



Commentary
for the
IBU Autumn Simultaneous Pairs
Friday 10th November 2023

Dear Bridge Player,

Thank you very much for playing in the IBU Simultaneous Pairs 2023, and for supporting the Irish Bridge Union (IBU).

As you probably know, the IBU is the confederation of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Bridge Union, and has responsibility, on an all-Ireland basis, for sending teams to represent Ireland at World and European competitions. During the summer, one such team did battle on our behalf at the World Championships in Marrakech, finishing in a very creditable thirteenth place. The costs of such competitions, like most costs these days, are increasing significantly, so your support for this Simultaneous Pairs, and for the various live competitions run during the season by the IBU, is greatly appreciated.

We hope that you enjoyed the chance to pit your bridge wits against your fellow players across Ireland (and for those still playing online, maybe overseas as well). As always, the hands (which are randomly generated by computer with no manual intervention whatsoever) provided plenty of tricky problems. Many thanks to our expert commentators Randal Milne (Monday), Enda Glynn (Tuesday), Brian Senior (Wednesday), Peter Goodman (Thursday), and Gay Keaveney (Friday) for their guidance through the maze. I hope that you have picked up some useful tips from their advice. Don't forget to check your standing in the national results at www.ecatsbridge.com/sims.

Peter O'Meara

President, Irish Bridge Union

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Board 1 | ♠ 108 ♥ AQ108 ♦ 10654 ♣ KQ3 | Dealer N Vul: None | |
| ♠ AJ763 ♥ KJ7 ♦ K ♣ 10864 | ♠ K9 ♥ 9653 ♦ AQ987 ♣ J2 | ♠ Q542 ♥ 42 ♦ J32 ♣ A975 | |
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♠ | Pass Db1* | Pass 3♠ | Pass All Pass |

Some Norths will open the flat 11 count but I must admit I am not a fan of this. It will be left to West to open 1♠. North can now make a takeout double with his short spade holding and holding 4 hearts (4 hearts are a must for

takeout double on a passed hand). The law of total tricks (5 spades in opener and 4 in East hand = a total of 9) permits East to jump to 3♠ after the takeout double. (The law of total tricks is a useful gadget to tell you how high you can compete in a competitive auction.). Note that if East only bids 2♠ South can bid 3♥ or 3♦. Now I know that double dummy indicates that N/S can make 10 tricks but K and J of hearts are well placed and you also need to cash ♦A to drop the singleton K and then pick up the J without loss. It's unlikely you will do everything that's needed. Note when you are evaluating the South hand how your ♠K is badly placed as it is likely ♠A is in the West hand. If bidding had gone 1♠ - P - 2♠ - P - P now North can now protect with a takeout double knowing that E/W have only limited values.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | 4 | 3 | - | 1 |
| S | - | 4 | 4 | - | 1 |
| E | 2 | - | - | 2 | - |
| W | 2 | - | - | 2 | - |

=====

| | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|
| Board 2 | ♠ A10642 | Dealer E |
| | ♥ 43 | Vul: N-S |
| | ♦ A95 | |
| | ♣ AJ7 | |
| ♠ J7 | | ♠ 83 |
| ♥ K6 | | ♥ AJ10875 |
| ♦ KQ862 | | ♦ J7 |
| ♣ Q962 | | ♣ 1053 |
| | ♠ KQ95 | |
| | ♥ Q92 | |
| | ♦ 1043 | |
| | ♣ K84 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 2♠ | 2♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 3♠ |

Most likely East will open a weak 2♥ which should be passed around to North who will protect with 2♠. In the protective position this can be quite weak and I suppose up to a maximum of 17 points. South will now make an invitational 3♠ bid which I think is just about right with two controls (two kings). In suit contracts it is best to have your points in controls (Aces two controls, and Kings one) whereas Queens and Jacks work best for NT. You should lose two hearts and two diamonds unless ♥A is led which sets up ♥Q to give you a diamond discard.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 1 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 |
| S | 1 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 |
| E | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| W | - | - | 1 | - | - |

