



The 2021 Charity Challenge Pairs Tuesday 16 March

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

♠ K J 8 ♥ ♦ A K 6 4 3 ♣ K Q 10 7 4 ♠ Q 9 4 3 ♥ A Q J 10 7 4 3 ♦ ♣ A 8	♠ 6 2 ♥ 8 5 2 ♦ Q J 10 8 2 ♣ 9 6 2 ♠ A 10 7 5 ♥ K 9 6 ♦ 9 7 5 ♣ J 5 3
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This set kicks off with a hand which has game possibilities for both sides. 4♥ goes one down, just: if West does manage two spade ruffs then South's heart trick will come into its own. Meanwhile, a really lucky East could find themselves defending 5♦. After

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♠
4♥	??		

The Norths that bid 4♠ now will be okay, but some might double 4♥ and then will Souths necessarily leave it there? Is double t/o or penalties? With a balanced hand and the heart king does it matter either way? I'm thinking somebody will try 5♦.

Four spades, by the way, looks precarious, but gets home according to Deep Finesse. Let's see.... If the ♥A opening lead then ruff in dummy and play clubs, West winning the second round. He continues a heart and you win the king, play a spade to the jack and the king of spades. Next play clubs. At some point West ruffs and plays a winning heart, following by another heart. You ruff, draw his last trump and Bob's your uncle.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

♠ A 9 5 ♥ A J 7 2 ♦ 6 5 4 ♣ 8 7 6	♠ K Q 10 3 2 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ K 10 3 ♣ 10 9 ♠ 8 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ Q J 9 8 ♣ A Q 5 3 2 ♠ J 7 6 4 ♥ K 10 6 ♦ A 7 2 ♣ K J 4
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Tops and bottoms might be in the hands of the system god on this deal. Those playing weak NT will play spades by South after a transfer and now the opening diamond lead from West will hold it to 9 tricks if hearts are guessed. Played by North, on the other hand, East can begin with a diamond, but after winning the club ace cannot continue the suit and so 10 tricks will be made by those who guess hearts. Those who don't guess hearts are probably already

thinking about going home...those who happen to get to 3NT are most likely to make on an auction which will see West making the normal 4th best opening lead.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ 9 8 5 4 2 ♥ K 6 3 2 ♦ A 7 6 ♣ 8	♠ J 10 ♥ A Q 10 9 7 ♦ ♣ A 10 9 6 5 4 ♠ 7 ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ K J 10 9 8 5 2 ♣ J 3 ♠ A K Q 6 3 ♥ J ♦ Q 4 3 ♣ K Q 7 2
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Left to their own devices 7♣ may not be so hard to get to for N/S, but after a diamond pre-empt by East that'll be tricky. I like the idea that there will be some enterprising N/S pairs who figure out that spades is an excellent spot....only to see the trick they thought would be their thirteen: the diamond ruff at trick one is actually the demise of the contract.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

♠ K Q 6 3 ♥ A Q 10 4 ♦ A 10 4 2 ♣ 8	♠ A 8 4 ♥ 8 6 5 3 ♦ K 5 ♣ 10 7 5 4 ♠ J 10 9 5 2 ♥ J 9 7 ♦ J 3 ♣ 9 3 2 ♠ 7 ♥ K 2 ♦ Q 9 8 7 6 ♣ A K Q J 6
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E/W are good for 4♠, but one can imagine a sea of East declarers in 1♦. The Souths who refuse to take the money in that contract will deserve what they get: the best they will be able to do, after E/W come back to life and bid a lot in spades, is save in 5♣, one down, doubled -200.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ K 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ A 10 6 4 3 ♣ A K 10 2	♠ A J 10 ♥ K J 8 6 ♦ K 8 ♣ Q 6 5 3 ♠ 7 2 ♥ 10 5 4 2 ♦ Q 9 5 2 ♣ J 9 4 ♠ Q 9 8 6 5 ♥ A Q 9 3 ♦ J 7 ♣ 8 7
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3NT making on thin values and major suit fits might become a theme in this set. Here, for N/S, after a nervous trick one or two that contract will steam home for 10 tricks and a top. Spades makes 10 tricks easily. The 4-4 fit, on the other hand, fails poorly due to the bad trump break. Declarer may have the same 10 tricks as in 4♠, but he has no way of taking them all. Meanwhile E/W have a good save in 5♦: at the vulnerability they can afford three down.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Nobody is going to be playing clubs at pairs scoring on this one. 3NT after South makes a weak jump overcall in spades looks the likely spot. This should make 11 tricks: duck a diamond and lead a spade up perhaps after cashing some clubs to get some discards from North.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

