

# **British Autumn Sim Pairs**



**Tuesday  
8<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

Welcome to the British Autumn Simultaneous Pairs. Thank you for playing. I hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert. The commentator for this set of hands is Brian Senior.

This is your last chance in 2019 to qualify for prizes. The leading overall pair drawn for this event will win £100. Every club which enters a heat of any EBU organised event, excluding any participating unaffiliated English clubs, will be included in a random draw. One 'entry' in the draw is awarded for every ten tables (or part thereof) which take part in any single heat. The draw will be made at the AGM in November.

You can find all the full details (including detail of the revised prize structure), results and last year's prize winners at [www.ebu.co.uk/sims/](http://www.ebu.co.uk/sims/)

You can earn Blue points and they are awarded to the top third of the field. Provisional results will appear quickly but they won't be finalised and nor will the master point awards until all results are in and score corrections have been made. This can take up to three weeks. It really helps us if you can keep your scorecard for that period. Clubs should keep the travellers if still used.

Jeremy Dhondy, Chairman EBU

<p>♠ J ♥ J942 ♦ AKQ987 ♣ K8</p> <p>♠ 82                      ♠ 974 ♥ 83                        ♥ 1065 ♦ 532                      ♦ J1064 ♣ Q106543              ♣ A97</p> <p>♠ AKQ10653 ♥ AKQ7 ♦ - ♣ J2</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="65 1249 188 1435"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>14</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 1249 469 1435"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		14		2	5	19		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	5	6	6	6	S	2	5	6	6	6	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p><b>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</b></p> <p>We don't see many old-fashioned strong jump shifts these days, partly because so many tournament players prefer to play the two-level jump shift as weak. Some would argue that this South hand does not qualify either, as a common style is to play that a strong jump shift is either one-suited or, if two-suited, the second suit is support for opener's suit. However, I don't see that it can hurt that much for South to respond 2♠ with the intention of rebidding 3♥ at his next turn. After all, if South starts with a simple 1♠, his next bid is not so easy unless the agreement is that 2♥ would be forcing over partner's 2♦ rebid.</p> <p>Anyway, I would jump to 2♠, rebid 3♥ over North's 3♦ and, when North supports hearts, possibly with a simple raise to 4♥, possibly via a 4♣ cue-bid, I would cue-bid 4♠ so long as I trusted partner not to take that as an attempt to play there. If that was a serious worry, I would instead bid 5♥, asking partner to bid slam with a club control.</p> <p>6NT is the place to play, as it will be declared by North and so is a sure thing, but it will be tough to get there. 6♥ would also be secure if we could get it played by North, but I don't see how to achieve that. As it is, West will lead a club and playing low from dummy will bring home the slam. Of course, once in a while, we will find that West has made a cunning underlead of the ace of clubs and we will go down – but not today.</p>
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<p>♠ Q87 ♥ A5 ♦ KJ752 ♣ AJ6</p> <p>♠ 1096                      ♠ AKJ543 ♥ 4                         ♥ KQJ76 ♦ Q43                      ♦ 8 ♣ K109732              ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ 109832 ♦ A1096 ♣ Q85</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="65 1939 188 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>15</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 1939 469 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		15		5	14	6		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	4	2	-	3	S	1	4	1	-	1	E	-	-	-	3	-	W	-	-	-	3	-	<p><b>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>The East hand has great potential if a trump suit can be agreed. East will open 1♠ and West should raise to 2♠. Now, what should North do?</p> <p>North has 14 HCP but there is nothing that appeals other than a reluctant pass. North is, after all, vulnerable, and a three-level overcall on that diamond suit is very dangerous, while a take-out double when holding only a doubleton heart is even less attractive. So, pass it is.</p> <p>East should jump to game now. Very little is required to make 10 tricks, while it is asking too much to try for slam – all too often, any slam hunt ends up with us stopping in 4♠ or maybe 5♠, but having tipped off our hand to the defence, which will often cost a trick.</p> <p>Double dummy, 4♠ cannot be made, but in practice the unrevealing auction is likely to see South lead the ten of hearts to North's ace. Now declarer is in a position to ruff the remaining small heart and a good spade guess would bring home the contract. Some will guess well for an excellent +420, but in truth there is no good reason to get spades right and I would expect the majority to go down.</p>
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<p>♠ A542 ♥ 1093 ♦ AJ98 ♣ KQ</p> <p>♠ J1093      ♠ 87 ♥ Q8542      ♥ AKJ7 ♦ 107          ♦ KQ63 ♣ 74            ♣ J85</p> <p>♠ KQ6 ♥ 6 ♦ 542 ♣ A109632</p>	<p><b>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>North has a weak no-trump and East is just short of what is required for a double so should pass. South can transfer to clubs and that gets NS to much the best part-score of 3♣.</p> <p>In 3♣ there should be one heart and two diamonds to be lost – if North is declarer East will cash a top heart and probably switch safely to a trump, leaving declarer to test the spade break but eventually fall back on two diamond finesses, both of which will lose. Still, +130 is just fine, as were South to pass out 1NT East would again lead a top heart and should continue the suit after getting an encouraging signal, thereby holding the contract to eight tricks.</p> <p>If NS are playing a strong no-trump North will have to open one of a suit and that may allow EW into the auction. They can make 2♥ easily enough, but no more. Being vulnerable, they will need to be careful not to compete too vigorously, though 3♥ will rarely get doubled and –100 would be a good result for EW.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
14		N	4	3	-	2	2
3	14	S	4	3	-	2	2
	9	E	-	-	2	-	-
		W	-	-	2	-	-

