

♦♠NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION ♥♣



First Interclub – Heat B

23rd - 26th September 2020

Commentary by Ian Hamilton

1

♠ KQ10643
♥ 10
♦ KJ10
♣ KQ3

♠ J82
♥ AQ7632
♦ A
♣ 1054

♠ A975
♥ 54
♦ Q92
♣ AJ86

♠ KJ98
♥ 876543
♣ 972

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	4	-
S	-	-	-	4	-
E	-	1	4	-	-
W	-	1	4	-	-

When east overcalls north's 1♠ with 2♥ south needs to be able to distinguish the nature of his spade raise. His sound high card raise to game is best shown by cue-bidding 3♥. West raises the stakes to 4♥, and north advances to 4♠. East may well press on with 5♥.

The Law of Total Tricks - the sum of both sides longest fits - suggests that there are 20 Total tricks. North can be pretty confident of making 10 tricks, and aware that there is likely to only be 100 on offer in defence, as indeed is the case.

So N/S should perhaps advance to 5♠, where they make 450, except on the diamond ace lead, heart ace underlead and diamond ruff. A mix of results looks on, from 450 in spades N/S, through 300 against 6♥x, 100 defending 5♥x, with the odd -100 in 5♠.

2

♠ 3
♥ J542
♦ J108
♣ AQJ65

♠ QJ2
♥ A10763
♦ 75
♣ 1082

♠ K874
♥ Q
♦ KQ943
♣ 974

♠ A10965
♥ K98
♦ A62
♣ K3

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	1	2	1	3
S	3	1	3	1	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Most will be in 1NT here, south being passed out in his weak NT opener, or north responding 1NT to 1♠. Some could stretch to a very thin 2♣ by north over a south 1♠ and end up higher.

South may well make nine tricks when a heart lead goes to the queen and king, and the knave later scoring.

Where east is on lead a diamond start could allow as many as ten tricks, declarer making two diamonds and perhaps two hearts as well if the spade switch is missed.

So, one to bid up, game there on 23HCP however E/W defend. However, I can't see many achieving this.

3

♠ AQ
♥ AJ93
♦ Q10
♣ KJ842

♠ J104
♥ Q2
♦ 863
♣ AQ1096

♠ 9765
♥ 1054
♦ AK752
♣ 5

♠ K832
♥ K876
♦ J94
♣ 73

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	1	3	2	2
S	2	1	3	2	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Where north opens 1♣ he almost certainly raises south's 1♥ to 3♥. I would pass south's cards now, holding a near minimum. In practice ten tricks may well eventuate, declarer only losing two diamonds and the club ace, thanks to the handy trump and club lies. The defence need to find an improbable second round club ruff to take four tricks,

A few could be passed out in an off-shape north strong NT. A low diamond lead holds this to eight tricks, for a poor board.

4

♠ Q3
♥ Q32
♦ 10754
♣ K762

♠ 9754
♥ J62
♦ Q109543
♣ Q109543

♠ AJ10952
♥ AKJ8
♦ K8
♣ 8

♠ K8764
♥ 106
♦ AQ93
♣ AJ

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	2	-	3	1	-
W	2	-	3	1	-

East has a perfectly good 1♠ opening. South would be wise to pass over this, and nobody else is likely to have anything to add.

South is in trouble on opening lead, and could well help by leading hearts. Whatever the lead declarer can scramble seven tricks if he plays ace and a low trump, bringing down the short queen.

However, I can see many losing three trump tricks, to go with a club, heart and two diamonds, finishing light.

Not very exciting, but an above average board playing or defending 1♠ counts as much as the same score at the game or slam level.

5

♠ AQ2
 ♥ 10843
 ♦ 2
 ♣ AJ965
 ♠ 109543
 ♥ 6
 ♦ J10874
 ♣ K7
 ♠ K7
 ♥ AK952
 ♦ A953
 ♣ 82

 Dealer: North
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4	1	6	1	3
S	4	1	6	1	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

I guess most will open north 1♣, the hand having some shape, and high cards not with shortage. Even with a north pass the N/S heart fit should come to light easily, and the 4♥ game reached, though few will bid the slam.

As the cards lie twelve tricks are there on a crossruff after disposing of a club on a spade, even without setting up the long club, as west has to follow to three club ruffs in south.

Will any get to the dizzy heights and have 1430 on the card?

