

# **British Winter Virtual Sim Pairs**



**Wednesday  
13<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Welcome to the British Winter Simultaneous Pairs, which we expect will continue to be played mainly online. I hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert. The commentator for this set of hands is Brian Senior. Please note that the Tuesday event will be in memory of Peter Jordan, the EBU's widely-known and much-loved Competitions department member who for many years was also responsible for running our overseas congresses. Barbara Jordan will be donating trophies for the winners on that day.

This is the start of the 2021 Simultaneous Pairs season, so it's a new year for prizes. Every host club will be entered in to a prize draw made at the AGM in November. So the club at which you have played today has a chance to win one of ten cash prizes of £250. The prize for the overall winners of each Sim Pairs is £100, and we wish you luck in trying to win it.

You can find all the full details, 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. Don't be too impatient for the results! 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.

Coming up in February (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>) is the Junior Squad Simultaneous Pairs which raises money to help Junior Bridge. I hope you will support this event and look forward to you playing.

Ian Payn, Chairman EBU

<p>♠ 8752 ♥ AJ104 ♦ 87 ♣ A43</p> <p>♠ -                      ♠ AQ103 ♥ 872                    ♥ 653 ♦ Q106542             ♦ AK9 ♣ KJ86                   ♣ 1092</p> <p>♠ KJ964 ♥ KQ9 ♦ J3 ♣ Q75</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>9</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>13</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>12</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		9		-	-	-	2	-		6	13	-	-	1	2	-			12	3	3	-	-	1				3	3	-	-	1		<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>E/W can make three of either minor, with 3♦ obviously being by far the better contract, while the four-nil spade split means that NS are limited to eight tricks in a spade contract.</p> <p>If East opens 1♣, South will overcall 1♠ and NS will usually win the battle to declare the final contract. However, if West introduces the long diamond suit, NS are likely to be pushed to the three level where they should be defeated by the natural-looking defence of two rounds of diamonds followed by a club switch from East.</p> <p>If East opens 1NT neither North nor South may have an obvious way into the auction. If South passes, West may transfer to diamonds and that should shut NS out completely.</p> <p>If West passes 1NT, many Norths will also pass and the spade lead will give East an overtrick. But if North has a way to show both majors he should use it. Yes, it is normal to have nine cards in the two suits, not eight, but in the long run it pays off big to compete the partscore at Love All, where both sides are going down only in fifties. West will compete with 3♦ and South take the push to 3♠.</p>
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<p>♠ J104 ♥ AJ65 ♦ K109 ♣ 842</p> <p>♠ K98                    ♠ Q652 ♥ K10                    ♥ Q842 ♦ A5                      ♦ 8432 ♣ AK9765              ♣ J</p> <p>♠ A73 ♥ 973 ♦ QJ76 ♣ Q103</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>9</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		9		-	-	-	-	-		17	5	-	-	-	-	-			9	2	1	-	2	-				2	1	1	2	-		<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>West will open 1♣ and East, hating clubs, should respond 1♦ in hope of finding a better spot. Well, that is a good general principle to follow, but 1♣ is a nice safe spot while West's jump rebid of either 2NT or 3♣ is doomed to failure – at least double dummy.</p> <p>But double dummy is not the same thing as real life. What is North going to lead against either contract?</p> <p>Against 2NT, North will lead either the jack of spades, which offers the possibility that declarer will be able to come to two spade tricks, or a low heart. Either way, declarer will win in hand and clear the clubs. 2NT can be beaten, but only if South switches to a low diamond on winning the defensive club trick.</p> <p>Against 3♣ the opening lead options are the jack of spades and a trump. A trump does no harm, but the subsequent defence still has to be accurate, but a spade lead blows the second defensive spade trick and declarer should get home with five clubs, two spades and one in each red suit.</p>
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<p>♠ 1063 ♥ A10 ♦ K1082 ♣ 9742</p> <p>♠ 75 ♥ J865 ♦ AQ765 ♣ Q10</p> <p>♠ KQJ84 ♥ K97 ♦ 9 ♣ AK63</p> <p>♠ A92 ♥ Q432 ♦ J43 ♣ J85</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>16</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td></td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	7		-	-	-	-	-	9	16	-	-	-	-	-	8		3	2	4	3	3			3	2	4	3	3	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>EW have a borderline game which should come home on careful play. The top spot, double dummy, is 4♥, but at most tables hearts will not even be mentioned, and who would want to declare 4♥ with such a delicate combined trump holding anyway?</p> <p>3NT is the normal game to reach, if any. Playing a weak NT, East will open 1♠ and West respond 2♦. Whether East now rebids a descriptive 3♣ or a slightly more agricultural 2/3NT, that 2♦ response will see the partnership get to game.</p> <p>Things are far less clear if playing strong NT and all that goes with it. East will again open 1♠ but what will West do? Some may bid 2♦ still, arguing that their passed-hand status permits them to do so even if two-over-one would normally be GF, but others will respond 1NT, possibly because 2♦ would be a form of Drury, showing a four-card spade raise. There are many different ways in which the auction could progress.</p> <p>Over 1NT, East will rebid 2♣, West give preference to 2♠, and is it automatic for East to bid again facing an almost certain doubleton spade?</p> <p>With spades three-three, 3NT cannot be defeated, but not all will get there.</p>
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9	16	-	-	-	-	-																																					
8		3	2	4	3	3																																					
		3	2	4	3	3																																					
<p>♠ 106 ♥ A853 ♦ J103 ♣ KJ53</p> <p>♠ - ♥ KQ942 ♦ AKQ54 ♣ Q94</p> <p>♠ A98754 ♥ J ♦ 982 ♣ 762</p> <p>♠ KQJ32 ♥ 1076 ♦ 76 ♣ A108</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>9</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	9		-	-	-	1	-	16	5	-	-	-	1	-	10		1	3	2	-	-			1	3	2	-	-	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>West will open 1♥ and East, slightly to South's surprise, will respond 1♠. 2♦ is plenty on the West cards now – a jump to 3♦ would be GF and West is well short of having that kind of hand, particularly with the spade misfit.</p> <p>East will not choose between partner's suits, instead repeating the six-card spade suit. While knowing that 2♠ could be the best spot – give East ♠KQJ10xx and out instead of the actual empty suit – West is worth a third bid in case East is maximum, and also has reason to imagine that playing in one of the red suits could still be best. 3♦, then, looks normal, and that should conclude the auction.</p> <p>With diamonds three-two and the ♥10 coming down so that there is no need for a heart ruff – though of course declarer will take one – nine tricks are completely routine.</p> <p>If North errs by leading a spade, there will be an overtrick as one of the clubs goes away. It would be foolish to lead a spade, as this could easily allow declarer to get one or, on a different deal, even two club discards on dummy's spades. I would take the risk if leading a club and try to cash our tricks immediately, and that would work well on the actual layout.</p>
HCP		Makeable contracts																																									
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16	5	-	-	-	1	-																																					
10		1	3	2	-	-																																					
		1	3	2	-	-																																					
<p>♠ AK2 ♥ 105 ♦ A32 ♣ 97642</p> <p>♠ 103 ♥ K6 ♦ 95 ♣ KQJ10853</p> <p>♠ 9654 ♥ Q8743 ♦ QJ108 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ QJ87 ♥ AJ92 ♦ K764 ♣ A</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>11</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	11		1	4	3	3	4	9	5	-	4	2	3	2	15		-	-	-	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Should North open the bidding? My inclination would be not to open a weak NT, but that if my system was to open 1♣ then rebid 1NT over 1♦/♥, I might do so. I would raise a 1♠ response to 2♠.</p> <p>If North does not open the bidding, 1♥ is the Acol opening with the South hand, 1♦ the opening for those playing five-card majors. Either should see West make a weak jump overcall of 3♣ – the hand is too balanced to bid 4♣, while 2♣ would make it too easy for the opposition to explore the hand properly.</p> <p>3♣ gives North an interesting problem. Bid 3NT and hope to find partner with a club honour to complete a stopper, make a negative double to show values, or pass with the intention to either pass the likely reopening double or bid a delayed 3NT to express doubt about playing that contract?</p> <p>Nothing is ideal. Double is very dangerous with no four-card major. After 1♦ – (3♣) – Dble – (pass) – ? South will cuebid 4♣ to get partner to pick a major – and what will North do now? Maybe, and it's a big maybe, the best option is to pass over 3♣ then bid 3NT when South confirms a genuine sound opening by reopening with double?</p>
HCP		Makeable contracts																																									
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																					
11		1	4	3	3	4																																					
9	5	-	4	2	3	2																																					
15		-	-	-	-	-																																					
		-	-	-	-	-																																					

