

British Summer Virtual Sim Pairs



Monday
20th July 2020

Welcome to the 2020 British Summer Virtual 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.

If you are playing this SIM at a virtual club other than your normal one encourage the committee at your main club to consider running a SIM or two.

You can find the full details and results at www.ebu.co.uk/sims/. You can earn Blue points in these Sim Pairs (in England) and they are awarded to the top third of the field. Provisional master points are shown but the event is not finalised until all results are in and score corrections have been made. This usually takes about three weeks.

Ian Payn, Chairman EBU

<p> ♠AJ107 ♥J8 ♦AJ4 ♣QJ42 ♠K854 ♠Q2 ♥AQ105 ♥9732 ♦Q1073 ♦9862 ♣9 ♣A87 ♠963 ♥K64 ♦K5 ♣K10653 </p> <table border="1" data-bbox="70 1070 188 1256"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>14</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="229 1070 470 1256"> <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>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		14		11	6	9		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	-	1	2	S	3	-	-	2	2	E	-	1	1	-	-	W	-	1	2	-	-	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : 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></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A familiar situation at match point pairs. Whatever your competitive methods against 1NT, the West hand is not ideal. But you simply have to bid, because playing in 1NT, especially not vulnerable, is usually good for the opposition. If your system includes a bid to show both majors, fine. If you play Aspro, you have to choose which major to anchor to. I would bid 2♦, showing spades, and pass partner's relay of 2♥.</p> <p>2♥ is a touch-and-go affair. Played by East it looks as though a trump lead will just about beat it, but one down, even doubled, will still be good for East-West. Maybe North-South can back in with 3♣? Not easy, and it still scores only 110 as against 120 available in no trumps. These tiny margins will be worth a lot of match points.</p> <p>If North-South play a strong no trump and five card majors, West may have to wait for a round to compete.</p>	West	North	East	South		1NT	Pass	Pass	?			
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<p>♠ A73 ♥ K874 ♦ 9 ♣ Q9742</p> <p>♠ Q92 ♠ KJ1084 ♥ Q62 ♥ 109 ♦ J1043 ♦ KQ7 ♣ K63 ♣ AJ10</p> <p>♠ 65 ♥ AJ53 ♦ A8652 ♣ 85</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dbl</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Assuming North doesn't open ultra-light in third seat East has a normal 1♠ opening (no, it's far too good for a weak no trump if anyone considered that). Now, if West raises, will that be the end of the story? Once again, South has good reason to be bold. A double is a sound prospect as you can always convert a club response to diamonds and maximise your chances of finding a fit. Should the auction pan out like this, West will wish he'd bid 1NT rather than raise spades; not only do you make it but you'll discourage competition. As our auction went, if East is tempted to compete to 3♠, it shouldn't be hard for North-South to find their ruffs for two down.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥	All pass	
West	North	East	South																						
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HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9	N 2	-	3	-	-
8 14	S 2	-	3	-	-
9	E -	-	-	1	1
	W -	-	-	1	1

<p>♠ A4 ♥ AK832 ♦ J642 ♣ 103</p> <p>♠ K98763 ♠ J52 ♥ J105 ♥ Q974 ♦ 3 ♦ 1098 ♣ Q72 ♣ AJ8</p> <p>♠ Q10 ♥ 6 ♦ AKQ75 ♣ K9654</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>2♠ is not a thing of beauty, with moderate trumps and three cards in the other major, but few will resist it. And what a can of worms it may open. First, should North compete? 3♥ is too rich for me, and double is fraught with danger too. If North and East pass I would bid 2NT as South. No, not unusual, but natural! You have a source of tricks and after East's pass partner is strong favourite to have something in spades. That will get North-South an easy 630. But East probably will raise defensively to 3♠. Now what? You could try 4NT for the minors but it's very thin for that. Partner will surely go to 6♦ if you do. Alternatively, you might compromise with 4♦ which will get you at least to game. A lot of possibilities. I won't even begin to speculate about an auction starting 2♦ (multi) and a 2♥ overcall.</p>	West	North	East	South	2♠	?		
West	North	East	South						
2♠	?								

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
12	N 4	6	4	-	4
6 8	S 4	6	4	-	4
14	E -	-	-	-	-
	W -	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ A105 ♥ Q4 ♦ AK8 ♣ KQ1084</p> <p>♠ J987 ♠ K632 ♥ - ♥ AK85 ♦ J1064 ♦ Q95 ♣ J9762 ♣ A3</p> <p>♠ Q4 ♥ J1097632 ♦ 732 ♣ 5</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Just to see what might happen if South employs a modern tool, the weak jump shift in response. After a normal opening bid and normal double, 2♥ shows about 4-8 points and a six card suit. Okay, you're a point light but you do have an extra trump. Sadly, 4♥ should be one too high, especially with West on lead. It's harder to defend if played by North; maybe we should start playing transfer weak jump shifts! With three certain tricks, four trumps and some other values, East might be tempted to double. However, many partnerships treat such a bid as optional, in which case West will surely take it out, turning a plus into a minus. Just be grateful for small mercies.</p>	West	North	East	South		1♣	Dbl	2♥	Pass	4♥	?	
West	North	East	South										
	1♣	Dbl	2♥										
Pass	4♥	?											

