

# **British Autumn Sim Pairs**



**Wednesday  
9<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 Mike Pomfrey.

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>♠ Q10954 ♥ Q4 ♦ 975 ♣ Q65</p> <p>♠ K7                      ♠ AJ6 ♥ 987                      ♥ AKJ2 ♦ AK863                  ♦ 102 ♣ AK7                      ♣ J1094</p> <p>♠ 832 ♥ 10653 ♦ QJ4 ♣ 832</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <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>-</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>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		6		17	14	3		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	6	6	6	4	6	W	6	6	6	4	6	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td><b>West</b></td><td><b>North</b></td><td><b>East</b></td><td><b>South</b></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>All pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>We start with what should be a pretty easy hand in the bidding but could be a good deal more interesting in the play.</p> <p>You could make a case for South leading almost anything but let's say we start with a heart. Diamonds look to offer the best prospect of extra tricks so declarer ducks one at trick two. Whatever the defence returns you have a number of options for the twelfth trick; a finesse in either black suit or some sort of squeeze.</p> <p>If you trust your card reading, one possibility is to check the diamonds are breaking, then cash the heart winners and ace-king of clubs (just in case the queen drops). Now run the diamonds, watching the defenders' discards carefully. On the last one North has to let the spades go in order to keep the queen of clubs.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All pass						
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<p>♠ Q532 ♥ Q763 ♦ KQ8 ♣ 85</p> <p>♠ -                              ♠ J1074 ♥ 982                          ♥ 10 ♦ AJ10762                  ♦ 943 ♣ KQ109                      ♣ A7632</p> <p>♠ AK986 ♥ AKJ54 ♦ 5 ♣ J4</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <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>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		9		10	5	16		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	2	4	1	S	-	-	3	4	1	E	3	4	-	-	-	W	3	4	-	-	-	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td><b>West</b></td><td><b>North</b></td><td><b>East</b></td><td><b>South</b></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td></tr> <tr><td>2♦</td><td>3♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>3♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td></tr> </table> <p>All pass</p> <p>A number of interesting decisions here. 1♠ and 2♦ look quite normal but how good is North's hand in support of spades? Although rather a lot is in the opponent's suit it's just about worth a constructive raise in spades. South gets quite excited at that, but North is quick to dampen partner's enthusiasm.</p> <p>East-West may consider a sacrifice in clubs or diamonds. The latter works better for a surprising reason; repeated spade leads against 5♣ make it impossible to set up the diamonds in time.</p> <p>But what about the defence to 4♠? West starts with top clubs, the ace of diamonds and then a heart. The only way to make the contract is to win in dummy and play a low spade, playing the 9 unless East splits. Who's going to do that?</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			Pass	1♠	2♦	3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
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<p>♠ K75 ♥ KQ82 ♦ 1073 ♣ 432</p> <p>♠ AQJ8                      ♠ 109632 ♥ -                              ♥ J9764 ♦ AQJ98                      ♦ 4 ♣ J876                        ♣ A5</p> <p>♠ 4 ♥ A1053 ♦ K652 ♣ KQ109</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The momentum of this auction depends very much on South's choice of opening bid. In the merry evil days (as my daughters used to say) you started with the suit below the singleton. It has the downside that an auction like 1♥-1♠-2♣ sounds very much as if you have five hearts. 1♦ is better inasmuch as partner is less likely to insist on a diamond contract. Playing a strong no-trump, you can start with 1♣ and rebid 1NT over a spade response. As it happens, 1♦ makes it hard for West to enter the fray, but he should do later. East has quite a good hand opposite very short hearts and may try 3♠ now, which West raises to game.</p> <p>On the best lead of a trump you can win, play a club to the ace, finesse in diamonds and go for a complete crossruff for eleven tricks. Phew!</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥	Dble	Pass	?	
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Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥														
Dble	Pass	?															

HCP	Makeable contracts					
8	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
15      5	N	-	-	1	-	-
12	S	-	-	1	-	-
	E	1	1	-	5	-
	W	-	1	-	5	-

<p>♠ J43 ♥ K102 ♦ QJ ♣ A10875</p> <p>♠ 65                              ♠ A10 ♥ AJ64                        ♥ Q9875 ♦ A42                            ♦ K10976 ♣ KJ92                        ♣ Q</p> <p>♠ KQ9872 ♥ 3 ♦ 853 ♣ 643</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>With four trumps, West should break the transfer. Some partnerships will have sophisticated methods of showing strength or shortage outside trumps.</p> <p>With the favourable diamond position, only a spade lead holds 4♥ to ten tricks. Do we think South should have bid to ensure the right lead? It looks dangerous but it's far too late on the second round. And if you do bid, might North take you seriously and bash on to 4♠ over 4♥? In theory it goes for 800 but West will have to find an unlikely club lead to extract the maximum penalty.</p> <p>All in all, there should be a wide range of results.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass
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3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass										