6

♠ 76
 ♥ Q97653
 ♦ A2
 ♣ J42
 ♠ AK954
 ♥ 4
 ♦ 1098
 ♣ K1095
 ♠ 1032
 ♥ AKJ10
 ♦ K543
 ♣ A3
 ♠ QJ8
 ♥ 82
 ♦ QJ76
 ♣ Q876

 Dealer: East
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	4	3	6	5
W	4	4	3	6	5

An east strong NT easily finds 4♣ via a transfer and 3♣ trial bid. Playing Acol west responds 1♠ to 1♥ and east rebids 1NT. Many play 2♣ as checkback, east then showing his tripleton spade support and west advancing to game. If 2♣ is simply natural east's spade correction may not promise three card support, so 3NT might result.

Those playing in 3NT could easily be held to nine tricks on a diamond lead - they need to take the double spade finesse. Even then eleven tricks are the maximum.

In spades, most will make eleven tricks, playing trumps from the top, though twelve are possible by double finessing trumps as well as getting an east club ruff.

7

♠ K109652
 ♥ KJ
 ♦ 9
 ♣ A643
 ♠ Q7
 ♥ Q96
 ♦ KJ1042
 ♣ K95
 ♠ J83
 ♥ 832
 ♦ A8763
 ♣ 87
 ♠ A4
 ♥ A10754
 ♦ Q5
 ♣ QJ102

 Dealer: South
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	6	-	5	5	2
S	6	-	5	5	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

North has a quandary when south rebids 2♣ after his one spade response to 1♥. A pragmatic 4♣ is maybe best, though some could raise clubs or try a FSF 2♦. However, they need to avoid raising the possible 2NT continuation to the nine trick game - or an embarrassing minus ensues.

Most will end up in 4♣, easily making 650 when the black suits behave. 4♥ can also make the same tricks, but needs the trump queen to be picked up.

Best as the cards lie is 6♣, which comes home when the club finesse works, and spades can be ruffed good. However, it is a well anti-percentage spot, needing both black suits 3:2 and the trump king onside.

Nobody will have 1370 on the card, will they?

8

♠ K104
 ♥ Q62
 ♦ AK6
 ♣ Q983
 ♠ 63
 ♥ K108754
 ♦ Q102
 ♣ J4
 ♠ AJ95
 ♥ AJ9
 ♦ J5
 ♣ AK106
 ♠ Q872
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 98743
 ♣ 752

 Dealer: West
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	1	5	1	3
W	3	1	5	1	3

A west Multi or Weak 2 in hearts gives north a headache. The only sound action is to pass - any that bid lose a horrendous penalty.

Whether west opens or not E/W should get to 4♥, though either side could declare. Where north is on lead he likely plays three rounds of diamonds. If declarer plays for the drop in hearts, he needs to finish in west so that he can avail of the club finesse for spade pitch.

South could lead a spade, meaning declarer has to get trumps right or take an early club finesse to succeed.

Of course, Deep Finesse wins the spade ace, comes to the heart king, gets a spade away on the third club, ruffs a spade to west and makes eleven tricks by finessing north's trump queen. Will anyone emulate?

9

♠ K104
 ♥ 84
 ♦ 8754
 ♣ 10972
 ♠ A75
 ♥ KJ92
 ♦ AQ32
 ♣ 84
 ♠ Q832
 ♥ Q1075
 ♦ K96
 ♣ 65
 ♠ J96
 ♥ A63
 ♦ J10
 ♣ AKQJ3

 Dealer: North
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	-	-	-	-
S	2	-	-	-	-
E	-	2	3	2	-
W	-	2	3	2	-

South's strong NT may well have the desired effect of silencing the opposition, and could even make if the defence mis-discard on five rounds of clubs, declarer sneaking a spade trick. At worst it is one light.

A 1♣ opener will see west doubling, and in theory E/W getting to their heart contract. North might put a spanner in the works with a leap to 3♣, a spot which should be defeated, though could slip through if the defence set up a diamond in north.

Hopefully, most will alight in hearts E/W, where there is little to the play, just losing two clubs, the spade king and the trump ace, 140 on the card.

