



Sim Pairs

Commentary by John Williams

Monday 13th May 2019

EBED Spring Simultaneous Pairs ~ Monday 13th May 2019

Welcome to the English Bridge Education & Development (EBED) Simultaneous Pairs.

The proceeds raised by this event will be used by EBED, **the national charity for the promotion and development of bridge**, in support of its objectives to promote the national learning program "**Bridge for All**" and especially to improve and develop the infrastructure for bridge teaching in England by expanding our support for EBTA – the **English Bridge Teachers Association**

EBED supplies "Bridge for All" teaching materials, organises Minibridge/Duplicate Bridge teacher training and club director training courses, administers the Junior Award Scheme and supports county organisations and individual volunteers at the local level to run youth events.

You can read more EBED's activities in the current issue of English Bridge and at <u>www.ebedcio.org.uk.</u> If you wish to know more about EBED or to arrange a donation/legacy in favour of the charity, please contact us via <u>richard@ebedcio.org.uk</u>

Do please encourage your friends to come to play in these events which are open to all and raise vital funds for our work.

We thank you so much for your support!

Donna Wright Chief Executive English Bridge Education & Development, Registered Charity No: 1153543







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Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
			Pass	
1*	Pass	1♥	Pass	
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	
3♣	Pass	3 💙	Pass	
4 💙	All Pass			

One of the more useful features of fourth suit forcing is to transform what would have been a non-forcing bid into a forcing one, as here (i.e. the 1♠ rebid followed immediately by 3♥ would have been invitational only). Here, West is now happy to raise to game. The only problem for declarer is to make it.

◆A lead (or a club) would make things relatively simple and barring those, the most likely lead is a spade. Declarer will win and try a diamond, king losing to ace.

A second spade will allow a diamond discard followed by a diamond duck. Plain sailing now, assuming good guessing. However, some declarers will no doubt lose their way, so -100 is unlikely to be a complete disaster. Good hand!

Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 🗸	
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	
All Pass				

This hand illustrates perfectly why a 1NT rebid promising 15-17 HCPs is superior to the more traditional 15-16. OK, some form of check-back is now quite important to have available but here, where North will have no intention of bidding beyond 1NT, the final contract is much more comfortable for declarer. Who wants to be in 2NT followed by a misguess in clubs, with four hearts to lose and a failing spade finesse?

Check-back normally takes the form of an artificial 2♣ following the 1NT rebid. Here, where hearts and spades have been bid, the next available steps are 2♥ (5-card suit, min) 3♥ (ditto, max); 2♠ (3-card spade support, min), 3♠ (ditto, max); 2♦ (not 5 hearts or 3 spades, min); 2NT ditto, max). It may look a bit complicated but it all makes easy sense).

Results here will vary widely (between +150 and -200 to NS?)

oard 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable				
Vest	North	East	South	
	2NT	Pass	3NT	
All Pass				

There's nothing to say about the auction, which will be pretty universal I imagine. However, it's just possible to get into 4 , when the most that can be lost is a spade and two clubs, so a simple club to the king makes 11 tricks. No-trumps is trickier after a heart lead because losing a spade leads to a second heart return and a sure heart loser after ace and queen of diamonds are unblocked and clubs are broached. Those who go for a 3-3 diamond break by overtaking the queen will fare even worse. So, the winning pairs line is to take the first heart, unblock ace and queen of diamonds and exit with jack of spades; then win the second heart and lead a club up: if East ducks (unlikely) win the king and cash 12 tricks. When East goes up with the ace, the heart blockage means you can lose only a spade, a heart and a club. Not easy, though.

There will be many variations in the play and, again, a range of results.













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Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable			
West	North	East	South
		1♦	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	All Pass

A heart lead will put paid to 2NT but a club lead is more likely. Even then, declarer has an almighty struggle on his hands. 24 is easy but the chance of playing there looks to be remote. 34 has some semblance of play, if West can safely sign off there and the defence is less than ideal.