HCP	Makeable contracts					
11	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
13      11	N	-	-	-	1	-
5	S	-	-	-	1	-
	E	1	4	4	-	1
	W	1	4	4	-	1

<p>♠ A1086 ♥ Q7 ♦ 1086 ♣ 10942</p> <p>♠ KQ7432                      ♠ - ♥ K109                        ♥ AJ8643 ♦ K94                            ♦ A ♣ A                              ♣ KJ8753</p> <p>♠ J95 ♥ 52 ♦ QJ7532 ♣ Q6</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Here's an interesting one. Both East and West have very good hands, but they should both develop the auction slowly to investigate the best contract. After using fourth suit, West's 3♥ is forcing, of course, showing a hand too good to limit on the previous round of bidding.</p> <p>Now what? Even though West has bid spades I think a jump to 5♠ should now be exclusion Blackwood, asking for key cards outside spades. West shows two, the king of hearts and ace of clubs, but denying the queen of hearts. East settles for 6♥ and should easily make all thirteen tricks with both main suits very favourably placed.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass	?	
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15      13	N	-	-	-	-	-
6	S	-	-	-	-	-
	E	6	1	7	4	6
	W	6	1	7	4	6

<p>♠ 10842 ♥ 653 ♦ K87 ♣ K85</p> <p>♠ KQ5                      ♠ A3 ♥ KQ108                    ♥ J97 ♦ J1062                     ♦ A954 ♣ 94                         ♣ AQ76</p> <p>♠ J976 ♥ A42 ♦ Q3 ♣ J1032</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;">6</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">11      15</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</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>3</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	HCP		6	11      15	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	5	5	2	3	W	3	5	5	2	3	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>With 4-4 in the minors, I like to open 1♣ if intending to rebid in no trumps. On this hand it doesn't much matter what your style is; all roads will lead to 3NT, almost certainly played by East.</p> <p>Of far greater interest is how many tricks should you make? On a natural looking spade lead there seems to be plenty of time to finesse twice in diamonds, knock out the ace of hearts and finish up with the option of a club finesse for eleven tricks. So how come the computer only makes nine? What could the defence have done?</p> <p>The answer is, it has to be a low club lead to the 8 (unless dummy tries the 9) then a club continuation when South gets in. I'd be very peeved if they found that defence!</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All pass		
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<p>♠ KJ532 ♥ A10 ♦ 542 ♣ K54</p> <p>♠ Q106                      ♠ A4 ♥ 62                         ♥ KQ8743 ♦ KQ98                     ♦ 1063 ♣ AJ62                     ♣ 108</p> <p>♠ 987 ♥ J95 ♦ AJ7 ♣ Q973</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;">12      9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</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>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		11	12      9	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	1	-	E	1	2	3	-	-	W	1	2	3	-	1	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A pretty normal weak no-trump auction. North may feel she's being talked out of something but it's dangerous to get involved when East is still unlimited. In any case East will surely press on to 3♥ which is an easy make as the cards lie.</p> <p>If East-West are playing a strong no-trump the auction has a completely different flavour. North will get to overcall and may sometimes even buy the contract in 2♠. How will that fare?</p> <p>The most effective lead is a passive diamond. Now the defenders can volley red suits to each other. Declarer has no way of avoiding two trump losers, a heart, two diamonds and eventually two clubs for the dreaded "kiss of death" – minus 200. Any other defence and you may get out for -100, beating all the minus 140's.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	All pass		
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<p>♠ K ♥ KQ8754 ♦ KQ87 ♣ 32</p> <p>♠ 1093                      ♠ 7642 ♥ A9                         ♥ J3 ♦ A63                         ♦ J109542 ♣ Q10974                   ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ AQJ85 ♥ 1062 ♦ - ♣ AKJ85</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;">13</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10      2</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">15</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>3</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>5</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		13	10      2	15	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	1	6	5	5	S	4	1	6	6	5	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </table> <p>This looks like a nice, controlled auction so far. North suggests a 6-4 distribution and, by implication, a better than minimum hand (you might have rebid 2♥ on a weak 6-4). Unfortunately, South is none the wiser as to whether a slam is on. I think you just have to settle for 4♥ at this stage; you need partner to have very good trumps and to be able to develop one of your suits.</p> <p>You can make 6♥ but it's far from a sinecure. On a club lead you must play ace, queen of spades, discarding your second club, before touching trumps. Trumps must be 2-2. On an unlikely diamond lead, you have to ruff, play one round of trumps, ruff another diamond and dispose of two on the spades. Maybe it's just as well we settled for game.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass	?
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S	4	1	6	6	5																																																					
E	-	-	-	-	-																																																					
W	-	-	-	-	-																																																					
West	North	East	South																																																							
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠																																																							
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣																																																							
Pass	3♥	Pass	?																																																							

