

Some Food For Thought on Tonight's Hands - FOB

(Assuming Weak NT and 4-Card Majors)

<p style="margin-left: 40px;">♠ AQ542 ♥ 1075 ♦ - ♣ AJ853</p> <p>♠ K87 ♠ - ♥ KQ843 ♥ J2 ♦ K103 ♦ AQJ87654 ♣ 106 ♣ K97</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">♠ J10963 ♥ A96 ♦ 92 ♣ Q42</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px; margin-top: 10px; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px; margin-top: 10px; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		11		11	11	7		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	-	5	-	S	3	-	-	5	-	E	-	5	1	-	-	W	-	5	1	-	-	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> <td>5♦</td> <td>5♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6♦</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Fireworks on the very first board where once again fortune favours the brave. All tables will get to 5♦ eventually but then the real decisions start. Should South Pass, Double or bid 5♠? After that, should E/W double 5♠ or bid 6♦?</p> <p>N/S will be haunted by such wise adages as 'the 5-level belongs to the opponents' or 'never sacrifice at Nil-All' and so there will be a lot good N/S pairs conceding 5♦x. Those N/S pairs who don't like to be pushed around will bid 5♠, take the Spade finesse, make their contract and wonder what all the fuss is about. It is practically impossible for N/S to know that there are 21 trumps and 22 tricks available. If they knew that then bidding 5♠ would be a win-win proposition for them.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		1♠	5♦	5♠	6♦	Dbl	All Pass	
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<p style="margin-left: 40px;">♠ AQ10 ♥ AJ7432 ♦ 84 ♣ AJ</p> <p>♠ 53 ♠ J87642 ♥ K109 ♥ 6 ♦ A109765 ♦ K ♣ 92 ♣ KQ875</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">♠ K9 ♥ Q85 ♦ QJ32 ♣ 10643</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px; margin-top: 10px; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px; margin-top: 10px; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		16		7	9	8		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	3	-	3	S	-	1	3	-	3	E	1	-	-	1	-	W	1	-	-	1	-	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥ All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>4♥ is a reasonable contract and most pairs will reach it even if East tries to spoil the party by opening or overcalling.</p> <p>South has a nice hand and if his partner can find a vulnerable 3♥ overcall then South should take a rosy view of his King of Spades, Queen of Hearts and QJ of Diamonds. It turns out that the most important card in South's hand is the ♣10 – worthless to most of us – so maybe it's a good advert for David Jackson's Banzai Point Count method.</p> <p>In practice N/S will make 10 tricks at most tables because it takes a Diamond lead to beat 4♥ and quite a few Easts will lead a black suit.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥ All Pass
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Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable

West North East South

Pass 1NT Pass 2♥

Pass 2♠ Pass 3♥

Pass 4♥ All Pass

This hand is all about finding your 4-4 Heart fit and then deciding how high to bid. This hand might be another advert for 'Banzai' points where the '10s' are fully recognised.

In 6♥ or 6♠ there are 12 tricks – 5 Spades, 4 Hearts, 2 Aces and a Club ruff in the South hand or set up 2 Diamond tricks instead if you don't get a Club lead. The play in 6♠ might be a bit trickier as declarer needs the ♣10 and ♣9 to drop in 3 rounds. Sadly 6♠ will go down if played by South after a Club lead. If you bid and made 6♥ or 6♠ then – Respect.

If East can find a top Club lead, declarer will be held to 11 tricks in a No-Trump contract. The Strong No-Trumpers will presumably use some form of 'Checkback' to find their Heart fit after 1♣-1♠-1NT.

♠ A2
♥ QJ52
♦ J97
♣ AJ82

♠ J7 ♠ 9854
♥ 97 ♥ K86
♦ K65432 ♦ 108
♣ 1094 ♣ KQ63

♠ KQ1063
♥ A1043
♦ AQ
♣ 75

HCP	
13	
4	8
15	

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

Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable

West North East South

Dbl 1♠ Pass 1♥

Pass 3♥ Pass 2♣

All Pass Pass 4♥

4♥ might be a bit pushy for N/S tonight but on another night it would roll home – the 4-1 trump break means that only a handful of declarers will make 10 tricks.

