

Junior Squad

Sim Pairs

Wednesday/Thursday

8-9.02.2023

Thanks to our commentators:

Freddie Beneat: member of the U21 Squad. Freddie is currently studying for his A-Levels at Abingdon School. He started playing Bridge when he was 7 from a book in a car boot sale. He has played bridge at the House of Lords. Freddie is currently playing with Zane Soonawalla. His other hobbies include chess and squash.

Theo Sinclair: member of the Under-21 Squad. Theo is in his first year studying maths at Cambridge. Theo learnt to play when he was 10 from his parents and played at school level before joining the U16 squad. Playing with Kim Hudson, he won a bronze medal at the European Teams Championships in 2019. Theo now plays regularly with James Cater. Aside from bridge, Theo loves playing board games, piano and reading, Victor Mollo being his favourite author of course.

Liam Fegarty : I started learning bridge when I was about 7 and enjoy the game a lot. My mother taught me to play back then and I've learned so much from her. Now I love playing the game and being part of the Under 16 squad. My biggest success has probably been when with my brother (Jamie Fegarty) I came third at the EBU Autumn Congress Swiss Pairs. Outside of bridge I also thoroughly enjoy playing the piano. I also have a dog who I like to spend lots of time with.

Andy Cope: member of the Under 21 squad. Andy is currently in his first year at the University of Nottingham studying Mathematics and Economics. He took upon bridge in his local club and progressively worked his way up to play County first team and represent Warwickshire in National events. Andy has represented England in many youth events, with his most notable event being the WBF online championships achieving silver in his final year in the Under-16 category. Currently, he is playing with Thomas Gardner but becomes a free agent once his Under-21 contract expires at the end of the year. Away from the table, Andy enjoys hockey, cricket and football.

Tom Furness: member of the u21 squad. Tom is currently in Year 12 studying Further Maths, German and English. Tom started bridge at the age of 10 after reading about it in 'The Cardturner' and has been addicted ever since. In the summer of 2022 Tom was part of the U16 team that came second in the European championships, partnering Lucy Norman and Aman Parekh, and in April came second in the Portland Pairs with Lottie Bedford. He hopes this year can also go well!

Welcome to the 2023 EBU's Junior Squad Sims Pairs. Thank you for playing and I hope you have enjoyed the event and will take pride in having supported our Junior International Teams and the Squad system which trains them. This year the World Youth Championships are taking place in the Netherlands and England will be represented by an Under-21 and an Under-26-Women's team. The EBU can only provide limited funding for these teams, and these simultaneous pairs will help pay for the event. Other important areas, such as development and teaching, also require financial backing, so that the international budgets are never as large as we would wish. We run the Junior teams as economically as possible: players, captains and coaches are unpaid, and travel and accommodation are as cheap as we can make them, but money remains very tight. I very much hope you will enjoy reading the expert commentary, which this event has been written entirely by members of our Junior Squads. Please continue to support this annual event, and encourage your club to participate in the future.

Patrick Shields, this year's Editor for this publication.

<p>♠ A ♥ KJ104 ♦ KQ963 ♣ A76</p> <p>♠ KJ52 ♠ Q9764 ♥ Q85 ♥ A976 ♦ A42 ♦ J7 ♣ 1098 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ 1083 ♥ 32 ♦ 1085 ♣ QJ432</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>17</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		17		10	10	3		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	4	-	-	-	S	3	4	-	-	-	E	-	-	1	2	-	W	-	-	1	2	-	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all Freddie Beneat</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>North</td> <td>East</td> <td>South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>After East's 1♠ overcall, for many West's bid of 3♦ perfectly describes their hand – showing 7-9 HCP and exactly four spades, asking partner to bid game with a good hand. This is different from a 2♦ bid which would only show three spades instead of four, and 2NT which would show a stronger four card raise. Despite the HCP of the North hand it cannot compete over this jump cue bid by West – as a double would overestimate this hand's playing strength (facing a passed South can North really expect two tricks?). Here East signs off in 3♠ with their minimum overcall. Even over a 1NT opening East can get into the auction with a Landy 2♣ (showing both majors). Playing in 3♠, East will draw trumps and later ruff a long heart, making five spade tricks and one in each other suit, going one off for a score of -50.</p>	West	North	East	South		1♦	1♠	Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠	All Pass				
HCP																																																													
17																																																													
10	10																																																												
3																																																													
Makeable contracts																																																													
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																								
N	3	4	-	-	-																																																								
S	3	4	-	-	-																																																								
E	-	-	1	2	-																																																								
W	-	-	1	2	-																																																								
West	North	East	South																																																										
	1♦	1♠	Pass																																																										
3♦	Pass	3♠	All Pass																																																										
<p>♠ 7642 ♥ 754 ♦ AJ8 ♣ QJ10</p> <p>♠ QJ8 ♠ 1093 ♥ A108 ♥ 632 ♦ 962 ♦ 1074 ♣ K942 ♣ A763</p> <p>♠ AK5 ♥ KQJ9 ♦ KQ53 ♣ 85</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>3</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> </tbody> </table>	HCP		8		10	4	18		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	3	3	3	3	S	2	3	3	3	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable Freddie Beneat</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>North</td> <td>East</td> <td>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>After a very uneventful auction, North-South will arrive in 3NT. West's longest suit is clubs, but I think that a spade is more likely to be the winning lead. North often has a ropey four card suit (as here) as if they had a five card suit they might rebid bid otherwise to find a five-three fit; also, South is more likely to be short in his partner's suit than in any other. Indeed give East four spades headed by the ace and a spade lead may be necessary to beat the contract before North-South cash nine minor suit tricks.</p> <p>On this layout, declarer will win a spade lead and knock out the heart ace. After another spade the defence have four tricks to cash, but if declarer ducks that second spade, failure to cash the clubs immediately will allow a tenth trick.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass	
HCP																																																													
8																																																													
10	4																																																												
18																																																													
Makeable contracts																																																													
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																								
N	2	3	3	3	3																																																								
S	2	3	3	3	3																																																								
E	-	-	-	-	-																																																								
W	-	-	-	-	-																																																								
West	North	East	South																																																										
		Pass	1♦																																																										
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT																																																										
Pass	3NT	All pass																																																											