<p>♠ J9643 ♥ K82 ♦ Q9 ♣ 542</p> <p>♠ A ♥ A10743 ♦ K10862 ♣ 97</p> <p>♠ Q872 ♥ QJ5 ♦ 754 ♣ Q83</p> <p>♠ K105 ♥ 96 ♦ AJ3 ♣ AKJ106</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">?</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A lot of opportunities for tight match-point bridge on this one. After the opening bid I wouldn't recommend a two suited overcall as West; the suits are far too poor. With a takeout double available North's 1♠ promises five cards, which is why South supports them with a little to spare (some might prefer a double by South).</p> <p>Now the paths may diverge. With 5-5 distribution West may be tempted to bid another heart, despite the adverse vulnerability. That will be expensive if South finds a double, which North will surely pass.</p> <p>Even if West gets away with playing 3♥ undoubled, best defence makes you run out of trumps before you can set up the diamonds, so that should still be minus 200.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠	?			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
	Pass	Pass	1♣														
1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠														
?																	

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
6	N 4	-	-	3	2	
11      7	S 4	-	-	3	2	
16	E -	1	1	-	-	
	W -	1	1	-	-	

<p>♠ 105 ♥ A8764 ♦ A8762 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ J863 ♥ KJ1032 ♦ K4 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ 742 ♥ 95 ♦ J ♣ Q1098643</p> <p>♠ AKQ9 ♥ Q ♦ Q10953 ♣ J72</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6♦</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well! You may not think much of East's pre-empt (I don't either) but it certainly puts the cat among the pigeons. If South feels he has to say something, then 3♦ is the least of all evils. 3♥ is just a noise to show where you live, and North has just about had enough of all this messing about. OK, you might make seven, but how can you find out if partner has decent trumps, two top spades and a heart control?</p> <p>You can make thirteen tricks by crossing to hand and leading the queen of trumps, not an impossible play in view of East's pre-empt. That'll teach East to open on such rubbish!</p> <p>On the other hand, 3♣ might silence a timid South and get you a really good score. How fine are margins at this game.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			3♣	3♦	3♥	6♦	All pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
		3♣	3♦										
3♥	6♦	All pass											

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
12	N 1	7	3	4	5	
11      3	S 1	7	3	4	5	
14	E -	-	-	-	-	
	W -	-	-	-	-	

<p>♠ A1086 ♥ Q965 ♦ 3 ♣ A1054</p> <p>♠ K752 ♥ 87 ♦ K1095 ♣ Q83</p> <p>♠ J4 ♥ KJ4 ♦ AJ872 ♣ K76</p> <p>♠ Q93 ♥ A1032 ♦ Q64 ♣ J92</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dble</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>I don't suppose for a moment that your auction went like this! You've probably heard me mutter darkly about the folly of getting involved on weak three suiters but I'm afraid that's superseded by the importance of saying something in third seat. East overcalls, not with great enthusiasm, and South is in an interesting theoretical position. Once upon a time a double promised both majors. However, I think it's good tactics to double with one major so long as you can happily revert to clubs, reserving a major suit bid to show five cards.</p> <p>Hasn't North said enough? Maybe, but you know both sides have a fit. The excellent intermediates mean you can take double finesses in three suits and scrape home in 3♥. Bet the auction doesn't reach such giddy heights very often.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	Pass	1♣	1♦	Dble	3♦	Dble	Pass	3♥	All pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
			Pass																		
Pass	1♣	1♦	Dble																		
3♦	Dble	Pass	3♥																		
All pass																					

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
10	N 1	-	3	1	-	
8      13	S 1	-	3	1	-	
9	E -	2	-	-	1	
	W -	2	-	-	1	

<p>♠ Q95 ♥ 109 ♦ Q1053 ♣ AJ92</p> <p>♠ J1063                      ♠ AK7 ♥ A63                         ♥ Q75 ♦ 87                            ♦ J62 ♣ 10643                      ♣ KQ85</p> <p>♠ 842 ♥ KJ842 ♦ AK94 ♣ 7</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Another auction I don't expect to be repeated very often. The first two positive bids are pretty standard and West should certainly not be shut out of this auction. North is just about worth 1NT and East has nothing to say.</p> <p>Now there's a case for South passing 1NT; after all, partner's values are likely to be in the black suits. But if we believe we'll be safer in a red suit contract we give partner an interesting problem. Despite the disparity in the two suits, for North to give partner "false preference" is often the winning option at pairs. And so it proves here, with the hearts very favourably placed and nine tricks available in either suit.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥	Dble	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	All pass																											
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S	-	3	3	-	1																																						
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<p>♠ K1098 ♥ KJ9 ♦ Q64 ♣ J73</p> <p>♠ Q63                         ♠ AJ54 ♥ Q87652                    ♥ 103 ♦ 98                            ♦ AJ73 ♣ 102                         ♣ A54</p> <p>♠ 72 ♥ A4 ♦ K1052 ♣ KQ986</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </table> <p>This is one of those hands that make pairs such a difficult, yet fascinating game. At teams the hand would surely be passed out in 2♥, going one down. At match-points South is almost obliged to compete for the part score, despite the obvious risks. 2NT looks the natural choice here.</p> <p>Now what about North? You wouldn't be surprised to find partner is only 5-4 in her suits and you may pick the wrong one. But partner will hardly be really feeble, much of our values are in the majors and West may be so weak that the heart suit is not a danger. Is it worth passing 2NT?</p> <p>As we can see, it certainly is. There's nothing East-West can do to stop us making nine tricks for a great score.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	?																														
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E	-	-	1	-	-																																						
W	-	-	1	-	-																																						

