

ECatsBridge Pairs
for BBC Children in Need
Friday 8th November 2019
Session No 3633



Well ... another year has gone by and here we are again with another edition of the Children in Need Pairs. Last year we (well you really) got to the one million pound mark - truly truly amazing. So ... I guess it's onward and upward towards the second million !!

Brian Senior wrote the commentary for this set - Did he get it right I wonder ? Our thanks go to him as always - we really appreciate the effort that goes in to writing these commentaries.

So ... did you win ? or did you have a disaster ? Or just, as we hope, an enjoyable evening's bridge helping to raise money for a wonderful cause ?

Thank you all for coming along to your clubs and supporting us - we really hope you had fun and enjoyed the hands. I hope they weren't too difficult, but equally not too easy either. I haven't actually looked at them myself, just ran the dealing program and winged them off to the commentators with my fingers crossed. No use asking Mark to look at them of course - he has never played bridge - now is that sensible or foolhardy ?

Take care - and continue to enjoy your bridge

With our very best wishes

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Board 1. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

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

If North opens a weak NT, East may be able to show a two-or even three-suiter, depending on the agreed methods. 2♦♥♠ can all be made. If North is left to play in INT, that is easily defeated on a heart lead, but East will often lead a diamond. If declarer puts up the queen he has three diamond winners and seven in all, but even down one should be OK if most E/Ws are making a partscore their way.

Board 2. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

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

There is a lot of work to do, but E/W can make 10 tricks in a spade contract, while N/S can be held to only seven in hearts. Most Wests will open in third seat at favourable vulnerability, with 1♠ the modern style with five-five in the black suits. That may be enough to shut out N/S. If playing Acol, East responds INT then gives preference to 2♣ over the 2♠ rebid. If playing five-card majors, East raises to 2♠ directly.

Board 3. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

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

South opens 1♥ and West has a perfect weak jump overcall of 3♣. North doubles (take-out) and South rebids 3♥ and plays there. 3♥ can always be beaten, but say that West leads a top club and South drops the queen. West may switch and now there is a chance that the defence may never get the second club trick, declarer drawing trumps and setting up spades for an eventual discard.

Board 4. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

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

If West opens INT North may show both majors and South declare 2♥. Double dummy, 10 tricks are possible, but in practice nine is the most anyone is likely to make, with some happy to settle for eight. A 1♣ opening sees North overcall 1♠ then double when East's club raise comes around. If North is willing to let South play in 2♦, there are 10 tricks to be had, although again many will be happy with nine.

Board 5. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

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

E/W can make 4♣, though getting there would need a unilateral decision from West – club to dummy, diamond finesse, then play the ♠J and run it if not covered. Playing Acol, South opens 1♥ and North makes a pre-emptive raise, maybe all the way to 4♥, over West's overcall. Now West may indeed bid 4♣ and get the play right. Of course, with no defence against the majors, I would open 3♣ in front of South, leading to a very different scenario.

Board 6. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

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

Another six-card pre-empt for me with no defence against the majors. Not a triumph this time, as even getting everything right sees 3♣ fail by a trick. If South passes, West should pass also – bad vulnerability, borderline hand with moderate suit – and North opens 1♥ and passes South's INT response. That can be made, while if West gets involved 2♠ should be down one. I expect several different outcomes on this one.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

This one looks reasonably straightforward. West opens 1♥, East makes an invitational raise, and West goes on to game. Ten tricks should be easy enough, despite the bad trump split. After one round of trumps, declarer should switch his attention to diamonds and have no problems when the queen falls on the second round. N/S make only seven tricks in a spade contract, the problem being the lack of a quick entry to the North hand to pick up the trumps for one loser.

Board 8. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

A bit good for a weak NT, West opens 1♥ and East responds 2♦. 3♠ from South, and after two passes East doubles for take-out. E/W can make 11 tricks in either red-suit game, so obviously playing in hearts scores better than in diamonds, but West should respond 4♦ to the double and now East will do well to offer 4♥ as a possibility. 4♠, meanwhile, would be down only two, so a good sacrifice.

Board 9. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

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

We'd prefer to add say the ♠10, but most Easts will open 3♠ despite the vulnerability. South doubles and North...? 4♣ is a nothing bid, 5♣ too much, and 3NT needs partner to be pretty good. The big winner is to pass. Cash six winners then get out with a club and declarer has to ruff in hand and concede a spade for down three. North can make 11 tricks in any other denomination, though 5♣ is quite tricky.

Board 10. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

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

If West opens a weak NT in third seat East may use Stayman in case there is a heart fit. When West actually responds 2♠, East may go on with 2NT or 3♣ (non-forcing by a passed hand), but my choice would be to pass 2♠, which should be a comfortable spot. Against 2/3NT, North will lead a diamond simply because, with West having shown spades, nothing else is attractive. That works very well for the defence.