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| | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| Board 3 | ♠ 1092 | Dealer S |
| | ♥ 87642 | Vul: E-W |
| | ♦ Q87 | |
| | ♣ J2 | |
| ♠ AK8653 | | ♠ 4 |
| ♥ 9 | | ♥ AKJ1053 |
| ♦ 1053 | | ♦ K9 |
| ♣ 974 | | ♣ AQ65 |
| | ♠ QJ7 | |
| | ♥ Q | |
| | ♦ AJ642 | |
| | ♣ K1083 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2♠* | Pass | 3♥ | 1♦ |
| 3♠ | Pass | Pass* | Pass |

South will open 1♦ and West will overcall a weak 2♠ which has rock minimum values on a hand where you are vulnerable and your opponents are not. (You live on the edge when you make such bids!) East will make a 100% forcing response of 3♥ to which West will show minimum values by rebidding 3♠. East should now pass as he should devalue his ♦K as South has opened 1♦ and it looks like it is poorly placed with the Ace in the South hand. In addition West was not able to raise in hearts. In fact you are lucky playing in spades that the trumps are 3/3 and that the ♥Q is singleton. I think it would be timid to pass your partner's 2♠ overcall as West's hand could have heart support and maybe have another control.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| S | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| E | 4 | - | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| W | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 |

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Board 4 ♠ KQJ Dealer W
 ♥ Q4 Vul: Both
 ♦ Q652
 ♣ AK63

♠ 53
 ♥ 107652
 ♦ AK9
 ♣ Q107

♠ 9842
 ♥ K3
 ♦ 10874
 ♣ J92

♠ A1076
 ♥ AJ98
 ♦ J3
 ♣ 854

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Irrespective of whether you play a weak NT or a strong NT opening this is a routine 3NT contract. After you get a diamond lead and win the third round, lead the ♥Q capturing the ♥K. Now return to the North hand using a spade entry and finesse the ♥9 into West. East appears to be the defender who has the winning diamond so it is a safe finesse. You now have 10 tricks. When making an opening lead from a suit not headed by an honour you should lead your 2nd highest card to deny an honour. Note if as declarer you get a spade lead you may be held to 9 tricks because no diamond trick has been set up for you.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| S | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | - | - |

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Board 5 ♠ Q74 Dealer N
 ♥ 54 Vul: N-S
 ♦ KJ98
 ♣ A54

♠ AJ2
 ♥ QJ863
 ♦ A7
 ♣ K109

♠ 863
 ♥ K10
 ♦ Q6432
 ♣ Q86

♠ K1095
 ♥ A972
 ♦ 105
 ♣ J73

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| INT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

If you are playing a strong NT then West will be declarer in that contract. If playing a weak NT system you open 1♥ and will probably pass your partner's INT response as you know that, as a passed hand, East does not have a good 10 or 11 count to make a distributional opening. You will make 7 or 8 tricks depending on which suit North leads and how you negotiate the club suit for the position of the ♣J.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| W | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

=====

Board 6 ♠ K64 Dealer E
 ♥ K7 Vul: E-W
 ♦ J9654
 ♣ 653

♠ QJ1092
 ♥ A1086
 ♦ A
 ♣ Q109

♠ A75
 ♥ Q43
 ♦ K8732
 ♣ AK

♠ 83
 ♥ J952
 ♦ Q10
 ♣ J8742

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | INT | Pass |
| 2♥* | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Though the hand analysis shows 6♠ or 6NT as making contracts they are not biddable. Remember the ♠K is inside and there would not be any question of a slam possibly making if it was offside. To make 12 tricks you play a heart towards your Q. It is a very lucky 12 tricks with both major kings well positioned for declarer. Note that NT will score the same number of tricks as spades. If you play Smolen you first bid 2♣ and over the response of 2♦ you bid 3♥ which shows 5 spades and 4 hearts. Those playing Smolen would show 5/5 in the majors as we have bid this hand above with 5/4, because with 5/4 they would start with a Stayman bid of 2♣.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| W | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 |

Board 7 ♠ QJ74 Dealer S
 ♥ AJ10985 Vul: Both
 ♦ A7
 ♣ 9

| | |
|---------|--------|
| ♠ AK962 | ♠ 853 |
| ♥ K2 | ♥ 74 |
| ♦ KI06 | ♦ J853 |
| ♣ J83 | ♣ K752 |

♠ 10
 ♥ Q63
 ♦ Q942
 ♣ AQ1064

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 2♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 4♥ |