<p>♠ 9 ♥ QJ876 ♦ 872 ♣ Q964</p> <p>♠ J1087                      ♠ AKQ65 ♥ 3                            ♥ AK1095 ♦ A106                      ♦ QJ ♣ KJ875                      ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ 432 ♥ 42 ♦ K9543 ♣ A32</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>What starts off by looking a straightforward hand turns into a difficult test of our judgment, in both bidding and play.</p> <p>In my preferred style, 2NT shows a sound raise to 3♠ or a much stronger raise. Some treat it as game forcing; I've always found that trickier to manage. Both partners feel obliged to keep the ball rolling and you often reach a point where neither has any idea whether the other has extra values or is just going through the motions.</p> <p>On the auction shown, 3♥ is initially just a game try and West shows a suitable minimum. It's possible there are two losers but West takes a pragmatic view. There are many variations in the play, depending on South's lead. At teams, on a neutral lead you would play a club early; at pairs a diamond finesse is a do-or-die option.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠	All pass																										
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<p>♠ QJ109 ♥ AK65 ♦ A2 ♣ AQ5</p> <p>♠ 43                      ♠ A752 ♥ J742                    ♥ Q983 ♦ KQ1065                ♦ 973 ♣ 86                        ♣ 73</p> <p>♠ K86 ♥ 10 ♦ J84 ♣ KJ10942</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> </table> <p>All pass</p> <p>Here's an odd one. It's a three or six hand, depending on the lead. First of all, do we think South is worth a natural slam try of 4♣? No, I don't play Gerber!</p> <p>I think it's close, and also, close whether North should co-operate. North has a minimum point count but good clubs and controls. If South does bid 4♣ and North makes a cue bid of 4♦, South will probably take the plunge, with second round control of both majors. But if you bid the slam in clubs – disaster! West has an obvious diamond lead and 6♣ is doomed.</p> <p>Maybe this is a case for the maxim "slams are for the birds at duplicate". In 3NT you make 690 most of the time; in a slam, who knows?</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
			Pass										
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT										

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
20		N	5	2	1	4	3
6	6	S	5	2	1	4	3
		E	-	-	-	-	-
		W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 1087 ♥ J72 ♦ Q9865 ♣ 63</p> <p>♠ Q9                      ♠ J5432 ♥ A96543                ♥ - ♦ A1043                 ♦ 7 ♣ A                        ♣ KQ98742</p> <p>♠ AK6 ♥ KQ108 ♦ KJ2 ♣ J105</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Aarrgghh!</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This auction starts off in standard fashion. Despite the disparity in her suits, East just daren't bid clubs. I'm afraid I wouldn't dream of bidding 1NT as South; if partner has a blizzard, which looks more than likely, where are your tricks coming from? This time the results merchants can be smug; partner's slender assets are gold dust and East-West have no communication at all. But there's no arguing with success.</p> <p>On the auction given, East has no option but to try 2♠, even if it shows a better hand than you have. Miraculously, you escape unscathed, though even more miraculously you could have made 5♣!</p> <p>Sometimes at this game you have to shrug your shoulders and accept whatever fate has thrown at you.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	Aarrgghh!	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass										
2♦	Pass	Aarrgghh!											

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
3		N	-	2	2	-	3
14	6	S	-	2	2	-	3
		E	5	-	-	3	-
		W	5	-	-	3	-

<p>♠ Q9 ♥ A1093 ♦ KJ852 ♣ A3</p> <p>♠ 8765432                ♠ AK ♥ -                         ♥ KQJ542 ♦ 64                        ♦ Q97 ♣ 8754                    ♣ Q6</p> <p>♠ J10 ♥ 876 ♦ A103 ♣ KJ1092</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Redbl</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </table> <p>What the...? Who dealt these hands? First of all, do you think East should double or bid hearts? If I remember right, Sally Brock once wrote an article proposing that, with a strong hand and a good suit, <u>if you are short in the opponent's suit you are better off overcalling, as you can make a takeout double later.</u> If you have length in their suit you should double first and then bid your suit.</p> <p>This time all hell is let loose. South has a close decision whether to redouble, bid clubs, raise diamonds or try 1NT (don't like that last one at all). Now who can blame West for bidding a large number of spades? It looks like a total nightmare but, even if North-South find the best defence of forcing dummy, two off undoubled may not be too bad at all for East-West. Who knows what may happen elsewhere?</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		1♦	Dble	Redbl	3♠	Pass	Pass	?
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
	1♦	Dble	Redbl										
3♠	Pass	Pass	?										

