EBED



Sim Pairs

Commentary by Mike Pomfrey

Thursday
16th 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.

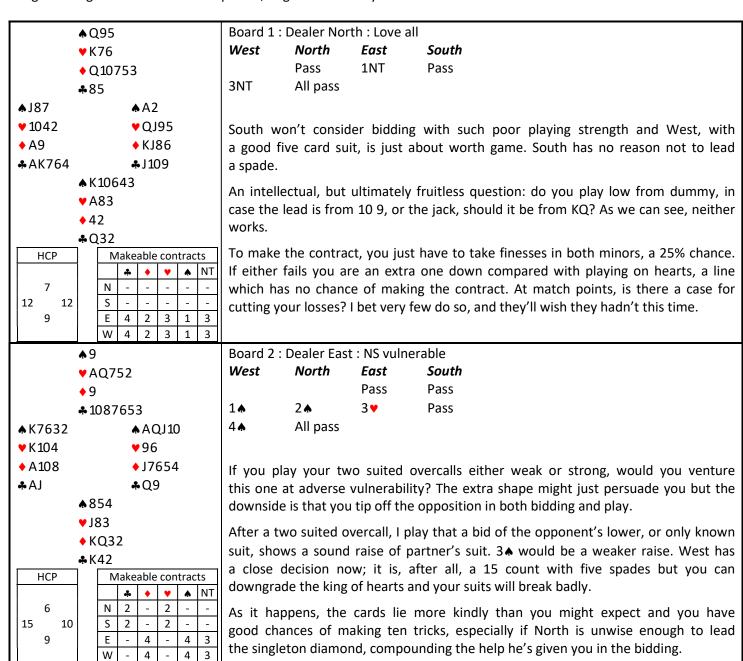
You can read more EBED's activities in the current issue of English Bridge and at www.ebedcio.org.uk. If you wish to know more about EBED or to arrange a donation/legacy in favour of the charity, please contact us via richard@ebedcio.org.uk

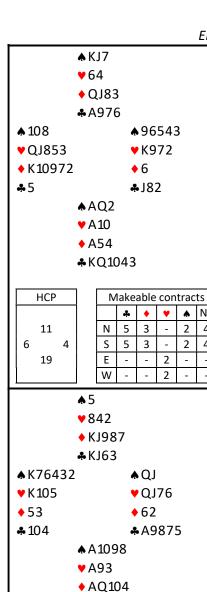
Do please encourage your friends to come to play in these events which are open to all and raise vital funds for our work.

We thank you so much for your support!

Donna Wright Chief Executive

English Bridge Education & Development, Registered Charity No: 1153543





4

4

Board 3: Dealer South: EW vulnerable West North East South 2NT 3♠ 4. Pass **Pass Pass** 4 **Pass** 4NT All pass

I expect many players will upgrade the South hand, with its good five card suit. The ten of clubs just about tips it for me. 3 ♠ is a slam try in the minors and, although you are minimum in terms of points, the club suit and good controls tempt you to co-operate with 4.4. Some partnerships have more sophisticated responses to 3.4. 4♠ is North's only possible cue bid; now it should be a golden rule that, after a minor suit slam try, 4NT is always natural and non-forcing. That should be the end of matter.

Against no trumps a high heart lead holds the contract to ten tricks; a low heart and West can be endplayed for eleven; a reckless diamond or passive spade and it's twelve. After a spade lead declarer should of course lead twice towards the queen of diamonds, not run it. Only a heart lead defeats 6.

| Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable | | | | |
|--|-------|----------|-------|--|
| West | North | East | South | |
| 2♠ | Pass | Pass | 2NT | |
| Pass | 3NT | All pass | | |

I don't much like a vulnerable weak two on such an empty suit, especially with decent support for the other major, but it will be a common choice. This time I think the opening bid is slightly more likely to goad opponents into bidding game.

Now you have to find a lead. Another fine mess you've got yourself into; they all look equally unattractive. It appears that South will make exactly nine tricks on any lead but I suspect an overtrick will slip in here and there.

If West passes, there are two possible scenarios. East may open third in hand, South doubles and North-South may well play in a diamond part score. If South is allowed a free run, his side may stay out of game unless one or other partner pushes a bit.

| _ | | | | | | |
|----|----|------|------|-----|----------|----|
| | N | 1ake | able | con | trac | ts |
| | | 4 | • | > | ^ | NT |
| | N | 1 | 4 | 1 | - | 3 |
| | S | 1 | 4 | 1 | - | 3 |
| | Е | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| | W | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| ΑΔ | ΩI | | | | | |

Makeable contracts

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Board 5: Dealer North: NS vulnerable West North East South 1 🕶 **Pass** 2* 3♦ **Pass** 3♥ Pass **Pass** 3NT **Pass** ?

