



# Commentary for the CBAI Simultaneous Pairs

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear Bridge Player,

Thank you very much for playing in the CBAI Simultaneous Pairs 2025, and for your continued support for the Association.

The funds that you contribute via these Simultaneous Pairs will help the Association in its ongoing development work – training new teachers and new TDs, promoting the game and trying to attract new members, developing junior bridge, and so on. Many of our input costs, like costs generally these days, are increasing significantly, so your support for this event, and for the various live competitions run during the season by the CBAI, is greatly appreciated.

We hope that you enjoyed the chance to test yourself 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 difficult decisions. Many thanks to our expert commentators Fearghal O’Boyle (Monday), Paul Delaney (Tuesday), Thomas MacCormac (Wednesday), Brian Senior (Thursday), and Enda Glynn (Friday) for their guidance through the maze. I hope that you have picked up some useful tips from their advice. For Wednesday’s game, Thomas has done his commentary in a series of videos rather than as a written text, which is a new innovation begun in the IBU Simultaneous Pairs in November; we hope you’ll like it, and would welcome your feedback.

Don’t forget to check your standing in the national results at [www.ecatsbridge.com/sims](http://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims). You’ll find the daily commentaries there too.

**Catherine Byrne**

**President, Contract Bridge Association of Ireland**

Board 1	♠ 98	Dealer N
	♥ 2	Vul: None
	♦ KJ8654	
	♣ 7532	
♠ K2		♠ QJ106543
♥ QJ		♥ K1096
♦ AQ7		♦ 9
♣ AKJ1084		♣ 9
	♠ A7	
	♥ A87543	
	♦ 1032	
	♣ Q6	

**The Bidding**

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
	3♦	Pass	3♥
4♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass

With 6/4 distribution and shortage in the majors, North sets the ball rolling with a 3♦ pre-empt. East believes in the maxim “never pre-empt a pre-empt” and at this stage observes a vow of silence. South with tolerance for diamonds introduces his heart suit. With 19 high-card points West is not to be prevented from entering the auction and joins the fray with a bid of 4♣. North passes and East

introduces his spade suit. West will do well to produce the pass card as the five-level is one too high. South will likely lead a diamond and after winning the spade ace, the ace and another heart will hold declarer to ten tricks.

This hand shows the value of a pre-empt. If East enters the fray on the first round of bidding the partnership may well advance beyond the four-level as West has such a powerful hand. The intrepid Norths who open with a pre-empt are destined to cause maximum confusion.

**Tip:** Pre-empt early if possible. It will usually cause unwanted disruption.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

Board 2      ♠ K10      Dealer E  
                  ♥ A9      Vul: N-S  
                  ♦ KJ9765  
                  ♣ Q87

♠ AJ96432      ♠ Q87  
 ♥ K5            ♥ 1073  
 ♦ A             ♦ Q1043  
 ♣ KJ4           ♣ 1063

♠ 5  
 ♥ QJ8642  
 ♦ 82  
 ♣ A952

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♥
4♠	X	All Pass	

South is worth a weak 2♥ opening. West has a difficult choice. The heart King appears to be well placed and with a seven-card suit a 4♠ bid is not unreasonable. North with good defensive cards will double a 4♠ contract. He will need to avoid the heart ace lead to obtain the best result. In practice many declarers will make nine tricks in spades which will score well. The favourable lie of the cards enables South to bring home 4♥ should the bidding stop there. If allowed North will frequently bid 4♥ to make realising that partner has made a vulnerable 2♥ opening. South will have to guess correctly the heart position to avoid a trump loser. Against 4♠, a minor suit lead will hold declarer to eight tricks.

**Tip:** When vulnerable keep your weak 2 bids up to scratch so that partner can make an accurate judgement in the subsequent auction.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 3      ♠ 972      Dealer S  
                  ♥ 2      Vul: E-W  
                  ♦ AJ74  
                  ♣ Q10743

♠ 864      ♠ 1053  
 ♥ Q96      ♥ KJ10753  
 ♦ Q105      ♦ K9  
 ♣ AJ85      ♣ K6

♠ AKQJ  
 ♥ A84  
 ♦ 8632  
 ♣ 92

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
			INT
Pass	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

2NT = minors

In the balancing position East bids 2♥. With 8 high-card points and a singleton heart North wishes to compete. There are two choices – a double for takeout or 2NT for the minors. The disadvantage of the double is that North has only three spades. The bid of 2NT is hardly natural and a bid of 3♣ would be unilateral. A 2NT bid puts both minors in the picture. 3♦ is a fine contract resulting in nine tricks. A takeout double also works well as frequently two losing hearts can be ruffed in dummy. In such sequences it is best to play double of 2-level bids as takeout from either side of the table. In a 2♠ contract if a trump is led an early club play from the South hand will establish a club trick, allowing declarer to score eight tricks – four top spades, heart ace, heart ruff, a club and a diamond.