To beat the contract West has to lead his singleton trump – which is normally a bad lead. However every West in the world will make the normal lead of a top Club. Declarer can now make 10 tricks by way of a crossruff – winning 2 Diamond tricks and a trick with each of his 8 trumps.

On the E/W side 4♠ would roll home on another night too but the offside 5-0 break is just too much to handle.

♠ K6543
♥ K93
♦ Q983
♣ 8

♠ AQJ10 ♠ 9872
♥ 2 ♥ QJ74
♦ 1052 ♦ J4
♣ AK1094 ♣ Q76

♠ -
♥ A10865
♦ AK76
♣ J532

HCP	
8	
14	6
12	

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

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ KQ87 ♥ 63 ♦ QJ654 ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ 109 ♠ J432 ♥ AKJ7542 ♥ Q98 ♦ - ♦ A9 ♣ AQ86 ♣ KJ93</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A65 ♥ 10 ♦ K108732 ♣ 1075</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">14 11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr> </table>	HCP		8	14 11	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	3	-	-	-	S	-	3	-	-	-	E	5	-	5	-	4	W	5	-	5	-	4	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♥</td> <td colspan="3">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>We've all been in worse slams than this and if N/S don't cash their 2 Spade tricks immediately the slam bidders will make their contract.</p> <p>Sometimes you can bid a hand too well and this could be one such time. If you bid the hand well with a few cue bids here and there (e.g. 5♣ and 5♦) you will discover that you are missing the Ace and King of Spades and you will stop in 5♥ and make it on the nose. Well Bid.</p> <p>Yet it will be annoying when you notice that a few of the less scientific bidders made 12 tricks because they didn't pinpoint their Spade weakness to the defenders and therefore received a nice friendly Diamond lead.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass	5♥	All Pass		
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Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦																																																															
Dbf	4NT	Pass	5♣																																																															
Pass	6♥	All Pass																																																																

Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable

West North East South

Pass 1♦ 1♥

Dbl 2♥ Pass Pass

Dbl Pass 3♣ Pass

3NT All Pass

If N/S stay quiet then E/W have some chance of having a conversation and maybe landing in one of 4 makeable slams. If E/W are not going to bid slam then they should play their 30 point game in 3NT to pick up a lot of matchpoints.

There will be some Souths who will even get the ball rolling with a weak 2♥ overcall. 2♥x-4 by South is a nice +800 for E/W but not many E/W will let the auction die in 2♥.

West should be seriously thinking about slam when he hears his partner open the bidding and especially when he discovers the 5-3 Diamond fit as well as the 4-4 Club fit. Fortune favours the brave once again because tonight both minor suit finesses are working.

♠ 863
 ♥ 9876
 ♦ J106
 ♣ Q83
 ♠ KQ54 ♠ A109
 ♥ AK ♥ 3
 ♦ AQ7 ♦ 98543
 ♣ 10762 ♣ AKJ5
 ♠ J72
 ♥ QJ10542
 ♦ K2
 ♣ 94

HCP	
3	
18	12
7	

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	6	6	3	6	6
W	6	6	3	6	6

Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable

West North East South

Pass Pass

1♠ Pass 2♥ Pass

4♥ All Pass

A borderline game and one that will be missed at quite a few tables. Of course if East has a two-suited gadget like Tartan available (where a 2♥ opening shows Hearts and a minor and 6-10 points) then that will help E/W get to 4♥ a lot quicker.

If East can't open then he has to decide what to respond to his partner's 1♠ opening. Your gut will be telling you to respond 2♥ instead of an off-centred 1NT and this time your gut is right – you have 2 five card suits – one of them very good and the other a major suit – get in there.

Declarer has 11 tricks as long as he leads towards his ♥K at least once. However the defence can take 3 tricks if North leads his singleton Diamond and South is awake enough to win the first round of trumps and give his partner a ruff.