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

<p>♠ 1097 ♥ 75 ♦ A53 ♣ Q9842</p> <p>♠ A842 ♠ Q65 ♥ KJ932 ♥ AQ64 ♦ J64 ♦ K972 ♣ 7 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ KJ3 ♥ 108 ♦ Q108 ♣ AJ1063</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="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>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		6		9	14	11		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	-	-	-	S	3	-	-	-	-	E	-	2	2	2	1	W	-	1	2	2	-	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>East has a super-strong weak no trump and some, including me I'm afraid, might be tempted to upgrade it. This time conservatism is the right policy, with only eight tricks available on the lie of the cards.</p> <p>With most of the key cards right for them, North-South can make 3♣, but how are they going to get into the auction? South can't say anything on the first round and opponents are still unlimited when it's your turn next.</p> <p>There's not much to the play for either side. Nothing left to say, no more ace to play.</p>	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥	All pass
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<p>♠ Q7643 ♥ K854 ♦ A10 ♣ QJ</p> <p>♠ AJ95 ♠ K82 ♥ AJ107 ♥ Q ♦ Q7 ♦ KJ8543 ♣ 873 ♣ 954</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ 9632 ♦ 962 ♣ AK1062</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="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>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	HCP		12		12	9	7		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	2	-	-	S	1	-	2	-	-	E	-	1	-	1	-	W	-	1	-	1	-	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>It pays to get busy against the weak no trump. This time North's 2♣ shows hearts and another suit, with the proviso that if the other suit is spades, they will be better than the hearts. If 2♣ showed both majors it would have much the same effect.</p> <p>There will be many variations thereafter; 2NT here is the Lebensohl convention, showing one of a number of hands, in this case a desire to compete in diamonds. It's wise to make such a bid before South has had a chance to respond to the Aspro bid.</p> <p>South may be tempted to compete to 3♥, but a moment's reflection should tell you that partner must have spades, and therefore probably only four hearts. The cards fit badly for both sides and 3♦ will go for 200 on best defence. South leads a top club, North playing the queen, and switches to a spade, getting two ruffs.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1NT	2♣	2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦	All pass
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<p>♠ A953 ♥ K107 ♦ - ♣ J108653</p> <p>♠ Q7 ♠ K1062 ♥ Q942 ♥ A53 ♦ A5 ♦ K10842 ♣ AQ742 ♣ K</p> <p>♠ J84 ♥ J86 ♦ QJ9763 ♣ 9</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="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>2</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	HCP		8		14	13	5		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	1	3	2	3	W	2	2	3	2	3	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>A completely normal auction; North or South might have been anticipating putting the odd spanner in the works, but not when your suits are bid in front of you.</p> <p>3NT is a fine contract, but will take some making if the defenders give nothing away. South has an unattractive lead. I wouldn't touch either major with a bargepole. The queen of diamonds is safe enough, but you'd rather declarer got the bad news in that quarter later rather than sooner. There's a reasonable case for the singleton club, which gives declarer no help at all.</p> <p>The only line I can see that works is to play on the majors, establishing the thirteenth heart and playing for the jack of spades to come down in three rounds, rather than finesse. In practice most will go down on a club lead.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	3NT	All pass
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<p>♠ K3 ♥ K10653 ♦ Q76 ♣ A64</p> <p>♠ AJ4 ♠ Q7652 ♥ 98 ♥ A7 ♦ 2 ♦ 109853 ♣ K1097532 ♣ J</p> <p>♠ 1098 ♥ QJ42 ♦ AKJ4 ♣ Q8</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>12</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>7</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	12		N	-	2	3	-	1	8	7	S	-	2	3	-	2			E	2	-	-	1	-			W	3	-	-	1	-	<p>Board 9 : 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>1NT</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dbl</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Here's a pretty mess, as WS Gilbert would (and did) say. North's hand is, of course, a weak no trump, not a 1♥ opening. I did advocate getting busy against the weak no trump so better stay true to my principles. Now South uses another version of Lebensohl, intending to bid 3♠ next to show a game going hand with four hearts and no stop in the opponent's suit (spades). With a spade fit, West is not afraid of competing, and North can't say anything yet. South sees it through, West shows spade values and North bids the obvious game.</p> <p>After West's helpful bids, East is likely to lead a club, with a spade second choice. Strangely, it's a diamond lead that beats the contract! West gets a ruff and there are three more inescapable losers. Funny old game.</p>	West	North	East	South		1NT	2♦	2NT	3♣	Pass	Pass	3♠	Dbl	4♥	All pass	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																									