10

♠ 6
 ♥ Q6543
 ♦ K8652
 ♣ 84
 ♠ 10842
 ♥ 87
 ♦ J1073
 ♣ AK9
 ♠ 5
 ♥ AKJ102
 ♦ A94
 ♣ 10753
 ♠ AKQJ973
 ♥ 9
 ♦ Q
 ♣ QJ62

 Dealer: East
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	2	-
S	-	-	-	2	-
E	3	3	4	-	-
W	3	3	4	-	-

The auction could be short here, east opening 1♥ and south leaping in spades. How high is the question? I think 3♣ is enough, and this could succeed should west start with top clubs, or south somehow sneak the diamond queen.

Deep Finesse better the penalty against spades (if there is one), by bringing home 4♥, though it is hard to see many there, or succeeding.

In 4♥, after ruffing the second spade, east can succeed by double finessing clubs and twice finessing trumps. Top trumps are played, leaving the queen out. The diamond ace fells the queen, and the suit is continued. North must give west diamond tricks and only makes his trump winner in addition to the diamond king.

11

♠ A863
 ♥ 765
 ♦ AJ984
 ♣ 3
 ♠ Q9542
 ♥ 932
 ♦ 102
 ♣ A42
 ♠ KJ107
 ♥ KQ8
 ♦ K7
 ♣ Q875

 Dealer: South
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	5	1	3	1	1
S	5	1	3	1	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

N/S may get an uncontested ride playing Acol, probably getting to 3NT by south after the weak NT and Stayman finds south with the wrong major. West cedes ten tricks with a diamond opening lead, passive defence saving a trick.

5 card majors find 1♣ overcalled 1♦ by west. North may try 1♥, or could simply raise clubs. However, there is a real possibility of missing one of the making games, 5♣ the other contender, it only losing the two minor suit aces. Declarer needs to ruff two diamonds in south, which means delaying drawing trumps.

Even if 3NT is declared it could easily be by north, beaten on a diamond lead. Note the importance of the hand with the short honour declaring NT, it could be played by south.

12

♠ 83
 ♥ 104
 ♦ AKQ8
 ♣ KQ1073
 ♠ AK952
 ♥ 82
 ♦ J53
 ♣ A84
 ♠ 104
 ♥ QJ765
 ♦ 10742
 ♣ J2
 ♠ QJ76
 ♥ AK93
 ♦ 96
 ♣ 965

 Dealer: West
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	2	2	2	3
S	3	2	2	2	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

When his partner overcalls west's 1♠ with 2♣ south may well try 2NT. This should lead to the unbeatable 3NT. On a low spade lead to the 10 and knave declarer needs to play clubs twice to the K/Q to keep east off lead and avoid the killing spade return - or duck the first spade, at the cost of a trick.

Acol opens west with a weak NT, east transferring to hearts. When east passes the completion south may well elect to ensure a plus by defending.

West's 2♥ goes badly light, but cannot go the twelve off needed to tie 3NT. However, those collecting 150-200 in defence may well beat those N/Ss who only declare part-score. Acob a possible winner again.

13

♠ 854
♥ J10876
♦ J104
♣ 52

♠ A7
♥ 52
♦ Q52
♣ AKJ1097

♠ KQJ93
♥ 4
♦ AK98
♣ 863

♠ 1062
♥ AKQ93
♦ 763
♣ Q4

Dealer: North
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	1	-
S	-	1	-	1	-
E	4	-	2	-	4
W	4	-	1	-	3

The space-consuming problems caused by even a simple overall are illustrated here, south overcalling east's 1♣ with 1♠ and west bidding 2♥. East is really only worth 3♣, and the bidding could die there. Some wests could appreciate their club holding and try 3♠, requesting a spade stop, duly forthcoming.

3NT by east has ten top tricks when the opponents are unable to cash more than two diamonds. They are better switching to or leading spades, at least taking three defensive tricks.

Will many miss game here? Maybe east is worth 2NT, if strong, at his second turn.

14

♠ K963
♥ 43
♦ Q6542
♣ 107

♠ QJ
♥ J876
♦ K983
♣ AK2

♠ 10872
♥ K10952
♦
♣ 9863

♠ A54
♥ AQ
♦ AJ107
♣ QJ54

Dealer: East
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	5	3	3	6
W	4	6	4	3	6

West could consider a possible slam when east opens 1♦ or a weak NT, though he will know of a maximum of 32HCP in the latter case, and might be wise to stay low, since the success or otherwise of 6NT involves picking up the diamond suit, ceding a spade and taking the heart finesse. Two successful finesses are a 25% chance.

6♦ is a more credible proposition, perhaps after an inverted raise. Most easts in this spot will go light, but can succeed on a non-spade lead. West gets a heart ruff and picks up trumps. North eventually ruffs a club, but must lead from the spade king.