Some South players might open 1♣ on the above 5/4 distributional 10 count but with only two controls (1 Ace) most will pass. West opens 1♠, North overcalls 2♥ which vulnerable has to be a good opening bid. East

might dredge up 2♠ with his 4 count (an extra 1 for the doubleton heart) but its scraping the bottom of the barrel to bid. South with 10hpc and two extra for the singleton spade should immediately raise to 4♥ which should finish the auction. If E/W were tempted to bid 4♠ it goes for -1100. Double dummy says you can make 5♥. To do that you would need to finesse the ♣Q. You are more likely to end up with 10 tricks in 4♥, if you play ♦A and a low diamond to the 9, and later enter dummy and ruff out the ♦K. Note West has a very difficult hand from which to lead back a card after an initial spade lead.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| S | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | - | - |

Board 8 ♠ 7 Dealer W
 ♥ KQJ952 Vul: None
 ♦ 862
 ♣ K76

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| ♠ AQ10952 | ♠ KJ83 |
| ♥ 6 | ♥ 107 |
| ♦ J5 | ♦ A743 |
| ♣ Q982 | ♣ 543 |

♠ 64
 ♥ A843
 ♦ KQ109
 ♣ AJ10

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 2♠ | Pass* | 3♠* | Pass |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

First let me say the suggested auction I have given will not be repeated at many tables around the country. West opens a weak 2♠. Many Norths will bid 3♥ on a hand which simply does not have the values to make a 3♥ bid. Assuming North passes, East should now make a non-invitational 3♠ bid to prevent South from either making a takeout double over 2♠ or an easy 3-level overcall. If East had an Invitational hand he would have bid 2NT in response to partner's 2♠ opening. South will

pass, but now in the passout position North knows his partner has an opening bid because the 3♠ bid from East was barrage, so he can protect with a bid of 4♥. This makes 11 tricks, and spades for E/W will make 8 tricks. In 4♥ leading twice towards the ♦KQ eliminates the need for a club guess to make 11 tricks

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 1 | 3 | 5 | - | - |
| S | 1 | 3 | 5 | - | - |
| E | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| W | - | - | - | 2 | - |

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Board 9 ♠ KJ97 Dealer N
 ♥ Q Vul: E-W
 ♦ K53
 ♣ J10863

♠ 106542
 ♥ 9654 ♥ K1032
 ♦ Q762 ♦ A4
 ♣ KQ942 ♣ A7

♠ AQ83
 ♥ AJ87
 ♦ J1098
 ♣ 5

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | Pass | 1♠ | Pass* |
| INT | Pass | 2♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

As the hand analysis shows N/S can make a spade contract but nowhere in the world would anyone get into that contract after East has opened 1♠. After the 1♠ opening South DOES NOT HAVE A TAKEOUT DOUBLE TO SHOW OPENING POINTS. This is because he has a singleton club which is one of the unbid suits. Say you doubled and partner jumped to 5♣? Would North be pleased? It is just one of those freakish hands where the opening bid has compromised the N/S hands. As long as declarer does not draw trumps he should manage to make 8 or 9 tricks playing in hearts.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | 2 | - | 2 | 2 |
| S | - | 2 | - | 3 | 2 |
| E | 1 | - | 2 | - | - |
| W | - | - | 1 | - | - |

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Board 10 ♠ AJ2 Dealer E
 ♥ K Vul: Both
 ♦ AKQ53
 ♣ KJ95

♠ Q54 ♠ 9876
 ♥ J10943 ♥ Q875
 ♦ J ♦ 764
 ♣ AQ103 ♣ 62

♠ K103
 ♥ A62
 ♦ 10982
 ♣ 874

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3♠* | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Another 12 trick hand courtesy of the defending cards being well placed for declarer. Again slam is unbidable in my opinion. You will notice I suggest the North hand is a 1 opening and not a 2-level bid. Just think if partner cannot respond with a 5 count there is no game on this hand. I must stress the definition of a NT opening bid is a balanced hand. Do not do it on hands with singletons, but if you open 2NT the sin here is less serious as it is a 21 count with a singleton K. After the 1♦ opening South will raise to 2♦ if his system allows. North will make a forcing 3♣ bid and South who is borderline will probably bid 3♦. North makes one more effort to get to 3NT by bidding his 3-card spade suit. (If he held 4 he would have bid them on previous round.) South can now show his heart stop by bidding 3NT. After a heart lead declarer can play to the club holding in dummy twice to probably make 11 tricks.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 5 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| S | 5 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | - | - |

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Board 11 ♠ AK1043 Dealer S
 ♥ A10 Vul: None
 ♦ Q107
 ♣ 1053

| | |
|---------|---------|
| ♠ 2 | ♠ J965 |
| ♥ KQ873 | ♥ 92 |
| ♦ AKJ3 | ♦ 82 |
| ♣ A87 | ♣ KQJ94 |

| |
|--------|
| ♠ Q87 |
| ♥ J654 |
| ♦ 9654 |
| ♣ 62 |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | INT | Pass |
| 2NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Another very straightforward auction. West will open 1♥, North overcalls 1♠, and East will bid INT usually showing 8 to 10 but here only a 7 count but aided by a good 5-card club suit. Now West will ask are you max or min by inviting game with 2NT and here East will pass. This will probably be one of the flattest hands of the competition as you lose 4 spade tricks and ♥A. That all depends on your ♠9 protecting your ♠J with ♠10 in the North hand. Note South should never ever make a raise to 2♠. If doubled it goes for 300. South has only a 3 count and East's INT bid is a red flag warning.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| W | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

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Board 12 ♠ J8 Dealer W
 ♥ K2 Vul: N-S
 ♦ 1043
 ♣ AQJ942

| | |
|----------|----------|
| ♠ K10763 | ♠ AQ9 |
| ♥ Q97 | ♥ J10853 |
| ♦ J87 | ♦ KQ52 |
| ♣ 107 | ♣ 3 |

| |
|--------|
| ♠ 542 |
| ♥ A64 |
| ♦ A96 |
| ♣ K865 |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♥ | 2NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

For anyone playing a potentially short 1♣ opening when East here overcalls with 1♥ it is difficult for South to support the clubs when not knowing how many clubs North has. Note that if you are playing a weak NT opening, then North must have clubs (or maybe 15+ with a short club). South really doesn't have a comfortable takeout double of 1♥ holding only 3 spades. If South does double the door is left open for West to bid 2♥. If N/S now bid to 3♣ more than likely East holding a singleton club will compete to 3♥. Psychologically it is easier to bid 3♥ over 3♣ than it is over 2NT as bid above. That is because West is able to show his hearts with the 2♥ bid.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 3 | - | - | - | 2 |
| S | 3 | - | - | - | 2 |
| E | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | - |
| W | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | - |

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Board 13 ♠ KQ2 Dealer N
 ♥ Q82 Vul: Both
 ♦ J107
 ♣ A974

♠ AJ10875 ♠ 64
 ♥ K9 ♥ J106
 ♦ KQ3 ♦ 42
 ♣ 65 ♣ QJ10832

 ♠ 93
 ♥ A7543
 ♦ A9865
 ♣ K

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | Dbf* | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

If playing a strong NT North will open 1♣, South responds 1♥ and West will overcall 1♠. Now many play support doubles here, showing 3 cards in partner's responding suit. South conscious of his 11 count but with only a singleton in partner's suit will just bid an invitational 3♥ though I know many would bid 4♥ holding 5 controls and a second 5-card diamond suit. There are just 9 tricks, losing two diamonds, a heart and a spade. As you can see NT also makes 9 tricks provided you play towards your ♥Q early if the initial spade lead against NT was ducked into you with the ♠10 inserted and not the ♠A.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | 3 | 3 | - | 3 |
| S | - | 3 | 3 | - | 3 |
| E | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| W | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| ===== | | | | | |

Board 14 ♠ 8542 Dealer E
 ♥ K962 Vul: None
 ♦ KJ3
 ♣ J2

♠ K6 ♠ AQJ9
 ♥ A43 ♥ QJ105
 ♦ A10987 ♦ Q4
 ♣ AK4 ♣ 865

 ♠ 1073
 ♥ 87
 ♦ 652
 ♣ Q10973

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♣ | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | INT | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