<p>♠ A6 ♥ AJ10984 ♦ J86 ♣ 32</p> <p>♠ 1095 ♠ KJ74 ♥ - ♥ K762 ♦ 10432 ♦ AK5 ♣ KQJ964 ♣ A10</p> <p>♠ Q832 ♥ Q53 ♦ Q97 ♣ 875</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable Freddie Beneat</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>I don't like opening a three-level pre-empt vulnerable with six, but with such a good suit, six-four shape, a void and no Weak Two available to me, I would open the West hand with 3♣. Not opening either gives North-South a free ride to a better contract, and makes it hard for your partner to find out about your clubs. North's 3♥ bid is also quite light but the sixth heart and two aces justify it. East is now left with a choice; bidding clubs is an option but I would argue that nine tricks are easier than eleven and with the ace of clubs and quick tricks in the ♦AK, 3NT looks like a decent gamble. At favourable vulnerability South does best to sacrifice, with your hand suggesting that 3NT is likely to make, alongside a high likelihood of at least seven tricks to make in hearts. 4♥ doubled is down three – making five hearts, a spade and a slow diamond.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				Pass	3♣	3♥	3NT	4♥	Pass	Pass	Dble	All pass																										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																																								
			Pass																																								
3♣	3♥	3NT	4♥																																								
Pass	Pass	Dble	All pass																																								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		10	18	6	6	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	-	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	4	4	-	3	3	W	4	4	-	3	3
HCP																																											
10	18																																										
6	6																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	1	-	-																																						
S	-	-	1	-	-																																						
E	4	4	-	3	3																																						
W	4	4	-	3	3																																						

<p>♠ 9 ♥ Q643 ♦ Q109876 ♣ 73</p> <p>♠ K1064 ♠ AQ732 ♥ KJ52 ♥ 97 ♦ J ♦ AK ♣ AQJ8 ♣ K1064</p> <p>♠ J85 ♥ A108 ♦ 5432 ♣ 952</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable Freddie Beneat</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</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>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>West has a difficult second bid, it's close between 2♠, which is conservative, 3♠, which is aggressive, and maybe 4♦, if I desperately needed a great board. After 2♠ or 3♠, East can bid 4♣ to show the king of clubs, a potentially vital card to show while establishing slam interest. West's 4♦ shows his singleton but East has to sign off in 4♣ with no heart control. With the hearts controlled, West should bid on – and with RKCB will hear of two aces and the queen of spades. West can now bid 6NT to "right side" the contract by ensuring that a heart lead runs up to his king. Indeed on a heart lead the contract is cold but on any other lead, in any slam, declarer has to take a guess in hearts.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass	6NT	All pass																				
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																																								
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass																																								
2♣	Pass	4♣	Pass																																								
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass																																								
4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass																																								
6NT	All pass																																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		4	16	15	5	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>6</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>6</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	-	-	-	S	-	1	-	-	-	E	6	-	3	6	6	W	6	-	3	6	6
HCP																																											
4	16																																										
15	5																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	1	-	-	-																																						
S	-	1	-	-	-																																						
E	6	-	3	6	6																																						
W	6	-	3	6	6																																						

<p>♠ KJ764 ♥ 85 ♦ K43 ♣ K105</p> <p>♠ 8 ♠ A52 ♥ 10962 ♥ Q743 ♦ AJ5 ♦ Q972 ♣ A8762 ♣ Q3</p> <p>♠ Q1093 ♥ AKJ ♦ 1086 ♣ J94</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable Andy Cope</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Many would expect to see this deal passed out, with none of the four hands having anything notable to kickstart an auction here. But some proceed as shown. The ♥3 looks like an obvious lead but worried about giving away tricks East may elect to lead spades and to hide all their queens. Declarer can continue trumps and cash the ♥A in case an unlikely singleton ♥Q appears. Running the ♣9 and losing to East will result in a diamond return to West's ace; a return of the ♦5 will now put declarer to a guess when they started with ♦Q73. This time, North will win the ♦K and will lead their final heart. A smooth duck from East will allow North to debate whether they take an assured eight tricks, or try for more, but risk getting only seven.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass	Dble	2♠	All Pass																											
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																																								
	Pass	Pass	1♣																																								
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass																																								
Dble	2♠	All Pass																																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		10	10	9	11	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	3	2	S	-	-	-	3	1	E	1	1	1	-	-	W	1	1	1	-	-
HCP																																											
10	10																																										
9	11																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	-	3	2																																						
S	-	-	-	3	1																																						
E	1	1	1	-	-																																						
W	1	1	1	-	-																																						

<p>♠ J7 ♥ K8532 ♦ 87 ♣ J1084</p> <p>♠ AQ3 ♠ 1086542 ♥ AJ74 ♥ 96 ♦ K92 ♦ 3 ♣ 752 ♣ AK63</p> <p>♠ K9 ♥ Q10 ♦ AQJ10654 ♣ Q9</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable Andy Cope</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>Dble</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>With poor suit quality and adverse vulnerability, East will be inclined to remain quiet, but second time around, East's hand has become a lot more attractive, with shortness in both the opponents suits making 3♠ or 4♠ over 1♥ both into reasonable calls. Many will end in a 4♠ contract by East. South has a simple lead of the ♥Q hoping for a diamond return, but it is declarer who will win the ♥A. Counting losers, East can see one in each side suit, and so needs to play trumps for no losers. Declarer needs South to have ♠K-doubleton, and so a club to the ace and a low spade to the queen, followed by cashing the ace, is indicated. South has the magic holding, and declarer will be able to ruff the fourth club in the West hand, and soon will be writing in +620. A diamond lead would have made life a lot easier for declarer as they can now pitch a losing heart on the ♦K; so always lead partner's suit!</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♦	Dble	1♥	4♠	All pass																																				
West	North	East	South																																														
		Pass	1♦																																														
Dble	1♥	4♠	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		5	7	14	14	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	-	1	-	-	-		S	-	1	-	-	-		E	3	-	1	4	4		W	3	-	1	4	4	
HCP																																																	
5	7																																																
14	14																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	-	1	-	-	-																																												
S	-	1	-	-	-																																												
E	3	-	1	4	4																																												
W	3	-	1	4	4																																												