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
14		N	2	3	2	-	5
0	17	S	3	3	2	-	5
		E	-	-	-	1	-
		W	-	-	-	1	-

<p>♠ KQ94 ♥ Q983 ♦ J102 ♣ 96</p> <p>♠ A53                      ♠ J1082 ♥ AJ10652                ♥ K7 ♦ -                             ♦ K975 ♣ KQJ3                    ♣ A104</p> <p>♠ 76 ♥ 4 ♦ AQ8643 ♣ 8752</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Oops, must have miscounted. But it is a nice 11 count and we are first to speak, not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents. West gets quite excited but is eventually persuaded to give up.</p> <p>On the best lead of a spade, ducked, and a diamond return, it looks as though 4♥ will be held to ten tricks. Suppose declarer ruffs, plays a heart to the king and another heart. Shortly you are down to the same number of trumps as North and in trouble. However, there is a counter-intuitive and utterly double-dummy line of leading the jack on the first round of trumps, ruffing three diamonds and eventually endplaying North to lead spades.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥	All pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
		1NT	Pass																		
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass																		
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass																		
4♥	All pass																				

HCP	Makeable contracts				
8	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15    11	N	-   1	-   -	-   -	-   -
6	S	-   1	-   -	-   -	-   -
	E	4   -	5   3	3   2	2   -
	W	4   -	5   3	3   2	2   -

<p>♠ 753 ♥ A97 ♦ A107643 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ AJ1094                    ♠ 62 ♥ KQJ3                     ♥ 1062 ♦ 98                         ♦ J5 ♣ 76                         ♣ KQJ1098</p> <p>♠ KQ8 ♥ 854 ♦ KQ2 ♣ A532</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Here's an interesting conundrum. Playing Aspro, West shows hearts and another suit, with the proviso that if the other suit is spades it will be better than the hearts. Now from East's point of view, either partner has four diamonds, which must be 2-4-5 round the table, or partner has spades and therefore probably only four hearts. The latter case looks a lot more likely, so what should we do?</p> <p>I think East should bid 3♣, just to push the opponents up a level. South duly obliges and there the case rests for an obvious 110. Not as good as 120 in no-trumps (impossible now) or 200 from 3♣ doubled (highly speculative).</p> <p>I suspect 110 to North-South for making 3♦ will be quite common.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				1NT	2♣	2♦	?	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
			1NT										
2♣	2♦	?											

HCP	Makeable contracts				
8	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11    7	N	-   3	-   -	-   -	2   -
14	S	-   3	-   -	-   -	2   -
	E	2   -	1   -	-   -	-   -
	W	2   -	1   -	-   -	-   -

<p>♠ AJ8 ♥ A743 ♦ 10843 ♣ QJ</p> <p>♠ 72                            ♠ KQ43 ♥ KQ9865                ♥ J10 ♦ KQ                         ♦ A52 ♣ 1065                    ♣ AK97</p> <p>♠ 10965 ♥ 2 ♦ J976 ♣ 8432</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>West</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>North</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>East</b></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><b>South</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At teams this hand would be totally dull. It makes no difference whether East bids 4♥ or 3NT for a flat board. You'd probably choose hearts as marginally the safer option; partner should certainly have six of them and it's just possible there is a weakness in diamonds.</p> <p>At pairs it's a real toss-up. As it happens, you make exactly the same tricks in no-trumps as in hearts, as partner has plenty in diamonds and the defenders can't get at either black suit. But it's a close decision on which a lot of match-points ride. I guess with values to spare East might think no-trumps will have a decent chance of making the same tricks as hearts. Take away one of your top cards and you'd definitely choose hearts.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	?	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass										
2♥	Pass	?											

HCP	Makeable contracts				
12	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10    17	N	-   -	-   -	-   -	-   -
1	S	-   -	-   -	-   -	-   -
	E	4   2	5   3	3   5	5   -
	W	4   2	5   3	3   5	5   -



<p>♠ QJ10953 ♥ 1065 ♦ 874 ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ 6                      ♠ A872 ♥ AJ8732                ♥ Q9 ♦ A92                     ♦ J653 ♣ AJ4                     ♣ 852</p> <p>♠ K4 ♥ K4 ♦ KQ10 ♣ KQ10973</p>	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>I'm all for getting your retaliation in first but as dealer, vulnerable against not, maybe that North hand is a touch too weak for a weak two. However, if I'm allowed to show 4-8 points with a jump to 2♠, I'm just up for it. West doubles, maybe hoping partner can pass for penalties, but East doesn't fancy it (very wise, as the lead of ♥Q lets it through).</p> <p>So, East takes it out. You can't blame East for preferring a heart contract to a speculative one in diamonds. Apparently 3♦ can succeed (though I wouldn't fancy trying), whilst 3♥ is also touch and go. On a singleton club lead, it can be made by encouraging the defence to get their ruff, so we can play the trumps for no loser.</p> <p>Well done North for not opening as that surely would get us too high.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥	2♠	Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass	3♥	All pass
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
	Pass	Pass	1♣														
1♥	2♠	Pass	Pass														
Dble	Pass	3♥	All pass														