<p>♠ Q10986 ♥ K10 ♦ 6 ♣ AQ1092</p> <p>♠ KJ7              ♠ A32 ♥ J64              ♥ 9852 ♦ A10543          ♦ Q982 ♣ 74              ♣ J3</p> <p>♠ 54 ♥ AQ73 ♦ KJ7 ♣ K865</p>	<p><b>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>North has only 11 HCP, which would not always be sufficient for an opening bid, but with five-five shape and very good intermediates, this is an automatic 1♠ opening.</p> <p>South will respond 2♣ and, North, with great club support but only a minimum opening, will raise quietly to 3♣.</p> <p>South has a balanced hand with four weak-ish clubs, so has no interest in a club contract – not with both red suits so well covered – and bids 3NT.</p> <p>North may not be sure that 3NT will be the correct spot but should trust partner to know what he or she is doing and pass.</p> <p>West will presumably lead a low diamond to the queen and king, and declarer will rattle off the clubs. True, a heart to the ten at trick two would net an overtrick, but that would be a wild gamble, particularly as the defenders don't know about our four-card heart suit and may discard from their four-card holding, giving the overtrick at no risk. East would probably hang on to jack-to-four hearts, but plenty of defenders will discard from four-to-the-nine, so I expect quite a few +630s on the scoresheet.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11		N	4	1	3	4	4
9	7	S	4	1	3	4	4
	13	E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 983 ♥ 97 ♦ QJ106 ♣ AKQ2</p> <p>♠ 765              ♠ J1042 ♥ A1032          ♥ KQJ54 ♦ 87              ♦ K3 ♣ 10986          ♣ J5</p> <p>♠ AKQ ♥ 86 ♦ A9542 ♣ 743</p>	<p><b>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>All North's values are concentrated in two suits, but that will not affect the opening bid, which will be 1NT if playing weak no-trumps. East may make a bid that shows both majors – the hand is ideal for a Landy 2♣ bid – and perhaps South will double to show some points?</p> <p>West will have an easy 2♥ bid and when that comes back to South he will want to force to game but, being warned about a possible heart problem, may cue-bid 3♥ to ask North for a stopper. North will respond 4♣, the lower of the two four-card suits, and South convert to 4♦. If North now raises to 5♦, NS will have reached the best game, one which requires only a successful trump finesse. Today they will be well rewarded for their careful bidding as the ♦K is where they need it to be.</p> <p>Surely, anyone who alights in a no-trump contract will lose the first five tricks, as East has an automatic heart lead. Any NS who do not get any opposition bidding to warn them will rightly consider themselves to be very unlucky.</p> <p>They will bid it 1NT – 3NT, and down they will go.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
12		N	4	5	1	2	2
4	11	S	4	5	1	2	2
	13	E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠AQ94 ♥AK ♦A1082 ♣J98</p> <p>♠10752            ♠K8 ♥J10975           ♥- ♦53                ♦KJ9764 ♣K5                ♣Q10742</p> <p>♠J63 ♥Q86432 ♦Q ♣A63</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">18</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4      9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		18	4      9	9	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	3	3	2	S	-	-	3	3	2	E	-	2	-	-	-	W	-	2	-	-	-	<p><b>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>Vulnerable, I wouldn't expect many Easts to open as dealer, though there will be those who open 3♦, a weak 2♦, or even an occasional 1♦. For me, the hand doesn't quite fit in any of those slots and, with a genuine two-suiter, it might be better to pass first time around, then decide whether to come in on the next round.</p> <p>South has a poor six-card suit but, non-vulnerable, it is a normal enough weak two bid.</p> <p>North might bid a 2NT inquiry, but the practical bid is a raise to 4♥. I think that should silence East – five-of-a-minor could be a winner, but it could also be a big loser, as is the case on the actual deal.</p> <p>On a three-two trump split, 4♥ would be easy, but on the actual five-zero break it has no chance at all. While nine tricks are available double dummy, in practice there will be people going down two. Try it on the lead of the king of clubs, for example, though I suppose a diamond or spade is more likely than such an aggressive choice.</p>
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<p>♠J104 ♥K764 ♦KQ1054 ♣3</p> <p>♠9875            ♠AKQ63 ♥J532            ♥98 ♦982             ♦6 ♣65               ♣A10842</p> <p>♠2 ♥AQ10 ♦AJ73 ♣KQJ97</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">1      13</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">17</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>1</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9	1      13	17	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	5	4	-	1	S	1	5	4	-	1	E	-	-	-	1	-	W	-	-	-	1	-	<p><b>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>South opens 1♣ and North responds 1♦. East overcalls 1♠ and South may jump to 3♠, splinter bid in support of diamonds.</p> <p>North will quite like that, having only one wasted point opposite the promised shortage. Fearing that 4♦ might end the auction, and that 4♣, partner's first suit, could be misinterpreted, North may try a 4♥ cue-bid as a safe non-committal slam try. When South now bids 5♦, denying the ability to cue-bid either 4♠ or 5♣, North knows that both black aces should be missing so passes out 5♦, which proves to be an easy make.</p> <p>There are other routes for NS to take, but this looks to be the one that is most clear cut, with little scope for messing up. South might, for example, make a take-out double of the 1♠ overcall, but that will make it that much harder to be certain of the nine-card diamond fit.</p> <p>4♥ can be made on the four-three fit, but that requires careful play and is not really where we would want to end up.</p>