Board 11. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

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

If North opens 1♥, East doubles and West jumps to 3♦. East bids 3♥ to ask for a stopper and West bids 3NT. Whatever the lead, there should be nine tricks. North could open 2♥ instead, arguing that this puts more pressure on the opposition and that there will only be game N/S if South has a heart fit, when he will raise. Again, East doubles, West's 3♦ response promises values playing Lebensohl, so East continues with the 3♥ cuebid and West bids 3NT.

Board 12. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

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

What is good for one is bad for another. The well-placed ♦K means that N/S can make 3♠, while the badly-placed ♦K means that E/W cannot make 4♥. N/S may even do better than that in a spade contract if the defence doesn't set up the second diamond winner immediately, as otherwise it goes away on the clubs and 10 tricks are made. How many will bid and make 4♠, I wonder?

Board 13. Dealer North. Vulnerability All

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

N/S will usually play a spade partscore. If West leads a club, the defence can eventually come to five tricks – declarer cannot both set up and cash the ♣Q for a discard – but West is more likely to lead the ♦Q. Now declarer will cover and soon set up a diamond winner on which to pitch one of the losers to make nine tricks. Played by North, there is no lead to prevent the ninth trick.

Board 14. Dealer East. Vulnerability None

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

N/S's 25 HCP is not enough to make game this time unless west leads a heart. That will only happen if South opens a strong NT and is raised directly to game (Stayman gives the game away). After 1♥ – 1♠ – 1NT – 3NT, West leads a diamond and declarer should be down two – East wins and switches to a low club and West leads a second diamond on gaining the lead when declarer plays on a major suit.

Board 15. Dealer South. Vulnerability N/S

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

South opens 1♦, West overcalls 1♥, and North bids 1♠ or makes a negative double according to system. At favourable vulnerability, a pre-emptive raise to 4♥ fits the bill on the East cards. That runs round to North, who doubles, and South responds 4♠. There are 11 tricks in a spade contract, while E/W make eight in hearts, meaning that 5♥ would be a good save, though of course N/S could take the push to 5♠ successfully.

Board 16. Dealer West. Vulnerability E/W

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

Unless West has a weak two-suited 2♠ opener in his bag it will be North who opens 1♥. East has 15 balanced with a stopper, but the hand is so empty that few experts would even consider a 1NT overcall. I would prefer to double and South may raise to 2♥. West is well worth a spade bid, and if North competes to 3♥ is also worth competing in turn to 3♠ – East has done his all with the initial double. If North doubles 3♠ he may regret it, as that cannot be beaten.

Board 17. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

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

North is just short of an opening bid so East opens 1♥, West raises to 3♥, and East goes on to game. On a club lead, declarer may think he has the finesse for free, as even if it loses he can pitch the spade loser on the ace. But see what happens; the finesse loses and North switches to a spade. With no quick entry to dummy, declarer has to win and play three rounds of hearts to get there and take the pitch. Now there is only one diamond ruff to be had.

Board 18. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

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

South opens 1♥ and is just about worth a 2♣ reverse over the 2♣ response. North can bid a forcing 2NT now and South raises to 3NT. The winning action now is for North to pass and take 10 tricks in NT. He may, however, have slam in mind, so go on with 4♥, but South is minimum so not interested and passes – the same 10 tricks but fewer MPs, of course.

Board 19. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

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

Many E/Ws will get to game but go down as the cards lie badly for them. West opens 1♥ and reverses into spades over the 2♣ response. East bids 2NT, West completes the picture with 3♣, and East closes proceedings with 3NT. Alas, the only good news is that North can only duck clubs once so declarer can get at four club winners, but by then the defence will have five winners after the natural diamond lead.

Board 20. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

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

West opens 1♦. Traditionally, we have been taught to respond in the higher of two five-card suits – here 1♠. But East is only strong enough to show one suit and the hearts are so much stronger. Why not pretend that the spades are only four cards in length and respond 1♥? If West rebids 2♣, East can cross some fingers and rebid 2♥, and is in the best spot that is achievable. What could East do over 2♣ having responded 1♠?

Board 21. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

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

West opens 1♥ after three passes and that goes round to South. If South passes, the likely outcome is eight tricks for +110. If South bids, INT is the obvious choice, and that will normally end the auction. After the normal lead of the queen of hearts, it only takes competent defence for the contract to be down two for -200 and a good score for E/W.

Board 22. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

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

After a pass from East, South opens 4♥. If left to play there, West leads the ♦10 and East must overtake and continue diamonds to get the contract two down. If East lets the ten hold the trick, the contract is made. It would be somewhere between brave and foolhardy for West to overcall 4♠, vulnerable against not and facing a passed partner; but if he passes East may double and now West bids 4♠. That is unbeatable and leaves North with a tough decision.

