6 5 ♥ Q 8 2 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ Q 6 4 ♠ J 10 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ A J 7 4 ♣ A K 10 5 ♠ K 7 4 2 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ 9 7 3	♠ Q 9 ♥ A J 9 6 3 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ J 8 2
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East-West can make a part-score in all strains but Spades. With the lie of the Hearts, East-West can make nine tricks there and 140 should score well. A Spade lead can hold No-trumps to eight tricks (North has to cover the ♥10 with the ♥Q, though) for 120. Many will open the West hand with a weak No-trump and now East simply has to view whether to Pass or remove to 2♥. It is a close decision with such a hand but statistics suggest it is right to play in the major.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

♠ 10 9 ♥ A J 7 5 3 2 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ 9 4 ♠ K Q 6 5 ♥ K Q 9 ♦ 10 9 8 2 ♣ K 3 ♠ A 3 ♥ 10 8 6 ♦ K 6 5 3 ♣ J 6 5 2	♠ J 8 7 4 2 ♥ 4 ♦ A J ♣ A Q 10 8 7
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This looks to be a fairly dull Board in that East-West have a cold Game available (4♠) with little chance of bidding to anything else. It really won't matter if West opens 1♦, 1♣ or a weak INT – all roads lead unerringly to 4♠. The match-points that are up for grabs all centre around the opening lead. A Diamond lead will set up three quick defensive tricks as might a trump to the ♠A and a Diamond switch. A Heart or a Club will let declarer make a valuable overtrick.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

No one can make a Game here so the highest making contract is 4♣ for North-South. That is an unlikely spot as the bidding is likely to go 1♣ from North, 1♦ from South and 4♠ from West. North will surely Double and that should end the auction. In theory, West has nine tricks (with the Heart finesse) and no more. However, it is a tough hand to defend as North has to lead trumps early (to remove the entry to the Diamonds) or to cash ♣A and lead Hearts. Not easy.

Board 18. NIS Vul. Dealer East.

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

North-South have a marginal 3NT here with the red Tens (not to mention the black Kings) proving to have major importance in the play. The defenders cannot prevent South from making at least nine tricks and some will make ten. Whether you bid this to 3NT or not is debatable. If South shows a flat 15-16 by rebidding 1NT then North has a maximum Pass; if 1NT shows 15-17 the good intermediates make it just worth 2NT, giving South another close decision.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

North-South have an easy Game here with 4♥ having at least ten tricks. It isn't completely clear how best to play for eleven tricks but a simple Spade ruff in the dummy will bring down the ♠Q and that will solve most of the problems. Only the 3NT merchants will suffer on this hand as they should be unable to muster more than ten tricks and only nine on a Club lead. Bidding the hand isn't difficult, maybe: 1♥ – 2♥ – 4♥. Simplest is sometimes best.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

A deal where East-West should really play in a minor suit part-score making about nine or ten tricks. There is a possibility that South competes in the majors so East-West may be forced to 4♣ or 4♦ but they can make those with careful play. Better would be to Double North-South in 3♥ if that is what they bid as that is an effortless 500. No doubt some East-Wests will overbid this either to a hideous 3NT or five of a minor. Not good bridge – don't overbid at pairs!

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

North-South can make nine or ten tricks in Clubs here. However, many Easts might take advantage of the vulnerability and open a weak INT (fair enough with three Tens and 11 points). Now the contract could well end in INT Doubled, maybe making after a Diamond lead or going off after a Club lead. At other tables, East may Pass but protect with INT after 1♦ has been Passed around. After that, South may bid 2♣ and play there. Lots of variation.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

North-South can make 4♥ here with an overtrick. Some Norths, however, may play in 3NT and that is a tricky match-point contract. If the defenders play off four rounds of Spades that's that; declarer claims. On a Diamond lead, though, North might decide to play for a top. He could win the Diamond in hand, cross to the ♥A and run the ♣J. If he does, East has to decide whether to switch to a Spade or to continue Diamonds with a top or bottom riding on the decision