♠ Q52  
♥ AKJ874  
♦ 765  
♣ 7

♠ 963  
♥ 532  
♦ AKQ84  
♣ 106

♠ AK874  
♥ Q  
♦ 109  
♣ A8432

♠ J10  
♥ 1096  
♦ J32  
♣ KQJ95

HCP	
10	13
9	8

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

Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable

4♠ is a lucky make for EW, but many will stop off in partscore and probably be happy that they have done so – until they manage to make 10 tricks.

East will open 1♠ and, if playing Acol, West will respond 2♦. North has an easy 2♥ overcall, and East may pass – the 2♦ response was forcing to at least 2♠, so there is no worry that West will not bid again, while a free 3♣ bid should be better than a working 11-count.

South may raise to 3♥, and now West has to decide whether to stretch to show the three-card spade support, or pass to show the complete minimum 2♦ response. I'd opt for pass and leave it up to East to bid again – which he will. If 3♥ comes round to East he can double for take-out and West respond 3♠. If, on the other hand, West bids 3♠ in front of East, the latter will probably go on to game.

Playing five-card majors, West's initial response is a simple raise to 2♠. North will overcall 3♥ and East perhaps compete with 3♠. This doesn't invite West to go on to game. If East wants to invite game on this auction, with no room to bid a new suit, what is known as a Game Try Double is the answer – as long as it has been agreed in advance.

♠ 10875  
♥ Q10  
♦ QJ98  
♣ Q96

♠ AQJ6  
♥ AJ8543  
♦ 3  
♣ A8

♠ K92  
♥ K9  
♦ 1076  
♣ J10752

♠ 43  
♥ 762  
♦ AK542  
♣ K43

HCP	
7	7
16	10

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

Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable

West will open 1♥ and reverse into 2♠ over the 1NT response – whether or not South butts in with 2♦.

East should love those two major-suit kings now. It is unclear for many partnerships just what three of a minor would mean now, but it is best to play it as a one-round force and if that is the agreement it is the best option open to East. West will go on with 3♥ and now East has an easy raise to game.

If there is any doubt about the forcing nature of 3♣, East may do best to just jump to 4♥, expecting that if West has only a five-card suit it should be a strong one as otherwise rather than reverse he might have raised 1NT to 2NT.

The play is all about the overtrick. It might seem that when North follows with the ten to the first round of hearts it is relatively easy to play him for ♥Q10 doubleton and play for the drop. But that overlooks the fact that it is a standard false card to play the ten from ♥10x precisely to tempt declarer to go wrong when partner has ♥Qxx. Declarer will need to know the calibre of the North player if he is to get the position right with any confidence.

♠ J84  
♥ 10973  
♦ -  
♣ Q109654

♠ A72  
♥ K5  
♦ AKQ976  
♣ J3

♠ K6  
♥ AQ42  
♦ J108532  
♣ A

♠ Q10953  
♥ J86  
♦ 4  
♣ K872

HCP	
3	14
17	6

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	7	6	1	6
W	-	7	6	1	6

Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all

12 tricks are the limit in a NT contract, but 7♦ is a very easy make without the need of any kindly breaks on finesses.