But will North be able to place nothing but green cards on the table? The temptation to interfere will be too much for some to resist, no doubt. A heart contract has seven tricks available but it wouldn't be possible to play at the one level... And anything higher will be a losing ploy, vulnerable, given that EW are all too likely to go minus themselves, left to their own devices.

This sort of hand is what makes pairs play such a challenge.

Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable				
West North East			South	
			1♠	
2♦	2	Dble	3♠	
Pass	Pass	3NT	4 🛦	
5♦	All Pass			

This hand is rich in swing possibilities. Note that after the suggested start East's double at his first turn shows a good hand, probably including four hearts, and is definitely NOT for penalties. Some would show it as promising 3-card diamond support. At his second turn, however, East has no sensible alternative to trying 3NT. If we're together up to this point, paths will now divide. Some Souths will chance the heart position and persist with 4^A, hoping the vulnerability will prevent disaster. Others will pass and concede -600 after declarer holds up his spade ace until the third round and finds ace of clubs well placed. Whenever NS persist with 4^A, some EWs will take their small penalty and a few will push on to 5^A. Unlucky! 5^A makes only when played by East: otherwise ace of clubs and a ruff earns NS a plus score instead. What a tantalising hand!

oard 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable				
'est	North	East	South	
١T	Pass	2♦	Pass	
1	Pass	3♦	Pass	
1	Pass	4NT	Pass	
•	Pass	6 💙	All Pass	

No great dramas here. Note that it's useful to play East's natural 3 bid as game forcing, allowing West to promise 3-card heart support without any danger of languishing out of game. 4NT is now RKCB. If the response was 5, promising two aces and the queen of hearts, a grand slam could be considered (though that would need West to hold queen of diamonds as well, to be safe, so would be something of a gamble). As it happens, a 5 response denies the trump queen, so 6 is the only safe option.

All things considered, 6♥ will be the popular spot - just making, obviously. This will score above average, if only because a few bashers will probably try the grand...



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Here is a further example of the efficacy of playing a raise of the fourth suit as any hand very good for the bidding to date. $3 \checkmark$ by West is now forcing and a raise of 3NT to 4NT is purely quantitative, with no suit agreed. This should lead to the best-scoring small slam. A heart lead would make this a nervy affair but, on this bidding a neutral diamond or spade is more likely and the 3-3 spade break covers all eventualities.

Those who reach 6♦ or 6NT will reap a rich reward. Otherwise 3NT+3 will probably be somewhere a little below average. But who knows for sure?

Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable				
Nest	North	East	South	
		Pass	Pass	
L 🎝	Dble	Pass	2♦	
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT	
All Pass				

South is sure to make 3NT (a club lead then requires only a successful heart finesse and a non-club lead allows ace of spades to be knocked out safely) but North has no chance in the same contract on jack of clubs lead. So, +400 to NS will be worth having. But there is more on offer to NS if West chances an opening 1NT, vulnerable opposite a passed partner and with two suits pretty much open. Practical players are alive to these situations and should always consider an alternative to the weak no-trump provided they have a rebid available: here they would plan to pass any bid by partner (or possibly rebid 2* over 1*) and any opposition interference).

A 1NT opening seems likely to lead to playing doubled in just about anything, with a variety of disastrous results. At least a lesson would be there to be learned....

Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable				
West	North	East	South	
			Pass	
1♦	Pass	1 🔺	Pass	
<u>2</u> ♣	Pass	2 🛦	All Pass	

2♠ is the clear rebid for East in this auction. This promises a 6-card suit and is definitively to play. The trouble with 2♥ is that, for most of us it's fourth suit forcing. Indeed, it would normally be played as forcing even if it wasn't fourth suit. In the event that West preferred a 1NT rebid to show his strength (why, one asks?) 2♠ would still be the right next step for East.

No contract compares with 2 in terms of trick potential. It's theoretically possible to make ten, double-dummy but +170 will be a biggish score anyway, without taking the risk of going minus by over-bidding.

This should be a rare flattish board, with +140 to EW the likely average.