This is a very tough hand to bid, even if you are armed with this little tool. If a change of suit is forcing after a two level response – and it should be whatever your system — a jump in a new suit can be a Splinter bid, promising support for partner. Now South has a huge hand, even though much of it is in the wrong suit. South temporises by showing some heart support and now, with good spades and moderate clubs, 3NT looks a sensible choice for North.

So far, so reasonable, but sooner or later someone is going to have to make a decision as to denomination and level. With hearts unkindly placed and the spade king offside you will have to be inspired to make a slam in hearts or no trumps, even though your auction has right-sided either contract. 64 makes easily enough but may not be a popular match point choice.

| | ₩ A QJ | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | ♥AK104 | 2 |
| | ♦ 7 | |
| | ♣ K864 | |
| ♦ 842 | | ♦ K10763 |
| v 7 | | ♥ J965 |
| ♦Q10983 | 2 | ♦ 65 |
| 4 1073 | | ♣ J2 |
| | ♠ 95 | |
| | ♥ Q83 | |
| | ♦ AKJ4 | |
| | ♣ AQ95 | |
| | | |

♣Q2

HCP

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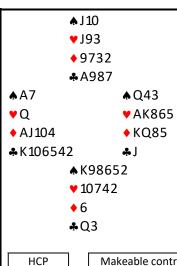
HCP

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| Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----|------|--|--|
| West | North East Sout | | | | |
| | | 1♥ | 2♠ | | |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♦ | Pass | | |
| 3♠ | Pass | 3NT | Pass | | |
| ? | | | | | |

South's weak jump overcall is no thing of beauty but the vulnerability is favourable. Thereafter the bidding develops naturally until West's bid of the enemy suit, and East suggests game in no trumps. It's quite a close decision for West whether to accept this or to plough on with 4. If that happens, a couple of cue bids will probably commit you to having a bash at the diamond slam.

6 ♦ looks tricky on a trump lead but you win in the East hand and play ♣ J, covered by the queen, king and ace. Whether North returns a trump or ♠ J you have the entries to ruff out clubs, discarding your losing spade on a heart on the way.

If South doesn't bid the auction develops in a similar way.

| Makeable contracts | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| | ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT | | | | | |
| N | - | - | - | - | - | |
| S | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Е | 4 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 4 | |
| W | 4 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 4 | |

★ K▼ 765◆ 1087632♣ Q104♠ QJ976

A8
AQJ976
AQ83
KJ109
QJ9
K4
AK92
★53

- **♦** 105432 ♥42
 - ◆ A5 **♣** J876

| Board 7 | : Dealer Soi | uth : All vu | Inerable |
|---------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| 2NT | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| ? | | | |

What happens next will depend on whether you play ordinary Stayman, five card Puppet or one of the many variations. Once a heart fit is established East is worth a slam try. West is minimum but has reasonable trumps and controls and it's easy to see this one spiralling out of control. 6♥ is a poor slam but, imagine West with the king of spades rather than the king of clubs and it would be excellent. I doubt whether many partnerships have the means to find out in time.

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

To make twelve tricks you will probably play to ruff clubs in the East hand. Even then you are pretty well bound to run the queen of spades at some stage, losing to the king. Let's hope North doesn't smugly point out that it was singleton!

AQ10 VAJ72 KQ92 A52

↑75
↑8632
↑109854
↑K
↑1085
↑A764
↑AK4
♣J983

★KJ94♥Q63◆J3♣Q1076

| Makeable contracts | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| | ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT | | | | | |
| N | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | ω | |
| S | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | |
| Ε | - | - | - | - | - | |
| W | - | - | - | - | - | |

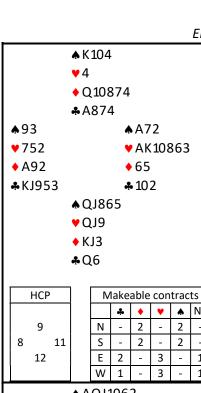
Board 8: Dealer West: Love all West North East South Pass **1** 🗸 **Pass** 1 Pass 1NT **Pass** 2* Pass 2♠ **Pass** 3NT

All pass

North's rebid shows 15-17 and 2♣ is "checkback", asking if opener is upper or lower range and whether she has a fifth heart or a third spade. The answer shows three spades and not a maximum hand – this hand is actually almost worth 3♠. It's close now whether either South or North should take the plunge to game.