Say that West opens 1♦ and North passes. This being a matchpointed pairs event, East will start with 1♥ rather than commit to diamonds immediately. Left to himself, West will rebid 3♦, but most Souths will make a weak jump overcall of 2♠ non-vulnerable. That is a bit awkward for West, who is now a bit good for a quiet 3♦, which he might well bid without the king of hearts. So perhaps West will jump to 3NT, hoping to run the diamonds and find East with the little extra required.

West will be very interested now. A quiet 4♦ is forcing and West can cuebid 4♥ or 4♠ according to partnership style.

What now? Say that West cuebid 4♥, East might just ask for key cards, figuring that the ♥K will fill a hole rather nicely, and that the only other side-suit card needed for slam is the ♠A or ♠Q – and partner surely has at least one or the other for the 3NT bid. When West shows three key cards, East can see all the tricks and can bid 7♦.

<p>♠ A1042 ♥ J872 ♦ 65 ♣ A92</p> <p>♠ Q                      ♠ J983 ♥ K95                    ♥ Q4 ♦ AKJ3                  ♦ Q982 ♣ KQ1074              ♣ J63</p> <p>♠ K765 ♥ A1063 ♦ 1074 ♣ 85</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>6</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	9		N	-	-	1	1	-	18	6	S	-	-	1	1	-			E	3	3	-	-	1			W	3	3	-	-	1	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>I can see several different auctions on this one. If East responds 1♦ to West's 1♣ opening, West may raise to 3♦. The hand is slightly good for that bid but nothing else appeals. East will pass 3♦ like a shot, of course. If East responds 1♠, obligatory for many when playing five-card majors with Walsh, West should reverse into 2♦, a one-round force. System will play a big part in how things progress from there. In standard bidding, either 3♣ or 4♦ would now be non-forcing and would conclude the auction, with any hand good enough to force to game having to go through FSF. That is quite a cumbersome style, however, and many tournament players will use a version of Lebensohl to allow that any immediate preference to either of opener's suits is forcing, while 2NT is a puppet to 3♣ to allow responder to show a weak 3♣ or 3♦ preference. All the above auctions should end in 3♦, which can be held to nine tricks if the defence threatens a club ruff, but will often come to an overtrick. The, shall we say, less cultured, Wests will rebid 2NT and be left to play there. A heart lead should see that go down one.</p>
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<p>♠ K10872 ♥ 1082 ♦ 1082 ♣ A9</p> <p>♠ AJ53                    ♠ Q964 ♥ QJ75                    ♥ 63 ♦ A6                        ♦ Q9543 ♣ QJ7                      ♣ 108</p> <p>♠ - ♥ AK94 ♦ KJ7 ♣ K65432</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>4</td><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</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								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	7		N	3	1	3	-	2	15	4	S	3	1	4	-	2			E	-	-	-	1	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>Surprisingly, South can make 4♥ at double dummy, though I wouldn't expect anyone to both bid and make that contract. South will open 1♣ and West has a choice of doubling to get both majors into the game or overcalling 1NT to get across the strength and balanced nature of the hand. I don't think it is an automatic choice by any means, but I would expect a substantial majority to opt for the overcall – if nothing else, an overcall greatly improves one's chance of becoming declarer, does it not? If West overcalls 1NT, that should silence North, and South will probably rebid 2♣. What now? Possibly two passes to East, who competes with 2♦, and South bids 2♥? That would probably end the auction and we would discover whether declarer was up to finding the double dummy 10 tricks. Meanwhile, there are nine tricks in a club contract, while the only contract EW can make is 1♠ played by East. If West doubles the opening bid, North will bid 1♠ and that should silence East. South rebids 2♣, and we may then go back to the continuation we saw after the 1NT overcall.</p>
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<p>♠ 2 ♥ AQ985 ♦ Q742 ♣ 1064</p> <p>♠ A87653                ♠ KJ10 ♥ 4                        ♥ J1063 ♦ AK                      ♦ 109853 ♣ AQ85                  ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ Q94 ♥ K72 ♦ J6 ♣ KJ972</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>5</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	8		N	-	-	-	-	-	17	5	S	1	-	-	-	-			E	-	2	1	5	4			W	-	2	1	5	4	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>West opens 1♠ and most Norths will pass – the hand is really about a king short of what I would expect for a two-level overcall. East raises to 2♠ and West should make a slam try of some kind on the way to game. After all, Kxxx, xxx, xxx, Kxxx is enough to make 6♠ a very good contract. How West makes his slam try is a matter of style and partnership agreement. One way would be to jump to 4♥, splinter showing heart shortage. I like splinters, and would certainly choose a 4♣ splinter if the order of the suits was switched around, but 4♥ leaves partner no space to make a non-committal reply – either he has to go past game or sign-off. So I would prefer to bid 3♣, ostensibly merely a game try, and if partner responds only 3♠ to that, give up and just raise myself to 4♠. However, if partner accepts the game try, I can afford to go on to at least the five level. The play is interesting. Say that the lead is a diamond. Declarer wins and can just play to ruff three clubs in the dummy. That creates two trump losers and the outcome is 10 tricks. Or, declarer can cross to the ♠K and take the club finesse. Now only two ruffs are needed and there is only one trump loser so 11 tricks. But if the club finesse loses and a trump comes back, there is only one club ruff to be had. Tricky.</p>
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<p>♠AQ982 ♥K852 ♦73 ♣62</p> <p>♠KJ106            ♠754 ♥109                ♥A6 ♦Q9842            ♦J10 ♣73                 ♣AQJ954</p> <p>♠3 ♥QJ743 ♦AK65 ♣K108</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">12</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">13</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>1</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		9		6	12	13		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	1	5	3	1	S	1	1	5	3	1	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Most Easts will open 1♣ in third seat and South can overcall 1♥. West will introduce the spades, possibly via a negative double, and North is worth a constructive raise to 3♥ – especially if spades have been shown on his right. That should be enough to see South go on to the heart game.</p> <p>Everything lies very kindly for South and, while some will only make 10 tricks when they fail to take the spade finesse and are left with a minor-suit loser at the end, 11 tricks are possible if declarer does take the finesse, three minor-suit losers then being disposed of via two ruffs and one discard on the ♠A.</p> <p>A more imaginative East might open 3♣, trading on the favourable vulnerability and partner's passed-hand status. That would be my choice with such a strong six-card suit and with game quite unlikely on the EW hands – the fact that a bi shows a weak hand doesn't mean that the hand must ALWAYS be under opening bid strength.</p> <p>Actually, it is unlikely to affect things very much. While overcalling in such a weak five-card suit at the three level is no great joy for South, there is no real alternative, and North has an easy raise to game. In fact, the opening pre-empt might even make it easier for declarer to steel themselves into taking the spade finesse.</p>
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<p>♠Q5 ♥AQ653 ♦KQ75 ♣J8</p> <p>♠J10842            ♠AK93 ♥9                    ♥J10742 ♦6                    ♦A43 ♣K76542            ♣10</p> <p>♠76 ♥K8 ♦J10982 ♣AQ93</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;">14</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">12</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10</td><td></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>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		14		4	12	10		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	3	1	-	-	S	-	3	1	-	-	E	3	-	-	4	-	W	3	-	-	4	-	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>When North opens 1♥, East has the values to come in but not the right distribution, so most will pass. If South responds 2♦, would you come in with the West hand? Six-five but only 4 HCP – some will double or make a two-suited overcall. It may look dangerous, but the opposition rate to have a red-suit fit in which case they will probably not find it easy to double whatever EW bid to. If West does double, East has an easy jump to 4♠, which is unbeatable.</p> <p>But coming into a live auction with only 4 HCP is a bit scary so let's suppose that West passes and North raises to 3♦. South should pass that and now West knows that East has opening values. Now might be the time to make a balancing double and, though that is clearly an attempt to compete the partscore, East again has a hand worthy of a jump to 4♠.</p> <p>NS can make 3♦, and should score well if left to play there. Any higher contract should be defeated easily enough. As for EW, 10 tricks are available in a spade contract but quite a few pairs may never bid.</p>