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♥ Q5
♦ 965
♣ J10842

▲876

♦ J2

*****653

∀K9642

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W 5 7 5 7 6

▲ KQ8
 ♥ AKJ9
 ◆ A106

▲AK52

10873

AKQ9

Makeable contracts

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▲ NT

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♥3

▲J104

VAJ1087

AKQ4

HCP

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	EBE	D Spring .
	▲ J104	Board 24
	∀ J2	West
	♦K9732	Pass
	♣ AK8	Pass
♠9862	▲ K7	All Pass
♥AQ74	♥ 109653	
♦ QJ	♦ A864	This is
* 973	* 104	the obvi
	▲A053	2NT or
	¥K8	embarra
	▲ 10.5	unlikely
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	* 0,002	another
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	W 3	
	▲AJ9	Board 25
	♥Q87	West
	♦753	
	♣KQJ5	2♦
♦ Q65	▲ K83	
♥54	♥ AJ1062	Followin
♦ A6	♦ KJ942	to 1NT
♣A10976	3 🐥 -	a major-
	▲10742	in case
	∀ K93	indicates
	♦Q108	impossib
	* 842	West no
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НСР	Makeable contracts	for pena
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<u> </u>	▲K13	Board 24
	• Λ 10 7	West
	▼ KQJ /	1 🕶
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♦ 954	♦ 32	Should M
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НСР	Makeable contracts	
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15	<u>N - 3 2</u>	uown or
7 10	<u> </u>	

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Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all				
West	North	East	South	
Pass	1NT	Pass	2*	
Pass All Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT	

his is not a hand where the weak no-trumpers need to consider avoiding he obvious opening bid and after a Stayman sequence South will rebid either NT or (even worse) 3NT. Disaster! The likely heart lead will presage acute mbarrassment. The only comfort to NS is that if that's where they play, they're nlikely to be alone.

One or two themes are emerging in this set of boards. Here it demonstrates another bad hand for the weak no-trump . After a 1 • opening and a 2 • response North will most likely rebid 3 • and if South follows up with 3NT he'll hit the button, at least some of the time. A diamond lead followed by a heart switch at trick three (unlikely, to say the least) means three down, a heart is fatal whereas anything else gives declarer a fighting chance at least.

's a cruel game! (Have I said that before?)

Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable					
West	North	East	South		
	1NT	2*	Pass		
<u>2</u>	Pass	2 🗸	All Pass		

ollowing on from earlier commentary when it was suggested that a 2* defence o 1NT can be played to show a decent hand with either diamonds alone or major-minor two-suiter, here's another example: West has to respond 2* to 2* n case that's where partner wishes to play but the 2* follow-up now clearly indicates both red suits (hearts and clubs would be so unlikely as to be virtually mpossible).

West now has to choose where to go next, a choice made easier by remembering the basic precept of all defences to 1NT - that they deny the values to double 1NT for penalties. This suggests that, particularly at pairs, pass is the prudent option. Here, whilst it's true that 4♥ can be made thanks to even breaks in both red suits, that would be an extremely lucky result. +170 should score fine. And if you fancy a more commonplace, no-frills defence to 1NT, the same choices are available and 2♥ remains a logical resting-place.

Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable						
Nest	North	East	South			
		1*	Pass			
LV	Pass	2 ♣	Pass			
Pass All Pass	Dble	Pass	2♦			

Should North intervene with 1NT at his first turn? It's certainly possible but not for the faint-hearted, when vulnerable and minimum for the bid with no club stop. Most pragmatists will surely pass, knowing they will have second chance to get into the auction, if desirable. When 2* rides round, a take-out double represents much better odds (partner is now marked with some values) and again, most pragmatists will opt for it. 2* now proves to be the perfect spot for NS, losing just a spade, a heart and two clubs on normal play. And should East decide to compete with 3* there is an element of fielder's choice available to NS: defend for a likely one down or bid on for a likely make in 3*. Note that by bidding 1NT, North would almost certainly end the auction - and end up with a minus score. And what if South, with different cards, bids 2* after North's second-round double? Well, so be it...

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