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

East-West have Game contracts in three strains, with 4♥ and 4♠ being the obvious spots. The defenders will have to be quick to cash their three tricks against either of these contracts – a passive lead will let 4♠ make an overtrick and will allow 4♥ to make two overtricks. The most likely contract, though, will be 4♥ by East after West has opened 1♠. South has really little alternative but to lead a Diamond (what else?) and North little choice but to switch to the cxQ

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Lots of possibilities on this tricky deal as East-West can make 5♣ (and 4♥) and North-South can make 4♠. Well, the first two bids are obvious – West will open 1♥ and North will bid 4♠. Now what? It is possible for East to Double leading to either -590 (if West Passes) or +400 (if West bids 5♣). These are truly difficult hands and no one can really be blamed for conceding 590 as East-West. If pre-empts were ineffective no one would use them, would they?

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

North-South can make 5♥ (and 5♣) and the vulnerability is likely to prevent East-West from getting too frisky in Spades. Is that the end of it? By no means! In fact, it takes a Diamond lead to defeat a slam by North-South and 6♥ is not that bad a spot on the North-South cards. It makes if the Clubs play for no loser or, when they are 3-1, if trumps are 2-2 and the defenders don't lead Diamonds. That's some way above 50%. Any takers tonight?

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

This deal seems to be a routine Game in Spades. With the actual Spade layout and the friendly location of the ♥K North-South can make eleven tricks in Spades and 4♠ is where you want to be on this deal. After East has Passed South has a choice of 1♦ or 1♥ according to whim and system and an easy raise to 3♠ if North responds 1♠. If West overcalls 2♣ it might be more murky but a negative Double should sort things out. 650 everybody?

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

3NT isn't quite makeable on this deal in theory but it might make in practice. Not that it is a thing of beauty as it needs the Clubs to provide five tricks, not to mention an extra trick in either Diamonds or Hearts. Weak No-trump adherents may well open one and play there – strong No-trumpers may open 1♣ and rebid INT. After a Spade lead declarer has to decide what to do – most will cash their Clubs and settle for eight tricks. Some will fiddle a ninth.

Board 28. NIS Vul. Dealer West.

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

East-West can make 4♠ and that will be easy-peasy to bid should West decide that he has a weak two in Spades. East has the world's most obvious raise to Game and there we are. If West Passes and North opens 1♥ it all gets much more murky and now anything is possible, including South playing in INT down a few. North may even open INT and that may also muddy the waters. Still, after a Double from East, West will surely bid Spades to some level.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

North-South can make 7♥ but reaching it may be awkward for standard methods. This is probably a very good hand for a strong Club system as the Heart fit can be identified early. If North, playing standard methods, opens 2♣ it is marginal whether South bids 2♥ (which must surely lead to the grand slam) or 2♦ (which probably won't). After a 2♥ response North can simply bid 5NT (assuming that asks for two top trump honours) and 7♥ is reached quickly.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

A part-score battle with East-West able to make ten tricks in Clubs and North-South able to make at least eight in Diamonds and nine in Hearts. If East opens INT it is possible that Clubs never get mentioned and North-South might play in something like 2♥, making about 140 points. If East opens 1♣ the outcome of the auction may well depend on whether that shows Clubs or not. A very difficult to predict deal with scores all over the place.

Board 31. NIS Vul. Dealer South.

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

East-West will surely play this in 3NT so the interest in the deal revolves around making overtricks. It is best played by West as North has an awkward lead – a Heart or a Spade gives away a trick, allowing West to make at least ten and maybe eleven tricks. It is hard for North to find a passive minor suit lead – if he does, West won't dare to play a Heart – if he does, West won't dare to play a Heart to the ♥10 as he fears a Spade switch. If East plays the hand a Spade lead will probably hold declarer to nine tricks.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

After West opens 1♠ (and some may try a weak No-trump) East-West should buy the hand in a Spade part-score. Even after a Diamond lead (best) declarer can patiently play Hearts towards the ♥Q and make nine tricks. Meanwhile, North-South can make very little – about eight tricks in Hearts being the limit. If West opens 1♠ East should raise to 2♠ and South has a choice between Double and 3♥. Regardless, East should compete with 3♠ on the next round.