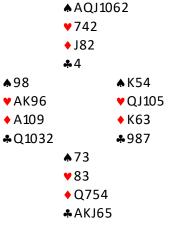
And it's also close whether you will make it. The best lead for the defence is a club; unless blessed with x-ray vision you probably play the ten, losing to the king. Now, what should West return? Anything could help declarer. As it happens, a passive spade is safe, but whatever you do declarer is almost bound to lose a heart, a diamond and three clubs. Yet another singleton king sinks the contract! It's East's turn to be smug.

EBED Spring Simultaneous Pairs ~ Thursday 16th May 2019



As is often the case a three-card raise is West's best choice in a competitive auction. North is rather too good for a simple raise, so falls back on a double. With six hearts East should definitely bid one more and North decides that one side or the other is favourite to make nine tricks in something. It's too close for anyone to double.

3♥ would make if you guess the clubs right. How about 3♠? A heart to the king and the ten of clubs back looks a reasonable defence for East-West. Now declarer is on the horns of a dilemma. If you play on trumps East will duck the first round, take the second and play a third, leaving South with five losers. If you try to knock out the ace of diamonds first, West ducks the first round and the defence get a ruff. It looks as though 3♠ should always fail, but where will the match points go?

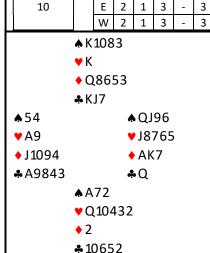


| Board 10 |) : Dealer Ea | ast : All vuln | erable |
|----------|---------------|----------------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 1♣ |
| Pass | 2♠ | All pass | |

I'd like to feature a modern development that is rapidly gaining popularity.

Not all of us would open the South hand, second in hand and vulnerable, but let's say we do. West doesn't have a suitable bid now (though a few brave souls might overcall on a four-card suit). A jump response in a major can be used to show a six-card suit and some 4-8 points. The method has two benefits; first, it gives a more compact range to uncontested auctions like 1 - 2 - 2 +; this is now played as around 9-11. The immediate jump response also gives you a better chance to buy the contract when opponents might have competed.

2 should go one down; on a heart lead West should overtake and fire back a trump, but it's a good result for North-South when opponents can make nine tricks in hearts or, very fortunately, in no trumps.



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| Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--|--|--|
| North | East | South | | | |
| | | Pass | | | |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | | | |
| 1 🖍 | All pass | | | | |
| | North 1◆ | North East 1 ◆ Pass | | | |

What a horrible hand to have as East. You have plenty enough to bid, but your longest suit is dreadful, the hand might play better in spades and you have fair defensive values. I would be inclined to pass and hope to get involved later.

Unfortunately, by the time it is later the opponents have bid both our suits and there's nothing to do but pass again. Now South has a decision to make; even if a change of suit is theoretically forcing it looks wise to pass, so 1 & it is.

HCP

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| Makeable contracts | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|----------|----|
| | 4 | • | > | ^ | NT |
| N | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| S | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Ε | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| W | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |

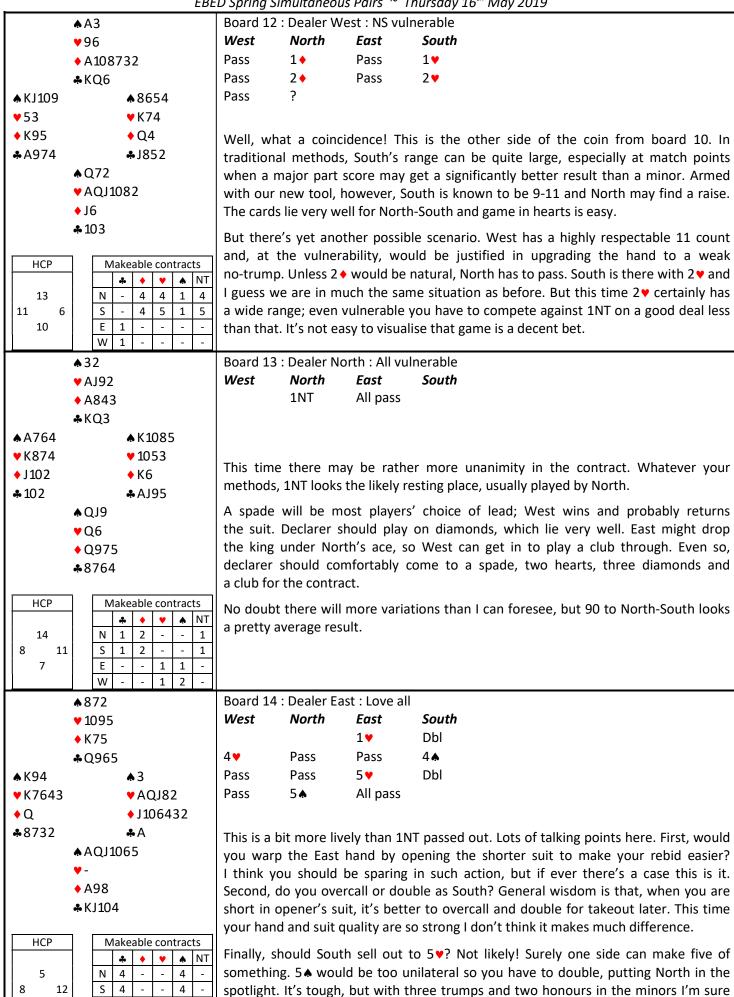
Makeable contracts

♠ NT

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A high trump lead looks normal; then, when West gets in with ♥A, another trump will cut down declarer's cross-ruff. I suspect it will need an inspired view in clubs to make 1♠ on best defence.



the percentage action is to bid on. Who knows, maybe East will bid another heart.

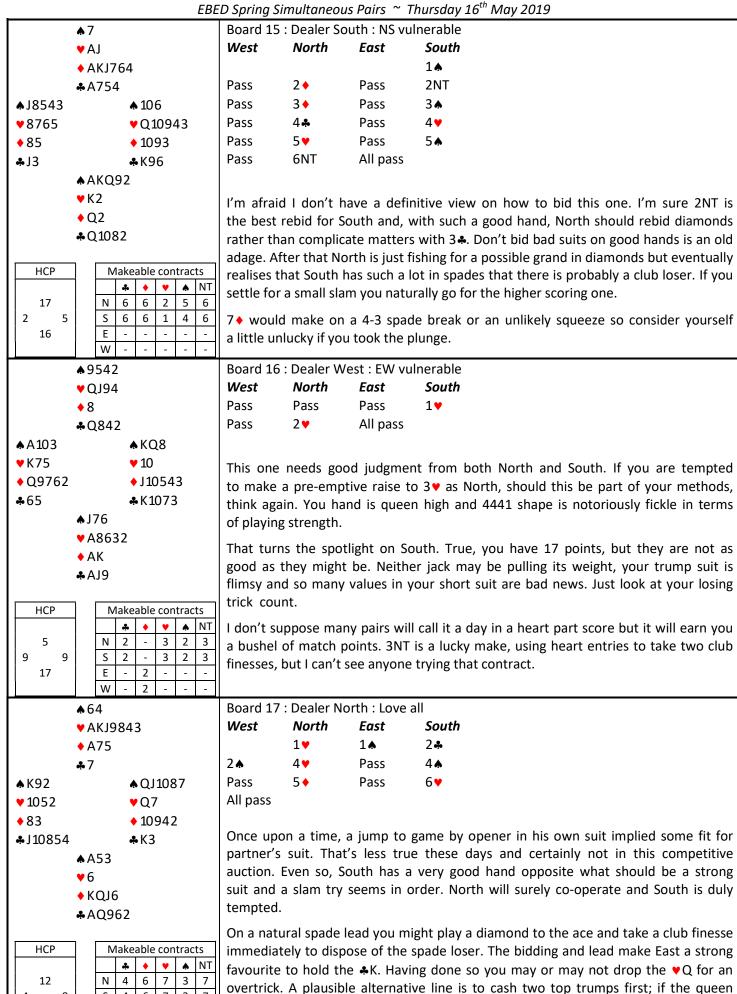
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3 5



doesn't drop you have to try for the discard. This time you have an easy thirteen tricks.

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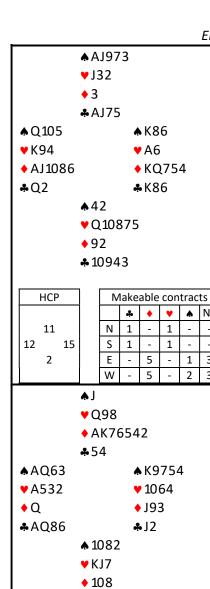
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|----------|-------------|------------|----------|
| Board 18 | : Dealer Ea | st : NS vu | Inerable |
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♦ | Pass |
| 3NT | All pass | | |

Many of us play a jump to 3NT over a major suit opening to show a raise to game with primary support and no shortage. It makes a lot of sense to do this in the minors as well. But even if you have no such agreement, try to think of a better response for West; I can't.