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<p>♠AQJ52 ♥QJ7 ♦8 ♣J972</p> <p>♠107            ♠K943 ♥10             ♥543 ♦AQ97643      ♦K52 ♣K108           ♣A54</p> <p>♠86 ♥AK9862 ♦J10 ♣Q63</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">11</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9      10</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		11	9      10	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	3	1	-	S	1	-	3	1	-	E	-	4	-	-	-	W	-	4	-	-	-	<p><b>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</b></p> <p>West has a sound 3♦ opening and an aggressive North will double, following the old rule that the player short in the pre-emptor's suit must strain to get into the auction.</p> <p>If North does double, East may raise to 4♦ or may pass. Either way, South holds one of the more obvious 4♥ bids we will come across, and that should be that.</p> <p>Alas, the ♠K is offside, as it rates to be on the auction, and there are four unavoidable losers and 4♥ should be down one.</p> <p>And if North does not double? If East passes, South will surely overcall 3♥ and it would take a remarkably inspired North not to raise to game, so the outcome will be the same. If East raises to 4♦, that may be enough to silence South, but might not North double when that comes back around, safe in the knowledge that the first-round pass limits the hand nicely. Mind you, South is still going to bid 4♥, so it appears that all roads lead to 4♥-1 by NS.</p> <p>Actually, that is OK. EW would make 4♦ if allowed to play there, so 4♥-1 is actually a good sacrifice.</p>
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<p>♠AJ4 ♥762 ♦J1095 ♣1087</p> <p>♠Q1073      ♠5 ♥K95      ♥J84 ♦Q6      ♦AK7432 ♣AQ62      ♣K95</p> <p>♠K9862 ♥AQ103 ♦8 ♣J43</p>	<p><b>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>I can imagine the auction to this one being very short and sweet. East will open 1♦, South overcall 1♠, and West close proceedings with a jump to 3NT.</p> <p>That gives North a very interesting opening lead problem. From North's perspective, a spade lead could cost a trick, so he may look elsewhere for the opening attack. The big winner is to lead a heart, South putting in the ten to force the king. For a brief moment, West will have visions of overtricks, until he tries the diamonds and finds North with a stopper. With the hearts established and the spade situation a danger also, the best that West can do is to cash out for down one.</p> <p>It would be a disaster for North to lead ace then jack of spades, after which declarer would make despite the four-one diamond split, while a low spade to South's king also may not be good enough. True, South has time to switch to the queen of hearts, losing to the king but leaving the ace-ten over dummy's jack for when North gains the lead, but he may not spot this and instead continue with a spade. If North wins the jack and ace, the ♠Q and ♥K become declarer's eighth and ninth winners.</p>																																												
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<p>♠KJ7 ♥J8 ♦AKJ54 ♣J72</p> <p>♠A109853      ♠Q6 ♥A962      ♥Q107 ♦3      ♦Q98 ♣53      ♣KQ1086</p> <p>♠42 ♥K543 ♦10762 ♣A94</p>	<p><b>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>I would imagine that most Easts will upgrade their 11-count because of the decent five-card suit and useful intermediates. If playing weak no-trump, 1NT is what the opening should be – this is a balanced hand, and all those queens and intermediates are very much no-trump orientated values, rather than a singles-suited club hand.</p> <p>On a good day, West will think that game is possible, for all that he has just the two aces, but more often than not searching for game risks getting too high and going down. West should use Stayman and, when East responds 2♦, settle for 2♠, which may end the auction.</p> <p>However, North will be aware that 2♠ is not a strong bid and may compete with 3♦. I say may, because this is quite a dangerous action when vulnerable and with left-hand-opponent having opening values with no major. If no major, East may have an awkward diamond holding. This time, a 3♦ bid from North will merely push West to 3♠, ending the auction.</p> <p>3♦ is doomed to failure on competent defence, while 3♠ comes down to how declarer negotiates the trump suit – low towards the queen makes the contract, the double finesse, starting with the queen from dummy, means down at least one.</p>																																												
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<p>♠J7 ♥Q543 ♦87 ♣K10987</p> <p>♠AQ52      ♠8643 ♥KJ82      ♥9 ♦K95      ♦QJ1043 ♣J4      ♣AQ2</p> <p>♠K109 ♥A1076 ♦A62 ♣653</p>	<p><b>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</b></p> <p>Although South has a couple of tens backing up higher honours, the 4-3-3-3 shape and lack of genuine honour combinations does not suggest a hand worthy of an upgrade. South will usually pass and West can open a weak 1NT. It isn't clear that anyone can come in over that so 1NT will often end the auction.</p> <p>North is likely to lead the ten of clubs, which declarer can run to the jack. The ace of diamonds will be knocked out and South will be inclined to play back a heart, though he should consider the fact that North did not lead the suit, so declarer is almost certain to have at least four cards in the suit. If declarer is willing to risk the club finesse – South would of course have ducked the king at trick one – he will come to at least nine tricks and possibly more, depending on how many heart tricks he is given.</p> <p>Where West opens one of a suit, the spade fit should be found. With spades three-two and the king onside, there are 10 tricks without having to break sweat. It is unlikely that many will bid the thin and fortunate game, but there will be the odd +420 and that will score a huge number of match-points.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ 95 ♥ K109874 ♦ K ♣ Q1093</p> <p>♠ Q108                      ♠ KJ74 ♥ AJ52                      ♥ - ♦ Q74                         ♦ AJ932 ♣ AJ5                         ♣ K874</p> <p>♠ A632 ♥ Q63 ♦ 10865 ♣ 62</p>	<p><b>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>West has another weak no-trump and North may overcall 2♥. That is far from being compulsory when vulnerable, but it pays in the long run to disturb opposing 1NT openings and I would expect most tournament regulars to compete. East may make a take-out double, though that is dangerous when void in the opponents' suit as partner may leave it in with what will prove to be an inadequate trump holding. It may be wiser for East to cue-bid 3♥ or, if that would have a different meaning, bid a forcing 3♦ and hope to see partner bid 3♠ if the has four of the suit. EW can make game in any of no-trump, spades or diamonds, but they are most likely to end up in 3NT once they discover that there is no four-four spade fit. In 3NT, if West wins the ♥10 lead to the queen and ace and plays on spades he will go down as South returns the ♥6 and traps the jack. Ducking until the third round of hearts makes the contract, as North has no entry, but that would be the losing play were the ♠A with North. It's a tricky hand both in the auction and the play. If East does double 2♥ for take-out, West may leave it in and scramble +200 for a very sweaty down one.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8	-	-	1	-	-
14    12	-	-	1	-	-
6	4	5	-	4	3
	4	5	-	4	4