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<p>♠AK42 ♥AJ42 ♦53 ♣KQ5</p> <p>♠8653                ♠109 ♥953                ♥K108 ♦A984                ♦2 ♣A2                 ♣J1098764</p> <p>♠QJ7 ♥Q76 ♦KQJ1076 ♣3</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;">17</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">11</td><td></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>4</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		17		8	4	11		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	4	3	3	4	S	-	4	3	3	4	E	1	-	-	-	-	W	1	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>Non-vulnerable, East has a normal 3♣ opening. I would imagine that most Souths will overcall 3♦ and that North will convert that to 3NT.</p> <p>When East leads the jack of clubs and dummy goes down, declarer will have a momentary worry that the lead is from AJ10, in which case perhaps he should duck the opening lead to cut defensive communications if East has a seven-card suit.</p> <p>But West will win the ace of clubs and declarer can relax. If West returns the two of clubs, declarer will win and play on diamonds, establishing 11 tricks. West can save a trick by guessing to switch to a heart. Now declarer has to concede to the ♥K as well as the two minor-suit aces – but why should West guess to find the heart switch? Anyone who is held to only 10 tricks rates to score very poorly on the board.</p> <p>And if East passes as dealer, having a more traditional view of what is required for a pre-empt? South will open 1♦, rebid 2♦, and North will once again close proceedings with 3NT.</p>
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<p>♠ 85 ♥ 97 ♦ KJ873 ♣ J865</p> <p>♠ KQJ10      ♠ A42 ♥ A3          ♥ J10542 ♦ 952          ♦ AQ64 ♣ AK42        ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ 9763 ♥ KQ86 ♦ 10 ♣ Q973</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>7</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <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>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	HCP		5	11	17	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	3	4	4	3	W	2	3	4	4	3	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <p>If West opens a strong NT, East will transfer to hearts then jump to 3NT to offer a choice of games and West will choose NT.</p> <p>If West opens 1♠, East will respond 2♥ then raise West's 2NT rebid to game, or pass if West's style is to jump to 3NT with a good 17.</p> <p>North has no good reason not to lead a diamond after any of these auctions. If declarer ducks this, South will win the bare ten and switch to a club. The defence is ahead of the game now and there will be no time to set up hearts even if they lie favourably. Declarer will eventually take the diamond finesse for a ninth trick.</p> <p>Seeing that to play low on the diamond will cost a potentially vital tempo, declarer may put in the ♦Q at trick one. When that wins he can play ace and another heart, hoping for a three-three split or doubleton honour with North. But the ♥10 loses to the queen, a club comes back and, when declarer wins and crosses to the ♠A to play a third heart, South can win cheaply and clear the clubs. Once again, declarer is held to nine tricks.</p>
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<p>♠ KJ1098 ♥ 965 ♦ 3 ♣ AK106</p> <p>♠ Q6432      ♠ - ♥ Q3          ♥ AKJ874 ♦ 1092        ♦ AQ86 ♣ Q53        ♣ J97</p> <p>♠ A75 ♥ 102 ♦ KJ754 ♣ 842</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>8</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		11	15	6	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	-	2	-	S	-	-	-	2	-	E	-	1	3	-	1	W	-	1	3	-	1	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <p>North opens 1♠ and East overcalls 2♥. South raises to 2♠ and that comes back to East who, looking at a very promising hand for the initial overcall, will double for take-out.</p> <p>After a pass from South, that gives West an interesting problem.</p> <p>There has to be a temptation to pass when holding five of the opposition's trump suit, but the lack of any intermediates in the spade suit suggests that it may be an uphill struggle to beat 2♠ doubled. My inclination would be to bid 3♥, which is likely to end the auction.</p> <p>There is quite a lot of work to be done, but 3♥ can be made, though declarer will often go wrong by using the heart entry to dummy to take a diamond finesse and run into a ruff.</p> <p>Actually, I would be more tempted to leave in the double with the west cards if NS were vulnerable. The point is that down one would now score the magic +200 on a partscore deal, whereas with NS non-vulnerable down one will be only +100, and that is less than a making partscore for EW.</p>
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<p>♠ K10986 ♥ A103 ♦ K10 ♣ KQ3</p> <p>♠ A3          ♠ J54 ♥ Q87        ♥ KJ652 ♦ AQ84       ♦ 96 ♣ 10854      ♣ AJ7</p> <p>♠ Q72 ♥ 94 ♦ J7532 ♣ 962</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>3</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <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>1</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>2</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		15	10	12	3	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	1	-	S	-	-	-	1	-	E	2	1	3	-	1	W	2	1	3	-	1	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>If North opens a strong NT, that is likely to keep everyone else out so he will play there.</p> <p>East has a normal heart lead and will be very pleased to see West play the queen. North will duck a couple of times but has to win the third heart and must play on spades. With no sure dummy entry to take a spade finesse through West, declarer has little option but to pay East for the jack of spades, running the ten. That brings some excellent news when West has to win the ace.</p> <p>If West now returns a low diamond, declarer cannot guess wrong so wins the trick and cashes out the spades for down one.</p> <p>If West instead plays back a club, the king will lose to the ace and East will cash the hearts, squeezing declarer out of a club and one of the spade winners. Now East can establish a second club trick and the contract should be down two.</p> <p>If North opens 1♠, West may overcall 1NT, weakfish in fourth seat, and East transfer to hearts. There are nine tricks to be had in a heart contract, though South may compete to 2♠ and, if EW fail to bid on to 3♥, that is only down one.</p>
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<p>♠ KJ6 ♥ K9543 ♦ 5 ♣ K964</p> <p>♠ 10987      ♠ AQ4 ♥ A62      ♥ 8 ♦ K82      ♦ AQJ10963 ♣ Q102      ♣ J5</p> <p>♠ 532 ♥ QJ107 ♦ 74 ♣ A873</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;">10</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9      14</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</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>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> </table>	HCP		10	9      14	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	-	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	-	5	-	5	5	W	-	5	-	5	5	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>East opens 1♦ and West responds 1♠. The partial spade fit will confirm to East that his hand is worth an invitational jump rebid of 3♦, and West will bid 3NT over that.</p> <p>On the likely heart lead, declarer will have to decide whether to simply cash out for nine tricks or gamble by leading a spade to the queen in search of an overtrick.</p> <p>It's just a 50-50 decision. At Teams scoring it would be automatic to settle for nine tricks – why risk 11 IMPs to try to gain 1 IMP?</p> <p>At Pairs scoring, the size of the gain or loss is identical, assuming everyone to have reached 3NT, so it may seem little more than a guess. However, even though it looks obvious to bid to 3NT, there will be pairs who fail to get there. We have already beaten those pairs simply by getting to the correct contract, so are risking something for nothing in comparison to those pairs. Best to just take the nine tricks, boring as that may be.</p> <p>If East rebids only 2♦, West can raise to 3♦, East bid 3♠, and West again bid 3NT. I'm betting that will be a very rare auction.</p>
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<p>♠ K53 ♥ 10 ♦ AJ8763 ♣ J83</p> <p>♠ A104      ♠ Q972 ♥ KQ963      ♥ 754 ♦ -      ♦ Q1094 ♣ A10765      ♣ K9</p> <p>♠ J86 ♥ AJ82 ♦ K52 ♣ Q42</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">13      7</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">11</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>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> </table>	HCP		9	13      7	11	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	-	-	-	S	-	1	-	-	-	E	3	-	3	3	2	W	3	-	4	3	2	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>West opens 1♥ and North will often overcall 2♦. East can make a negative double and South will either redouble to show a good hand or, more likely, try 2NT. West may compete with 3♣ over 2NT and one of North and South in turn compete with 3♦.</p> <p>If 3♦ ends the auction, the bad diamond situation means that the contract should be down two – not so bad if EW can make a partscore, and they can.</p> <p>East has the big decision to make over the opposing 3♦ bid. East has three-card heart support for a known five-card suit, and has a good holding in partner's second suit, clubs. That suggests competing to 3♥. However, the fact that East is minimum for the initial double of 2♦, and has a very handy looking diamond holding for defence, is likely to over-rule the three-card heart support and many Easts will choose to defend.</p> <p>So, how will EW get to play in 3♥, which cannot be touched? Well, apart from East making a winning decision, the simple way is to be playing five-card majors. Now, when North overcalls 2♦, East can just raise hearts immediately rather than get the spades into the game. Once West knows that East has three hearts, West will compete to the three level.</p>