This time you get an unexpected bonus. If South were on lead to 3NT a heart looks the normal choice, and it gets the defence off to a good start. Even if South chooses a black suit it does no immediate harm to the defence, though North will have a hard time discarding on five rounds of diamonds.

But with North on lead a heart seems a highly unlikely choice; West will very probably be gifted a tenth trick at once.

| Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|----------|--|--|
| West | East | South | | | |
| | | | Pass | | |
| 1. | 3♦ | Pass | Pass | | |
| Dbl | Pass | 3♠ | All pass | | |

That's a pretty top-heavy pre-empt for North at the vulnerability but, with partner having passed, it looks sensible. To quote the late Terence Reese "a pre-empt that is known to be weak is a blunt sword". After two passes West has a clear reopening double and East can hardly do more than 3 .

The momentum of the auction is such that West can't tell whether partner has a little something or nothing, or how many spades he has. It looks reckless to me to bash game, which is a slightly fortunate make.

It's a different story if North were to bid 1♦ only. East should dredge up a 1♠ response, promising five cards if a double would show four, and West will surely commit her side to game.

| HCP | | | V | lake | able | con | trac | ts |
|--------------|---|--|---|------|------|----------|------|----|
| | | | 4 | • | > | ^ | NT | |
| 10 | ı | | N | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 18 | 5 | | S | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 7 | İ | | Ε | 1 | - | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| | | | W | 1 | ı | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| ▲ K43 | | | | | | | | |

♥A83

.9

AAJ7

A

♥J1054

♣K10654

◆Q108432

♣K10973

| Board 20 | 0 : Dealer W | /est : All vu | Inerable |
|----------|--------------|---------------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1* |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1NT | All pass | |
| | | | |

No, I wouldn't open a weak 2♦ as North, should that be part of our system. You have a poor suit and far too much in the majors; it's easy to visualise hands for partner which would pass 2 ♦ when game is on in a major. It's worth mentioning that pre-emptive bids in second seat should be reasonably pure; once an opponent has passed you are more likely to make life difficult for partner than for the bad

HCP 10 13

108

♦ K65

♥K972

♣A832

| Makeable contracts | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| | * | ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT | | | | | | |
| N | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| S | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Е | - | - | - | - | - | | | |
| W | - | - | - | - | - | | | |

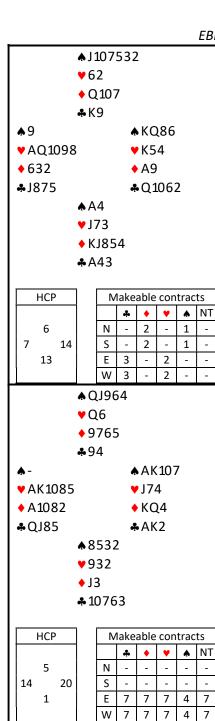
♠Q9652

♥Q6

♦ J97

♣QJ7

Assuming North passes, the auction starts normally. On the next round North has a choice between rebidding diamonds, trying 1NT or maybe 4th suit which will get South to declare 1NT. I'd rather play this one in 1NT than diamonds; should you scramble an overtrick it will be gold dust. The computer's best score is 110 in 2♥ but that looks to be a somewhat unlikely spot, and rather hairy to play.



♠ AJ1075 **y** 4 ♦ Q102 **4**10743

♠ K84

♥K653

♦ K53

| • | | | | |
|---|----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| | Board 22 | 1 : Dealer N | orth : NS v | ulnerable |
| | West | North | East | South |
| | | 2♠ | All pass | |
| | | | | |

That's not a great weak two, vulnerable, but unlike the last hand you don't have much playing strength in anything else. East doesn't quite have a 2NT overcall and 2♠ may well buy the contract, which looks booked for a somewhat unlucky one down when the trumps break badly.

If North doesn't open East has, in my view, rather a lot for a weak no-trump. If that is your choice your side will surely get to 2♥. Now might North venture 2♠ if he is in the pass out seat? That's far more dangerous than getting your retaliation in first. As Lady Macbeth put it: "stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once". Mind you, remember how she finished up.

