



The 2021 Charity Challenge Pairs Tuesday 16 March

This year we are raising funds for two different, but closely related Charities – Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie. And we have extended the event to run all week, with different hands each day.

It's been what can only be described as an extraordinary year – one year ago you joined us to raise money for RNLI, with a final cheque at the end for £5,595.88 and a total for RNLI over the past three years of £17,349.05 for which they were more than grateful.

The past year has seen charities receiving less and less as the pandemic has taken hold – many people of course have less disposable income and the charities themselves have found that many of their traditional avenues, such as the Charity Shops, Street Collections etc, are unavailable to them. Which is why we ask you to donate, through our website, so that we can send as much as possible to them. If you haven't already done so, please [click here to go to the page](#) that gives you all the information.

The future year for Simultaneous Pairs has other Charity events to enjoy - there will be one in July to raise funds for Kidney Research and of course there will be the Children in Need Pairs in November – well we couldn't NOT run that could we ! We are also looking at the possibility of taking on the Bill Hughes event in June ...

.. and who knows, we may be able to run a WorldWide event again, and maybe one or two events to raise funds for Youth Bridge. Our website will let you know what and when – I will put things onto the front page at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/> and our calendar at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/info/calendar.asp> will be kept up to date.

Do join us for some of these events if you can – whether virtually or actually joining in “round the table”. We love to have your company.

We do hope you have enjoyed yourselves, and you will know by know whether the commentator has got it right! Probably most of you are still playing online but there may be one or two clubs getting back to face-to-face bridge. And let's hope that by next year or better still later this year we will all be back at the green baize table!



Be well – stay safe – and thank you so much for joining us. And because some of you wonder why on earth we moved to Orkney, well it's just a beautiful place to be, and this is the view from our office window – who can argue with that ! And there's even a rainbow to enjoy – we get a lot of rainbows here, something to do with the rain I guess, and the lovely light we have from being so far north.

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Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

We start off with one of those hands that makes Pairs so irritating...3NT no good, 5♣ yes. In fact it takes a diamond lead to beat both 3NT and 6♣. Those who overcall in diamonds after a 1♣ opening by East will be okay, those who choose double could be in trouble. Some Easts will be opening a Precision-style 2♣ and then the South decision is even less clear-cut.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

If E/W are in hearts it is a 3 or 5 hand, depending on the defence scoring their diamond ruffs. Meanwhile N/S's 4♠ save is going -200 or -500 depending, again, if the defence get their ruff, this time in clubs.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

3NT N/S will make 10 tricks. West would not want to get too aggressive with his heart suit. It plays awfully and could well result in a hefty penalty!

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

The 6-2 fit beats the 5-3 on this hand, as declarer will not have to play the heart suit at all if spades are trumps. +680 vs +650.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

At the vulnerability E/W's 5♦ save is good. Even supposing that declarer normally fails to get spades right that is still only -500.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

The Norths who play 4♥ are certainly worse off than the Souths, given the spade situation. Will anybody open that East pile of rubbish 3♣? Vulnerable? If so, South has some sort of decision to make. 3NT straight off? Or Double, which will look bad if partner jumps to 4♠ with only four of them, but is otherwise no risk. If South does get to 3NT there is the issue of how to play it. Ten tricks will be enough if 4♥ is only making ten, but if 4♥ is making eleven then desperate measures are needed. Declarer will have to try to slip a heart around to West. East will need to split his honours on the play of a heart from dummy...and won't declarer just be the teensiest bit tempted to play that to be a singleton!? Pity anybody who does.

Meanwhile if East DOES open 3♣ then West, even at the vulnerability will be thinking about bidding too much. At game level the black suits all go for -800.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

With 33 highs and a 4-4 fit N/S shouldn't have any difficulty reaching slam. At the form of scoring it is hard to see anybody languishing in 6♣...surely +1430 will be shared all over the region.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

One of those hands Deep Finesse finds so easy, notching up +420 in hearts. But for mere human beings that is not likely. Declarer has to pick spades and hearts. I'm thinking E/W -50 will be common.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

It would be good going for E/W to hold hearts to eight tricks: they have to get both their ruffs. But, in any case, small consolation with 5♦ making. It needs the clubs to break, but hey, an early Easter present!