<p>♠ 10953 ♥ Q108 ♦ 109 ♣ KJ72</p> <p>♠ K62                         ♠ A874 ♥ A                             ♥ 954 ♦ 875432                     ♦ KQ6 ♣ 653                         ♣ Q98</p> <p>♠ QJ ♥ KJ7632 ♦ AJ ♣ A104</p>	<p><b>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>After two passes, South will open 1♥. West will pass and North must find a response. Those playing five-card majors would have no decision to make, the North hand being an easy raise to 2♥. Even playing Acol, where opener might be four-four in the majors, there is a good case for raising to 2♥ and getting the hand off your chest in one bid. If that is North's choice, South might raise invitationaly to 3♥ and North pass. Many Norths, however, will prefer to respond 1♠ and now South will jump to 3♥. Again, though holding useful hearts support, North has a completely minimum hand for the initial response, so should pass. There is little to the play. Declarer has four top losers after a diamond lead and will have plenty of time to draw trumps then set up a spade trick for a club discard.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
6	3	-	3	1	-
7    11	3	-	3	1	-
16	-	2	-	-	-
	-	2	-	-	-

<p>♠ 7 ♥ KJ73 ♦ K9653 ♣ 953</p> <p>♠ AJ4                         ♠ KQ5 ♥ Q106                      ♥ A854 ♦ A42                         ♦ 87 ♣ AQ86                      ♣ J1072</p> <p>♠ 1098632 ♥ 92 ♦ QJ10 ♣ K4</p>	<p><b>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</b></p> <p>Would you open the South hand with a weak 2♠ bid? I have to admit that I would, but I can understand that this will not appeal to everyone. Say that South does open 2♠, West will overcall 2NT and East will raise to game, possibly going via Stayman in case there is a four-four heart fit. For what it's worth, I wouldn't use Stayman. My worry would be that if both partner and I have spade strength there is a big risk of conceding a spade ruff if we do find a heart fit, so it might be wiser to stick to no-trump. It is all academic, of course, as there is no heart fit so everyone will get to 3NT. Where South does not open, West opens 1♣ and North may overcall 1♦. Again, it is hard to see any alternative to playing 3NT with two balanced hands, at least one stopper in every suit, and a combined 27 HCP. Declarer can duck a couple of rounds of diamonds, but it will not matter. There are nine top tricks once the club finesse wins, but there should be no overtrick unless the defence slips up.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
7	-	-	-	-	-
17    10	-	-	-	-	-
6	5	1	4	2	3
	5	2	4	2	3