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<p>♠ J942 ♥ KQ5 ♦ KQ63 ♣ 83</p> <p>♠ 876      ♠ A103 ♥ A1064      ♥ J972 ♦ A52      ♦ J1098 ♣ 762      ♣ 105</p> <p>♠ KQ5 ♥ 83 ♦ 74 ♣ AKQJ94</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;">8      6</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>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</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		11	8      6	15	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	3	2	4	4	S	4	3	2	4	4	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>This one looks to be quite straightforward. I wonder at how many tables I will be proved to be wrong?</p> <p>There will normally be three passes to South, who opens 1♣. Whether the style is for North to respond 1♦ or 1♠, South has a 3♣ rebid and North an easy 3NT.</p> <p>If North has bid spades, East will lead the ♦J, West winning the ace and continuing with the ♦5. It will be natural for declarer to play on spades and that establishes 10 tricks.</p> <p>If North has bid diamonds, East may lead a heart. West again wins the ace and returns the suit, and again declarer plays on spades for the same 10 tricks.</p> <p>Well, 10 tricks are assured if declarer plays on spades, but there will actually be 11 if East fails to cash West's second ace when in with the ace of spades. I would imagine there will be a fair number of tables at which 11 tricks are permitted.</p>
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<p>♠ - ♥ AQJ109432 ♦ KQ ♣ K43</p> <p>♠ KJ863                      ♠ 75 ♥ 5                              ♥ K86 ♦ J1054                        ♦ 8763 ♣ AJ7                           ♣ Q986</p> <p>♠ AQ10942 ♥ 7 ♦ A92 ♣ 1052</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>5</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	15		N	1	-	5	2	3	10	5	S	1	-	5	2	3			E	-	1	-	-	-			W	-	1	-	-	-	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>Way too good to open 4♥, but not good enough for an Acol 2♣, the North hand would, I suppose, fit a Benjamin 2♣, though I am not at all a fan of the method, which is far too prone to opposition pre-emption when the vulnerability is appropriate. Plus, a lot of people don't seem to know what an Acol two bid, which is what a Benjamin 2♣ is supposed to show, really looks like.</p> <p>Anyway, I would open 1♥ – after all, what are the chances that this will be passed out when North has a spade void?</p> <p>South will respond 1♠ and North is too good for a 4♥ rebid so may invent a suit and bid 3♣. South will repeat the spades and now North bids 4♥.</p> <p>Two aces are all very well, but a singleton heart strongly suggests that slam will be a poor bet so South should pass out 4♥.</p> <p>Declarer will have to overtake the queen of diamonds to get at the ♠A, on which a club loser goes away. If the lead was a diamond, next will come a club towards the king, while if the initial lead was a club, that will not be necessary and declarer will have the luxury of being able to take the heart finesse. No luck there so there should be 11 tricks for everyone.</p>
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<p>♠ AK103 ♥ J9753 ♦ AKQ ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ J97652                      ♠ 8 ♥ -                              ♥ AK1042 ♦ J10864                        ♦ 752 ♣ 65                              ♣ AK43</p> <p>♠ Q4 ♥ Q86 ♦ 93 ♣ QJ9872</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>14</td><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>3</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								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	17		N	2	-	3	1	3	2	14	S	2	1	3	1	3			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Most people will be dissuaded by the vulnerability from opening a weak two or weak two-suiter with the West cards, so North will get to open 1♥. East will have to pass that, though no doubt with some interest as to how things are going to continue.</p> <p>South responds 1NT and North has a close decision to make. Many will just pass if playing Acol – a 2♠ reverse would imply better hearts than this, while the most attractive rebid, is one cannot bear to pass, is to try the three-card diamond suit, which I am sure will not be to everybody's taste. Nonetheless, if playing strong NT, 5-card majors, where the 1NT response is wide-ranging, I would prefer to rebid 2♦ than 2♥, 2♠ or 2NT.</p> <p>If North does rebid 2♦, South will give preference to 2♥, which North should pass, and East will be more than content. Until, that is, he discovers that not only can he not defeat 2♥, but declarer can even make an overtrick, if he gets the play right. NS can also make 3NT, the defenders coming to East's two ace-kings but nothing more.</p>
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<p>♠ A8 ♥ K3 ♦ AQJ97 ♣ Q1097</p> <p>♠ Q97                              ♠ 105 ♥ J10952                        ♥ 876 ♦ K102                            ♦ 653 ♣ A4                                ♣ K8632</p> <p>♠ KJ6432 ♥ AQ4 ♦ 84 ♣ J5</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>3</td><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</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								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	16		N	4	4	2	4	4	10	3	S	4	4	3	4	5			E	-	-	-	-	-			W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <p>South will open 1♠ and rebid 2♠ over the 2♦ response. Now North could bid 3NT but, with only a single heart stopper and a strong doubleton spade, may prefer to bid 3♣ and give partner an opportunity to show a sixth spade should he have one.</p> <p>On this occasion, however, South has an interesting choice. True, he has a sixth spade, but the spades are nothing special, while he has a double stopper in the unbid suit. I would guess that the majority will therefore bid 3NT, and that will end the auction.</p> <p>Declarer will win the heart lead in hand and take the diamond finesse then, when it wins, play a club to the jack. West will presumably win the ace and continue the attack on hearts so declarer wins the king and clears the clubs. East in turn will set up West's hearts, but now declarer is in hand to repeat the diamond finesse and has 11 tricks for a useful score, with those playing in spades coming to only 10 tricks in most cases.</p>
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<p>♠ KQ52 ♥ AJ86 ♦ A6 ♣ A64</p> <p>♠ 987                      ♠ AJ1043 ♥ KQ5432                ♥ 7 ♦ K32                      ♦ QJ854 ♣ 7                         ♣ 102</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ 109 ♦ 1097 ♣ KQJ9853</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>8</td><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	18		N	5	-	1	-	3	8	8	S	5	-	1	-	3			E	-	1	-	2	-			W	-	1	-	2	-	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>West has a weak 2♥ opener and North will overcall 2NT, though the hand is a maximum for the bid. Looking at a misfit, East will, of course, pass, and South will raise to 3NT, ending the auction.</p> <p>If East leads partner's suit, declarer will be able to win and set up two overtricks by playing back hearts.</p> <p>If, however, East leads one of his own suits, the defence will go a little better though, of course, there are nine top tricks so nothing can threaten the contract.</p> <p>A diamond lead knocks out declarer's ace and there is no time to play for overtricks.</p> <p>A spade lead is not quite so effective as declarer gets a tenth trick immediately. If declarer now rattles off seven club winners, both defenders will be under pressure and will need to be very careful, watching declarer's discards before making their own. The contract can be held to 10 tricks, but it is easy to see how a defensive slip-up could allow an eleventh. For sure, I would prefer to be declarer rather than either defender.</p>