With 18 points opposite a weak NT opening this is a borderline slam. I will point out though for 6NT you generally need 33 points. After the INT rebid above you could try 4NT since you hold a decent 5-card diamond suit. This would be quantitative asking partner to bid 6NT if holding 14 but to pass holding 12 or 13. NT played by East will get a club lead. You now have three heart tricks after you take the heart finesse, two clubs, four spades and if you lead the ♦Q intending to double finesse it into North and you will end up making 11 tricks if all your other winners have been cashed. This is because North's last three cards are the ♦KJ3 and he is end-played to give you trick 11. Lucky for you he doesn't have a third club.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| W | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| ===== | | | | | |

Board 15 ♠ AQ9 Dealer S
 ♥ 1043 Vul: N-S
 ♦ K52
 ♣ KQJ4

♠ 1076 ♠ K432
 ♥ AQJ6 ♥ 75
 ♦ 107 ♦ AQJ84
 ♣ 10962 ♣ 87

♠ J85
 ♥ K982
 ♦ 963
 ♣ A53

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | INT | Pass | Pass* |
| Pass | | | |

If North opens a strong NT some will invite game on the South cards with their 8 count. I must admit I rarely rarely invite with an 8 count in the responding hand, and this is a pretty scruffy 8. East most likely will lead ♦Q which means N/S will scramble 6 tricks. It can be beaten by two tricks after the ♥7 lead and ♦10 switch by West but that is Alice in Wonderland stuff. Some Easts might come in showing a major/minor hand, and with the cards well placed you will make 2♠ or 3♦. I have to admit I would not overcall with the East cards.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| W | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

Board 16 ♠ J652 Dealer W
 ♥ A75 Vul: E-W
 ♦ J109
 ♣ Q96

♠ K8 ♠ Q
 ♥ J1092 ♥ K8643
 ♦ AQ76 ♦ K53
 ♣ A102 ♣ J743

♠ A109743
 ♥ Q
 ♦ 842
 ♣ K85

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | 3♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

I have no doubt the auction I have given will be different in practice at many tables as people have varying ideas on what they should bid. Some might make a weak 2♠ bid on South cards (too poor a hand vulnerable I think). On the auction above some Norths will bid 3♠ which can be held to 7 tricks if let play there. It might have the effect of pushing E/W into 4♥ which will make if you play a heart to the King. Playing North for ♥Q limits you to 9 tricks by running the ♥J. I think this is technically better but it costs you a trick here. In the auction given above I would play 3♥ as competitive but not asking West to go to game. For that I would double instead of bidding 3♥. This would be asking are you maximum or minimum for your 2♥ raise? If you're interested in finding out a bit more on that, look up game-try (or maximal) doubles

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| S | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| E | 2 | 3 | 4 | - | 1 |
| W | 2 | 3 | 4 | - | 1 |

Board 17 ♠ AKQ9 Dealer N
 ♥ AQ Vul: None
 ♦ QJ842
 ♣ Q5

♠ 10432 ♠ J86
 ♥ K76 ♥ 10
 ♦ A76 ♦ 1093
 ♣ A102 ♣ J98763

♠ 75
 ♥ J985432
 ♦ K5
 ♣ K4

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 4♦* |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |

Alternatively if you don't play 4♦ as a transfer to Hearts you can bid 3♦ as a normal transfer and raise then to 4♥ on the next round. Even though there are only 10 tricks on this hand I am certain a number of tables will make 11 because West when in on ♦A (if that suit is led initially) did not cash ♣A. The two clubs can disappear out of dummy on the third diamond and the third spade tricks. When declaring the hand it may be difficult to get an entry to dummy to finesse the heart. If Declarer plays ♥A and another instead, then when in on ♥K if the two clubs are still in dummy West should definitely cash ♣A. You are looking at 11 count, 7 in dummy and 20/22 in North. Partner can have nothing.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| S | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | - | - |

=====

Board 18 ♠ A J 4 Dealer E
 ♥ A 10 9 8 7 4 Vul: N-S
 ♦ A 2
 ♣ 9 4

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

♠ K 7 2
 ♥ K Q 3 2
 ♦ 8 6 5
 ♣ 6 3 2

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | 4♥* | Pass | 2♥** |
| Pass | | Pass | Pass |