<p>♠ K1084 ♥ KQ4 ♦ 10765 ♣ 83</p> <p>♠ 973                      ♠ 65 ♥ AJ532                  ♥ 9876 ♦ 9832                     ♦ Q4 ♣ K                         ♣ AQJ52</p> <p>♠ AQJ2 ♥ 10 ♦ AKJ ♣ 109764</p>	<p><b>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>South opens 1♣ and West may overcall or may pass, depending on what the attitude is to the bare king of clubs. It should not matter very much. If there is no overcall, North will respond 1♠, South raise to 3♠ and North go on to game. If there is a 1♥ overcall, North may have to double to show four spades, and South will again jump to 3♠ and North go on to game. The only difference, then, might be who becomes declarer in the spade game.</p> <p>The cards lie well for NS, with the doubleton queen of diamonds onside so that there is no losing guess, and with the ♥A onside. It doesn't look as though it matters whether West goes up with the ace when the ten of hearts is led towards North's honour holding. If West does go up, there are three inescapable losers and 10 easy winners. If the ace is ducked, declarer could avoid a heart loser if it was possible to take two heart ruffs, draw trumps and untangle the diamonds, but the communications to do all of that seem not to be present, so 10 tricks should again be the limit.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ AKJ8 ♥ AQ85 ♦ Q102 ♣ 98</p> <p>♠ 4                         ♠ 10965 ♥ KJ62                  ♥ 9 ♦ AK3                     ♦ J98765 ♣ AK1062               ♣ 53</p> <p>♠ Q732 ♥ 10743 ♦ 4 ♣ QJ74</p>	<p><b>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>West opens 1♣ and North doubles. Playing simple Acol, East will pass. No doubt the South players will be split between responding 1♥ and 1♠. My style is usually to respond in the cheaper suit with equal length unless I am strong enough to bid again in competition, but here I will not plan to compete if West rebids clubs as I am happy to defend with this club holding. So, I would respond 1♥, the cheaper of my two majors, rather than worry that the spades are slightly stronger.</p> <p>It isn't clear what West will do over an opposing 1♥, perhaps bid 1NT? If so, North may compete to 2♥. Will East now compete with 3♦, expecting partner to be more balanced so have some support for the six-card suit? For sure, if North does not raise hearts East will run to the safety of the long diamonds.</p> <p>If, on the other hand, South responds 1♠, West has an easy take-out double. If North raises to 2♠, East may pass and West double again. Now East will bid the diamonds.</p> <p>East can make 3♦, while NS are limited to eight tricks in any of hearts, spades or no-trump.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ 1092 ♥ 1063 ♦ J965 ♣ J32</p> <p>♠ K876                    ♠ AQJ54 ♥ Q85                     ♥ J97 ♦ 10843                  ♦ AQ ♣ 54                        ♣ K107</p> <p>♠ 3 ♥ AK42 ♦ K72 ♣ AQ986</p>	<p><b>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</b></p> <p>Far too strong to open a weak no-trump – many would think the hand too good even for a strong no-trump with the good five-card suit and 17 HCP – East will open 1♠ and South will double.</p> <p>The EW system and West's natural style will both affect what he bids now. Playing five-card majors, it would be normal to raise pre-emptively to 3♠ as there is a known nine-card fit. Playing four-card majors, some will still raise to 3♠ while others will content themselves with a simple 2♠.</p> <p>Whatever the level to which West raises the opening bid, East should not bid on. 17 HCP and a five-card suit is all very well, but the East hand contains a lot of potential losers and South has announced that most of the missing high cards are badly placed for EW. Indeed, 2♠ is the limit on the EW cards.</p> <p>Does that mean that the 2♠ raise is the winner then? No, because when 2♠ comes back to South he will double again and North will bid 3♦. That would be down a couple, but can you honestly say that you would be willing to defend with the East hand, or would you take the push to 3♠ and go down yourself?</p> <p>If West bids 3♠ at his first turn, South will still double again, but at this level East should have less temptation to rescue North, who will be left to play 4♦, probably doubled, for a terrible NS result.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ Q7 ♥ 65 ♦ KQ10985 ♣ 1032</p> <p>♠ 86                      ♠ 102 ♥ 93                      ♥ AQ74 ♦ A7                      ♦ J6432 ♣ AKQ9754              ♣ J6</p> <p>♠ AKJ9543 ♥ KJ1082 ♦ - ♣ 8</p>	<p><b>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>Find a fit and the South hand is very powerful indeed. South opens 1♠ and West has a probable eight running tricks. West may make a jump cue-bid of 3♠, which is commonly played as asking partner to bid 3NT with a spade stopper. If you don't play it that way already, why not do so? It won't come up very often, but what else do you need the bid for?</p> <p>With nothing in spades, East should bid 4♣, a sort of pass or correct bid, as West would only bid 3♠ with a long running suit, and East does not want to commit the partnership to 5♣ by bidding diamonds.</p> <p>South could bid 4♥ now to offer a choice of trump suits, but I would be inclined to trust the opposition's bidding and just bid 4♠. After all, neither opponent thinks they have a spade stopper, or they would have bid 3NT. Meanwhile, a seven-five hand will so often play better in the seven-card suit, even if partner prefers the five-carder. The point is that the defence is going to force declarer to ruff clubs and/or diamonds, and the five-card suit may not prove to be long enough.</p> <p>Today, North would give preference to spades anyway, so it doesn't matter what South bids. 4♠ is cold, while there are only eight tricks in a heart contract, and EW make only nine tricks in clubs.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
7		N	-	-	2	4
13	8	S	-	-	2	4
		E	3	-	-	-
		W	3	-	-	-

<p>♠ A ♥ AQ865 ♦ 106 ♣ AJ854</p> <p>♠ 943                      ♠ KJ10872 ♥ 1097                      ♥ - ♦ AQ842                      ♦ 97 ♣ Q2                      ♣ K10963</p> <p>♠ Q65 ♥ KJ432 ♦ KJ53 ♣ 7</p>	<p><b>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>North opens 1♥ and East has a number of options. With six-five distribution East could overcall 2♥, spades and a minor, or could bid a number of spades – 1♠ or 3♠, I think, as the hand has far too much potential playing strength to make a weak jump overcall of 2♠. Actually, reverse the vulnerabilities, and even 4♠ would have its attractions.</p> <p>My own preference is for the pre-emptive jump to 3♠. It won't shut out South this time; South has an easy 4♥ bid, and now I think that West should bid 4♠, despite the adverse vulnerability. That bullies North into bidding 5♥ with his shapely hand, and it is always good to push the opposition to that level.</p> <p>4♠ would have gone only one down, so would have been an excellent save against the cold 4♥, and it follows that NS need to take the risk of going on to 5♥, which is also unbeatable, though there is some work to do with diamond honours both offside, and it is easy to see how declarer might end up a trick short.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15		N	-	1	5	-
8	7	S	-	1	5	-
		E	-	-	-	3
		W	-	-	-	3