The motto at pairs is not to bid borderline slams. I bet those making 490 get well above average.

15

♠ AK
♥ 1098
♦ AQ1074
♣ K92

♠ J1093
♥ 742
♦ K2
♣ Q765

♠ Q872
♥ J65
♦ J986
♣ 43

♠ 654
♥ AKQ3
♦ 53
♣ AJ108

Dealer: South
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	2	-	2	-	-
W	2	-	2	-	-

Those norths doubling 1NT can beat it, though declarer could make, even on a diamond lead, by running hearts and getting out in diamonds. South needs to win the exit and find a club switch, or north gets end-played.

A west 1♣ probably sees north overcalling 1NT and again trying to make seven tricks. This time E/W have the advantage of the lead, and a club lead should result in a 200 penalty.

N/S are far better off in diamonds, and might get there if north simply overcalls in the suit. They shouldn't lose more than three hearts, a club and a trump.

Best of all for E/W declaring is to get to their heart fit, which makes the same tricks as 2♣, 110 possible in this fun part-score hand, with multiple likely outcomes.

16

♠ A762
♥ 4
♦ 1098762
♣ J8

♠ KQ1094
♥ Q10
♦ Q5
♣ A1064

♠ 5
♥ AK9532
♦ AJ3
♣ Q32

♠ J83
♥ J876
♦ K4
♣ K975

Dealer: West
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	1	5	3	5
W	4	1	5	3	5

West is just about worth 3♥ when his partner responds 1♠ to his opener, this paving the way to the heart game, which should be reached anyway when east has an opening hand himself.

I can see some overboard to slam. If north takes the spade ace immediately and fails to lead clubs declarer has a chance, but must improbably pick up trumps. He later gets his losers away on spades.

Some might be in 3NT, making either ten or eleven tricks depending on their view in hearts. So again we have a borderline slam, best not bid, as this time it isn't makeable against best defence, and even without this needs an anti-percentage view in a key suit.

17

♠ Q864
 ♥ 93
 ♦ J10762
 ♣ 62

♠ 5
 ♥ A6
 ♦ KQ4
 ♣ A1097543

♠ A103
 ♥ QJ1074
 ♦ 953
 ♣ KQ

 Dealer: North
 Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	2	2	3	4
W	5	2	2	3	4

I can see many wests simply punting 3NT when east simply rebids his clubs after they have tried 1♠ over south's 1♥ overall of 1♣.

This spot all boils down to the best way to play clubs. The percentage play in isolation is to take two finesses against north, this marginally better than playing the suit from the top. However, this ignores the bidding.

With south highly likely to hold at least one top club honour playing the suit from the top seems better than guarding against KQx(x) in north.

Will any take two finesses here and go light, as they will do if they fail to solve the same issue in the alternative 5♣?

18

♠ Q10642
 ♥ 10876
 ♦ K94
 ♣ 2

♠ J3
 ♥ A542
 ♦ AQ107
 ♣ 865

♠ 87
 ♥ J
 ♦ J632
 ♣ KQJ743

 Dealer: East
 N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	2	5	4	3
W	2	2	5	4	3

Whether east passes, opens 1♦ or a sub-range weak NT should not affect E/W getting to 4♥, as west has an Acol 1♥ or strong NT opener himself. West will declare at most tables.

Whoever declares surely gets a club lead, best won immediately. With north having a late trump trick declarer needs to play at most one trump, before finessing the diamond queen and cross-ruffing spades and diamonds, losing just two clubs and a trump, north eventually over-ruffing a loser with his trump trick.

Will everyone manage to make this tricky enough contract?

19

♠ J9854
 ♥
 ♦ KJ97
 ♣ QJ96

♠ A32
 ♥ A83
 ♦ 3
 ♣ 1075432

♠ Q106
 ♥ KJ74
 ♦ 10862
 ♣ AK

♠ K7
 ♥ Q109652
 ♦ AQ54
 ♣ 8

 Dealer: South
 E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	2	-	1	-
S	-	2	-	1	-
E	3	-	1	-	1
W	3	-	1	-	1

South will find himself in a 6:0 fit should he rebid 2♥, rather than 2♦, after north replies 1♠ to his opening 1♥. 2♥ should go at least one down, and does worse if west starts with a diamond, east getting a ruff with his shorter defensive trump holding.