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
3	-	-	-	1	-	
14      7	N	1	-	-	2	-
	S	-	3	3	-	3
	E	-	3	2	-	2
	W	-	3	2	-	2

<p>♠ 97 ♥ A742 ♦ AJ654 ♣ A2</p> <p>♠ 3                      ♠ KQ1086 ♥ QJ3                    ♥ 105 ♦ Q9832                ♦ 7 ♣ 7653                   ♣ Q10984</p> <p>♠ AJ542 ♥ K986 ♦ K10 ♣ KJ</p>	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Yes, I really would open a weak two as East, even at adverse vulnerability. The trump quality is good and the five-card club suit should be an asset in playing strength. Sadly, it's a very, very bad idea this time, so long as South can restrain herself on the first round. Your reward for restraint should be a penalty of 1100.</p> <p>Given a free run, North-South will easily reach their normal 4♥ contract. The winning play for eleven tricks, far from obvious, is to take two rounds of trumps, play West for the queen of diamonds and East for the king, queen of spades. You sit back in great self satisfaction, only to find that some idiot has conceded a telephone number in spades.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			2♠	Pass	Pass	Dble	All pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
		2♠	Pass										
Pass	Dble	All pass											

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
13	-	4	5	3	3	
5      7	N	-	4	5	3	3
	S	-	-	-	-	-
	E	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 532 ♥ K98 ♦ AJ8543 ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ AK87                    ♠ Q964 ♥ A63                     ♥ QJ54 ♦ 106                     ♦ 2 ♣ Q873                    ♣ KJ109</p> <p>♠ J10 ♥ 1072 ♦ KQ97 ♣ A542</p>	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>There have to be some bad hands for the weak no-trump, and this is one. On careful defence North-South can take eight tricks for a penalty of 200, better than they can manage in diamonds.</p> <p>There's actually a small case for East employing Stayman. The odds are very slightly in your favour that partner will have a four-card major, which will surely play better than 1NT. Even a 4-3 fit might do quite well.</p> <p>Bizarrely, you can make more tricks in a 4-3 heart fit than a 4-4 spade fit. That's because, on perfect defence, North-South can get two club ruffs against either contract, and, the heart king will still be a trick against a spade contract. In practice most of those in spades will make nine tricks.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	1NT	All pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
			Pass										
1NT	All pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
8	-	3	-	-	1	
13      9	N	-	3	-	-	1
	S	3	-	3	2	-
	E	3	-	3	2	-
	W	3	-	3	2	-