♠ QJ84
 ♥ 72
 ♦ 3
 ♣ Q109876
 ♠ AK963 ♠ 10
 ♥ K63 ♥ 109854
 ♦ Q95 ♦ AKJ74
 ♣ A2 ♣ 54
 ♠ 752
 ♥ AQJ
 ♦ 10862
 ♣ KJ3

HCP	
5	
16	8
11	

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	5	4	2	2
W	-	5	4	2	2

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 7 ♥ Q85 ♦ 874 ♣ AQJ985</p> <p>♠ AKQ10864 ♠ 53 ♥ 63 ♥ AKJ10742 ♦ K105 ♦ 93 ♣ 3 ♣ 106</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ J92 ♥ 9 ♦ AQJ62 ♣ K742</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9		12	8	11		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	3	-	-	-	S	4	3	-	-	-	E	-	-	5	5	-	W	-	-	5	5	-	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Should South open or pass? Most of our top players are opening with 11 points these days especially when all of their points are in their two long suits.</p> <p>Should West overcall 1♠, 2♠ or 4♠? If he only bids 1♠ then North will surely bid 2♣ and now there is a good chance N/S will find their cheap sacrifice in 5♣x or even 6♣x.</p> <p>Certainly if South opens the bidding, West should judge slam to be unlikely and simply bid what he thinks he can make i.e. 4♠.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♦	4♠	All Pass		
HCP																																																									
9																																																									
12	8																																																								
11																																																									
Makeable contracts																																																									
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N	4	3	-	-	-																																																				
S	4	3	-	-	-																																																				
E	-	-	5	5	-																																																				
W	-	-	5	5	-																																																				
West	North	East	South																																																						
			1♦																																																						
4♠	All Pass																																																								

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K843 ♥ AQJ10954 ♦ 74 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ QJ62 ♠ 975 ♥ - ♥ 86 ♦ AKQ832 ♦ 5 ♣ A83 ♣ KQJ10654</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A10 ♥ K732 ♦ J1096 ♣ 972</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		10		16	6	8		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	5	-	-	S	-	-	5	-	-	E	4	1	-	2	-	W	4	1	-	2	-	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dbl</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♣</td> <td>5♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This hand will produce a lot of interesting post mortems e.g. 5♦x-4, 5♦x-1, 5♣x=, 5♣x-1, 5♥x=, 6♣x-1, 6♣x-2, 6♥x-1.</p> <p>N/S will get to 4♥ either directly or via a more scenic route and then E/W will have a few decisions to make.</p> <p>To beat 5♣ by E/W, N/S need to cash ♠AK and then give South his Spade ruff. To beat 6♣ by EW, NS need to cash ♠AK immediately.</p> <p>Sadly North playing in his Heart contract cannot avoid losing 2 Diamond tricks even if EW forget to cash them early on.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♦	4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass	5♣	5♥	All Pass			
HCP																																																													
10																																																													
16	6																																																												
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West	North	East	South																																																										
1♦	4♥	Pass	Pass																																																										
Dbl	Pass	5♣	5♥																																																										
All Pass																																																													

Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable

West North East South

Pass Pass 1♣

Pass 1♥ All Pass

A wise man once said – ‘Never open a weak no-trump in third seat’ – and it is certainly good advice on this board. South can make 9 easy tricks in a Heart contract but shouldn’t make more than 6 tricks in a No-Trump contract – if West leads a Spade he sets up 7 tricks for the defence i.e. 3 Spades, 1 Heart and 3 Clubs.

Another thing to remember is that when you open the bidding in third seat you are not obliged to bid again – partner has already limited his hand by the fact he was unable to open the bidding, so you can pass his response.

Should West re-open with a double or a 1♠ bid when 1♥ is passed around to him? He only has 10 points, he is vulnerable and his partner had 2 chances to bid and didn’t.

♠ A643
♥ QJ52
♦ Q42
♣ 96

♠ Q872 ♠ KJ5
♥ K7 ♥ 943
♦ 9876 ♦ J53
♣ KQ3 ♣ A1072

♠ 109
♥ A1086
♦ AK10
♣ J854

HCP	
9	
10	9
12	

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

Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all

West North East South

1♣ Dbl Pass Pass

Pass 3NT All Pass 1♠

West opens 1♣ and North has to mentally check his system notes. Is a 2♦ jump overcall weak or strong. Most Norths will start proceedings with a simple double.