<p>♠ J8762 ♥ 8 ♦ KJ65 ♣ AQ4</p> <p>♠ AKQ10                      ♠ 953 ♥ Q4                      ♥ 10963 ♦ 8742                      ♦ AQ93 ♣ K83                      ♣ 95</p> <p>♠ 4 ♥ AKJ752 ♦ 10 ♣ J10762</p>	<p><b>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>West opens 1NT. It would be a brave North who would overcall 2♠ on that suit if playing natural methods, but the bid becomes much more attractive if playing something like Multi-Landy, where 2♠ shows five spades plus a four-card or longer minor.</p> <p>If North does overcall 2♠, West will be very happy, for a moment. But South will surely respond 3♥, not really caring whether the bid is forcing or merely constructive non-forcing. If the latter, North will pass, while if the former North will bid a slightly uncomfortable 3NT and South will correct to 4♥, or possibly 4♣.</p> <p>4♣ is likely to be made as declarer will have no temptation to finesse in hearts and the fall of the queen will be good news. 4♥ is less clear cut. There are sufficient high cards missing that East could easily hold the ♥Q, and it may be necessary to take the finesse when that is the case.</p> <p>If West leads out two top spades, declarer may well take the heart finesse, thereby losing two trump tricks and going one down. If West cashes one spade then switches to a high diamond spot, declarer may read East for the ♦A and ♦Q, and, though East could still hold the ♥Q as well, declarer is more likely to play the suit from the top and make his game.</p>
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HCP		Makeable contracts				
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11		N	4	-	4	-
14	6	S	4	-	4	-
		E	-	1	-	-
		W	-	1	-	-