My first thought on this deal was 'Who knows?'. Yes, with the black suits behaving so nicely both 4♠ and 5♣ are making, but just one bid by East may make it difficult for N/S to get there:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2♦	1♥
			?

A brave 2♦ bid but 'active' seems to be the way to play matchpoints. Now South can scarcely bid 3♣. His options are 2♥ or pass. Or is there somebody out there making a t/o double on that lot? Let's suppose not. Over 2♥ or pass by South North can hardly justify 3♣ either. So maybe 2♠ N/S will be common. Even a competitive 3♦ by West is not going to see N/S pushed to game, is it?

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Dare I say 'Who knows?' again. This auction would not be the most surprising one of the session:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

That will be down a couple. 5♣ N/S has only 2 losers, but not enough tricks with the black suits breaking badly, so a couple off as well. Meanwhile for E/W diamonds SHOULD only make 9 tricks, but that might depend upon who plays them. If East's hand is not exposed one can readily imagine a McKenny gone wrong as North delivers a spade ruff while asking for a club back. That won't quite be enough to let 5♦ make but it'll make N/S nervous for a while.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

All right, it is true that E/W will probably get to a relatively dull 3NT making 10 tricks. But diamonds is the fun spot. Imagine East playing 6♦...hopeless contract? 2 heart losers and a club? Yes, but it is going to be played by East on the normal spade lead – because North has opened 1♠, after all. North is now in a great deal of trouble in all the suits. Declarer takes a couple of heart pitches and then throws North in with a heart. North has to give away a trick in one of the three suits. Alas only one of them, the club, gives away the 12th trick and so 6♦ will still go one down.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

♠ A Q 6 2 ♥ A 10 5 2 ♦ K 9 ♣ K J 4 ♠ 10 8 ♥ K J 8 3 ♦ 7 5 ♣ A 9 5 3 2	♠ 4 3 ♥ Q 4 ♦ A Q J 10 8 3 2 ♣ Q 6 ♠ K J 9 7 5 ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ 6 4 ♣ 10 8 7
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At last a quiet part-score battle. N/S should be able to get away with 3♠ undoubled over 3♦. It would be a desperate E/W pair who thought they needed to convert +100 to +200 on this Board.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

♠ K ♥ K J 10 4 2 ♦ A J 8 7 ♣ J 7 2 ♠ A Q 10 8 3 ♥ A 5 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ A 5 3	♠ J 9 7 6 5 2 ♥ 9 8 7 3 ♦ 6 2 ♣ 9 ♠ 4 ♥ Q 6 ♦ 10 5 4 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 6 4
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A 3♣ opening pre-empt by South gives West a difficult decision. Supposing 3NT, then North has interesting options too. If one were assured to be on lead by passing then that is the obvious thing to do. But there is still the spade suit to wonder about. If this auction:

West	North	East	South
3NT	Pass	4♠	3♣

ensued – or some other systemic method of getting to spades – then North would be regretting now having bid 5♣ over 3NT. At any rate, supposing that E/W do manage to get to spades, if it is over a club pre-empt they will be making 11 tricks by picking spades. Other auctions might make the spade pick more difficult. The Norths who do raise to 5♣ after partner begins with 3♣ and next hand overcalls 3NT should be rewarded with -300: doubled and two down.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

♠ 10 7 6 4 2 ♥ Q 8 ♦ A 10 4 ♣ 8 4 2 ♠ A Q J 9 ♥ 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ A K Q 10 7 3	♠ 8 3 ♥ A J 7 6 ♦ K Q J 9 6 ♣ J 5 ♠ K 5 ♥ K 10 9 5 3 2 ♦ 8 7 2 ♣ 9 6
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6♣ by E/W looks the spot. The E/Ws who think they need to try 6NT will be severely disappointed by the heart opening lead. On the other hand defenders do not like leading from honours to NT slams, so making would be a well-deserved piece of luck.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