Then the spotlight turns to South who must do more than bid a simple 1♠ - which could be made with a 3-card suit and 0 HCP – instead South jumps to 2♠ telling North that he has 9-11 HCP. That will be great news to North who will now find it very easy to bid 3NT.

I’m sure those of us who landed in 5♦, remember being told a thousand times before that it is more profitable to be in 3NT rather than 5♦ on these hands?

♠ 9
♥ A92
♦ AKQJ65
♣ K64

♠ Q1086 ♠ J742
♥ QJ74 ♥ 1065
♦ - ♦ 10832
♣ AQJ107 ♣ 98

♠ AK53
♥ K83
♦ 974
♣ 532

HCP	
17	
12	1
10	

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	5	2	1	5
S	1	5	2	1	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

<p> ♠ K76 ♥ A952 ♦ Q6 ♣ 10763 ♠ J1082 ♠ A4 ♥ KJ73 ♥ Q108 ♦ 4 ♦ AKJ9873 ♣ KQ84 ♣ J ♠ Q953 ♥ 64 ♦ 1052 ♣ A952 </p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9		10	15	6		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	1	4	3	2	4	W	1	4	3	2	3	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The above auction will likely be replicated at most tables. There will be a few Easts who will toy with the idea of raising Hearts albeit with only 3-card support. The idea is nice and is certainly good for partnership morale but a double raise to 3♥ should guarantee 4-card support and the East hand is certainly too good for a simple raise to 2♥. So all in all the majority action of 3♦ looks best.</p> <p>The defence need to be on the ball if they are to hold declarer to 10 tricks. An initial Spade lead will hold West to 9 tricks. If North doesn't lead a Spade then N/S will need to find the Spade switch before their second Ace is knocked out in order to hold declarer to 10 tricks. 3NT+2 will be a common E/W result.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
HCP																																																																	
9																																																																	
10	15																																																																
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Makeable contracts																																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																												
N	-	-	-	-	-																																																												
S	-	-	-	-	-																																																												
E	1	4	3	2	4																																																												
W	1	4	3	2	3																																																												
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																																																														
			Pass																																																														
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass																																																														
1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass																																																														
3NT	All Pass																																																																

<p> ♠ J754 ♥ K864 ♦ K7 ♣ Q104 ♠ A1096 ♠ K82 ♥ - ♥ AJ753 ♦ Q864 ♦ 93 ♣ AK952 ♣ J86 ♠ Q3 ♥ Q1092 ♦ AJ1052 ♣ 73 </p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9		13	9	9		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	-	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	3	-	-	2	1	W	3	-	-	2	1	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A straightforward hand to bid for a change although some East's might run into bother at their second turn. West is showing 5 Clubs and 4 Spades in a hand of up to a bad 17 points. East is being asked to choose between the black suits. The simple option is to choose the 5-3 Club fit but it is not unreasonable to choose the 4-3 Spade fit by raising to 2♠.</p> <p>Bidding 2♥ in these situations should show a decent 6 card suit in a weak hand. The actual East hand above is definitely not what a 2♥ rebid should look like. Any declarer who manages to make 9 tricks in 2♣ or 8 tricks in 2♠ will have played the hand very well indeed. Declarer can only afford to play one round of trumps before embarking on a sort of cross-ruff play culminating in ruffing a lot of Hearts in hand.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣	All Pass
HCP																																																									
9																																																									
13	9																																																								
9																																																									
Makeable contracts																																																									
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																				
N	-	-	1	-	-																																																				
S	-	-	1	-	-																																																				
E	3	-	-	2	1																																																				
W	3	-	-	2	1																																																				
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																																																						
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass																																																						
1♠	Pass	2♣	All Pass																																																						

Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all

West North East South

Pass Pass 1♥ Pass

1♠ Pass 2♦ Pass

3♣ Pass 3♦ Pass

4♦ (KCB) Pass 4♥ (1KC) Pass

4♠ (Q♦?) Pass 5♥ (♥K) Pass

6♦ All Pass

There are 12 tricks available in No-Trump or in Diamonds but the 12th trick will be easier to get in a Diamond contract...you might even make all 13 tricks in 6♦ if South doesn't cash his ♣A at trick 1.

