

ECatsBridge Simultaneous Pairs for Children in Need



Tuesday 10th November 2020

Together we can ...

... and by competing in this Virtual Simultaneous Pairs you have certainly shown that **together we can indeed do something to help make a difference** to children who really need our help.

Mark and I do hope you enjoyed it despite the very strange environment and world we find ourselves in!

Thank you so so much for coming along and joining in, playing and donating – please don't forget the donating bit though, will you – just go to :

<https://www.ecatsbridge.com/donate/>

and you will see how you can do it – if you haven't already done so of course!

We ask for £3 per player but if you can spare more please top it up a bit ! Then at the end of it all we can send a nice big cheque through to CiN.

You will notice this commentary is for 32 boards – we had set it up before the onset of COVID, and decided to leave it with all the boards and commentary so you could enjoy it even if you didn't play them all ! Our thanks to Julian Pottage for writing this set for us – I hope you found it interesting (and accurate!).

Take care won't you and stay safe

Anna & Mark

Board 1. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

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

East-West are likely to start 1♦-1♥-2♦-2NT. East has 13 HCP and an attractive six-card suit but no aces. Some will pass 2NT and some will raise to 3NT. The lack of aces does indeed prove a problem if North leads a club or if South wins an opening spade lead and switches to a club. The defenders then score three club tricks and the two pointed-suit aces. You can in theory make ten tricks in diamond contract but you will need a backward finesse or an endplay to do so.

Board 2. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

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

Most likely East opens a weak 2♥ and West, with 3-card heart support and so expecting the partnership to hold a 9-card fit, raises to 3♥. North lacks four spades and is just too flat to come in. After a spade lead and club switch (the ♣10 is the best card in case East has A-J-x), the defenders can take the first four tricks. If they fail to cash out, one of dummy's clubs goes away on the third round of diamonds.

The ECatsBridge Team are Anna Gudge & Mark Newton

Mill Cottage Voy

Stromness, Orkney KW16 3HX

Tel: 01787 881920

Email: anna@ecats.co.uk **** Website: <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/>

Board 3. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

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

If South opens a weak INT, North transfers with 2♦ to show the hearts and rebids 2♠ to show the second suit. With fair 3-card support and an ideal spade holding, South should be happy to play in 4♥. So long as you do not finesse into the bare ♥Q you should make 11 tricks. You can ruff two spades in the South hand but do not need to do that if West leads a club. 9 tricks are the limit in no-trumps on a non-club lead.

Board 4. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

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

South might get to open INT in fourth seat. If West can then overcall 2♥ to show hearts and a minor, East-West can find their diamond fit. Making 10 tricks seems normal since the defenders have two chances to lead spades and declarer might not risk the ruffing heart finesse anyway. 9 tricks are on in no-trumps if the ♥K captures the ♥Q at trick one. 8 tricks are the limit in clubs because East can ruff the ♥K.

Board 5. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

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

East is likely to play in INT either by opening 1♣ and rebidding INT after South has doubled and West has bid a suit or by opening a strong INT. On a heart lead, the defenders easily score three hearts and three aces. They do not get any more tricks because a lack of entries is more of a problem for North than it is for West. A score of 90 is also available in diamonds, a heart lead being the easiest way to stop 9 tricks.

Board 6. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

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

The traditional Acoll range of 8-10 for a 1♣ response to 1♣ opening may come in handy here. East has no good response otherwise. With 17 points West raises to game. If East declares, an overtrick in 3NT is likely since it would take the lead of a low black card or a bizarre ♥K to prevent it. If West declares, the ♠J lead is far easier to find – indeed any card other than the ♥Q should be good enough to stop 10 tricks.

Board 7. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

If West makes a weak jump overcall of 2♦ over 1♣, North does not have an easy choice. 2♠ would be an overbid but doubling with only two hearts is risky – South would surely jump to 3♥ here. If you are on good form, you can make 2NT by holding up the ♦A and using the ♣A at the right time to keep West off play. Next best is to make 3♣ or 2♠; indeed you might score 140 in spades if East does not find the ♣K lead.