12		N	-	2	3	-	1																																																								
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<p>♠ J5 ♥ 98 ♦ J832 ♣ J10532</p> <p>♠ Q87642 ♠ AK93 ♥ KJ7 ♥ Q1052 ♦ 10 ♦ K95 ♣ 976 ♣ Q4</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ A643 ♦ AQ764 ♣ AK8</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>14</td> <td>S</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	3		N	5	5	-	-	1	6	14	S	5	5	-	-	1			E	-	-	1	3	-			W	-	-	1	3	-	<p>Board 10 : 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>1NT</td> <td>Dbl</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Another heavyweight weak no trump is met with the obvious riposte. There are several popular artificial conventions to use when partner's 1NT is doubled, but let's say our West can make a natural bid. Now what?</p> <p>Many pairs have sophisticated methods of handling these situations when partner doubles 1NT and the opponents run for cover. Some of these methods involve passing on good hands and bidding on weak hands. In this case North may be forced to bid 3♣, or perhaps 2NT to show a very weak two or three suiter.</p> <p>Whatever happens, although perceived wisdom says that East should not punish West, who may have been forced to say something with nothing, surely you can raise spades in competition. This time you may push opponents into a lucky game; there's every reason to get the diamonds right for eleven tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South			1NT	Dbl	2♠	3♣	3♠	?				
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																									
3		N	5	5	-	-	1																																																								
6	14	S	5	5	-	-	1																																																								
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<p>♠ J963 ♥ AK5 ♦ 987 ♣ J32</p> <p>♠ Q4 ♠ 875 ♥ 762 ♥ 1098 ♦ AJ1065 ♦ KQ3 ♣ AK6 ♣ Q1085</p> <p>♠ AK102 ♥ QJ43 ♦ 42 ♣ 974</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>9</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>7</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	9		N	-	-	2	1	-	14	7	S	-	-	2	1	-			E	2	2	-	-	-			W	2	2	-	-	-	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : 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></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Dbl</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>I've had enough of calling these monster 14-counts a weak no trump! This time I'm upgrading it, so there. Now, it's dangerous for South to enter the fray, but you do have both majors and it is pairs. North obliges and it's probable that East-West go quietly, though I wonder how 3♦ one off would fair on the match point sheet.</p> <p>You will see that the computer can make 2♥ on a 4-3 fit but not 2♠. That's because, in a spade contract, if the defenders take their minor suit winners in the right order, the thirteenth club will promote West's queen of spades. Well done if you found that defence. If you don't, North may be able to count the hand and play to drop the queen.</p> <p>Defending 1NT is much duller. It should be easy to take four tricks in each major.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT	Dbl	Pass	2♠	All pass	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																																													
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																									
9		N	-	-	2	1	-																																																								
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<p>♠AQ6432 ♥Q97 ♦87 ♣K6</p> <p>♠K ♥A654 ♦A102 ♣J10954</p> <p>♠J85 ♥10832 ♦KQJ ♣A73</p> <p>♠1097 ♥KJ ♦96543 ♣Q82</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>North</td> <td>East</td> <td>South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Here's yet another interesting situation. West has a revolting opening bid, but we all do, don't we? North makes the obvious overcall, East shows four hearts and South raises spades.</p> <p>As West you know both sides have a fit. So do you bid 3♥? That's OK with restrained partners but many of us are not so blessed. As it happens, East should have another go and you can come clean. 3♥ is just a make by ruffing two spades and finessing clubs twice.</p> <p>Should North have bid a third spade? It depends on whom you're playing against. If East finds a sharp match point double you lose 200, a disaster. Getting away for minus 100 would be a good outcome.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♣	1♠	Dbl	2♠	Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
1♣	1♠	Dbl	2♠														
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass														
3♥	All pass																