On this hand South's response depends so much on your system of raising your partner's 1 of a major opening bid. A raise from 1 to 2 for many is 5-9 (flat 10 should be included). Some play a raise as 8-10 with 3- or 4-card support, and many play Bergen raises to show 4 trumps. 3♣ shows a 4-card raise and 6-9, 3♦ shows 4 cards and 10-12 (with some

variations) and a direct raise to 3 of the major is 0-5 with 4-plus trumps. A simple raise to 2 of the major is a 3-card raise with 5-10. Some might stop in 3♥ above but most will get to 4♥ and in effect it depends only on the position of ♠Q. Unless you're lucky enough to get a spade lead you will only make 9 tricks

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | 3 | - | 2 |
| S | - | - | 3 | - | 2 |
| E | 3 | 3 | - | 1 | - |
| W | 3 | 3 | - | 1 | - |

=====

Board 19 ♠ 8 5 3 2 Dealer S
 ♥ Q J 6 4 Vul: E-W
 ♦ Q J
 ♣ Q 10 8

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

♠ A K Q 7 4
 ♥
 ♦ A 8 6 5
 ♣ J 9 7 6

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 4♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | Pass | Pass |

This hand is very similar to the previous one in terms of how you raise in spades depends so much on your system. Whatever your system I think South with his 14 count and void (extra 3 points) and 5 controls should bid 4♠. Mind you it plays easily because the spades are 2/2 and because of the club spots in the dummy. It is probably easiest to bid using Bergen. North's 8 count is poor because it has not one control card holding only Qs and Js. In passing let me emphasise that West DOES NOT HAVE A 2♥ OVERCALL ON THIS HAND. VULNERABLE???

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 2 | - | - | 4 | 1 |
| S | 2 | - | - | 4 | 1 |
| E | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| W | - | - | 2 | - | - |

=====

Board 20 ♠ 542 Dealer W
 ♥ QJ1043 Vul: Both
 ♦ Aj
 ♣ A83

| | |
|---------|---------|
| ♠ K86 | ♠ Q93 |
| ♥ 98 | ♥ AK |
| ♦ 10653 | ♦ K82 |
| ♣ QJ75 | ♣ K9642 |

| | | | |
|--|---------|--|--|
| | ♠ AJ107 | | |
| | ♥ 7652 | | |
| | ♦ Q974 | | |
| | ♣ 10 | | |

Probably one of the flattest boards on the night where I expect most to be making 9 tricks in hearts provided you double finesse in spades. South based on the Law of Total Tricks (9 combined trumps) is probably willing to be pushed to the 3-level (9 tricks) and with trumps 2/2 there is no difficulty in making 9. Note West with his 6 count could double 2♥ for takeout if he held one more spade and one less heart.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | 3 | 1 | - |
| S | - | - | 3 | 1 | - |
| E | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| W | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 |

=====

Board 21 ♠ 72 Dealer N
 ♥ Q32 Vul: N-S
 ♦ J763
 ♣ J953

| | |
|------------|--------|
| ♠ KJ10 | ♠ AQ64 |
| ♥ J | ♥ AK76 |
| ♦ KQ109852 | ♦ A4 |
| ♣ 82 | ♣ Q76 |

| | | | |
|--|----------|--|--|
| | ♠ 9853 | | |
| | ♥ 109854 | | |
| | ♦ | | |
| | ♣ AK104 | | |

It has become fashionable in recent years for a lot of players to open 2NT showing 19-21. I must admit I don't know the reason for this because if partner cannot respond to a 1-level bid showing 5+, then quite likely you are already too high in 2NT. On the above hand if you open 2NT then 100% certain you are going to be in 6♦ or 6NT. It might make if played by West because you might avoid a club lead, but most likely it will be played by East going 1 off.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | - | 5 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| W | - | 5 | - | 3 | 3 |

=====

Board 22 ♠ 864 Dealer E
 ♥ 65 Vul: E-W
 ♦ QJ103
 ♣ J842

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ Q32 | ♠ J |
| ♥ 108743 | ♥ AKQ92 |
| ♦ 75 | ♦ AK862 |
| ♣ Q93 | ♣ 75 |

| |
|-----------|
| ♠ AK10975 |
| ♥ J |
| ♦ 94 |
| ♣ AK106 |

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 3♠* | Pass | 4♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