Board 8. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

After North opens 1♠ in second seat, East might make frisky takeout double. South might then make a pre-emptive raise to 3♠. North, with 17 HCP and a singleton would go on to 4♠. The defenders make two diamonds and, with the ♣K over the ♣A, a club. Perhaps West bids 4♥ over 3♠, suggesting a sacrifice. Repeated spade leads definitely beat 5♥ by two, though declarer is unlikely to pin the ♦8 anyway.

Board 9. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

<p>♠ 10 6 ♥ 9 8 7 5 2 ♦ A Q 9 ♣ 8 7 2</p> <p>♠ K 7 ♥ K 6 4 ♦ K 7 5 3 ♣ K Q J 5</p>	<p>♠ A Q J 9 4 3 ♥ Q 10 ♦ J 6 2 ♣ A 9</p> <p>♠ 8 5 2 ♥ A J 3 ♦ 10 8 4 ♣ 10 6 4 3</p>
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East-West might bid 1♠-2♣-2♠-3NT. If North leads a second highest ♥8, South needs to grab the ♥A and switch to a diamond, North then making the ♣Q and ♦A. If the defenders do not cash three tricks as soon as someone leads a red suit, declarer may end up with 11 tricks rather than 10. If East plays in spades, South needs to lead a diamond (playing upwards to deny a doubleton) or cash the ♥A and then lead one.

Board 10. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

<p>♠ 9 5 2 ♥ K J 9 5 2 ♦ Q 7 ♣ K 8 7</p> <p>♠ Q 10 7 6 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ 9 8 3 ♣ A Q 2</p>	<p>♠ K 8 4 3 ♥ 10 8 7 3 ♦ A J 6 2 ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ A J ♥ 4 ♦ K 10 5 4 ♣ J 9 6 5 4 3</p>
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If West opens a weak INT, East has the right shape for bidding Stayman with the intention of passing whatever West does. South should be brave and reopen with 3♣ rather than allow West to play quietly in 2♠. If East takes the push to 3♠, the defenders might come to two tricks in each red suit and the ♣A, though perhaps not if North leads a club. South can make 3♣ by pinning the ♣10.

Board 11. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

<p>♠ AKJ98654 ♥ 32 ♦ — ♣ 854</p> <p>♠ Q2 ♥ 107 ♦ K972 ♣ AKQ92</p>	<p>♠ 103 ♥ QJ5 ♦ QJ1053 ♣ J103</p>
<p>♠ 7 ♥ AK9864 ♦ A864 ♣ 76</p>	

After South opens 1♥ and West overcalls 2♣, North might well close the auction with a jump to 4♠. Whether the defenders cash clubs at tricks one and two or not, declarer makes 11 tricks with 8 trumps and 3 top cards in the red suits. East-West, with five top losers, do not have a profitable sacrifice – in fact they could lose a club ruff too (if they play in diamonds) or multiple diamond ruffs (if they play in clubs).

Board 12. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

<p>♠ AK52 ♥ AQ4 ♦ AJ54 ♣ A9</p> <p>♠ QJ8 ♥ 1052 ♦ KQ8 ♣ KJ62</p>	<p>♠ 10643 ♥ KJ963 ♦ 3 ♣ Q103</p>
<p>♠ 97 ♥ 87 ♦ 109762 ♣ 8754</p>	

North has an easy decision to make a penalty double if West opens a weak 1NT. East may deploy the partnership method to retreat to hearts or perhaps attempt to show both majors. North will act further, either doubling again or trying 2NT. South might then get to play in 3♦. You can make 130 in diamonds by finessing in trumps. 2NT makes on a heart lead but is down one on a spade lead and two off on a club lead.

Board 13. Dealer North. Vulnerability All

<p>♠ K107653 ♥ KJ86 ♦ K10 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ 7542 ♦ AQJ972 ♣ Q8</p>	<p>♠ AJ ♥ A93 ♦ 6543 ♣ A1032</p>
<p>♠ Q842 ♥ Q10 ♦ 8 ♣ KJ9764</p>	

We had better hope Larry Cohen does not see this deal since although both sides have a 10-card fit neither side can make 10 tricks on best defence. Perhaps the bidding will stop in 4♦ if North opens 1♠, East doubles, South bids 2NT (to show a sound raise) and West bids either 3♦ or 3♥. North then bids 3♠ and West competes to 4♦. The losers in 4♦ are two hearts and one in each minor. 4♠ is missing four aces.