Board 23. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

The South hand, with weak long suits, is not worth a vulnerable opening, so there will be three passes to East. I would be inclined to open a weak NT rather than 1♣ and risk having to rebid the suit over a 1♠ response. That sees West transfer to spades and, if 2♠ ends the auction, nine tricks can be made. N/S meanwhile, can make only eight tricks in a diamond contract, while E/W also come to 10 in clubs.

Board 24. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

Non-vulnerable, most Wests will open the hand, though this is hardly compulsory. The classic sequence would be 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠, where 1♠ is asking and 2♠ shows a minimum opening with four spades. East may be tempted to do more, but 4♣ is enough, knowing that partner is short in diamonds so that East's suit is not as useful as it might have been. After a trump lead, often correct against this sequence, 11 tricks can be made.

Board 25. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

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

6♦ is made on a winning heart guess, while 6♥ can always be beaten by a diamond lead. North opens 1♥, middle of three touching four-card suits, and South may splinter to show heart support with short spades. Though North has little wasted in spades, the hand is very minimal with only four trumps, so he is likely to sign off and play in 4♥. 12 tricks are possible on a club lead, but a diamond lead means that declarer concedes a ruff if he tries for ruffs himself, so makes at most 11.

Board 26. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

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

East has a weak NT and West will use Stayman. After the 2♠ response to that, both players have borderline decisions – should West bid game or only invite, and if the latter should East accept? 2NT is high enough on these two hands, though on a good day game would make. Today, a spade lead to the ten should see the defence prevail against 3NT.

Board 27. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

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

If West opens INT North may be able to bid 2♣. Landy to show both majors. South responds 2♦ to ask for the longer major and North bids 2♥ – the normal thing with equal length. Either 2♥ or 2♠ should be successful, but East, with both minors and 10 HCP, should compete. 2NT can be beaten, but 3♣ can be made despite the four-one split – that same split defeats 3♦ due to the club ruff.

Board 28. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

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

N/S will often get too high on this one. Say that West opens INT. With a good lead, some Norths will scrape up a double and, after East has run to diamonds, South will just bid 4♥. While that can be made on a spade lead by putting in the jack, either a diamond lead or club lead and diamond switch collects five defensive tricks. If North passes over INT, he is still likely to raise when South overcalls, and again the partnership is too high.

Board 29. Dealer North. Vulnerability All

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

When South opens 1♥ – the texture of the hand doesn't look right for 4♥ with three aces and a fairly empty main suit – will West double? Put the bare queen into a different suit and double would be automatic, but All Vul. Is not the time to get over aggressive and many will pass. It is unlikely to matter. North will raise to 2♥ and South jump to game either way. The eleventh trick is decided by the spade guess, while 5♣♦ would be –800.

Board 30. Dealer East. Vulnerability None

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

East opens 1♣ and, unless he has a way to show a spade/diamond two-suiter, South will overcall 1♠. After a pass by West, North should raise to 2♠ – a good 2♠ bid would instead make a 2♣ cuebid, so partner should not get over-excited. East may compete with 3♣ and South bid 3♦ as a game try, which North will decline, signing off in 3♠. Some will get diamonds right and make 3♠, some will get diamonds wrong and go down.

Board 31. Dealer South. Vulnerability N/S

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

West opens 1♦ and North may bid 2♠ – 3♠ is obviously absurd at this vulnerability. If so, East cuebids 3♠ to show a constructive diamond raise, and West ought to drive to slam from here. If North passes over 1♦ – hardly a crime, I'm sure you will agree – East may raise to 3♦, invitational. West may try 3♥ and, if East believes that to show worry about spades for NT, he will go past 3NT and commit to diamonds. Again, slam is the likely outcome.

Board 32. Dealer West. Vulnerability E/W

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

If North opens 1NT he may play there. A heart lead would hold the contract to seven tricks, but the more normal club gives an overtrick. If E/W compete, debatable when vulnerable against not, they will often manage eight tricks in a heart contract, though the fourth round of spades can create an extra trump trick for the defence.

Please read me !!

Hopefully you have read this far because we have yet another favour to ask you !

Mark and I use eBay to sell items to raise funds for RNLI - mostly stamps or old bank notes ... things with some small value that are easy to post. If you have anything like that and could send it to us - well that would be marvellous! Every little helps and living as we do on a fairly small island off the top of Scotland we are very aware of the value of the RNLI and the courage of all its volunteers and want to do our bit to support them.

Did you know that we run a lot of other Simultaneous Pairs ?

Our special Charity ones are held during the year - the January one (with no master points) raises money for UNICEF; the March one, the Charity Challenge will be raising funds for RNLI in 2019, and there is the Kidney Research one in July.

In addition there are Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Celtic Sims.

The EBU licence covers affiliated clubs for the Charity events, and we run a special session for non-affiliated English clubs so they are not excluded.

All the details are on the website - probably best to have a look at the calendar which is at: <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/info/calendar.asp> as details about each of the events is linked from there.