<p>♠ 84 ♥ 965 ♦ 85 ♣ K108643</p> <p>♠ J1095                      ♠ K732 ♥ AQ72                      ♥ 4 ♦ KQ93                      ♦ 10742 ♣ 2                              ♣ J975</p> <p>♠ AQ6 ♥ KJ1083 ♦ AJ6 ♣ AQ</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>4</td> <td>S</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		3		N	2	-	2	-	2	12	4	S	3	-	3	-	2			E	-	2	-	1	-			W	-	1	-	1	-	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>I did say I'm not very keen on opening minimum 4-4-4-1 hands, but look what may happen if you do. East is well advised to respond, hoping to improve the contract, and what does poor South think? Has someone psyched?</p> <p>No, all is as it seems. But what are you going to do about it? You have a very sound 2NT opener, but you can't bid 2NT now; it's conventional and surely partner has absolutely nothing. How about 1NT? West will raise spades and you are back wondering what on earth to say next. Incredibly, the winning option is 2NT! You can make 3♥, but who's going to consider that? You can also make 3♣, but any remotely sensible auction will get partner to be declarer, and the singleton heart lead is fatal.</p> <p>I give up. No, wait a moment. How about doubling on the second round? Partner bids 2NT, Lebensohl, you obediently say 3♣ and that's it. Piece of cake.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	Pass	1♠	?												
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																																			
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																															
3		N	2	-	2	-	2																																																														
12	4	S	3	-	3	-	2																																																														
		E	-	2	-	1	-																																																														
		W	-	1	-	1	-																																																														
West	North	East	South																																																																		
1♥	Pass	1♠	?																																																																		
<p>♠ KJ1096 ♥ - ♦ 97652 ♣ J62</p> <p>♠ 873                              ♠ AQ4 ♥ AKQJ962                      ♥ 1087 ♦ Q3                                ♦ AK8 ♣ 10                                ♣ AK54</p> <p>♠ 52 ♥ 543 ♦ J104 ♣ Q9873</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>20</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>7</td> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>7</td> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		5		N	-	-	-	-	-	12	20	S	-	-	-	-	-			E	3	2	7	4	7			W	4	2	7	4	7	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If you don't play Gerber, how can you check on aces after an opening 2NT? West is sure there are thirteen tricks, so long as there isn't an ace missing. Here's a method for handling long major suits. It features transfer responses at both the three and four level. So: 3♦ and 3♥ are transfers to hearts and spades respectively. To follow with 4NT is natural and invitational. A simple raise to game is a mild slam try. 4♦ and 4♥ are also transfers to hearts and spades, either with no slam interest or strong interest. In this case 4♦ shows hearts, then a continuation of 4NT is Key Card Blackwood. I'll spare you the rest of the system for now.</p> <p>And what if North opens a very weak two on a five-card suit? Then life gets really difficult and I get my own back for board 22.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	2NT	Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass	7NT	All pass		
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																																			
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																															
5		N	-	-	-	-	-																																																														
12	20	S	-	-	-	-	-																																																														
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7NT	All pass																																																																				
<p>♠ 762 ♥ 865 ♦ 82 ♣ 109643</p> <p>♠ J                                      ♠ AKQ10854 ♥ KQ2                              ♥ J107 ♦ A97643                      ♦ J ♣ AKJ                                ♣ Q7</p> <p>♠ 93 ♥ A943 ♦ KQ105 ♣ 852</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>13</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		0		N	-	-	-	-	-	18	13	S	-	-	-	-	-			E	3	4	4	6	5			W	3	4	4	6	5	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>We've just had a potential slam hand which is really tough to bid without explicit methods, and here's another one. If East opens 4♠, as most of us would, how much does West fancy a slam? If you can rely on partner having a solid suit it looks a good bet. Opener may have the ace of hearts or a diamond control and, if not, the defence may still have to find the killing lead. How can I tell?</p> <p>One possibility is to use Texas openings. 4♣ and 4♦ show good four level openings in hearts and spades respectively, either a solid suit or a one loser suit plus an outside ace. Opening four of a major still shows a good hand but denies these specific holdings. It doesn't always make bidding a slam cast iron but, as in this case, significantly improves your chances.</p>	West	North	East	South																
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																																			
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																															
0		N	-	-	-	-	-																																																														
18	13	S	-	-	-	-	-																																																														
		E	3	4	4	6	5																																																														
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<p>♠ J652 ♥ A3 ♦ 975 ♣ AKJ5</p> <p>♠ AK983      ♠ 1074 ♥ 762      ♥ KJ1094 ♦ 32      ♦ Q1064 ♣ Q109      ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ Q ♥ Q85 ♦ AKJ8 ♣ 87632</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">All pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>I don't think either South or West has an opening bid but North has. I strongly believe that you should intervene over opponents' 1NT on any excuse, but this Aspro bid is about as weak as can be. Now, what should South do?</p> <p>Without the intervention you might have made a natural raise to 2NT. That's no longer an option if you play Lebensohl, so you have three choices. One is to wait and then aim to play in three of a minor, which seems a bit wet.</p> <p>That leaves you with blasting 3NT, which is pretty aggressive at match-points, or playing for penalties, which would be my choice. It should get you 300, which at least beats all the pairs who play in a part-score.</p>		West	North	East	South					Pass	Pass		1NT	2♣	Dble	2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass	Dble	All pass				
	West	North	East	South																						
				Pass																						
Pass		1NT	2♣	Dble																						
2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass	Dble																						
All pass																										

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
13	N 5	4	1	1	4
9      6	S 5	4	1	1	4
12	E -	-	-	-	-
	W -	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ A3 ♥ K ♦ AQJ1072 ♣ Q876</p> <p>♠ 95      ♠ Q10642 ♥ AQJ1084      ♥ 7 ♦ 9      ♦ K854 ♣ A1093      ♣ K42</p> <p>♠ KJ87 ♥ 96532 ♦ 63 ♣ J5</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td></td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td></td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td></td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The first two bids are not contentious. Now, what should East say? It's close between pass, planning to remove partner's reopening double to 2♠, and double, showing four spades. (I don't like an immediate 2♠, even if it's not forcing, on such a poor suit). Double sometimes works badly with a singleton in opener's suit, but I would choose it this time. At least if partner stresses the hearts you are not tempted to look elsewhere.</p> <p>Partner does indeed rebid hearts but North is not finished yet. Should East venture a penalty double? You should defeat 3♦ but, if you don't double, you can't blame West for insisting on hearts (it's close to a 3♥ bid on the previous round). In theory you can make 3♥, but you may need to drop the singleton king of trumps.</p>		West	North	East	South	1♥		2♦	Dble	Pass	2♥		3♦	Pass	Pass	3♥		All pass		
	West	North	East	South																	
1♥		2♦	Dble	Pass																	
2♥		3♦	Pass	Pass																	
3♥		All pass																			