Where south rebids 2♦ north likely passes. If passed out the classic lead against such an auction is a trump, and this would lead to a set were west was able to get in twice to lead a third trump. As it is, declarer can succeed by ruffing down west's club honours, and subsequently pulling trumps, ending in north.

East does better to protect with 3♣ in the pass-out seat, and should only lose the obvious four tricks. Will many be brave enough to do so vulnerable on such a tatty suit?

20

♠ 1042
 ♥ J4
 ♦ AJ1087
 ♣ J85

♠ 3
 ♥ K1087632
 ♦ KQ96
 ♣ 4

♠ J75
 ♥
 ♦ 5432
 ♣ AKQ932

♠ AKQ986
 ♥ AQ95
 ♦
 ♣ 1076

 Dealer: West
 Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	2	1
S	-	-	-	3	1
E	3	2	1	-	-
W	2	2	1	-	-

West might open 1♣, possibly 3♣ or more credibly east pre-empt 3♥ on his ropy suit in third seat. South doubtless bids 3♣ in all scenarios, unless he gets to open 1♠, west overcalling clubs.

In any event it is hard to see south not playing a spade contract at some level. West does best to lead his top clubs, but the defence is stuck thereafter, one or other defender having to give dummy the lead. A heart goes on the diamond ace and declarer loses only one more trick so long as he doesn't lead a heart to the ace.

Will everyone manage nine tricks N/S, hopefully for a plus score?

21

♠ A10
♥ A542
♦ A108
♣ AJ87

♠ Q7642
♥ 1093
♦ 93
♣ Q43

♠ KJ83
♥ J876
♦ KJ7
♣ 62

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	3	5	3	4
S	3	3	5	3	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Some might upgrade the prime four ace north hand to a suit opener and 2NT rebid, rather than a strong NT. Acol opens 1♥, and would normally rebid 2NT.

The heart fit should easily be established, and 4♥ eventuate, the 4:4 fit as usual proving superior to 3NT. Indeed, with the convenient heart lie eleven tricks are possible in hearts by getting two spade ruffs in north and guessing diamonds.

Those that play in 3NT should make at most ten tricks, and could easily be held to 600.

22

♠ J1084
♥ K74
♦ AKQ52
♣ 5

♠ K96532
♥ J953
♦ 9
♣ A4

♠ Q7
♥ A10
♦ 1086
♣ J109876

♠ A
♥ Q862
♦ J743
♣ KQ32

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	5	3	-	3
S	1	5	3	-	3
E	-	-	-	1	-
W	-	-	-	1	-

Despite the adverse vulnerability and moderate suit some will venture 1♠ as west over south's 1♦ opener, leaving north awkwardly placed. I can see many simply punting 3NT, though some might take the scenic route to this or 5♦.

3NT may survive on a spade lead, certainly should east's Ax hearts be picked up. However, a club lead may beat it. Declarer needs to duck the first round, preventing the suit from being established.

The 3:1 trump break makes 5♦ awkward. Cross-ruffing the black suits results in an east trump promotion, so declarer needs to play hearts to advantage, picking up the doubleton ace. He may well fail to do where west is marked with spade length and therefore likely heart shortage.

23

♠ A1062
♥ 94
♦ A96
♣ AK84

♠ K
♥ AKQJ3
♦ J1032
♣ 932

♠ 98743
♥ 87
♦ KQ8
♣ J107

♠ QJ5
♥ 10652
♦ 754
♣ Q65

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	-	-	2	2
S	2	-	-	2	2
E	-	2	1	-	-
W	-	2	1	-	-

South has an unenviable choice when north doubles west's 1♥ opener. Although a point or two shy 1NT is probably the least worst option, 1♠ a close second choice. North could well raise, whether or not west bids again, but will surely not advance beyond the Two level.

2NT should make on the nose once west has cashed his hearts, south using his club entry to take what proves to be an unnecessary spade finesse.

2♠ also plays surprisingly well. North can ruff the third heart, stopping the run of the suit, east over-ruffing or not as he chooses. However declarer could err in playing spades. He needs to play to the club queen then advance a small spade. The eighth trick is north's 13th club, which either scores or is over-ruffed by south.