HCP		Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
11		N	-	-	2	-	
12	11	S	-	-	2	-	
6		E	3	-	3	-	1
		W	3	-	3	-	1

<p>♠QJ762 ♥876 ♦7 ♣Q932</p> <p>♠853 ♥A9 ♦A862 ♣K864</p> <p>♠AK9 ♥105 ♦QJ105 ♣AJ75</p> <p>♠104 ♥KQJ432 ♦K943 ♣10</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>North</td> <td>East</td> <td>South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>How many hearts do you think South should bid? A simple overcall gives East-West plenty of room to investigate. 2♥ by West shows a good raise in clubs, 3♥ asks for a stop. The cards lie kindly and 3NT makes in comfort.</p> <p>I would be tempted, especially opposite a passed partner, to overcall 3♥. However, that more or less forces West to punt 3NT. Maybe a compromise of 2♥ is best?</p> <p>A small corollary; with 4-4 in the minors and planning to rebid no trumps, I generally prefer to bid the lower, just as you would with both majors. It makes little difference this time; although theoretically you can make a trick more in clubs I would expect most pairs to be in no trumps.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	1♣	1♥	2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
	Pass	1♣	1♥														
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass														
3NT	All pass																

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

<p>♠K975 ♥K10 ♦A86 ♣KJ53</p> <p>♠AQJ62 ♥A86 ♦1093 ♣A4</p> <p>♠84 ♥QJ72 ♦KQJ52 ♣Q7</p> <p>♠103 ♥9543 ♦74 ♣109862</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>North</td> <td>East</td> <td>South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Another fairly flimsy opening bid, but you have to bite the bullet, especially with a decent suit. West rather runs out of options on the second round.</p> <p>North probably leads a club, you play the queen, close your eyes and ... it holds! Sadly that's the last bit of good news you get. It matters not whether North holds off twice in diamonds. Neither major will produce enough tricks if you make two diamonds and then change horses. And even if North takes the first or second diamond and continues with a top club, both the finesses are wrong and there's no winning option.</p> <p>It's a cruel game partner. We had the points, we had the suits, we had the stoppers. All we lacked were the tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
		1♦	Pass														
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass														
3NT	All pass																

HCP		Makeable contracts					
		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
14		N	2	-	-	-	
15	11	S	2	-	-	-	
0		E	-	3	2	2	1
		W	-	4	3	3	2

<p>♠ KJ64 ♥ Q96 ♦ Q942 ♣ J6</p> <p>♠ 1032 ♠ A87 ♥ J1084 ♥ K5 ♦ 6 ♦ 10873 ♣ AK753 ♣ 10984</p> <p>♠ Q95 ♥ A732 ♦ AKJ5 ♣ Q2</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </table> <p>The theme of hopeless games, despite adequate values, continues. North makes a game try via a checkback auction. 2♣ asks for information about majors and strength; South shows three spades and not a maximum and may be tempted to bid one more. North-South have two balanced hands and a combined 25 count, yet they can't even make 1NT on best defence! It's that pesky duplicated weakness in clubs, of course.</p> <p>Mind you, I said "on best defence". It's highly likely that West will lead a low club rather than a high one and now you are in the game. You can certainly make eight tricks but there's precious little chance of being gifted a ninth.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	?
West	North	East	South																		
			1♥																		
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT																		
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠																		
Pass	2NT	Pass	?																		

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9	-	3	2	2	-
8 7	-	2	2	2	-
16	3	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 109543 ♥ K9 ♦ AJ64 ♣ A10</p> <p>♠ Q2 ♠ AK6 ♥ 1032 ♥ Q654 ♦ 73 ♦ Q852 ♣ KJ5432 ♣ Q8</p> <p>♠ J87 ♥ AJ87 ♦ K109 ♣ 976</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> </table> <p>All pass</p> <p>South has a couple of close decisions here. By modern standards, even playing a weak no trump, you are not strong enough for a two level response. Having decided that, although it's often a good idea to raise with three card support, I would just about prefer a 1NT response here with such a high quota of losers.</p> <p>Over partner's 2♦ rebid should you now jump to 3♠? At teams, when the potential gain from bidding game outweighs the loss for going down, that would be a possibility. But plus scores are the order of the day at pairs. This time, of course, North would pass a game invitation.</p> <p>Amazingly, even on a club lead you can make ten tricks. That'll need a lot of good guesses; even 140 is sure to be an excellent result.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
West	North	East	South										
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT										
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠										

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
12	-	3	2	4	2
6 13	-	3	2	4	2
9	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-

<p>♠ 5 ♥ 76 ♦ KJ10953 ♣ 9654</p> <p>♠ J10964 ♠ AKQ ♥ 8 ♥ KQ954 ♦ 2 ♦ A74 ♣ AKQ872 ♣ 103</p> <p>♠ 8732 ♥ AJ1032 ♦ Q86 ♣ J</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">West</td> <td style="width: 25%;">North</td> <td style="width: 25%;">East</td> <td style="width: 25%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>3♦</td> <td>DbI</td> <td>4♦</td> </tr> </table> <p>4♠!</p> <p>Yes, I really would open 3♦, first in hand, non-vulnerable, even if I had a weak 2♦ in my armoury. East has an obvious double and South raises the ante (I think 4♦ is enough with length in both majors). Now what? West has a huge hand and it's certainly possible there's a slam on. However, I think you have to settle for 4♠, amid much wailing and gnashing of teeth to show partner you have a good hand!</p> <p>Incidentally, that's another reason for South not to pre-empt all the way to 5♦, apart from the fact that it costs more than a game. You strongly tempt opponents to close their eyes and bid a slam.</p> <p>You'll see the computer can make 6♣ but only 5♠. The 4-1 breaks in both suits and the blockages mean that an unlikely club lead against a spade contract forces declarer to waste a vital trump getting back to hand.</p>	West	North	East	South		3♦	DbI	4♦
West	North	East	South						
	3♦	DbI	4♦						