What West will respond after East has opened 1♥ and South has overcalled 1♠ depends really on individual partnership agreements. However what a lot of partnerships play is to use 3♥ as pre-emptive and not invitational here. With an invitational hand or better (11hcp or more), after the opposition have overcalled 1♠ as here, they bid 2NT to show a 4+-card raise and bid 2♠ to show a 3-card raise. (I myself actually use 2♠ to show invitational and any number of trumps). In effect you cue bid their suit as long as it is below a bid of 3 in your suit. Whatever way you play it, East should play in 4♥ making 10 tricks.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 2 | - | - | 2 | - |
| S | 2 | - | - | 2 | - |
| E | - | 2 | 4 | - | 2 |
| W | - | 2 | 4 | - | 2 |

=====

| | | |
|----------|------------|-----------|
| Board 23 | ♠ AKJ10875 | Dealer S |
| | ♥ Q863 | Vul: Both |
| | ♦ 3 | |
| | ♣ 10 | |
| ♠ | | ♠ Q432 |
| ♥ AK1042 | | ♥ 975 |
| ♦ A862 | | ♦ KJ95 |
| ♣ KJ73 | | ♣ 96 |
| | ♠ 96 | |
| | ♥ J | |
| | ♦ Q1074 | |
| | ♣ AQ8542 | |

| | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| 1♥ | 3♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Db1* | Pass | ?(4♥) | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

I know many Norths will overcall 4♠ and not 3♠ because holding 4 hearts partner is likely to be short in hearts. Partner in the passout position makes a takeout double showing short spades. Now you are only looking at

one spade trick and partner is quite likely to be void in that suit and you know you have both a heart and a diamond fit so it would be very wrong for East to convert the takeout double into a penalty double. Therefore you should bid 4♥ to cut your losses as 9 tricks will make in spades

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| S | 1 | - | - | 3 | - |
| E | - | 3 | 2 | - | 1 |
| W | - | 3 | 3 | - | 1 |

=====

| | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| Board 24 | ♠ K75 | Dealer W |
| | ♥ 10974 | Vul: None |
| | ♦ 9862 | |
| | ♣ 93 | |
| ♠ A932 | | ♠ J8 |
| ♥ 6 | | ♥ AQ85 |
| ♦ K1053 | | ♦ AJ7 |
| ♣ AJ74 | | ♣ KQ82 |
| | ♠ Q1064 | |
| | ♥ KJ32 | |
| | ♦ Q4 | |
| | ♣ 1065 | |

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♦* | Pass |
| 3♦* | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

After the 1♣ opening and 1♥ response, the 1♠ rebid on most hands shows 5/4 except when you have the 4/4/4/1 hand, as here. East's 2♦ bid is game forcing and some Wests no doubt will bid 2NT instead of 3♦ which shows the 5/4/4 hand or the 4/4/4/1 hand. I prefer 3♦ in case your fit is in diamonds. East could now bid 4♣ intending to bid 6♣ after using Keycard Blackwood. Others no doubt will bid 3NT. I would not blame anyone for bidding 6♣ particularly as you think you have a 5/4 fit. It makes a huge difference to the hand that you only have 8 trumps and not 9. However though 6♣ is on, it is very difficult to play. You need to get two ruffs in one hand and also enjoy four diamond tricks, which is by no means easy.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| W | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

=====

Board 25 ♠ K754 Dealer N

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| | ♥ 42 | | Dealer N |
| | ♦ QJ975 | | Vul: E-W |
| | ♣ 92 | | |
| ♠ 108 | | ♠ J9632 | |
| ♥ A8763 | | ♥ KQJ5 | |
| ♦ A82 | | ♦ 10 | |
| ♣ 1086 | | ♣ KQ5 | |
| | ♠ AQ | | |
| | ♥ 109 | | |
| | ♦ K643 | | |
| | ♣ AJ743 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | Pass | 1♠ | 2♣* |
| 2♥* | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