If East opens 1♦ he might not be able to show his Heart suit having only a minimum hand. It seems better to treat the East hand as 5-5 in the reds and open 1♥ making it easier to get both suits into the picture. Some Wests will give up the ghost and just bid 3NT at some point and take their reasonably good score.

Those who want to prove to the Sunday Independent that slams in a minor can still be bid will agree Diamonds, suggest a slam there and start cue bidding.

♠ 1074
♥ 92
♦ 875
♣ Q7642

♠ AK653 ♠ 8
♥ 7 ♥ AKQ103
♦ AK4 ♦ Q109632
♣ K853 ♣ J

♠ QJ92
♥ J8654
♦ J
♣ A109

HCP		Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
2		N	-	-	-	-	
17	12	S	-	-	-	-	
9		E	2	6	4	4	
		W	2	6	4	4	

Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable

West North East South

Pass Pass Pass 1♦

Pass Pass Dbl Rdbl

Pass 2♠ All Pass

A board where everyone has a part to play. Some Easts might open the bidding. If East doesn't open then he will have to decide what to do when 1♦ is passed around to him. His options are Pass, Double and a Protective 1NT. Double feels right when you have a good hand and two suits to show.

West has to decide whether or not to show his 4-card Club suit. His 4-3-3-3 shape will probably restrain him.

Then of course North will be itching to bid but if he bids on the first round he will find himself in 4♠ very quickly. Passing on the first round means he can safely bid 2♠ on the second round knowing that should end the auction. If North finesses twice in Hearts he will come to 8 tricks.

♠ 10965432
♥ 1094
♦ J63
♣ -

♠ Q87 ♠ AJ
♥ Q76 ♥ K532
♦ AQ8 ♦ 109
♣ 10832 ♣ QJ764

♠ K
♥ AJ8
♦ K7542
♣ AK95

HCP		Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
1		N	-	-	2	-	
10	11	S	-	-	2	-	
18		E	3	-	1	1	
		W	3	-	1	1	

♠ -
♥ K42
♦ AQJ1084
♣ KQJ2

♠ AQ984 ♠ K107653
♥ 1093 ♥ A5
♦ 9 ♦ 76
♣ A984 ♣ 1053

♠ J2
♥ QJ876
♦ K532
♣ 76

HCP	
16	
10	7
7	

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

Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♦	1♠	3♦
4♠	5♦	All Pass	

An exciting board – but one where E/W will need to respect their ‘vulnerable’ status. It is a good board for those who like to bid. If South is fearless he will respond 2♥ and the Heart fit would come to light. The more restrained among us will see that we are not strong enough to respond 2♥ and will either support partner’s Diamonds or make a negative double. So the Heart fit may never come to light.

If East does not overcall then N/S will easily get to 4♥. Some partnerships may expect more from East if he does overcall 1♠. If East does bid then West has an easy raise to 4♠ and indeed some Wests may already have opened the bidding with some sort of Spade-Minor two suited gadget like a ‘Tartan’ 2♠ opening. North has to take some action over 4♠ e.g. Double? 4NT? 5♣? 5♦?

If E/W were non-vul they could afford to be in 5♠x-2 and still show a profit but a vulnerable 5♠x-2 will cost them 500 which is much more than 4♥ or 5♦ made by N/S.

♠ 10965
♥ AQ6
♦ KQ2
♣ KQJ

♠ 3 ♠ 7
♥ 742 ♥ K1093
♦ A987543 ♦ J106
♣ 32 ♣ A10764

♠ AKQJ842
♥ J85
♦ -
♣ 985

HCP	
17	
4	8
11	

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	1	5	4
S	1	-	1	5	4
E	-	1	-	-	-
W	-	1	-	-	-

Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			4♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠ All Pass

Another hand where costly decisions have to be made. If North is playing 4-card majors and opens 1♠ what can South respond?

Those who respond a simple 4♠ will score well assuming North takes the 4♠ bid as a sign off. Others will rightly feel that the hand is worth more than 4♠ and will try some creative response such as 2♣ or a Diamond Splinter.

Even if North opens 1♣ what does South respond? 4♠? It won’t be so easy for North to pass this either. Slam is not an unreasonable proposition but sadly there isn’t even any way the opponents can even ‘gift’ you your 12th trick tonight – although I stand ready to be amazed.