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
4	-	1	-	-	-
10 18	-	1	-	-	-
8	6	-	-	5	4
	W	-	-	5	4

<p>♠K ♥98763 ♦KQ964 ♣J6</p> <p>♠- ♠A1098765 ♥J105 ♥AKQ4 ♦A8753 ♦- ♣KQ1095 ♣A2</p> <p>♠QJ432 ♥2 ♦J102 ♣8743</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 573 188 761"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="226 573 472 761"> <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>2</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>6</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		9		10	17	4		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	6	2	5	5	5	W	6	2	5	5	5	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>Eek! Who dealt this monstrosity? I'm not even going to try to prophesy an auction.</p> <p>I guess many will open 2♣ as East; after all, you've more or less got a certain game in your own hand. West will show positive values and you are off to the races.</p> <p>If it becomes clear to East that West has no spades you will try to avoid a slam in that suit; even 5♠ might fail on different lies of the cards. But will West co-operate? Is there any chance you can find out that clubs offer the only possible slam? With the trumps behaving you can manoeuvre to ruff a diamond for your twelfth trick.</p> <p>There will be a lot of sad faces on this one. I suspect 450 in spades will score well, though an unlikely 460 in no trumps beats it. Successful club slams will be rare.</p>
HCP																																													
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	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																								
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S	-	-	-	-	-																																								
E	6	2	5	5	5																																								
W	6	2	5	5	5																																								
<p>♠AJ7 ♥105 ♦KJ108 ♣KQ62</p> <p>♠83 ♠1065 ♥AQ974 ♥J8 ♦A65 ♦Q32 ♣753 ♣AJ1084</p> <p>♠KQ942 ♥K632 ♦974 ♣9</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 1245 188 1433"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>14</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="226 1245 472 1433"> <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>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		14		10	8	8		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	-	2	-	S	-	1	-	2	-	E	3	-	2	-	-	W	3	-	2	-	-	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>Pass ?</p> <p>Will the duplimator stop doing this? Yet another huge 14 count, that I for one would treat as too strong for a weak no trump. If 1NT is your choice, South will surely Stayman her way to 2♠ and all will be well. If North does upgrade and treat the hand as a strong no trump, South is probably worth a game try. Sadly, 3♠ may prove too high on an unfortunate lie of the cards; ♥A, ♦Q and ♣A are all badly placed. On a better day 4♠ would have a chance.</p> <p>All this goes to show either that: i) I have appalling judgment about when to upgrade a hand, or ii) virtue has to be its own reward. You can be the judge of that.</p>
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<p>♠7 ♥943 ♦AJ762 ♣AJ84</p> <p>♠J1042 ♠KQ9653 ♥Q5 ♥KJ1082 ♦K1084 ♦- ♣KQ6 ♣92</p> <p>♠A8 ♥A76 ♦Q953 ♣10753</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 1917 188 2107"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>10</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="226 1917 472 2107"> <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>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		10		11	9	10		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	3	-	-	1	S	3	3	-	-	1	E	-	-	3	4	-	W	-	-	3	4	-	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>Pass 1♦ 2♦ 3♦</p> <p>4♠ All pass</p> <p>The course of this auction will depend on a number of factors. Will North (or even West) consider they have an opening bid? What type of two suited overcalls do East-West play and does the East hand qualify?</p> <p>I'm not sure of the answer to any of these questions except the last. I don't care what range I'm supposed to have, that East hand is so pure, with 6-5 distribution and everything in its long suits, it has to be the right hand to employ your toy.</p> <p>Despite having a maximum pass and four spades, it's not certain that West is worth game. There could easily be a loser in each suit but partner's void diamond - not a total surprise - is the key.</p> <p>If East is allowed to open the bidding you are bound to get to game.</p>
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<p>♠ K1094 ♥ 94 ♦ AK97 ♣ AJ5</p> <p>♠ AQ2 ♠ 6 ♥ KQ1075 ♥ 86 ♦ 852 ♦ QJ10643 ♣ Q3 ♣ K1042</p> <p>♠ J8753 ♥ AJ32 ♦ - ♣ 9876</p>	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: center;">South</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4♠</td> <td style="text-align: right;">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>I wish the computer wouldn't keep making life difficult. If North's methods allow a start of 1♠ and East makes a frisky weak jump overcall, South is sure to bid game. It's hopeless, of course, with half North's values being opposite a void.</p> <p>Other auctions give you a chance of avoiding yet another disaster. A 1♦ opening will certainly put South off, especially if North conservatively raises your 1♠ response to 2♠. A strong no trump and Stayman gives South a close decision; unless you have some very sophisticated way of agreeing spades and showing where your values lie, South will probably make an invitational raise, which North will accept on the basis of good trumps and controls. Some may have the methods and judgment to get this one right, but for most of us it will be guesswork.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♠	3♦	4♠	All pass
West	North	East	South								
	1♠	3♦	4♠	All pass							