<p>♠ 6 ♥ 7 ♦ AQJ109742 ♣ 532</p> <p>♠ QJ5 ♠ 974 ♥ J842 ♥ AK9653 ♦ K83 ♦ 6 ♣ K76 ♣ J94</p> <p>♠ AK10832 ♥ Q10 ♦ 5 ♣ AQ108</p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable Andy Cope</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>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>3♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A highly competitive auction with North-South ending up in 4♠ or 5♦. In spades, West will lead a heart, and East will return a spade to ensure no ruffs in dummy. Declarer can cash the ♠AK and exit with a third spade; West wins that and can now play a second heart to partner's ace. A third heart will be played, and declarer will ruff. To make the contract declarer now needs to find ♦K onside and West with at most two diamonds. When that is tried and it fails, declarer is in danger of losing two clubs tricks, and needs to guess to play ♣T when leading a club from dummy next. Playing out trumps before taking the diamond finesse saves that guess – as West will throw two hearts and a club, and now when the ♦K does not drop, West can be put on lead with it to lead into the ♣AQ at the end.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♠	Pass	1NT	2♥	3♣	3♥	4♦	Pass	4♠	All pass																															
West	North	East	South																																														
			1♠																																														
Pass	1NT	2♥	3♣																																														
3♥	4♦	Pass	4♠																																														
All pass																																																	
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		7	8	10	15	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	4	4	-	3	-		S	4	4	-	3	-		E	-	-	1	-	1		W	-	-	1	-	1	
HCP																																																	
7	8																																																
10	15																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	4	4	-	3	-																																												
S	4	4	-	3	-																																												
E	-	-	1	-	1																																												
W	-	-	1	-	1																																												

<p>♠ Q10987 ♥ AKQ975 ♦ A ♣ Q</p> <p>♠ J2 ♠ A ♥ 1043 ♥ 82 ♦ 1097 ♦ KQJ8652 ♣ J10954 ♣ K76</p> <p>♠ K6543 ♥ J6 ♦ 43 ♣ A832</p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all Andy Cope</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♥*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♠</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>North has many options over 2♠ but a practical 4NT seems like the best. Winning the diamond lead in North declarer must take a second to ensure success. The concern is trumps and there are two choices as to how to play this suit. A massive clue on the auction is the suggestion that East is holding most of, if not all, of the outstanding points. Using this to our advantage we should start with the ♠Q. If West now shows out we can run the ♠10 second time around. If West follows all is well and and we can just cash the trump king next.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♥	2♦	2♠	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥*	Pass	6♠	All pass																																	
West	North	East	South																																														
Pass	1♥	2♦	2♠																																														
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥*																																														
Pass	6♠	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		17	13	2	8	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	-	-	6	6	2		S	-	-	6	6	2		E	1	3	-	-	-		W	1	3	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
17	13																																																
2	8																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	-	-	6	6	2																																												
S	-	-	6	6	2																																												
E	1	3	-	-	-																																												
W	1	3	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ Q1085 ♥ J1075 ♦ J6432 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ 762 ♠ AK9 ♥ Q42 ♥ A983 ♦ 75 ♦ AK ♣ J8542 ♣ KQ106</p> <p>♠ J43 ♥ K6 ♦ Q1098 ♣ A973</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable Liam Fegarty</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">West</td> <td style="width: 15%;">North</td> <td style="width: 15%;">East</td> <td style="width: 15%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣^[1]</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦^[2]</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT^[3]</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td colspan="3">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>[1]: 23+/GF [2]: relay [3]: 23-24 pts bal</p> <p>East-West should have no problem getting to 3NT which East will make without problem by knocking out the ♣A. If South has led a club, then East will have time to make an overtrick by playing a heart towards the queen after the ♣A has been knocked out.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	2♣ ^[1]	Pass	2♦ ^[2]	Pass	2NT ^[3]	Pass	3NT	All pass																												
West	North	East	South																																								
	Pass	2♣ ^[1]	Pass																																								
2♦ ^[2]	Pass	2NT ^[3]	Pass																																								
3NT	All pass																																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">23</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		4	23	3	10	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	2	-	-	-	S	-	2	-	-	-	E	4	-	2	1	3	W	4	-	3	1	3
HCP																																											
4	23																																										
3	10																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	2	-	-	-																																						
S	-	2	-	-	-																																						
E	4	-	2	1	3																																						
W	4	-	3	1	3																																						

<p>♠ K10 ♥ 743 ♦ J97654 ♣ Q3</p> <p>♠ AQ64 ♠ J832 ♥ AQ1098 ♥ J52 ♦ 83 ♦ AK ♣ 75 ♣ AK108</p> <p>♠ 975 ♥ K6 ♦ Q102 ♣ J9642</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable Liam Fegarty</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">West</td> <td style="width: 15%;">North</td> <td style="width: 15%;">East</td> <td style="width: 15%;">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>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td colspan="3">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Even after a strong NT opener and Stayman, East-West are unlikely to find the okay-ish slam (6♠ or 6♥) which is fortunate to make as the heart finesse works and the spades play for only one loser. The slam would also make if South had had Kx in spades and then declarer does not need to rely on the heart finesse. If East-West have the agreement, after 1NT opener and Stayman, West may be able to use 3♥ as some sort of slam try over 2♠ and that might get them to the 6-level.</p> <p>If we add the ♠T9 to either hand, then slam becomes very good odds (roughly one of two finesses).</p>	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass																												
West	North	East	South																																								
		1NT	Pass																																								
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass																																								
4♠	All pass																																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		6	16	12	6	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	1	6	6	6	W	3	1	6	6	6
HCP																																											
6	16																																										
12	6																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	-	-	-																																						
S	-	-	-	-	-																																						
E	3	1	6	6	6																																						
W	3	1	6	6	6																																						