Board 14. Dealer East. Vulnerability None

<p>♠ 5 ♥ AK104 ♦ Q73 ♣ AK832</p> <p>♠ K98 ♥ 8 ♦ K9642 ♣ J1074</p>	<p>♠ Q1072 ♥ J965 ♦ A108 ♣ 65</p>
<p>♠ AJ643 ♥ Q732 ♦ J5 ♣ Q9</p>	

North should get to open 1♣ in fourth seat and South responds 1♠. North might reverse to 2♥ or rebid 1NT. South would raise hearts or, after 1NT, look for a heart fit. The most testing lead against 4♥ is a low spade from East. You go down if you put up the ♠A and take two rounds of trumps. You need to cash one top trump from the North hand or not play trumps at all. 3NT is down on most reasonable lines of defence.

Board 15. Dealer South. Vulnerability N/S

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

If South opens INT, West may pass with the plan to double next time if the bidding is in 2♥. Using transfers but otherwise natural methods, North bids 2♥, then 3♥, then 4♥ to show 5-5 in the majors. With the ♥K over the ♥A, a club lead defeats 3NT by at least two tricks (three if East switches to a spade when in with the ♣Q). 4♥ is makeable but perhaps only if declarer takes the ♣A and leads the ♠9 (!) at trick two.

Board 16. Dealer West. Vulnerability E/W

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

Many tables will witness a brief INT-3NT auction. It is hard to fault North for leading the ♦K, though this enables declarer to win with the ♦A and return the suit (perhaps after taking some clubs first). This sets up a slow diamond winner and, if declarer braves the spade finesse, the possibility of 11 tricks for 660. If East is in 3NT, the ♥Q lead proves safe. Even so, South may need to take care not to discard any spades.

Board 17. Dealer North. Vulnerability None

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

If East opens a weak 2♥, South is a bit strong for a 2NT overcall and may double first. A heart lead and diamond switch beats 2NT. If South plays in 3♠ (after a transfer), a heart lead and a switch to either minor beats it – giving West a heart ruff is not good enough because later one of North's diamonds can go on the ♥K and another can go on the fourth round of clubs. 3♠ is a bit easier to defeat if North declares.

Board 18. Dealer East. Vulnerability N/S

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

At favourable vulnerability East might pre-empt as high as 4♣. South is a bit flat but some will double, in which case North plays in 4♦. The opening lead is critical. A club beats it by three because West scores a ruff and an overruff, East a ruff too. A heart beats it by two but a spade or (nobody will do this) a trump lead allows 4♦ to make. 4♣ would be two down with two tricks in each black suit and the ♦A to lose.

Board 19. Dealer South. Vulnerability E/W

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

South opens 1♣ and it is West's turn to preempt, here with 3♥. North, holding four spades and some values, probably doubles 3♥. With a 7-card club suit, South is likely to pot 5♣. After West cashes a top heart, 5♣ must fail by a trick. East will either score two trump tricks or, by ruffing the fourth round of diamonds low, one trick in each black suit. 5♦ is the safest game. 11 tricks are on in spades too as the cards lie.

Board 20. Dealer West. Vulnerability All

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

North has a tricky opening bid. With all those values in the short suits, many will open 2NT. South transfers with 3♦, intending to pass 3♥, but North may well super accept with 4♥. With aces everywhere else, East leads the ♦7. Not keen on playing spades from hand, declarer leads a trump at trick two, pleased to flush out the ♥A at once. With normal guesswork it should then be possible to lose just the aces.

Board 21. Dealer North. Vulnerability N/S

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

West gets to open in fourth seat and is likely to choose a simple 1♠. The vulnerability and poor suits may deter North from coming in, though INT is available to show a two-suited hand – it cannot be natural by a passed hand! East raises spades and West easily reaches 4♠. If you play this board at the end of the session and need a good score, you might go against the odds and drop the ♠K. Most will make only 11 tricks.

Board 22. Dealer East. Vulnerability E/W

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

While the points are 20-20 and East-West have the higher-ranking trump suit, this deal belongs to North-South. With clubs 2-2, a winning guess in the diamond suit allows 11 tricks with clubs as trumps. 8 tricks are the limit in spades since the ♦K is inside but the suit divides 4-2. It is likely that West opens 1♠ in third seat and North stretches to double. East then raises to 2♠, South bids 3♣ and West competes to 3♠.