24

♠ J942
♥ AK8
♦ KJ
♣ 10964

♠ 10873
♥ Q106
♦ Q107
♣ 853

♠ KQ
♥ J7
♦ A642
♣ AKJ72

♠ A65
♥ 95432
♦ 9853
♣ Q

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	3	1	-
S	-	-	3	1	-
E	1	1	-	-	1
W	2	1	-	-	1

South is best to take out a double of north's weak NT to hearts, where a good guess in diamonds, plus the nice spade lie, can allow nine tricks.

East probably overcalls the alternative north 1♣ with 1NT, and in all likelihood plays there. This spot should make whatever south leads, east getting the lead early on and clearing clubs.

This looks a winner for Acol N/S, going plus in hearts, 5 card majors going minus when it is tricky for them to find their heart contract after the opposing 1NT overcall.

25

♠ K4
♥ K765
♦ A85
♣ A852

♠ QJ865
♥ A1032
♦ 9
♣ 1064

♠ A3
♥ J84
♦ K107642
♣ 97

♠ 10972
♥ Q9
♦ QJ3
♣ KQJ3

 Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	-	1	1	2
S	3	-	-	-	1
E	-	1	-	-	-
W	-	1	-	-	-

Whether north opens a weak NT or 1♣ there is every chance of him declaring 3NT when south has invitational values and he a maximum.

Unfortunately, today there are only seven tricks, despite the partnership holding 25HCP. East may give up a tempo with a diamond lead, but declarer still cannot make a spade trick or extra heart without help, and could finish two light.

North can actually make eight tricks, even on a passive lead, cashing clubs, then giving up a diamond. West eventually has to cede an extra trick in the majors.

A good one to go plus on N/S.

26

♠ Q1076532
♥ AK4
♦ 108
♣ K

♠ AJ
♥ Q108
♦ J52
♣ Q10432

♠ K
♥ 7632
♦ AQ96
♣ A987

♠ 984
♥ J95
♦ K743
♣ J65

 Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	2	-
S	-	-	-	2	-
E	4	4	3	-	4
W	4	4	3	-	4

West could respond 1NT or a thin 2♣ to east's 1♦, but north will be there with 2♠. It looks more likely that east will bid or support clubs rather than look for a no trump spot with his seemingly vulnerable spade holding.

Today, 3NT is there when clubs lie ideally and the diamond 10 falls. However, I can see few actually declaring this spot, though those that respond 2♣ might find themselves propelled into the game.

The same nice club lie allows ten tricks to score in clubs, but this will have to take second fiddle to any declaring no trumps.

Some may get carried away with their long spade suit as north and lose a penalty bigger than E/W's likely part-score.

27

♠ J75
♥ AJ763
♦ K743
♣ 9

♠ AQ86
♥ 108
♦ QJ10
♣ J754

♠ 94
♥ 5
♦ 9652
♣ AKQ1082

♠ K1032
♥ KQ942
♦ A8
♣ 63

 Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	3	1	-
S	-	-	3	1	-
E	3	1	-	-	-
W	3	1	-	-	-

North has an ideal pre-emptive 3♥ available when south opens his suit. A 2♥ raise risks east being able to show his clubs, where nine tricks are available, 4♣ a good save against N/S's part-score.

In practice, many will raise 1♥ directly to game, and are perhaps somewhat unlucky that it should go light, east winning the first club, seeing dummy's singleton, switching to a spade and getting a third round ruff.

Will any get home in 4♥, the defence missed? Or will there be those taking the phantom sacrifice in 5♣?

28

♠ QJ8
♥ Q109
♦ KQ75
♣ KJ2

♠ A52
♥ J85
♦ J1064
♣ 1064

♠ 10976
♥ K743
♦ A
♣ AQ83

♠ K43
♥ A62
♦ 9832
♣ 975

 Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	-	1
S	-	1	-	-	1
E	1	-	1	1	-
W	1	-	1	1	-

North's weak NT is surely passed out, and can make double dummy, the diamond suit picked up for one loser. It might do so anyway, as east could easily lead a heart, freezing the suit, and the defence go astray later in the play.

A 1♦ opener will see east doubling, and it could be west trying to make 1NT. So long as north leads a low diamond, rather than the king, he should be defeated.

So we have another intricate part-score with variable outcomes possible, rather a theme of the set, which is hoped proved enjoyable.

Ave HCP	N 10.00	S 9.96	E 10.00	W 10.04	Balanced	N 11	S 15	E 10	W 16
Voids/singletons	N 2/10	S 2/8	E 0/13	W 3/6	7+ suit	N 1	S 1	E 2	W 0