<p>♠ AJ63 ♥ K8 ♦ A86 ♣ AQ109</p> <p>♠ 97 ♠ 2 ♥ Q64 ♥ AJ952 ♦ KJ9542 ♦ Q103 ♣ 63 ♣ KJ42</p> <p>♠ KQ10854 ♥ 1073 ♦ 7 ♣ 875</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all Liam Fegarty</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">West</td> <td style="width: 15%;">North</td> <td style="width: 15%;">East</td> <td style="width: 15%;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td colspan="2">All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>South has the perfect weak 2♠ opening here with all their values concentrated in the spade suit and an outside singleton, and North has an obvious raise to game over that.</p> <p>The play is more interesting. 4♠ can be made with confidence on a heart lead; as long as declarer does not play the king on top of a low heart from East, he will be able to endplay East by eliminating the red suits and playing a club to the ten. On a club lead, the contract will fail as South can no longer eliminate the red suits and throw East in. If the lead is a trump or a diamond, declarer must avoid creating an entry to the East hand when eliminating the heart suit by playing a low heart to the ♥8 or running the ♥10. If declarer plays the king from dummy, East can play a heart back to East's queen, and get a club return, while still holding an exit card in one of the red suits.</p>	West	North	East	South				2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass																															
West	North	East	South																																								
			2♠																																								
Pass	4♠	All pass																																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">18</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		18	11	6	5	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>4</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	-	4	2	S	2	-	-	3	2	E	-	3	1	-	-	W	-	3	1	-	-
HCP																																											
18	11																																										
6	5																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	2	-	-	4	2																																						
S	2	-	-	3	2																																						
E	-	3	1	-	-																																						
W	-	3	1	-	-																																						

<p>♠ 932 ♥ J4 ♦ A1094 ♣ J642</p> <p>♠ Q8 ♠ AK754 ♥ K109763 ♥ Q8 ♦ K6 ♦ J872 ♣ K97 ♣ A3</p> <p>♠ J106 ♥ A52 ♦ Q53 ♣ Q1085</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable Liam Fegarty</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>In this bidding sequence West has shown six hearts even if playing four card majors, as with only five and no other suit they would have a balanced hand and be bidding no-trumps. At pairs, it is difficult to find the best balance between the chances of going down against the overtrick chances. On the club lead, declarer could win two clubs and ruff the third, and now play spades from the top, chucking a diamond on the third and then playing a fourth, letting it be ruffed while pitching the final diamond loser. The lack of a diamond lead hits that the ♦A is offside, and encourages this approach. On today's lie of the cards, declarer will get eleven tricks from this line. If spades had been four-two, the same line would still work for getting 10 tricks as it is likely that the opponent who ruffs the ♠Q would jeopardise their trump holding.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass																																				
West	North	East	South																																														
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass																																														
2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>14</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9</td> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts									♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	6		N	-	-	-	-	-	11	14	S	-	-	-	-	-		9	E	1	2	5	5	4			W	1	2	5	5	4	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																															
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																										
6		N	-	-	-	-	-																																										
11	14	S	-	-	-	-	-																																										
	9	E	1	2	5	5	4																																										
		W	1	2	5	5	4																																										

<p>♠ J842 ♥ 2 ♦ QJ84 ♣ K874</p> <p>♠ Q1073 ♠ A65 ♥ J654 ♥ A1083 ♦ A ♦ 1093 ♣ A963 ♣ Q52</p> <p>♠ K9 ♥ KQ97 ♦ K7652 ♣ J10</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable Tom Furness</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>North shows her four card spade suit in response to South's diamond opening; South cannot rebid 2♥ as that would be a reverse showing 16+, and so reluctantly rebids 2♦. [An alternative is for South to show a weak NT on this hand]. A diamond part-score should be a fairly simple contract, probably only needing one heart ruff if the heart ace is played early. If East shows up with both major suit aces, as a passed hand, she cannot hold the ace of clubs as well and not have opened the bidding. So declarer will know to play a club to the king (rather than running the jack) and should secure the valuable overtrick, +110 beating anyone defending a major suit part-score, or who plays in 1NT just making.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦	All pass																																			
West	North	East	South																																														
	Pass	Pass	1♦																																														
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦																																														
All pass																																																	
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>10</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>12</td> <td>E</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts									♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	7		N	-	3	-	-	1	11	10	S	-	3	-	-	1		12	E	2	-	2	2	-			W	1	-	2	1	-	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																															
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																										
7		N	-	3	-	-	1																																										
11	10	S	-	3	-	-	1																																										
	12	E	2	-	2	2	-																																										
		W	1	-	2	1	-																																										

<p>♠ K8 ♥ 10876 ♦ J982 ♣ KQ4</p> <p>♠ 95 ♠ AJ76 ♥ Q95 ♥ KJ ♦ 1076 ♦ AKQ ♣ AJ1085 ♣ 7632</p> <p>♠ Q10432 ♥ A432 ♦ 543 ♣ 9</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all Tom Furness</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>1♣</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Over East's 1♣ opening there are many upsides for South stretching to make a 1♠ overcall – lots of room is taken away at low risk, and if partner has support they can help to continue the barrage. But here West is not deterred from raising to 3♣, and with an 18-count and a nice-looking spade holding it seems normal for East to bid 3NT.</p> <p>Even if South tries a heart lead, the defence will have no problems beating this as long as they do attack spades – coming to two spades, two clubs and the ace of hearts when North somewhat disappointingly shows up with both of the guarded club honours despite South having overcalled.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	1♠	3♣	Pass	3NT	All pass																																				
West	North	East	South																																														
		1♣	1♠																																														
3♣	Pass	3NT	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> <th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>18</td> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6</td> <td>E</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>W</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		Makeable contracts									♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	9		N	-	-	-	-	-	7	18	S	-	-	-	-	-		6	E	3	1	1	1	2			W	3	1	1	1	2	
HCP		Makeable contracts																																															
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																										
9		N	-	-	-	-	-																																										
7	18	S	-	-	-	-	-																																										
	6	E	3	1	1	1	2																																										
		W	3	1	1	1	2																																										

<p>♠ J4 ♥ J108 ♦ 102 ♣ AK8762</p> <p>♠ Q103 ♠ AK97 ♥ 432 ♥ AK976 ♦ K9873 ♦ 5 ♣ 43 ♣ 1095</p> <p>♠ 8652 ♥ Q5 ♦ AQJ64 ♣ QJ</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable Tom Furness</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>2♣</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>South opens 1♦ and the first decision comes to North; in Acol, North should respond at the 2-level if they can picture game opposite a flat 15 count (so on most good 9+ point hands). 3NT could be cold opposite a hand like Axx-Axx-AJxx-Qxx, so North here has enough to respond 2♣. With her major suits being similar quality, double is a better choice than 2♥ for East, pushing West into bidding 2♥, even with the poor suit, as it is cheaper than bidding 2♠; West should be hoping to score club ruffs with the low trumps. North is reluctant to compete with 3♣ at the vulnerability and so 2♥ might well end the auction.</p> <p>2♥ can be held to eight tricks as long as the defence play three rounds of clubs before losing the lead, allowing South to ruff ahead of West with a high trump to go with North's late trump trick and the ♦A.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	2♣	Dble	1♦	2♥	All pass																																						
West	North	East	South																																														
Pass	2♣	Dble	1♦																																														
2♥	All pass																																																
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		9	14	5	12	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	-	-	-	1		S	2	-	-	-	1		E	-	-	2	2	-		W	-	-	2	2	-	
HCP																																																	
9	14																																																
5	12																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	-	-	-	1																																												
S	2	-	-	-	1																																												
E	-	-	2	2	-																																												
W	-	-	2	2	-																																												