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15	N 2	-	-	3	1
13 6	S 2	-	-	3	1
6	E -	2	1	-	-
	W -	2	1	-	-

<p>♠ Q5 ♥ A742 ♦ Q1087 ♣ A65</p> <p>♠ 874 ♠ KJ109632 ♥ Q1063 ♥ 85 ♦ 6 ♦ AK92 ♣ Q7432 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ A ♥ KJ9 ♦ J543 ♣ KJ1098</p>	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: center;">South</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">4♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>That looks like a 4♠ opening to me, vulnerable, which should silence everybody.</p> <p>Partner has a load of junk, but there's gold in that dross. Three trumps and a singleton diamond mean you can ruff two diamonds and guess the trumps right for ten tricks. North-South can get two trump leads in if they start with the ace of spades, but just look at that ten of hearts, which is another precious stone, providing the tenth trick.</p> <p>If East opens 1♠ either opponent may find a double. East will keep bidding spades and North-South had better not push things too far, or they'll wish they'd never started. Surprisingly, the computer can sacrifice in either minor at a cost of only 300, though in practice it's likely to be more than that. And, of course, North-South could have accepted minus 170.</p>	West	North	East	South				4♠	All pass	
West	North	East	South								
		4♠	All pass								

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

<p>♠ Q ♥ AJ732 ♦ Q43 ♣ A1082</p> <p>♠ AK65 ♠ 8743 ♥ 109 ♥ 6 ♦ AJ52 ♦ K9876 ♣ Q94 ♣ K53</p> <p>♠ J1092 ♥ KQ854 ♦ 10 ♣ J76</p>	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: center;">South</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">1NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>It's time to stop complaining about maximum no trump openings. North shows hearts, by whatever methods you use, and East may compete in diamonds (or possibly by a very thin takeout double if North's bid is 2♥).</p> <p>We are taught not to punish partner for intervening enterprisingly over 1NT. Even so, 3♥ looks a sound move, with excellent trumps and little defence. North could be worse, but I wouldn't criticise a pass at pairs. On this occasion you should have gone for it. The clubs lie kindly but, because of your spade pips, you don't even need that. Once it's clear West has ♠ AK you can establish the suit for two discards.</p> <p>Should South have gone all the way to game? Not opposite my overcalls, but some have different standards.</p>	West	North	East	South					Pass		1NT	2♣	2♦	3♥		All pass				
West	North	East	South																		
			Pass																		
1NT	2♣	2♦	3♥																		
All pass																					

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
13	N 2	-	4	-	-
14 6	S 2	-	4	-	-
7	E -	2	-	2	1
	W -	2	-	2	1

<p>♠ KQ852 ♥ 54 ♦ Q102 ♣ K53</p> <p>♠ 3 ♥ KQ32 ♦ AJ94 ♣ AJ104</p> <p>♠ J976 ♥ A1097 ♦ K3 ♣ Q98</p> <p>♠ A104 ♥ J86 ♦ 8765 ♣ 762</p>	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: left;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td colspan="3">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>What do you open on 4441 hands? In the merry evil days it was the suit below the singleton. These days we've recognised that with a black singleton the middle of the other three suits works best. It's flexible, maximising your chances of finding a fit. Moreover, if you were to open 1♥ you may not be able to avoid giving partner the impression that you have five of them.</p> <p>It matters little this time. Once East shows hearts West is worth a strong raise. It's worth mentioning that 4441 hands tend to have poorer playing strength than we might hope; there may not be enough trumps to deal with the long card in the side suits. This time your overall strength and good intermediates in the minors justify boldness.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♦	1♠	Dbl	2♠	4♥	All pass		
West	North	East	South										
1♦	1♠	Dbl	2♠										
4♥	All pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10	N	-	-	-	-
15 10	S	-	-	-	-
5	E	4	2	5	1 2
	W	4	2	5	1 2