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 42 ♥ 109 ♦ Q9532 ♣ 9874</p> <p>♠ AQ8 ♠ 75 ♥ 87 ♥ QJ652 ♦ K106 ♦ AJ84 ♣ AK632 ♣ Q5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ KJ10963 ♥ AK43 ♦ 7 ♣ J10</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">2</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">16 10</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">12</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr> </table>	HCP		2	16 10	12	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	4	5	1	4	W	4	4	5	1	4	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>If South opens 1♠ West has a simple 1NT overcall available and then East can offer a choice of games to West by showing his Hearts either by jumping to 3♥ or by transferring.</p> <p>A Spade lead, although it looks friendly, is actually the only lead to make sure that declarer does not make 11 tricks. Of course to make 10 or 11 tricks declarer has to guess that North has the ♦Q (or else get a friendly Diamond lead from North). Some Souths might try and make life difficult for West by opening 2♠ or 3♠.</p> <p>Some declarers will be pleasantly surprised when they discover that their ♥6 has grown up to be the best Heart after just 2 rounds of the suit. Consequently East can make 11 tricks in a Heart contract – losing only two tricks to the Ace and King trumps....if he finds the ♦Q.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♠	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass
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<p style="text-align: center;">♠ AQ73 ♥ KQ52 ♦ K64 ♣ 94</p> <p>♠ K954 ♠ J10 ♥ J9 ♥ 73 ♦ 10983 ♦ AJ72 ♣ AK10 ♣ Q7652</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ 862 ♥ A10864 ♦ Q5 ♣ J83</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">14</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">11 8</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		14	11 8	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	3	1	1	S	-	-	3	1	1	E	2	2	-	-	-	W	2	2	-	-	-	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>4♥ is a bit pushy on the N/S cards but if the defence slips up the contract will sneak home. East can go wrong by playing his ♦A on thin air and West can go wrong by discarding 2 of his small Spades.</p> <p>The Weak No-Trumpers will get to 3♥ (or 4♥) played by North while the Strong No-Trumpers will have South at the helm. South is just a tad too weak to be tempted by the above auction where North has broken the transfer showing 4-card Heart Support, a maximum opening bid and a doubleton Club. If South had the ♦A instead of the ♦Q he would accept North's invite. 3♦ is a 'Re-Transfer'.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥	All Pass	
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Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable

West North East South

Pass 1♦ Pass 2NT

Pass 3NT All Pass

All tables will bid to 3NT albeit by different routes – some played by South and some played by North. Some tables might get to 5♣ and hopefully they will have learned for the next time to bid the easier 3NT.

It is just a question of whether you make 10 or 11 tricks. Even though South can be held to 10 tricks on a brilliantly thought out Heart lead, most Souths will have an easy run to 11 tricks on a Diamond lead once he notices the fall of the ♦J8 from East.

If North is declarer he just has to remember to deploy the 'Bath Coup' and duck the ♥K opening lead.

♠AQ3
♥J73
♦Q973
♣654

♠K65 ♠109742
♥965 ♥KQ108
♦K542 ♦J8
♣J103 ♣82

♠J8
♥A42
♦A106
♣AKQ97

HCP	
9	6
7	18

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	5	5	3	-	5
S	4	4	3	-	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all

West North East South

Pass Pass Pass 1♠

Pass 2♣ Pass 2♦

Pass 2NT Pass 3♥

Pass 4♥ All Pass

N/S have an 8-card Heart fit and values for game so all N/S pairs should land in 4♥.

As ever the good scores will go to the good card players. If declarer notices the ♦98 in the North hand he can lead diamonds twice towards the South hand, covering East's card each time.

In the process he will just lose 2 Diamond tricks and setup 2 Diamond tricks to go with 3 Spade tricks, 2 Spade ruffs and 4 trump tricks to make 11 tricks.

♠A8
♥Q743
♦985
♣KJ94

♠52 ♠QJ94
♥952 ♥86
♦AJ2 ♦Q73
♣Q10865 ♣A732

♠K10763
♥AKJ10
♦K1064
♣-

HCP	
10	9
7	14

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