<p>♠ 1064 ♥ AK ♦ AK43 ♣ 10742</p> <p>♠ Q8753 ♠ KJ ♥ J10862 ♥ Q4 ♦ 86 ♦ Q972 ♣ 3 ♣ AK985</p> <p>♠ A92 ♥ 9753 ♦ J105 ♣ QJ6</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable Tom Furness</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>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A standard auction lands North in 1NT; East is just short of doubling, but those who do will be rewarded if West pulls to the making 2♥ (although 2♠ might be a common choice). If North opens 1♦ playing a strong no trump, then East may find it hard to resist overcalling 2♣ which might chalk up -200, but should be deterred by the unfavourable vulnerability, poor holdings in the other suits for declaring, and holding only five clubs. If East does find a pass, and passes again after North's 1NT rebid, then North will end up in 1NT anyway.</p> <p>The normal lead looks to be a low club, but dummy can win and run ♦J (into East's queen) and the defence cannot prevent declarer coming to another club at some point to make an overtrick for +120.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1NT	All pass																																									
West	North	East	South																																														
Pass	1NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		14	15	3	8	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	1	-	-	2		S	2	1	-	-	1		E	-	-	2	1	-		W	-	-	2	1	-	
HCP																																																	
14	15																																																
3	8																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	1	-	-	2																																												
S	2	1	-	-	1																																												
E	-	-	2	1	-																																												
W	-	-	2	1	-																																												

<p>♠ AK1097 ♥ 7 ♦ AJ87 ♣ 754</p> <p>♠ QJ652 ♠ 4 ♥ J1094 ♥ KQ3 ♦ 9 ♦ KQ6432 ♣ QJ6 ♣ K93</p> <p>♠ 83 ♥ A8652 ♦ 105 ♣ A1082</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all Theo Sinclair</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>South's double is 'negative' showing 4+ hearts and roughly 8+ points. 2♥ is also an option but I think South's hand is a little too weak.</p> <p>In 2♠, the lead plays an important part in how North declares the hand. It seems normal for East to lead a top diamond. When the ♦9 appears, North can see three diamond tricks and two aces, and so can afford to lose two trump tricks. It seems reasonable for North to just cash the two top spades, which only loses to a 5-1/6-0 split in spades with both honours in the longer hand. If East instead leads a top heart, North can only count 2 diamond tricks, in which case they need an extra trick. East is almost certain to have ♦KQxxx for their two-level overcall, in which case they are likely to be short in spades. Now, playing for the double finesse in spades seems like a good option for declarer.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♠	2♦	Dble		2♠	All pass																																					
West	North	East	South																																														
Pass	1♠	2♦	Dble																																														
	2♠	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		12	13	7	8	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	-	-	2	1		S	2	-	-	2	1		E	-	-	-	-	-		W	-	-	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
12	13																																																
7	8																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	-	-	2	1																																												
S	2	-	-	2	1																																												
E	-	-	-	-	-																																												
W	-	-	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ K864 ♥ J10865 ♦ 4 ♣ AQJ</p> <p>♠ A1093 ♠ 72 ♥ 32 ♥ K974 ♦ Q109 ♦ J8753 ♣ 10652 ♣ 97</p> <p>♠ QJ5 ♥ AQ ♦ AK62 ♣ K843</p>	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable Theo Sinclair</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <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>3♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The sequence shown illustrates the use of 3♣ as ‘Checkback Stayman’, which works similarly to Stayman but can be played in response to a no-trump rebid rather than opening. Here, 3♣ is game forcing and asks South whether they have any extra major suit length to show (noting that they have already denied four hearts). South responds 3♦ to deny having three hearts or four spades, a little like in normal Stayman.</p> <p>Eleven tricks is possible to make on a non-diamond lead by setting up hearts. [If entries pose a problem, when the fifth heart is cashed, a squeeze on West’s black suits will resolve it]. On a diamond lead, you can still make 11 tricks playing double dummy (♠5 at trick two!) after which West will become subject to a triple squeeze without the count.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT	All pass																													
West	North	East	South																																														
		Pass	1♦																																														
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT																																														
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦																																														
Pass	3NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		11	4	6	19	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	5	3	4	5	5		S	5	3	4	5	5		E	-	-	-	-	-		W	-	-	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
11	4																																																
6	19																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	5	3	4	5	5																																												
S	5	3	4	5	5																																												
E	-	-	-	-	-																																												
W	-	-	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ 864 ♥ 7 ♦ AK653 ♣ A962</p> <p>♠ KQJ9 ♠ 3 ♥ 98 ♥ AQJ10653 ♦ 942 ♦ 87 ♣ K874 ♣ Q103</p> <p>♠ A10752 ♥ K42 ♦ QJ10 ♣ J5</p>	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable Theo Sinclair</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Dble</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Opening on South’s hand is a matter of partnership style, but with a five card suit and two useful tens, many would. On the other side, North’s hand is not worth a game force, as it’s lacking pips in diamonds and so might struggle if an opponent has four diamonds to the queen (with AQJ10x in diamonds an upgrade would seem fine to me) . Bidding 3♥ is not obvious at the unfavourable vulnerability as you risk going for 800 if partner really has nothing. However, partner needs as little as ♣AJx and a doubleton in hearts for 3♥ to be a very good contract. From the bidding, you know partner has 5-9 points so you can expect something. Also, if you do pass hoping to get 2NT or 3NT off, why should partner find a heart to lead. South’s double is slightly risky but 3♥ is almost certainly going off and turning 100 into 200 can be crucial at matchpoints. It is not too hard to get 3♥ two off, as after the ♦Q lead South can count their partner for ♦AK and ♣A and so can arrange to get a club ruff.</p>	West	North	East	South				1NT	Pass	2NT	3♥	Dble	All pass																																			
West	North	East	South																																														
			1NT																																														
Pass	2NT	3♥	Dble																																														
All pass																																																	
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		11	9	9	11	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	1	3	-	2	2		S	1	3	-	2	2		E	-	-	1	-	-		W	-	-	1	-	-	
HCP																																																	
11	9																																																
9	11																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	1	3	-	2	2																																												
S	1	3	-	2	2																																												
E	-	-	1	-	-																																												
W	-	-	1	-	-																																												