<p>♠ 1093 ♥ A973 ♦ 9532 ♣ A4</p> <p>♠ QJ ♥ KQJ865 ♦ 6 ♣ Q953</p> <p>♠ 864 ♥ 102 ♦ AJ108 ♣ J876</p> <p>♠ AK752 ♥ 4 ♦ KQ74 ♣ K102</p>	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: left;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> </table> <p>All pass</p> <p>You'd like to bid more than 2♥ as West, but the vulnerability speaks caution. North doesn't really have much option but to raise and South, with five trumps and a five loser hand, should take the pressure off partner. I would lead a top heart, rather than the singleton diamond, which would risk damaging partner's holding. As it happens, it makes little difference. Declarer has to play on diamonds anyway, and a potential trump loser may be exchanged for a defensive ruff.</p> <p>Whatever the defence or line of play, it looks like ten tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥	2♠	Pass	4♠
West	North	East	South										
	Pass	Pass	1♠										
2♥	2♠	Pass	4♠										

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

<p>♠ KQ109 ♥ KJ ♦ 10954 ♣ 762</p> <p>♠ 874 ♥ 1052 ♦ AQ73 ♣ 953</p> <p>♠ 632 ♥ A974 ♦ 862 ♣ QJ8</p> <p>♠ AJ5 ♥ Q863 ♦ KJ ♣ AK104</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: left;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Sorry, this is a rather dull hand. South may start off wondering how the auction may develop but it resolves itself quite quickly. Whatever your methods, 3NT should easily be reached.</p> <p>In 3NT, paradoxically, it looks best to play on your weakest suit, diamonds. You are guaranteed to set up two tricks to throw potential losing clubs. As it happens, the clubs lie perfectly for you anyway, so everyone will make ten tricks.</p> <p>Next board please!</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass	
West	North	East	South														
		Pass	1♥														
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT														
Pass	3NT	All pass															

HCP	Makeable contracts				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
9	N	4	4	3	4 4
6 7	S	4	4	3	4 4
18	E	-	-	-	- -
	W	-	-	-	- -

<p>♠ Q84 ♥ 52 ♦ J8653 ♣ 1094</p> <p>♠ A7653 ♠ K2 ♥ A84 ♥ KQ73 ♦ 9 ♦ AKQ107 ♣ A732 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ J109 ♥ J1096 ♦ 42 ♣ QJ86</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 573 188 763"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="229 573 470 763"> <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>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		3		12	20	5		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	5	6	6	6	6	W	5	6	6	6	6	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : 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></td><td></td><td></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>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>6NT</td><td>All pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>What! Did you open, partner? There's no way East is going to stop short of a slam, and 6NT looks the natural choice. Surprisingly, it's nothing like laydown. North probably leads a neutral club and where do you start? Either spades or diamonds might supply the necessary tricks on their own and, if not, there are other chances.</p> <p>Two possibilities spring to mind. One is to win with ♣A and run the nine of diamonds. If diamonds behave you have twelve tricks and chances of thirteen. When they don't break you can play king and duck a spade, with lots of possibilities. Or you can win the lead in dummy and immediately play king and a low spade. I'm not sure I like that so much as you don't know what to throw on the third spade should they not break. I'd be interested to see an analysis but any line should work this time.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass	6NT	All pass				
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<p>♠ QJ8542 ♥ 109 ♦ KQ763 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ 1063 ♠ A ♥ AQ642 ♥ K3 ♦ 8 ♦ AJ1052 ♣ AQJ5 ♣ K9762</p> <p>♠ K97 ♥ J875 ♦ 94 ♣ 10843</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 1272 188 1462"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="229 1272 470 1462"> <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>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>6</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		8		13	15	4		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	1	-	S	-	-	-	1	-	E	6	2	5	-	4	W	7	2	5	-	4	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</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>2♥</td><td>Dbl</td><td>2♠</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>4♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♦</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>4♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>6♣</td><td>All pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Just one possible auction on this spectacular hand. After North's two suited bid East first shows a good hand, then a better hand not interested in penalising spades, and finally an exchange of cue bids gets to the cold slam. With North on lead, it's an easy matter to make all thirteen tricks on a complete cross-ruff. Don't worry about missing the grand; if North had a trump to lead there might be too much work to do.</p> <p>Should North have done more bidding and cramped the auction? Maybe, but there's a natural tendency to be wary at adverse vulnerability.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	2♥	Dbl	2♠	Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass	6♣	All pass		
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<p>♠ A10 ♥ Q765 ♦ Q74 ♣ AKQ2</p> <p>♠ KJ76432 ♠ 5 ♥ - ♥ KJ103 ♦ AK5 ♦ J108632 ♣ 873 ♣ J9</p> <p>♠ Q98 ♥ A9842 ♦ 9 ♣ 10654</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="67 1944 188 2134"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>17</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="229 1944 470 2134"> <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>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		17		11	6	6		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	2	-	1	S	3	-	3	-	1	E	-	2	-	1	-	W	-	2	-	1	-	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : 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>1♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr><td>3♠</td><td>Dbl</td><td>All pass</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Yet another death trap hand. Once again I've given the auction for a weak no trump, four card major system. South's hand is actually pretty good for a pre-emptive raise, as is West's for a simple overcall.</p> <p>But it's horrible for either side. North would do well to double (I think this should be penalties, after all, what else are you inviting partner to do, other than bid game).</p> <p>The computer says 3♠ doubled is two off, but the defence will have to be careful to achieve this. North will surely lead a top club and what next? Best is to play the ace of spades now, though you may have concerns it will cost a trump trick, and then continue clubs. Eventually the defence get two trumps, one diamond and three clubs.</p>	West	North	East	South		1♥	Pass	3♥	3♠	Dbl	All pass													
HCP																																																																					
17																																																																					
11	6																																																																				
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<p>♠ 5 ♥ J732 ♦ 10642 ♣ AQJ4</p> <p>♠ Q943 ♠ KJ82 ♥ AQ9 ♥ 108654 ♦ A ♦ QJ ♣ K10872 ♣ 96</p> <p>♠ A1076 ♥ K ♦ K98753 ♣ 53</p>	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : 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></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dbl</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>So far, so good. South, North and East have all stretched a little in this auction. It's not at all unlikely that matters will end here. Yet 3♠ will go one down on normal play and defence; the 4-1 trump break is too much to cope with, whilst North-South can make 5♦ if they guess to drop the ace of trumps singleton. What's gone wrong?</p> <p>Maybe South should have done more. It's not often you open on minimum values and then bid on with A10xx in the enemy suit. But you do have a lot of trumps and partner is marked with a singleton spade. I can't see many pairs bidding and making 5♦ but 4♦+1 should be a good score.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♦	Dbl	2NT	Dbl	3♦	3♠	?		
West	North	East	South														
		Pass	1♦														
Dbl	2NT	Dbl	3♦														
3♠	?																