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<p>♠ AQ8753 ♥ 106 ♦ 1064 ♣ 75</p> <p>♠ J106                      ♠ K2 ♥ A754                    ♥ KQJ83 ♦ J                         ♦ A ♣ AKQ104                ♣ J9862</p> <p>♠ 94 ♥ 92 ♦ KQ987532 ♣ 3</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>14</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>5</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	6		N	-	2	-	1	-	15	14	S	-	2	-	1	-			E	6	-	6	-	5			W	6	-	6	-	5	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>North has a classic weak two opening. East must now choose between a simple 3♥ overcall and a Leaping Michaels 4♣, showing at least five-five in clubs and hearts.</p> <p>My preference is for the simple overcall as I don't feel a jack-high suit is appropriate for the Leaping Michaels bid.</p> <p>It is hard to imagine South being able to resist introducing the eight-card suit, particularly at favourable vulnerability. Now West has a problem. The West hand is far too good for a quiet raise to 4♥, yet no other bid quite describes this hand properly. The West hand is so good that I would not bid only 4♥. Perhaps 5♦ is best, showing the heart fit and diamond control with slam interest, while also denying a spade control.</p> <p>And if South's bid was 5♦? Then I guess West can only bid 5♥ – a jump to slam would be a bit of a wild stab in the dark.</p> <p>As we can see, it is a simple task to make 6♥, but it will be very hard to get there. Even if West does make a slam try, is East really going to accept the invitation when holding that club suit?</p>
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<p>♠ K106 ♥ J862 ♦ 1074 ♣ A76</p> <p>♠ A742                      ♠ 985 ♥ 104                        ♥ AQ953 ♦ K85                        ♦ Q ♣ KJ54                      ♣ Q1098</p> <p>♠ QJ3 ♥ K7 ♦ AJ9632 ♣ 32</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></td><td></td><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>10</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	8		N	-	3	-	-	-	11	10	S	-	3	-	-	-			E	2	-	2	1	-			W	2	-	2	1	-	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>South will open 1♦ and rebid 2♦ over North's 1♥ response. That will run round to East who, knowing that partner is marked with values and looking at diamond shortage, should double. West will respond 2♠ and North compete to 3♦, which ends the auction.</p> <p>Theoretically, of course, somebody could double 2♠ for +200, but South has a minimum opening, while North has too many diamonds to make that a likely choice. That is the point really – even when the balancing double could work out badly in theory, in practice it will rarely do so and it is pretty safe to try to push the opposition up a level.</p> <p>The play in 3♦ is about as exciting as watching paint dry – one loser in each suit with no real possibility of any being avoided.</p> <p>2♠ by West is more interesting but the even trump split should see declarer get out with seven tricks, and -100 should score well.</p>
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<p>♠ K8 ♥ KQ972 ♦ A82 ♣ A54</p> <p>♠ 4                      ♠ AQJ10 ♥ 10863                ♥ A4 ♦ K1064                ♦ J73 ♣ J1098                ♣ K762</p> <p>♠ 976532 ♥ J5 ♦ Q95 ♣ Q3</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;">16</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4      15</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">5</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		16	4      15	5	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	1	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	3	1	-	-	1	W	3	1	-	-	1	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>Well, is that spade suit below the threshold your stomach will tolerate for a weak 2♠ opening? Non-vulnerable, I would open 2♠, but I'm not sure that the EBU would thank me for arguing that everyone else should match my style.</p> <p>If South does open 2♠, North may make a 2NT inquiry then settle for 3♣ when South shows a minimum. Four trump losers is not a good start for declarer and 3♣ should eventually be down three after the normal club lead.</p> <p>Where South does not open the bidding, North will open either 1♥ or 1NT according to system.</p> <p>East is not strong enough to double a strong NT so will pass and South will transfer to spades. 2♠ by North is a trick better than spades played by South as the club position is protected. On a diamond lead, declarer can win and knock out the ace of hearts and get rid of a club while East ruffs the third round, and the contract is down only one.</p> <p>If North opens 1♥, East should double, though some may prefer a 1NT overcall. South will bid 1♠ over the double and North rebid 1NT. That is NS's best spot, with potential for East to let it through with the opening lead, but South will surely correct to 2♠, and that is down two.</p>
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<p>♠ A752 ♥ J ♦ 652 ♣ KQ743</p> <p>♠ 1064                      ♠ KJ83 ♥ Q752                      ♥ AK94 ♦ QJ109                      ♦ K8 ♣ A5                              ♣ 1062</p> <p>♠ Q9 ♥ 10863 ♦ A743 ♣ J98</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;">10</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9      14</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	HCP		10	9      14	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	-	-	-	S	1	-	-	-	-	E	-	2	3	2	1	W	-	2	3	2	1	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>East will open a weak NT at many tables and, unless North has a way to describe a four-card major and longer minor, that may end the auction. Incidentally, there is a convention that does exactly that, a passed-hand double showing four major, five-plus minor – after all, a new meaning for double is needed, as a passed hand can't have a penalty double, can it?</p> <p>If playing this double, South would respond 2♣, pass or correct and West double for take-out. That would get EW to 2♥, a very good contract and one which will outscore those in 1NT, making North wish he had kept his mouth shut.</p> <p>Those playing strong no trump will find the heart fit without any help from the opposition. East opens 1♣, West responds 1♥ and, while North might double that for take-out, East supports partner's hearts.</p> <p>Nine tricks are possible with a good spade guess, though eight may prove more common after a club lead. Meanwhile, should NS buy the contract at a few tables, all they can make is 1♣, so they had better not go past the two level when vulnerable.</p>
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<p>♠ AJ3 ♥ 1084 ♦ K85 ♣ K876</p> <p>♠ Q842                      ♠ K1095 ♥ AQJ5                      ♥ 976 ♦ AJ107                      ♦ 9632 ♣ Q                              ♣ 42</p> <p>♠ 76 ♥ K32 ♦ Q4 ♣ AJ10953</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;">16      3</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10</td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		11	16      3	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	-	-	1	S	2	-	-	-	1	E	-	3	2	3	-	W	-	3	2	3	-	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>At most tables the auction will begin with two passes. Non-vulnerable, I would recommend a 3♣ opening with the South hand but perhaps at the actual vulnerability 1♣ is a wiser choice. For sure, 1♣, if nothing else giving partner a sound opening lead, is more enterprising than passing.</p> <p>West has a classic take-out double of any number of clubs. After 1♣ – Dble – North will show a constructive raise to 3♣ if facing a genuine club suit, but South will quickly sign off in 3♣.</p> <p>If 3♣ ends the auction careful defence should lead to down one.</p> <p>An aggressive West may double again when he sees the opposition stop in 3♣. That sees East respond 3♠, which should succeed. It is natural for declarer to get the spades right because he needs entries to hand to play on the red suits.</p> <p>If South's 1♣ opening does not promise the suit, North may start with a redouble. East can bid 1♠ now and South repeat the clubs – 2♣ saying that he has long clubs but a minimum or even sub-minimum opening. That will ensure that North competes to 3♣, and it will once again be down to West to judge whether to push on to 3♠ or to defend.</p>
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<p>♠AQJ9876 ♥72 ♦J87 ♣2</p> <p>♠K5                      ♠2 ♥AKQ4                  ♥109865 ♦9643                    ♦AK10 ♣Q106                    ♣AKJ7</p> <p>♠1043 ♥J3 ♦Q52 ♣98543</p>	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>When East opens 1♥, West should respond 2NT, game-forcing raise, if having that agreement. How the auction continues will depend on the EW agreements. Some show shortages at the three level, others prefer to show second suits at the three level and shortages at the four level.</p> <p>I prefer the latter approach as if East rebids 3♣ to show clubs, West can then bid 3♥ to ask for a shortage, and more information can be got across than if East has to bid 3♠ to show the singleton.</p> <p>Anyway, either approach should see West learn soon enough that the ♠K is wastepaper so that the partnership stops in game, if left to themselves.</p> <p>But, of course, EW will not be left to themselves, as North has a 3♠ overcall. East will need to know what his agreements are – is 4♣ natural or just a cuebid, how to show the singleton, what would double mean?</p> <p>If EW attempt to play in 4♥, South can save in 4♠, and that costs only –300 if they are allowed to play there. EW, therefore have to take the Pushto 5♥ to save their matchpoint score. It is not completely automatic for them to get that right, as West has the wasted ♠K, while East has weak hearts.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
8	-	-	-	2	-
14      15	-	-	-	2	-
3	4	5	5	-	-
	4	5	5	-	5