If East-West play in 2♥ the defence will have to be sharp to get their club ruff and hold it to eight tricks.

| Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable | | | | | | |
|--|-------|------|-------|--|--|--|
| West | North | East | South | | | |
| | | 1♠ | Pass | | | |
| 2♥ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass | | | |
| 4 • | Pass | ? | | | | |

There are two possible types of auction here. First, East might open 2NT. I don't like that much - yes, you have 20 points, but if partner can't respond to a one level opening do you really want to be in game? However, I have to admit it simplifies matters here. West will show hearts, then try to find out if partner has the queen, and eventually subside in 6NT if he doesn't; surely there are enough tricks when East is 20-22.

I really don't know how the auction I've shown should continue. If your partnership is sure that 4NT is RKCB at this point, that seems a reasonable choice for East, again settling for 6NT when partner doesn't have the ♥Q.

| Board 2 | 3 : Dealer So | outh : All v | ulnerable |
|---------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| Pass | 1♠ | 1NT | Dbl |
| Pass | 2 | Pass | 2♠ |
| ? | | | |
| | | | |
| North's | ultra liabt | third in h | and anan |

North's ultra-light third in hand opening really puts the cat among the pigeons. East and South are full value for their actions and West decides to trust partner rather than the opponents. North wants none of it and South should not punish her; all the signs are that North is thin. Now West is in a quandary. How will opponents fare in 2♠? Can we make 3♥? Don't we wish we had bid 2♥ in the first place; this problem would never have arisen!

As we see, 2 ♠ should always be one down, while 3 ♥, though far from laydown, can be made.

If North doesn't open, East-West should easily get to 2♥ for a reasonable score.

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|------|------------|-----|
| НСР |] | N |
| 7 | | N |
| 5 17 | İ | S |
| 11 | | Ε |
|] | I | ۱۸/ |

♠63

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♣KJ98

♥J10982

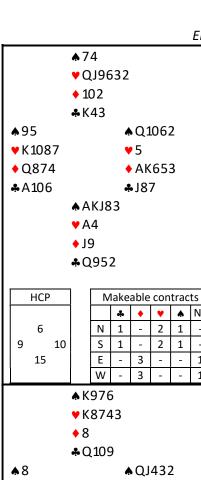
| Makeable contracts | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| | * | ♣ ♦ ♥ | | | | | | |
| N | - | - | - | 1 | - | | | |
| S | - | - | - | 1 | - | | | |
| Ε | 1 | 2 | 3 | - | 2 | | | |
| W | 1 | 2 | 3 | - | - | | | |

♠Q92

♥AQ7

♣A2

♦ AJ974



Board 24: Dealer West: Love all West North East South Pass 2♥ Dbl Redbl 3♦ Pass Pass Pass Pass All pass 3♥

If East passes over North's weak two, so should South. It doesn't pay to press for thin games at pairs. Just imagine partner with a pure weak two of KQJxxx and nothing else and you'll see how unlikely game is.

But East may not pass; it's only 10 points, opposite a passed partner, but it's all in the right place and a reasonable bet, in my view. The auction now gets quite lively, South suggests a penalty, but North doesn't like it, quite rightly as 3 can be made.

3♥ will be just the one down if declarer takes the right view in trumps or takes a spade finesse and forces West to waste a possible trump trick to prevent a discard. Either of these plays is more than plausible on the bidding.

| ♥ K8743 | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|--|--|--|--|
| ♦ 8 | | | | | |
| ♣ Q109 | | | | | |
| ♦ 8 | ♠ QJ432 | | | | |
| ♥ Q6 | ♥ J2 | | | | |
| ♦ AK6542 | ◆QJ73 | | | | |
| ♣ A652 | ♣ 84 | | | | |
| ♠ A105 | | | | | |
| ♥ A109 | 5 | | | | |
| ♦ 109 | | | | | |
| ♣ KJ73 | | | | | |

Makeable contracts

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Makeable contracts

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♠ NT

1

1

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3

3

✓ ♠ NT4 2 -

HCP

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HCP

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| Board 25 | : Dealer N | orth : EW | vulnerable |
|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| 3♦ | Dbl | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | Pass | ? | |

Assuming a 2 ◆ overcall would be conventional, how much should your partner expect for a natural 3 ◆, vulnerable? About this much, I would say. With decent defence to 1NT, you may prefer to pass, but the odds are that North is planning to look for a major suit fit and you do better to forestall this.

A double of a three-level overcall of partner's 1NT has to be for takeout, even more so than at the two level. If that's not your style, there are so many hands on which you'd be completely stuck. Here North's bid is bold, but eminently sensible. South has a very suitable hand, trumps break kindly and ten tricks are a doddle.