<p>♠ Q74 ♥ KJ93 ♦ A53 ♣ KQ4</p> <p>♠ A62 ♠ J85 ♥ AQ8 ♥ 75 ♦ KQ6 ♦ 10942 ♣ J853 ♣ A962</p> <p>♠ K1093 ♥ 10642 ♦ J87 ♣ 107</p>	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable Theo Sinclair</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>A 1NT overall seems better than a take-out double with a flat hand and bad spades. Pass is also a possibility for North but risks missing game. Neither East nor West has anything to do over 1NT; lacking a source of tricks neither is worth a double.</p> <p>On the ♣2 lead (playing fourth highest leads), West does best to play the ♣8 if dummy follows with the ♣7. The hands where playing the jack rather than the eight makes a difference are where partner has the A962, Q642 or KQ62. This means that the ♣J will work better in the last two cases – so consider yourself exonerated if you played the jack! There is also the live possibility that declarer will play the ♣T at trick one here which they might do with this holding. There are many paths forward from here, and it is hard to tell who will reach seven tricks first.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♣	1NT	All pass																																									
West	North	East	South																																														
1♣	1NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		15	5	16	4	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	-	-	2	1	-		S	-	-	2	1	1		E	2	1	-	-	-		W	2	1	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
15	5																																																
16	4																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	-	-	2	1	-																																												
S	-	-	2	1	1																																												
E	2	1	-	-	-																																												
W	2	1	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ J6 ♥ 9832 ♦ Q52 ♣ J764</p> <p>♠ Q10542 ♠ 973 ♥ J ♥ KQ1074 ♦ AKJ7 ♦ 43 ♣ 1095 ♣ Q82</p> <p>♠ AK8 ♥ A65 ♦ 10986 ♣ AK3</p>	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Nobody can make a 2-level contract on this deal but the scores will show that defence is tricky. Against a reluctant 2♠ contract (the opponents usually lack a majority in high cards for this), a trump lead should be a first choice; it can be dangerous with the Jx but here three rounds of trumps leaves declarer very poorly placed. Winning the ♠9 gives a chance to lead from dummy – and two options appear. Leading a heart from dummy might get a duck from South who doesn't know yet how many hearts declarer has. Alternatively this might be the only chance to take a diamond finesse which might win. The first route could lead to success (if once South has shown AK-A-AK you can deduce that the ♦Q would have given South a 2NT opener, and now do not finesse in diamonds) but the second route will probably generate two under-tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	1♦	1♠	Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass	2♠	All pass																																
West	North	East	South																																														
	Pass	Pass	1♦																																														
1♠	Pass	Pass	1NT																																														
Pass	Pass	2♠	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		4	7	11	18	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	1	-	-	-	-		S	1	-	-	-	-		E	-	-	1	1	-		W	-	-	1	1	-	
HCP																																																	
4	7																																																
11	18																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	1	-	-	-	-																																												
S	1	-	-	-	-																																												
E	-	-	1	1	-																																												
W	-	-	1	1	-																																												

<p>♠ K2 ♥ A106 ♦ A1073 ♣ Q1086</p> <p>♠ Q8753 ♠ A10 ♥ KQ75 ♥ J93 ♦ J4 ♦ KQ92 ♣ KJ ♣ 7432</p> <p>♠ J964 ♥ 842 ♦ 865 ♣ A95</p>	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>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>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>The auction might be as smooth as above, or North could double the opening bid, in which case a re-double puts South in a terrible position and 1NT doubled by South might cost 300 or more. A minimum double of a 1♠ opener is a doubtful choice opposite a passed partner, as if partner has spades you will wish you had not bid, and if partner doesn't have spades the opponents will always outbid you.</p> <p>Declarer in 2♠ is looking at – as a minimum – a loser in each suit and a potential further loser in trumps and clubs. The club position will often get resolved with the opening lead, and now playing the spades starting small to the ten will keep the losers there to two tricks. If the ♠K dropping identifies the 4-2 spade break honestly, then a trump coup might generate a ninth trick.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠	All pass																																
West	North	East	South																																														
		Pass	Pass																																														
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass																																														
2♥	Pass	2♠	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		13	10	12	5	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	-	-	-	-	-		S	-	-	-	-	-		E	1	1	2	3	1		W	1	1	2	3	1	
HCP																																																	
13	10																																																
12	5																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	-	-	-	-	-																																												
S	-	-	-	-	-																																												
E	1	1	2	3	1																																												
W	1	1	2	3	1																																												

<p>♠ J543 ♥ 642 ♦ - ♣ J107643</p> <p>♠ 108 ♠ AK762 ♥ A3 ♥ 1085 ♦ KJ9743 ♦ A1052 ♣ AK8 ♣ 2</p> <p>♠ Q9 ♥ KQJ97 ♦ Q86 ♣ Q95</p>	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6♦</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>It is never easy to bid a slam after the opponents open the bidding, and here the 3♠ fit-jump (promising 3+diamonds as well as 5+spades) gives East-West a chance but it is difficult to know exactly what each other has, and it will take momentum as illustrated (the cue bid of 4♣, and the extras suggested by the jump to 5♦) to reach the slam.</p> <p>Twelve tricks is easy if you start diamonds with the ace (draw trumps, ruff one club) but cannot be made if you start with the king. The one hint on this hand is that there are 14 hcp missing, and South opened the bidding. Easy if South had opened 1NT but opening 1♥ on a hand with a diamond void is a live possibility. 3N will suffer the same fate as 6♦ but score a lot less when it makes.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♥	2♦	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass	5♦	Pass	6♦	All pass																														
West	North	East	South																																														
			1♥																																														
2♦	Pass	3♠	Pass																																														
4♣	Pass	5♦	Pass																																														
6♦	All pass																																																
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		2	11	15	12	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	1	-	-	-	-		S	1	-	-	-	-		E	-	7	2	4	5		W	-	7	2	4	5	
HCP																																																	
2	11																																																
15	12																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	1	-	-	-	-																																												
S	1	-	-	-	-																																												
E	-	7	2	4	5																																												
W	-	7	2	4	5																																												