<p>♠ Q10953 ♥ J ♦ Q965 ♣ A109</p> <p>♠ A6                      ♠ KJ7 ♥ A106                    ♥ Q8752 ♦ AK1087                ♦ J ♣ J84                      ♣ K732</p> <p>♠ 842 ♥ K943 ♦ 432 ♣ Q65</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>5</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>-</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>4</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9	10	16	5	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	4	4	2	4	W	4	4	4	3	4	<p><b>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>There should be three passes to West, who will open 1♦. North can overcall 1♠ and East will probably double with a heart to spare – even as a passed hand, I don't think I'd want to bid 2♥ with that weak suit.</p> <p>South will probably not raise spades at this vulnerability, so West will rebid 1NT, 15-17, and East will drive to game. With weaker spades, East would check back for a five-three heart fit, but if partner can bid no-trump and we have ♠K J 7, do we need to worry about finding a trump suit? Partner surely won't have four hearts.</p> <p>How might West play 3NT on a spade lead? One possibility is to win the ace and lead a low diamond towards the jack. That's OK if North takes the queen, but declarer's communications are a little awkward if the jack scores – a heart to the ten would now work very badly. Maybe declarer will therefore lead a low heart at trick two to the jack, queen and king. Again, communications can get a little awkward. So maybe it is actually better to win the ♠J at trick one and run the ♦J. If that holds we have an extra entry to hand to play on diamonds, leaving hearts for later.</p> <p>Ten tricks are possible though, as we have seen, the play is a little tricky and nine may prove to be a more common outcome.</p>
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<p>♠ KQ ♥ AQ1062 ♦ KJ9 ♣ J63</p> <p>♠ J873                      ♠ A1042 ♥ 9                            ♥ J874 ♦ AQ10642                ♦ 83 ♣ K8                        ♣ 942</p> <p>♠ 965 ♥ K53 ♦ 75 ♣ AQ1075</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>9</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		16	5	10	9	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	-	3	-	2	S	4	-	3	-	2	E	-	2	-	1	-	W	-	2	-	1	-	<p><b>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>There will be two passes to West, who will surely open in third seat. I wouldn't mind a weak 2♦ in this position, and that would give North an interesting choice between overcalling 2♥ and 2NT, losing the fifth heart but giving full weight to the diamond holding and getting across the strength and essential nature of the hand. I would favour 2NT, but can understand those who prefer 2♥.</p> <p>South would raise 2NT to 3NT and East lead a diamond. To beat the contract, West would have to win the ace and switch to a spade – certainly possible, but far from automatic.</p> <p>If North overcalls 2♥, South will raise to 3♥ and North go on to game – but 3NT rather than 4♥, to offer a choice of games. I would expect South to pick 3NT if it goes this way.</p> <p>4♥ has a loser in each suit so is down one.</p> <p>Where West opens 1♦, North will overcall 1♥ and South cue-bid 2♦ to show a sound raise. Once again, North should bid 3NT to offer a choice of games and South choose 3NT.</p>
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<p>♠ 32 ♥ J2 ♦ AQ72 ♣ KQ1082</p> <p>♠ 754                      ♠ J10986 ♥ 8                            ♥ K9765 ♦ J654                      ♦ 3 ♣ AJ964                    ♣ 53</p> <p>♠ AKQ ♥ AQ1043 ♦ K1098 ♣ 7</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>18</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; 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>4</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		12	4	6	18	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	6	4	2	6	S	4	6	4	2	6	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p><b>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>South opens 1♥ and rebids a quiet 2♦ over the 2♣ response – even if a jump to 3♦ is played as strong and natural, it should still show at least five-five shape as it uses up so much bidding space so needs to be reasonably specific.</p> <p>If North wants to be certain of getting to game it is necessary to go through fourth-suit-forcing, bidding 2♠ over 2♦, and my guess is that most Norths will want to drive to game. In modern style, FSF is forcing to game, which means that South can save space by bidding a quiet 2NT for now. If North raises to 3NT, South can then go on with 4NT to show the big hand. However, in practice, North will bid 3♦ over 2NT, and now South will start a slam hunt, perhaps by raising to 4♦ to ask partner to cue-bid. North has no major-suit cue-bid to make and will probably not want to cue-bid a second-round club control either. If North just bids 5♦, South will not be well placed. The trouble is that at this form of scoring 5♦ making will be a very poor result with 30+ HCP between the two hands. So, South may bid 6♦ despite knowing that the contract can hardly be better than the heart finesse. If so, South will get lucky as careful play will produce 12 tricks.</p> <p>It's all so much easier at teams, where we can explore slam then stop in 5♦ and just concede an odd IMP if our opponents play in no-trump. At match-points, the slam try is very committal as it is hard, if not impossible, to then sign-off in 4NT.</p>
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<p>♠ K8763 ♥ 62 ♦ AKJ4 ♣ Q8</p> <p>♠ AQ2                      ♠ J954 ♥ Q94                      ♥ KJ83 ♦ Q32                      ♦ 85 ♣ 10952                  ♣ KJ6</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ A1075 ♦ 10976 ♣ A743</p>	<p><b>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</b></p> <p>North opens 1♠ and rebids 2♦ over the 1NT response. And that may well be that, though some will raise to 3♦ – an action which is more clear cut at teams scoring, when getting to game is more important.</p> <p>It doesn't appear that there is any way for EW to get into the auction, and they are always likely to be outbid anyway.</p> <p>As is often the case when dummy chooses to play in declarer's second suit, a trump is the best lead for the defence. However, nine tricks can still be made with a little care. Perhaps slightly surprisingly, 2♠ can also be made, though it is unlikely that many will end up in that contract.</p> <p>In a diamond contract, it doesn't actually matter whether declarer is able to lead a spade towards the king or just leads low from hand. Either way, he may be limited to one spade ruff, but the ace then falls on the third round and the king and the fifth card both score to go along with four diamonds, a spade ruff, and two aces.</p>																																																
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<p>♠ A53 ♥ A92 ♦ KQ4 ♣ A985</p> <p>♠ Q62                      ♠ J10874 ♥ 1085                      ♥ K7 ♦ AJ105                    ♦ 83 ♣ 1032                      ♣ KQ76</p> <p>♠ K9 ♥ QJ643 ♦ 9762 ♣ J4</p>	<p><b>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>North opens 1♣ and East will often overcall 1♠. I say often, because for some the suit will not be considered good enough and those players will pass.</p> <p>Where East passes, South will respond 1♥ and North will now rebid 1NT. South should think that a heart contract will be safer so correct to 2♥, where nine tricks can be made if 2♥ becomes the final contract. However, now may be the time for East to balance with 2♠, which would be down one. More likely, however, is that North will take the push to 3♥.</p> <p>Where East does overcall 1♠, South will make a negative double and West may raise to 2♠. North has only a single spade stopper so to bid 2NT would be unsound. Better is to double, and that sees South bid 3♥. North may be tempted to bid game now, expecting partner to have five hearts as he had already pretty much promised four with the double, but he should look at just how many losers his hand contains, and make a disciplined pass.</p>																																																