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

Clubs and hearts behave on this N/S spade hand, but even this is not enough to let 4♠ home. Those conservative enough to keep to a part-score will be rewarded.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

A dull 3NT, yes? It will be interesting to see the frequencies at the end of the event but it looks like 11 tricks for everyone. We will see !

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

Those who play the N/S cards in the diamond slam, rather than the club slam, risk going down to the club ruff if North is the declarer...but how likely is that to be found? E/W have a good save in 6♠, but is that relevant? 4♠ by West passed around to a balancing 5♣ by South looks likely to be the end of things.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

Another dull 3NT. It's a shame when the deals come up like this, but on the other hand sometimes it's nice to have a hand that you don't have to worry about too much ! But I suspect the frequencies may not show it as quite so dull as I may think.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

Let's just call this one a who-knows-what-partscore. With half the assets each some sort of p/s fight is likely to develop, but it is E/W with the only fit and clubs plays best with, according to DF, 10 tricks available.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

And another W-K-W-P. Clubs is best again, this time for N/S. With the four obvious losers that should make +110.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Single-dummy if I told you 4♠ was going down you'd think, yes, well, 2 diamonds, 1 heart and 1 club...in fact the black suit loser is a trump, not a club! Meanwhile, it might look like diamonds N/S is an easy 10 tricks and perhaps a tempting save against 4♠, but in fact the tap at trick one in spades makes it a highly precarious contract as declarer is immediately threatened with losing contact with the club suit. How about this line to take 10 tricks: ruff the spade opening lead, concede a club, ruff another

big spade and play a heart to West's ace. I guess a trump shift is best now and then another spade, another cover and a ruff with South's last diamond. Cash a big club and play another club hoping that the long diamond is with the short club as you take a couple of heart pitches. Success!

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

What a peculiar hand. Each side has an eight card major suit fit and 20 HCP. Yet N/S make 6♣, while E/W make not even 1♥!! I don't know if there is actually cause for declarer to get spades right – ie run the jack – but nobody is going to be in slam, so that trick is neither here nor there. Any E/W pair who defend spades making twelve tricks – well, congratulate declarer by all means...but think about holding your cards up higher for the rest of the round.

The difference between the two contracts is the working diamond shortage for N/S compared with wasted values in every suit held by E/W.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

4♣ N/S is easy sailing for 11 tricks...but what about hearts E/W? Deep Finesse says that makes only nine tricks. Indeed that is so, as long as the defence get in their trump leads EARLY!

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Again the points are evenly divided, again the side with the fit does better. Eight tricks for N/S in spades or NTs.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Best for E/W against spades is to play clubs early...but given that it will be West playing the spades it is likely that the defence will mess up straight away with a big club opening lead. Those who begin with a diamond ('but partner, I bid diamonds, why would you begin with a club?') will be rewarded by holding spades to eight tricks. N/S can compete in diamonds, making nine tricks.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Well, 3NT N/S makes on this board, but one would hesitate to predict exactly how the hand will develop: who will be playing it, what auction, what lead? Would you believe it, my New Year's resolution was to steer clear of murky waters, so I'm just going to have to leave this one alone!

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Supposing 3NT by E/W, in theory there are 12 tricks for the taking once N/S fail to cash two clubs at the start of the hand...and a non-club lead is likely since East has either a 1♣ or 2♣ opening, depending upon system.

But declarer will still have to decide to be brave and take all those finesses, risking, as it does, a club shift should either finesse fail. That is not so serious in the case of the spade finesse, which is being taken into the right hand, but problematical in the case of the heart finesse.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

4♠ is just too high. Even if N/S don't get off to trump leads, in the course of ruffing out the diamonds a trump trick will be set up for South, which goes with 2 hearts and 1 diamond.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

It's all very well for Deep Finesse to claim the obvious 10 tricks for E/W in 3NT, but played by East this means if a club opening lead to the jack East has to duck in order to make 10 tricks. Not easy to decide this! On the other hand, as it happens North can't really afford to put in the jack as he will look foolish if it turns out that declarer had ♣ Qxx. So, given that East will be in a position to duck two rounds of clubs this certainly puts him in a better position to go for the overtrick.. Indeed, if North has opened the bidding, which seems likely, trying for the overtrick will be automatic.