Board 23. Dealer South. Vulnerability All

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

1♥-1♠-2♥-3♥-4♥ seems a normal way to bid the West and East cards. Declarer will be able to discard a diamond on the third round of spades, so all depends upon playing the trumps for one loser. Both because it may be easier to attack trumps from hand and because if South switches to a diamond it will suggest North has diamond length, declarer will usually lead up to the ♥K and succeed.

Board 24. Dealer West. Vulnerability None

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

In response to a weak INT, I play a gadget to show a three-suited hand but most will simply use Stayman on the East cards. West then denies a major and also declines to bid game if East invites with 2NT. The ♠8 lead (second highest from a poor suit) would give declarer an easy way to an overtrick or two. On a heart lead the defenders surely get two tricks in each red suit and often another trick as well.

Board 25. Dealer North. Vulnerability E/W

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

If East opens a weak INT in second seat, South might decide the vulnerability is right to enter the auction. North can hardly fail to raise to 3♠ in that case. Declarer is unlikely to get a complete count of East's points before tackling the trumps so will usually finesse into the singleton ♠K and make only 8 tricks. A heart contract plays well for East-West with spade forces needed to stop 10 tricks if declarer guesses well.

Board 26. Dealer East. Vulnerability All

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

East will open some number of diamonds – 1♦, 4♦ or even 5♦. South would bid 1♠ over 1♦ and double 5♦. It is less clear what happens if East chooses to open 4♦. 5♦ doubled is a cheap sacrifice against game, with one trick in each suit to lose. A spade contract yields 12 tricks on a non-heart lead. On an unlikely heart lead declarer needs to win at once to block the suit or else end up with only 10 tricks.

Board 27. Dealer South. Vulnerability None

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

North opens 1♠ in third seat and, because the suit is so good, probably rebids 2♠ over a 1NT response – South would give preference back to 2♠ over 2♦ anyway. East probably leads a club. West wins with the ace and may well switch to a diamond. Working on the theory of split aces, declarer inserts the jack. East needs to win this and find the heart switch; a diamond continuation would result in 10 tricks.

Board 28. Dealer West. Vulnerability N/S

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

As the West hand is suitable as dummy in a spade contract, most will West players will pass despite the favourable vulnerability. South then gets to open 1♣ in fourth seat and West can freely pre-empt. Even if you misguess the trumps, 5♦ doubled is cheap compared to 620. If North-South go on to 5♥, declarer may need to find both major-suit queens to make it. South will not like going so high facing a passed hand.

Board 29. Dealer North. Vulnerability All

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

If North opens a weak 1NT, West has the ideal shape to bid 2♣, Landy, showing both majors. East then bids 2♦ to pass the buck. With better spades, West may rebid 2♠. South, eyeing 5-4 in the minors, will be reluctant to defend and might bid 3♣ or perhaps 2NT to show two suits despite the disparity. A low spade lead might beat 2♠ by two but many leads allow 2♠ to make. 3♣ and 2NT are on for North-South.

Board 30. Dealer East. Vulnerability None

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

The movement used in an online pairs means that few if any pairs will play this board. If some do, I wonder whether anyone will play in 1♠ redoubled. You can certainly get there if South opens 1♦, West overcalls 1♠ and South reopens with a double. So long as they do not sell out at the one level, North-South should get a plus score, with 10 tricks available in a club contract (four in each minor and two heart ruffs).

Board 31. Dealer South. Vulnerability N/S

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

After South opens 1♠ and West overcalls 2♣, North might double or bid 2♥. South might jump to 3♠ whichever of those options North chooses. 3♠ can make even without a helpful lead because declarer has 8 top tricks and should be able to arrange an endplay against West. If South plays in no-trumps, any lead other than a club might hold declarer to 8 tricks, a heart being best from a defensive viewpoint.

Board 32. Dealer West. Vulnerability E/W

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

Playing 4-card majors, West opens 1♠. North may overcall 2♥ and East has a sound raise to 2♠. With 17 HCP it takes discipline for West to pass but the shape (4333) and the intermediate cards (not even an eight, let alone a nine or ten) are about as bad as they ever could be. Even 3♠ goes down if the defenders cash two top clubs, ruff a club and switch to a heart – but of course East would accept any game try.