South overcalls 2♣ as the South hand not suitable for a takeout double as it only holds two hearts. I'm sure the odd South will upgrade his 14 count to overcall INT (15/17). The 2♥ bid from West can only be made if it is a one round force and not showing 10+. West's hand is not suitable for a takeout double holding only two diamonds. N/S will not discover their ♦ fit unless South makes an incorrect takeout double over 1♠. East will raise to 3♥ knowing West may not be that strong for his one round force bid of 2♥. 10 tricks will make from East as it avoids the club lead and the long spade can be set up to discard a club loser.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 1 | 3 | - | - | - |
| S | 1 | 3 | - | - | - |
| E | - | - | 4 | 1 | - |
| W | - | - | 3 | 1 | - |

=====

Board 26 ♠ A1075 Dealer E

| | | | |
|--------|----------|---------|-----------|
| | ♥ 9732 | | Dealer E |
| | ♦ 52 | | Vul: Both |
| | ♣ K32 | | |
| ♠ KJ63 | | ♠ Q8 | |
| ♥ QJ8 | | ♥ 6 | |
| ♦ J108 | | ♦ KQ964 | |
| ♣ 1075 | | ♣ AQJ86 | |
| | ♠ 942 | | |
| | ♥ AK1054 | | |
| | ♦ A73 | | |
| | ♣ 94 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | 1♦ | 1♥ |
| Dbl | 3♥* | 4♣ | Pass |
| 4♦ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

The double by West should show 4 spades and North's 3♥ bid is pre-emptive and not invitational. I do not think any East would pass that holding 5/5 so will bid 4♣ though if he kept the stretch marks off his face and passed, E/W would collect a dirty 200 - always a good pairs score. West will now simply convert back to 4♦ with his minimum hand as he knows his ♥QJ are useless in Diamonds as partner has a singleton. East, having stretched to bid 4♣, should now pass the 4♦ bid.

Makeable Contracts

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| S | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| E | 4 | 4 | - | 2 | 1 |
| W | 4 | 4 | - | 2 | 1 |

=====

Board 27 ♠ 92 Dealer S

| | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|-----------|
| | ♥ J54 | | Dealer S |
| | ♦ QJ97 | | Vul: None |
| | ♣ AJ85 | | |
| ♠ J8754 | | ♠ Q103 | |
| ♥ AQ10 | | ♥ K97 | |
| ♦ 104 | | ♦ AK85 | |
| ♣ 1076 | | ♣ K92 | |
| | ♠ AK6 | | |
| | ♥ 8632 | | |
| | ♦ 632 | | |
| | ♣ Q43 | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | INT | Pass |
| 2♥* | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

This will either be played in INT or 2♠ and you will probably end up making 9 tricks in either denomination. If playing a weak NT opening West will pass your INT rebid showing 15/17 as his hand is flat. However if you are playing a strong NT opening West will transfer into 2♠ and that will finish the auction. Only a club lead where North inserts ♣J will allow N/S to hold INT to 8 tricks and to do that South must play ♣Q and another one when in on the top spades. It is impossible to do this in practice.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | | | | 3 | 2 |
| W | | | | 3 | 2 |
| | ===== | | | | |

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
| Board 28 | ♠ A6 | Dealer W |
| | ♥ AQ95 | Vul: N-S |
| | ♦ Q3 | |
| | ♣ AKQ54 | |
| ♠ KJ5 | | ♠ Q10972 |
| ♥ KJ2 | | ♥ 873 |
| ♦ AK9 | | ♦ 854 |
| ♣ J1073 | | ♣ 82 |
| | ♠ 843 | |
| | ♥ 1064 | |
| | ♦ J10762 | |
| | ♣ 96 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| INT | Dbl | 2♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl? | Pass | Pass or 3♦ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

If you play a strong NT your INT opening will be doubled by North. East will remove to 2♠. North's next action will depend on what another double means to your partner. If it is a penalty double then it is easy but if it is a takeout then you cannot bid it as you only have two diamonds. So if you pass you will collect 150 as it probably will go 3 off. Obviously if double is penalty that is 500. 9 tricks are available in a contract of 3♦ or 3♥ but on a spade lead North can only make 7 tricks in NT.

Makeable Contracts

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|---|---|----|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
| | = | = | = | = | == |
| N | 2 | 3 | 3 | - | - |
| S | 2 | 3 | 3 | - | - |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | | |
| | ===== | | | | |