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<p>♠ AJ74 ♥ KJ84 ♦ Q ♣ QJ97</p> <p>♠ 109                      ♠ 8 ♥ Q65                      ♥ A1097 ♦ K8653                  ♦ J972 ♣ 1054                      ♣ A632</p> <p>♠ KQ6532 ♥ 32 ♦ A104 ♣ K8</p>	<p><b>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>South opens 1♠ and North can splinter with 4♦ in response, showing a constructive game raise with a singleton or void diamond.</p> <p>South has no wasted diamond values but has a complete minimum opening bid. Slam would be possible facing three aces, but it is also just possible for there to be three top losers – on the actual deal declarer is on the heart guess for 11 tricks.</p> <p>Playing traditional cue-bidding methods, South would be wise to take the cautious view and sign off in 4♠, accepting that slam will be missed once in a while.</p> <p>Some tournament pairs have a solution to this problem of wanting to make a slam try without committing to going to a possibly dangerous level. They play something called Last Train, where South would bid 4♥ over 4♦ to say that he wasn't ready to give up on slam just yet – nothing about hearts. With poor controls, North would sign-off in 4♠ and South would give up. The golden hand with three aces, however, would bid more, and slam should be reached. Of course, while this looks wonderful and is a very useful agreement when the right hand comes up, sometimes we just wish we could make a heart cue-bid, and that is no longer an option.</p>																																																
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<p>♠ A763 ♥ 84 ♦ A962 ♣ AQ10</p> <p>♠ KQ94                      ♠ 8 ♥ 732                         ♥ Q965 ♦ 854                         ♦ Q73 ♣ K74                         ♣ J9853</p> <p>♠ J1052 ♥ AKJ10 ♦ KJ10 ♣ 62</p>	<p><b>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</b></p> <p>The auction will be very straightforward. South opens 1NT and North uses Stayman. When South rebids 2♥, North jumps to 3NT and South corrects to 4♠, knowing that a hand which could bid game would not be bidding 2♣ with no major. West's spade holding looks as though it could be a problem, but the contract should never be in danger and 11 tricks cannot be prevented if declarer reads everything just right. West will surely lead a red card and that will solve one of declarer's problems. Say that he wins a diamond lead and plays the jack of spades to the king and ace. A second spade would allow West to win two spades then play the fourth round, preventing any ruffs in either hand. Yet even now declarer can come to two spades, three or four diamonds, two clubs and three or four hearts, or 11 in total. I would not, however, be surprised to see that a fair number made only 10 tricks.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ KQ973 ♥ 742 ♦ 52 ♣ A93</p> <p>♠ J82                         ♠ A5 ♥ J953                       ♥ KQ ♦ AJ3                        ♦ KQ104 ♣ 742                        ♣ KQ1065</p> <p>♠ 1064 ♥ A1086 ♦ 9876 ♣ J8</p>	<p><b>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>East opens 1♣ and West responds 1♥. North has a normal 1♠ overcall and East must decide how to show his strong hand. If playing traditional methods, East will probably double then cue-bid 2♠ over West's 2♣ response. Eventually, however, East will have to admit to having a spade stopper and 3NT is the likely outcome. Alas, a spade lead swiftly dooms that to defeat by a couple of tricks. If playing support doubles, East cannot double with this hand as that would show three-card heart support. That need not be a problem. Instead, East will bid 2♦, a reverse and still a strong bid, just as in an uncontested auction. West will give preference to 3♣, and East may again end the auction by bidding the doomed 3NT. As we can see, a spade lead beats 3NT very easily, and those who can avoid the doomed game should score very well. But it is hard to blame anyone for getting to game with a combined 26 HCP and at least one stopper in every suit.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ - ♥ 109832 ♦ A105 ♣ KQJ73</p> <p>♠ A754                       ♠ KJ863 ♥ K74                        ♥ Q65 ♦ KJ64                       ♦ Q93 ♣ 65                         ♣ 108</p> <p>♠ Q1092 ♥ AJ ♦ 872 ♣ A942</p>	<p><b>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</b></p> <p>Should we open the North hand? There are only 10 HCP, but the distribution is worth something. I might be tempted to open if the hearts and clubs were switched, but I don't fancy opening that weak heart suit and often getting preference to it – or indeed a dangerous heart lead against a spade contract. With both sides vulnerable and nobody having an automatic opening bid, I wonder how often the deal will be passed out? It looks as though that would be good news for EW, as they can make only 1♠, while NS can make nine tricks in hearts or ten in clubs – clearly the latter is the more likely trump suit. Actually, on a spade lead there may be time to set up hearts for diamond discards and make 5♣, and if EW have bid and supported spades, as will usually be the case once someone opens the bidding, a spade lead looks very likely.</p>																																												
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<p>♠ 9872 ♥ 8742 ♦ KQ10 ♣ 85</p> <p>♠ AK4                      ♠ Q ♥ QJ106                    ♥ A5 ♦ J764                      ♦ A983 ♣ K6                        ♣ AQ10932</p> <p>♠ J10653 ♥ K93 ♦ 52 ♣ J74</p>	<p><b>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</b></p> <p>East will open 1♣ and West respond 1♥ – nobody is interested in that weak four-card diamond suit. Now East has to select a rebid, either 2♣, 2♦ or 3♣. To some extent, it is a matter of personal style just how aggressively to make jump rebids of our original suit. Were the queen of spades put into one of the other suits, then the 16 HCP would make the hand too good for a 2♣ rebid. Even as the hand is, there are those who will opt for a stronger rebid than 2♣, but the simple rebid would be my personal choice. As I no doubt have said before, there is no premium on getting to thin games at match-points, and it is always easier to add to values already promised than to subtract from them.</p> <p>My second choice would be 3♣ rather than the 2♦ reverse. This hand is mostly about the club suit, and if partner cannot bid diamonds then it is very unlikely that we belong in the suit. Also, auctions after a reverse are often somewhat murkier than we might like so I think it is losing policy to reverse on borderline hands.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ 10742 ♥ AQ85 ♦ 86 ♣ 954</p> <p>♠ 93                        ♠ Q865 ♥ K63                    ♥ 42 ♦ J742                    ♦ Q10953 ♣ QJ32                   ♣ K7</p> <p>♠ AKJ ♥ J1097 ♦ AK ♣ A1086</p>	<p><b>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</b></p> <p>South has a balanced 20 HCP so a normal 2NT opening. North has enough to commit to game and, with four-four in the majors, uses whatever version of Stayman NS have agreed. Whether that is simple Stayman or Puppet Stayman, the final contract should be 4♥ played by South.</p> <p>The play goes very smoothly for declarer. Both major-suit finesses work so there are four heart tricks, three spade tricks, two diamonds and one club. That makes 10, and a club ruff in dummy provides the overtrick. It is hard to see why anyone would make other than 11 tricks in a heart contract.</p> <p>Meanwhile, a diamond lead would hold 3NT to 10 tricks, but West may lead a club. If declarer tests the two finesses first and, on getting the good news in both majors, plays clubs back at West, he can establish a second trick in the suit and have 11 in all for a very good, if slightly fortuitous, match-point score.</p>																																										
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<p>♠ KJ9 ♥ J32 ♦ A9 ♣ 87642</p> <p>♠ A2                        ♠ Q10853 ♥ 865                    ♥ K74 ♦ Q1072                ♦ K8654 ♣ AKQ5                ♣ -</p> <p>♠ 764 ♥ AQ109 ♦ J3 ♣ J1093</p>	<p><b>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</b></p> <p>Just too strong for a weak no-trump, West will open 1♦ (or perhaps 1♣ by agreement or inclination), and rebid 1NT over the 1♠ response. Facing a balanced 15-17, what will East do?</p> <p>A substantial proportion of the field are likely to drive to game, particularly when facing a 1♦ opening. 1♣ might dampen their enthusiasm somewhat, but still some will insist on game. And, let's face it, there is a nine-card diamond fit but 60% of West's hand is in the club suit, facing East's void.</p> <p>Double dummy, there are only eight tricks to be had in either a spade or a diamond contract, or seven in no-trump.</p> <p>Is there any hope for game? Well, yes, actually, but only if played by East. South is likely to lead the jack of clubs, and suddenly declarer can get rid of all three heart losers before playing on the trump suit. If, for example, East has shown a spade/diamond two-suiter after West has opened 1♣, or a strong no-trump, it is quite possible that 5♦ could be allowed to make. I suspect, however, that making a part-score will score well enough, with many pairs going down in the game of their choice.</p>																																										
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