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
16	N -	2	-	-	-
11      8	S -	2	-	-	-
5	E 2	-	3	2	1
	W 2	-	3	2	1

<p>♠ J ♥ KQ10984 ♦ Q52 ♣ Q64</p> <p>♠ Q9643      ♠ K52 ♥ A7652      ♥ - ♦ J      ♦ AK10873 ♣ A2      ♣ 10983</p> <p>♠ A1087 ♥ J3 ♦ 964 ♣ KJ75</p>	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♥</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>North has either a maximum weak two or a minimum weak one. Let's see what happens if you choose the former and East overcalls.</p> <p>West has a really tough decision now. You might choose a cautious pass, a bold 3NT or a speculative 3♠, which East raises to game. The last option could be a spectacular success; you have to run the jack of diamonds, take your winners and scramble as many trump tricks as you can.</p> <p>I'm afraid I wouldn't dream of trying 3♠. Partner will need really good support for spades to be playable and, moreover, if you don't bid no-trumps now, who will?</p> <p>Sadly, no-trumps would be a disaster with no entry to the East hand. Maybe we should have settled for a quiet part score in diamonds.</p>		West	North	East	South			2♥	3♦	Pass	?				
	West	North	East	South												
		2♥	3♦	Pass												
?																

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10	N -	-	1	-	-
11      10	S -	-	1	-	-
9	E 1	4	-	4	-
	W 1	3	-	4	-

<p>♠ A9764 ♥ J7 ♦ KQ7 ♣ K105</p> <p>♠ K1032      ♠ QJ ♥ AKQ9      ♥ 52 ♦ A4      ♦ 1053 ♣ 986      ♣ AQJ743</p> <p>♠ 85 ♥ 108643 ♦ J9862 ♣ 2</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>10</td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts						13		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	16	10	N	-	-	-	-	1		S	-	-	-	-			E	5	1	1	3	4			W	5	1	1	3	4	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Not everyone will be a fan of opening 3♣ but you feel you want to say something. Queen, jack doubleton in spades are not pulling their weight, so it hardly looks like an opening one bid. But with most of your hand in clubs and only four major cards a pre-empt is a reasonable compromise.</p> <p>It works pretty well. With three cards in clubs, West is worth a bash at 3NT, which makes in comfort.</p> <p>A normal looking fourth highest spade lead concedes twelve tricks. But was it a wise choice? With your clubs seemingly badly placed is there any case for North to start with a top diamond instead? I doubt that will be a popular choice but it would save a couple of overtricks and a bushel of match points.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			3♣	Pass	3NT	All pass		
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<p>♠ 92 ♥ KJ54 ♦ K109 ♣ AJ83</p> <p>♠ 743      ♠ K865 ♥ AQ76      ♥ 98 ♦ 72      ♦ AQJ8654 ♣ KQ102      ♣ -</p> <p>♠ AQJ10 ♥ 1032 ♦ 3 ♣ 97654</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>10</td><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td></td><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts						12		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	11	10	N	4	-	2	1	-	7		S	4	-	2	-	-			E	-	2	-	-	-			W	-	2	-	-	-	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>To my mind the West hand is easily worth a weak no trump. All your honour cards are pulling their weight and, unusually for a balanced eleven count, it's only seven losers. You could make a case for a number of options for East; I would be inclined to ignore the small chance that partner has four spades, close my eyes and bash 3NT.</p> <p>The success or otherwise of that contract depends entirely on the lead. If North wants to attack, a heart looks a better choice than a club. Opponents haven't looked for a major fit and leading a suit headed by AJ is too likely to give away a trick. As it happens, both are equally unsuccessful, giving access to the West hand to take two diamond finesses.</p> <p>Anyone for a passive spade? At pairs there's definitely a case for it. Partner can't have much and every other suit looks dangerous. A spade is a real killer, as we see.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All pass
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<p>♠ AKJ2 ♥ 92 ♦ KJ7 ♣ AK72</p> <p>♠ Q53      ♠ 10976 ♥ AKJ64      ♥ Q75 ♦ 832      ♦ 1094 ♣ 65      ♣ QJ3</p> <p>♠ 84 ♥ 1083 ♦ AQ65 ♣ 10984</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>5</td><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts						19		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	10	5	N	4	4	2	3	2	6		S	4	4	2	3	2			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Playing four card majors, I'd be happy to start with one here, intending to get to 3NT if partner responds. However, West, rather than East, has the obvious killing lead of a top heart. It's a cruel game.</p> <p>But it's not yet all over. Do East-West have a leading method whereby partner is required to show attitude or distribution on the lead of an ace or king? Suppose an ace asks for attitude; is the 7 clear enough? If they are playing reverse attitude signals and play the 5, might declarer disguise the message by false carding with the eight?</p> <p>It's worth thinking about how you can scramble the defensive signals, depending on their style. Try to check the opponents' methods in advance and be ready to make the most deceptive play you can; in tempo, of course.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT	All pass	
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