Should East have competed to 4. Sadly, you know that if opponents go to game, they're probably right, or maybe they will double out of spite for 200. You can't win.

| | | W | 1 | 3 | - | - |
|------------|-------------|-----|-----|------------|-----|---|
| | ♠ C | 108 | 364 | | | |
| | ♥ C | 17 | | | | |
| | 4 | | | | | |
| | ♣ K | 986 | 52 | | | |
| ♠ K | | | 4 | A 7 | '5 | |
| ♥AKJ63 | | | • | 98 | 52 | |
| ♦ AKQ872 | <u> </u> | | • | J9. | 5 | |
| . 4 | | | • | •A1 | .07 | |
| | ♠ J | 932 | | | | |
| | v 10 | 04 | | | | |
| | 1 0 | 063 | | | | |
| | 4 C | J53 | 3 | | | |
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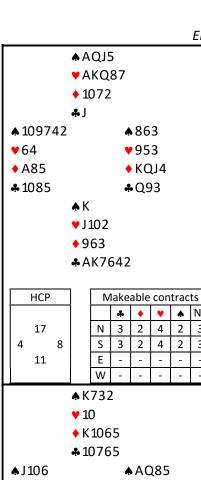
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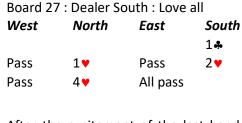
| Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable | | | | |
|---|----------|------|-------|--|
| West | North | East | South | |
| | | Pass | Pass | |
| 1 • | 1♠ | Dbl | 2♠ | |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♥ | Pass | |
| 6♥ | All pass | | | |

Oh I say. As West you toy with opening with a game forcing bid but decide that, with this shape, you'd better give yourself as much bidding space as possible. Surprise, surprise, opponents bid and support spades and partner shows four hearts.

The question now is: is 4NT unequivocally RKCB for hearts? After all, hearts are your side's last bid suit (by implication). I think it should be; what else but a massive heart fit would inspire you to leap into the stratosphere? If you had a huge minor two suiter, wouldn't you just bid a large number of clubs?

Partner has two aces and, for good measure, trumps are 2-2 so thirteen tricks roll in.





After the excitement of the last hand, it's time to sit down with a mug of cocoa. South's isn't much of a hand but, having opened, you are well advised to show support for partner's major rather than rebid your own minor. North might be tempted to go more slowly, hoping for a miracle fit but, as Bob Hamman always says: "don't play me for the perfect hand, partner, I never have it".

Another downside of the slow approach is that you might help the defence. This time East has an obvious lead anyway, they take their three diamond tricks and we get on with the next hand.

Even if South rebids those clubs it is easy to get to 4♥.

♥KJ8643 **♥**A97 **♦** Q9 **♦**872 **♣**A8 **4**432 **♠**94 **♥**Q52

♦ AJ43

♣KQJ9

Board 28: Dealer West: NS vulnerable West North East South **1** Pass 1 Pass 2 🗸 Pass Pass Dbl

Pass 2NT **3** 🗸 All pass

South might double on the first round, which could lead to a number of possible auctions. If that happens, unless playing a support redouble, to show three-card spade support, West should pass with a minimum opener.

Assuming South passes, it's a much closer decision for West than on the previous hand whether to support spades or rebid hearts, both being majors. If East has a limited hand with only four spades a 2 v rebid works best; if East has five spades, we may wish we'd supported them.

| Makeable contracts | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|----------|----|
| | * | • | > | ^ | NT |
| N | 2 | 2 | - | - | - |
| S | 2 | 2 | - | - | - |
| Ε | - | - | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| W | - | - | 5 | 4 | 3 |

٨

2 3

2 3

> On this auction North's 2NT passes the buck back to South. East will clearly go to 3♥ anyway. The cards lie so well for East-West that, amazingly, eleven tricks are possible on the right view in trumps, but few will venture to game.

♠654 ♥QJ983 **2** ♣Q754 **↑** 108 **♠**QJ972 **♥** K76 **♥** A 10843 ♦ KQ96 **♣**AJ92 **\$1083 ♠**AK3 **V** 10542 ♦ AJ75

♣K6

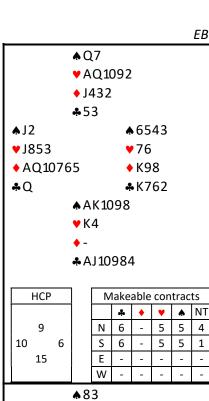
| Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable | | | | | |
|--|-------|------|-------|--|--|
| West | North | East | South | | |
| | Pass | 1 🛧 | Dbl | | |
| 1NT ? | 2♥ | Pass | Pass | | |

Only a trivial little part score hand, but a lot of possible auctions, even leaving aside the possibility of North throwing in a weak semi-two suited opening.