<p>♠Q52 ♥K762 ♦Q875 ♣102</p> <p>♠K1087                  ♠A943 ♥Q53                    ♥108 ♦AK43                    ♦J106 ♣65                        ♣Q973</p> <p>♠J6 ♥AJ94 ♦92 ♣AKJ84</p>	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <p>South opens 1♣ and West doubles. Now North bids 1♦ or 1♥ according to taste, and East is worth a free bid of 1♠. South will raise a 1♥ response to 2♥ and West may compete with 2♠. If so, South is likely to compete further with 3♥.</p> <p>It is possible to make 3♥ but that requires declarer to pick up the trumps without loss as well as taking the club finesse, so the contract will often fail.</p> <p>As for 2♠, that should fail by a trick, a good save against 2♥.</p> <p>If North's initial response is 1♦, things are a bit more complicated as South does not know about the heart fit. Assuming double of 1♠ to be for take-out, rather than showing three-card diamond support or some other agreement, South will indeed double 1♠. If West passes, North will respond 2♥ and we are back on our previous course. However, if West raises 1♠ to 2♠, it is hard to see North bidding 3♥ freely. If North passes over 2♠, will South double again? Possibly not.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
7	2	1	3	-	3
12      7	2	1	3	-	3
14	-	-	-	1	-
	-	-	-	1	-