<p>♠ QJ84 ♥ 72 ♦ A6 ♣ AKQJ10</p> <p>♠ 76 ♠ K932 ♥ AK1065 ♥ 93 ♦ KJ843 ♦ 1072 ♣ 8 ♣ 9542</p> <p>♠ A105 ♥ QJ84 ♦ Q95 ♣ 763</p>	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all Patrick Shields</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>1♥</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>It is "normal" for the 1N bid here to always have some values, and with six top tricks it is reasonable then for North to take a chance on 3NT.</p> <p>Any red suit lead will give declarer a winner in hand at trick one, and after that there is no reason not to take the spade finesse using club entries to dummy and this will generate ten tricks without a sweat. If the lead had been a low heart round to the queen, then after all the black winners have been cashed, West can be thrown in with a second heart to lead away from the diamond king to generate 11 tricks. Which suit should be led? A heart needs less from partner but partner had an easy chance to support hearts and didn't, which hints that partner might have more in diamonds than in hearts. It's a toss-up.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	Dble	Pass	1NT	2♦	3NT	All pass																																					
West	North	East	South																																														
1♥	Dble	Pass	1NT																																														
2♦	3NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		17	3	11	9	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>4</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	4	-	1	3	4		S	4	-	2	4	4		E	-	2	-	-	-		W	-	2	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
17	3																																																
11	9																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	4	-	1	3	4																																												
S	4	-	2	4	4																																												
E	-	2	-	-	-																																												
W	-	2	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ 85 ♥ J98 ♦ J74 ♣ AK752</p> <p>♠ 64 ♠ AQ10732 ♥ A742 ♥ Q10 ♦ A1063 ♦ 52 ♣ 1063 ♣ QJ4</p> <p>♠ KJ9 ♥ K653 ♦ KQ98 ♣ 98</p>	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>After a natural auction like this, South has no reason not to lead a top diamond. Declarer can see four losers in the side suits and needs to play the spades for one loser – so starting with a spade to the ten looks best. There are dangers for the defence if South continues diamonds; cashing the queen is safe but now a club switch is needed and North needs to win that and continue with one of the black suits. It is important that neither North nor South touches the heart suit – it is a "frozen suit" meaning that whoever first leads it will give the other side a trick they could not otherwise get.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠	All pass																																				
West	North	East	South																																														
	Pass	1♠	Pass																																														
1NT	Pass	2♠	All pass																																														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		9	11	8	12	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	2	2	-	2		S	2	2	2	-	2		E	-	-	-	1	-		W	-	-	-	1	-	
HCP																																																	
9	11																																																
8	12																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	2	2	-	2																																												
S	2	2	2	-	2																																												
E	-	-	-	1	-																																												
W	-	-	-	1	-																																												

<p>♠ A6 ♥ 1062 ♦ AQJ8 ♣ AQ95</p> <p>♠ J8 ♠ 975432 ♥ J843 ♥ A95 ♦ 10764 ♦ 95 ♣ 842 ♣ 107</p> <p>♠ KQ10 ♥ KQ7 ♦ K32 ♣ KJ63</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>6NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>When South gets to show 15-17 balanced (either on this sequence or with an opening 1NT bid), North knows that slam is likely and the presence of the minor honours in the long suits (no stray jacks) makes the hand more attractive. At match-points the choice has to be 6NT.</p> <p>With the clubs breaking evenly, all routes will lead to making 6NT on this hand, three spade tricks, one heart, four diamonds and four clubs.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass	6NT	All pass																																	
West	North	East	South																																														
		Pass	1♣																																														
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT																																														
Pass	6NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		17	4	2	17	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</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> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	6	6	5	3	6		S	6	6	5	3	6		E	-	-	-	-	-		W	-	-	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
17	4																																																
2	17																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	6	6	5	3	6																																												
S	6	6	5	3	6																																												
E	-	-	-	-	-																																												
W	-	-	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ J97 ♥ AJ1054 ♦ 10765 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ KQ1043 ♠ 6 ♥ 76 ♥ K832 ♦ J42 ♦ AK93 ♣ AK7 ♣ 10852</p> <p>♠ A852 ♥ Q9 ♦ Q8 ♣ QJ964</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all Patrick Shields</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>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>One might think about passing with the South hand but when the hand patterns out easily, as here, then it pays to get in before the opponents. The sequence used here shows 5+ hearts in the North hand but not enough values to bid 2♥ over 1♠. It is difficult for East to bid once the misfit in spades has emerged.</p> <p>Declarer is very short of tricks outside the four trumps, but if East starts (reasonably) with a top diamond, then declarer might get a sixth trick out of the ♦T and that will score better than East-West making either 2♣ or 2NT (which they can, and they will reach if South does not open).</p>	West	North	East	South				1♣	1♠	Dble	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥	All pass																											
West	North	East	South																																								
			1♣																																								
1♠	Dble	Pass	2♣																																								
Pass	2♥	All pass																																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		6	10	13	11	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	2	1	2	2	W	2	2	1	2	2
HCP																																											
6	10																																										
13	11																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	-	-	-																																						
S	-	-	-	-	-																																						
E	2	2	1	2	2																																						
W	2	2	1	2	2																																						

<p>♠ Q5 ♥ A9632 ♦ 53 ♣ J764</p> <p>♠ A10972 ♠ J84 ♥ J10 ♥ Q8754 ♦ AK97 ♦ Q6 ♣ Q2 ♣ A95</p> <p>♠ K63 ♥ K ♦ J10842 ♣ K1083</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>The 2♠ raise illustrated is a little heavy in Acol (as partner will pass with 15-16 balanced) but 2♥ is equally a bit of a stretch. Playing 5-card majors, the raise to 2♠ would be considered standard.</p> <p>After running a club lead from North to South's king, declarer's prospect in 4♠ do not look good but the defence needs to be careful. If South cashes the ♥K (which is not an obvious choice) then a spade at trick three will beat the contract. If South leads a spade at trick two, then North must win and play the ♥A immediately and give a ruff. On a club or diamond return at trick two, declarer can ditch a heart on the ♣A and can make the spade game (but might still stumble on the way).</p>	West	North	East	South	1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass	4♠	All pass																														
West	North	East	South																																								
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass																																								
3♦	Pass	4♠	All pass																																								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		7	9	14	10	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	1	-	-	-	-	E	-	2	2	3	3	W	-	2	2	3	3
HCP																																											
7	9																																										
14	10																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	-	-	-																																						
S	1	-	-	-	-																																						
E	-	2	2	3	3																																						
W	-	2	2	3	3																																						