HCP	Makeable contracts					
8		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15 7	N	-	5	-	-	1
10	S	-	5	-	-	1
	E	1	-	1	2	-
	W	1	-	1	2	-

<p>♠ A643 ♥ AQ ♦ 1096 ♣ 10542</p> <p>♠ K1097 ♠ 852 ♥ 964 ♥ K87 ♦ 4 ♦ AKQ75 ♣ AKJ83 ♣ 97</p> <p>♠ QJ ♥ J10532 ♦ J832 ♣ Q6</p>	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS 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>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Just for once, a straightforward and completely natural auction. East is close to bidding 3NT, but the absence of any high cards in partner's suit (and the rubbish we tend to open) argue for caution.</p> <p>And you'd be right, in theory, to be cautious. You can make 3NT, even on a heart lead; probably best is to duck the second heart then, if North switches to a spade, you can win, set up a long diamond and make four diamonds, three clubs and the two major kings. More likely, North will exit passively, so take three diamond tricks, throwing spades, three clubs and endplay North on the fourth club. It's a reasonable line but needs a lot going for it. I suspect quite a few will go down in 3NT, so 150 won't be a bad score.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT	All pass
West	North	East	South														
			Pass														
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass														
1♠	Pass	2NT	All pass														

HCP	Makeable contracts					
10		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11 12	N	-	-	-	-	-
7	S	-	-	-	-	-
	E	2	2	1	3	3
	W	3	2	1	4	3

<p>♠ 1074 ♥ 2 ♦ A108 ♣ KJ9842</p> <p>♠ A9 ♠ Q53 ♥ QJ10 ♥ AK863 ♦ 542 ♦ KJ63 ♣ A10765 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ KJ862 ♥ 9754 ♦ Q97 ♣ Q</p>	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : 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>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This is a perfectly reasonable auction with everyone bidding sensibly. But we didn't get where we are today by being sensible. First of all, that West hand is a weak no trump any day of the week, and I don't care if you're vulnerable. East will now surely force to game, and it's not a bad game at all.</p> <p>On normal defence, however, you won't make it. The diamonds lie quite nicely but everything else is against you. The king of spades is offside, trumps break 4-1 and that horrible club break makes for insuperable communication problems. Any pair scoring 140 should be happy.</p> <p>This whole set of boards has included quite a few thin games scuppered by bad breaks, so conservative pairs may have done well.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠	2♣	2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠														
2♣	2♠	Pass	Pass														
3♥	All pass																

HCP	Makeable contracts					
8		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11 13	N	1	-	-	1	-
8	S	1	-	-	1	-
	E	-	3	3	-	3
	W	-	3	3	-	2