♠ 7 ♥ A K 5 2 ♦ 8 4 ♣ K Q J 9 5 4 ♠ A 8 4 3 ♥ Q 10 7 6 ♦ K 7 ♣ 8 3 2	♠ J 9 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ A Q J 10 6 5 3 ♣ A ♠ K Q 10 6 5 2 ♥ J 8 ♦ 9 2 ♣ 10 7 6
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E/W's 3NT contract might attract a club sacrifice by N/S: even 5♣ is only -500.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

♠ K J 7 5 4 3 ♥ Q 10 9 2 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ ♠ Q 8 6 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ K Q 10 4	♠ 10 2 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ J 8 6 ♣ A J 9 7 6 ♠ A 9 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ A 7 4 2 ♣ 8 5 3 2
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N/S's 4♠ contract will make 10 or 11 tricks depending on the heart guess. It is possible that West will make a bid – perhaps even a third-in-hand weak NT opening if South declines to open – which will clarify the position: West will have shown up with the ♠ queen, ♥ ace, ♦ king and a couple of club cards if only by inference, by the time the heart play has to be taken.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

A straight-forward 4♥ by E/W. If N/S fail to begin with spades they will be looking at a poor score as the diamonds set up for a spade discard from the West hand.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

4♥ E/W will be common going one down. Some E/Ws will instead play 3NT which is a disaster.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

N/S have 3♦ on, E/W 2♠. It may, however, be hard for E/W to get to their contract after South opens the bidding – as surely at least some Souths will.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

An interesting 3NT contract by E/W. N/S are certainly better off if it is played by East as the spade lead by South is a good start. If played by West the defence give away a trick with the spade opening lead but 3NT will still go down as declarer will presumably play on clubs. I can't see a reason why declarer would run the ♥8 and it looks like that is the only way to make.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

N/S may make 2♠, but I'm for playing the 6-2 fit, even at matchpoints. 3♣ will make nine tricks against best defence, but if East fails to get off to the ♥A opening lead it is running away. Best for E/W is to play 3♥ one down.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

It looks like 3♠ will take 9 tricks for E/W, but in fact North can begin with a diamond and the diamond ruff will be the fifth trick for the defence. Equally the diamond part-score E/W has less tricks than seems obvious. Declarer will not be able to do everything he needs to.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

The weak notrumpers holding the North cards will languish there when spades is worth nine tricks. Indeed, it is hard to believe but the bad trump break does seem to stop ten tricks. The idea is to threaten a heart ruff early. Declarer cannot afford to draw trumps yet...and cannot afford not to.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Despite the duplication in N/S's values there are no unuseful cards and so the balanced-30- HCP-slam is on no more than the club finesses....failing, of course. Indeed, even if played by South on a club lead it will still go down. Let that be a lesson to those who are afraid to lead from kings to slams!

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

E/W have a red-suit partscore at the two level, but the interesting contract is 3♣ N/S. The potential scenarios is this: supposing something like diamond opening lead and another diamond ruffed, three rounds of spades ruffing (isn't bridge an easy game?) and then ace of clubs and a club won by West. He can exit with another big diamond, ruffed by declarer, but now look at what happens to East: when he ruffs in on the run of the spades he has to exit a red suit perforce allowing declarer to make by guessing hearts.

So, East, if he gets the chance because the first round of trumps is played from the North hand has to make sure he plays the ♣Q under the ace. Equally declarer has to make sure in his timing of the hand that his first club is played from hand: presumably at trick three after ruffing a diamond. Now the only West who defeats the contract will be the one whose ♣K falls on the table while trying to pull out the ♣8! (As, ahem, I did the other day.) In reality declarer will win the ♣ ace over the ♣8, West will see the ♣Q from partner and spending the rest of the hand ruing what might have been as declarer sets about the spade suit before drawing a second round of trumps.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

A spade part-score for N/S...Not a very interesting hand to end with ... oh well !