<p>♠ 86 ♥ 9543 ♦ 8654 ♣ 853</p> <p>♠ AK932 ♠ 5 ♥ 1086 ♥ AQ72 ♦ A97 ♦ K1032 ♣ 107 ♣ K964</p> <p>♠ QJ1074 ♥ KJ ♦ QJ ♣ AQJ2</p>	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>North has little choice on this deal, and even with South holding a maximum for their overcall, 1♠-doubled will not be pleasant. After two top diamonds, best practice for East is to lead a trump, and West can win that and continue diamonds. A top spade at this point is South's best way to get off lead, but West can counter that by ducking the trick. South knows by now that the ♥A and ♣K are both onside, and leading either suit will cost a trick, so continuing spades must be best. If East has discarded one club and one heart at this point – then the right choice (another club) on the fourth spade will generate +800 after ♥A and another – but for sure +500 will be forthcoming.</p> <p>Although East-West might score more bidding 3NT, the penalty more than compensates for a game they were not likely to bid.</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	1♦	1♠	Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass																														
West	North	East	South																																								
	Pass	1♦	1♠																																								
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass																																								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		0	12	11	17	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	4	4	3	4	W	2	4	3	2	3
HCP																																											
0	12																																										
11	17																																										
Makeable contracts																																											
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																						
N	-	-	-	-	-																																						
S	-	-	-	-	-																																						
E	2	4	4	3	4																																						
W	2	4	3	2	3																																						

<p>♠ K3 ♥ J765 ♦ J43 ♣ KJ73</p> <p>♠ Q2 ♠ AJ976 ♥ A109832 ♥ Q4 ♦ AKQ52 ♦ 1096 ♣ - ♣ 1062</p> <p>♠ 10854 ♥ K ♦ 87 ♣ AQ9854</p>	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all Patrick Shields</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>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The cards lie very well for East-West here but some will struggle to reach game. On this auction West could bid 3♦ on the third round (which might end the auction) but double shows a stronger hand and partner would have supported diamonds already with four, and so will be happy to bid the suit now with three if holding a singleton heart.</p> <p>In 4♥, after ruffing a club lead, it looks natural to play a heart to the queen. If a second club is ruffed, the ♥A will show declarer the bad heart break but playing out side winners will deliver ten tricks. Starting the hearts with the ace would have been better here, but not if South's singleton heart was any of the other four missing hearts.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	2♣	2♦	3♣	Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass																										
West	North	East	South																																														
		Pass	Pass																																														
1♥	Pass	1♠	2♣																																														
2♦	3♣	Pass	Pass																																														
Dble	Pass	3♥	Pass																																														
4♥	All pass																																																
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		9	7	15	9	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th colspan="2">NT</th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>2</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td colspan="2">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td colspan="2">1</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	-	-	-	-		S	2	-	-	-	-		E	-	6	6	3	1		W	-	6	6	3	1	
HCP																																																	
9	7																																																
15	9																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	-	-	-	-																																												
S	2	-	-	-	-																																												
E	-	6	6	3	1																																												
W	-	6	6	3	1																																												

<p>♠ A76 ♥ AK73 ♦ K9876 ♣ 7</p> <p>♠ Q9853 ♠ 102 ♥ J1064 ♥ Q952 ♦ - ♦ QJ1042 ♣ AJ108 ♣ Q9</p> <p>♠ KJ4 ♥ 8 ♦ A53 ♣ K65432</p>	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Dble</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>After an auction like this where partner fails to support spades, it is natural for West to start the defence off with a low heart. Declarer is not without hope to start with but when West shows out on the first diamond declarer can see that this deal is all about minimising the under-tricks and must focus on that. Ending down two is a likely outcome.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♣	1♠	Dble	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass																													
West	North	East	South																																														
			1♣																																														
1♠	Dble	Pass	2♣																																														
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT																																														
Pass	3NT	All pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		14	7	8	11	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th colspan="2">NT</th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td colspan="2">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	3	-	1	-		S	3	4	1	1	1		E	-	-	-	-	-		W	-	-	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
14	7																																																
8	11																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	2	3	-	1	-																																												
S	3	4	1	1	1																																												
E	-	-	-	-	-																																												
W	-	-	-	-	-																																												

<p>♠ AKQ4 ♥ A107 ♦ 62 ♣ KJ64</p> <p>♠ 9832 ♠ J106 ♥ KQ63 ♥ 954 ♦ AQJ5 ♦ 10843 ♣ 8 ♣ A102</p> <p>♠ 75 ♥ J82 ♦ K97 ♣ Q9753</p>	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable Patrick Shields</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>1♥</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Nobody has an exciting hand on this deal and it looks very natural for North to end up playing in 1NT, or if West had chosen to open 1♦, then it will be South playing 1NT in response to a double. Except that East should not let that happen, by pushing on to 2♦. Anyone declaring 1NT in the North-South direction is likely to get a heart lead, which will be won by declarer, who must now tackle clubs. The result will depend on which diamond East plays after winning the club ace – with the ten generating four defensive tricks in that suit and a low one netting only two.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	1NT	All Pass																																									
West	North	East	South																																														
1♥	1NT	All Pass																																															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">HCP</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> </table>	HCP		17	5	12	6	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="7">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th colspan="2">NT</th> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td colspan="2">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td colspan="2">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td colspan="2">-</td> </tr> </table>	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	3	-	-	1	1		S	3	-	-	1	1		E	-	1	-	-	-		W	-	1	-	-	-	
HCP																																																	
17	5																																																
12	6																																																
Makeable contracts																																																	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																												
N	3	-	-	1	1																																												
S	3	-	-	1	1																																												
E	-	1	-	-	-																																												
W	-	1	-	-	-																																												