<p>♠AK986 ♥AKJ982 ♦- ♣J5</p> <p>♠3                        ♠Q42 ♥75                      ♥103 ♦QJ983                  ♦AK10642 ♣A10932                ♣64</p> <p>♠J1075 ♥Q64 ♦75 ♣KQ87</p>	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <p>The North hand has huge potential if a trump fit can be found. North will open 1♥ and East probably overcall 2♦.</p> <p>If South now raises hearts, which is the possibly the right thing to do even if facing a possible four-card suit, NS will be locked into hearts as West jumps pre-emptively to 5♦.</p> <p>Clearly, the right bits and pieces could make slam cold, but North can hardly bid it and will probably settle for 5♥, which ends the auction and the contract is made exactly.</p> <p>Some Souths will make a negative double and again West should jump to 5♦. Now North will know of the spade fit and that may convince him to punt the slam, though it is still just a guess. Facing the ♣A instead of the ♣KQ, a diamond lead would see 6♠ made, despite the trump loser.</p> <p>Even vulnerable, it is right for West to take the advance sacrifice. If partner has a 2♦ overcall, it is very unlikely that the opposition will be able to judge to defend 5♦ doubled, and an immediate 5♦ really makes NS guess.</p>
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
16	-	-	5	5	-
7      9	-	-	5	5	-
8	-	3	-	-	-
	-	3	-	-	-