Assuming North passes, what would you say as South over East's opening bid? Some might try 1NT, which strikes me as a horrible choice with no spade intermediates; you could easily be walking into a big penalty. Despite the less than ideal shape, a double is more appealing.

| Makeable contracts | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| | ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT | | | | | |
| N | - | - | 2 | - | - | |
| S | - | - | 2 | - | - | |
| Ε | - | 2 | - | - | - | |
| W | - | 2 | - | - | - | |

The next two bids are fairly normal; East would be well advised to give up but it's just possible that West may have another go. Would double suggest this sort of shape? If so, East bids 3 ◆ and South has a problem. We have reasonable defence but we are by no means certain we can beat 3 ◆. If you pass North will probably take the "safe" option of bidding another heart, which trump leads can defeat.

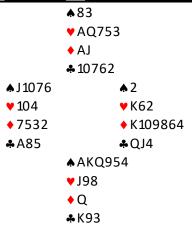


| Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|------|-------------|--|--|
| West | North | East | South | | |
| | | Pass | 1♣ | | |
| 3♦ | 3♥ | 4 • | I hate you! | | |
| | | | | | |

South starts out with fond hopes of describing this hand at his leisure, but opponents have other ideas. It's OK for West to pre-empt despite having four hearts. Should partner have a fit for hearts, North-South would probably outbid you in spades. It's riskier to make an off-centre pre-empt with four spades on the side.

As it goes, North is just about worth a bid and East continues the interference. Now, should 4♠ by South promise five cards? I think so as, if North can't stand spades, you are really out on a limb. With only four spades you can double 4♦.

Even so, it's tough for North to pass 4. The play is interesting; if West leads a diamond you can play ace and jack of clubs. Now if the defenders continue to force in diamonds you play on cross-ruff lines. An alternative, but really hair-raising line, is to draw trumps and rely on getting both spades and hearts right for eleven tricks.



Makeable contracts

3

3

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3

Makeable contracts

♠ NT

2

1

1

3

2

S

Ε

3

1

HCP

11

15

HCP

7

16

9

5

4

1

| Board 31: Dealer South: NS vulnerable | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|----------|-------|--|--|
| West | North | East | South | | |
| | | | 1♠ | | |
| Pass | 2♥ | 3♦ | 4 💙 | | |
| 5 • | Dbl | All pass | | | |

Would you bid as East, at favourable vulnerability? It might pave the way for a profitable sacrifice. However, you have a nagging feeling that your king of hearts and singleton spade are defensive, rather than offensive assets.

And so it proves. The save is cheap but it's a phantom, at least if you had led your spade against 4♥. You get the king of hearts, two clubs and a spade ruff. Moreover, North-South might have chosen to play in spades, which is easy to defeat.

So, if you are considering being a nuisance at the right vulnerability, bear in mind what the Americans call your "offense/defense ratio". Are there features of your hand which suggest the opponents would struggle in their contract?

| | ♠ Q7 | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | ♥AQ63 | |
| | ♦ 1042 | |
| | ♣ J753 | |
| ♠ AK10 | | ♦ 95 |
| ♥ KJ9742 | | ♥ 85 |
| ♦ K76 | | ♦J953 |
| . •Q | | ♣ AK1092 |
| | ▲ J8643 | 2 |
| | v 10 | |
| | ♦AQ8 | |
| | \$ 864 | |
| | | |

Ε 2 3 3

W 2 3 3

| Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable | | | | | |
|--|----------|------|-------|--|--|
| West | North | East | South | | |
| 1♥ | Pass | 1NT | Pass | | |
| 2♥ | Pass | Pass | 2♠ | | |
| Dbl | All pass | | | | |
| | | | | | |

South is too weak to overcall on the first round but decides to ignore Lady Macbeth and to protect next time. Now, what does double mean by West? Is it a strong penalty suggestion or just a hand too strong to sell out to 2 \(\bar{A} \)? On your actual hand you'd like it to be the former but I'm not sure that's right in theory.

Let's say East agrees to defend 2♠ doubled and West leads ♣ Q. It holds and your best continuation is probably ♥J. South finesses, disposes of a loser, and should come to seven tricks for a decent result.

West could have made 3♥, after a few twists and turns along the way. Why did you pass my double, partner? Surely you didn't think it was for penalties, says results merchant West.