**Tip:** When opponents overcall a suit over partner's INT opening it is best to use a double as takeout from either side of the table.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 4      ♠ 4                      Dealer W  
                  ♥ 8532                      Vul: Both  
                  ♦ K985  
                  ♣ AK43

♠ KJ2                      ♠ 109876  
 ♥ J97                      ♥ AQ106  
 ♦ 107                      ♦ A42  
 ♣ Q9762                      ♣ 10

                 ♠ AQ53  
                  ♥ K4  
                  ♦ QJ63  
                  ♣ J85

**The Bidding**

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

East is vulnerable and has only 10 points but with his points in his suits is worth a third seat opening. South with only two hearts opposite a partner who has passed, does best to remain silent. West raises to 2♠ and that probably ends the auction. The diamond Queen is the normal lead and should be ducked by declarer. The diamond continuation is won by declarer and a diamond will be ruffed in dummy. The unsuccessful heart finesse follows and South exits on a heart. In defence South will likely score two top spades, a heart trick, a heart ruff, a diamond and a club. It is true N/S can make 3♦ but it is not easy to get there. North could double 2♠ for takeout but the value of East's hand is undisclosed at this stage. If N/S can find a diamond contract they will score well. The defence will have to be on their toes to beat 2♠.

**Tip:** With four trumps make an attacking lead.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 5      ♠ AJ1086                      Dealer N  
                  ♥ QJ3                      Vul: N-S  
                  ♦ QJ  
                  ♣ K105

♠ 742                      ♠ K93  
 ♥ AK74                      ♥ 105  
 ♦ 4                      ♦ K10876  
 ♣ AQJ97                      ♣ 864

                 ♠ Q5  
                  ♥ 9862  
                  ♦ A9532  
                  ♣ 32

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	INT
2♣	All Pass		

Once North passes 2♣, he likely has a minimum 1♠ opening. South has only 6 points and it would be unwise to bid 2♦ in pass out position opposite a minimum opening. Best defence to 2♦ doubled will lead to minus 200 or 500. In the play the club 10 will come into its own as declarer tries to ruff his losing hearts. East should pass his partner's overcall. He has three clubs but only 6 points. With only one diamond West does best to bid his suit as his hand is not suitable for a takeout double. It is best for N/S to defend a club contract. 2♦ doubled by South will accrue a penalty of minus 200 or 500. South should retire from the bidding early.

**Tip:** Retire early when you do not have requisite values.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 6      ♠ KJ765      Dealer E  
                  ♥ 6                      Vul: E-W  
                  ♦ 10763  
                  ♣ 932

♠ 843                      ♠ 109  
 ♥ KJ5                     ♥ 108743  
 ♦ AQ2                    ♦ K54  
 ♣ KQ54                  ♣ J76

♠ AQ2  
 ♥ AQ92  
 ♦ J98  
 ♣ A108

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
INT	2♠	All Pass	

West with a bare 15 points manages a INT overcall showing 15-17 points. After a pass by partner the INT overcall is done with some trepidation as a penalty double could follow in some instances. It is decision time for North. He asks himself "What kind of a hand does partner have?" After a INT overcall he is unlikely to have a weak hand with clubs. He has not opened INT so he comes to the conclusion that he is likely to hold a strong hand. North is not good enough to double the INT overcall but he wishes to compete. He decides to bid 2♠ with 5/4 distribution. That is the winning option. If E/W compete in hearts they will have to go to the 3-level and a double will yield plus 200. 2♠ is an easy make and South should pass his partner's bid recognising that he was not good enough to double the INT overcall.

**Tip:** At favourable vulnerability try and compete in partscore hands.

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-		-	2	
♠	-		-	2	
E	-	-	2	-	-
W	-	-	2	-	-

=====

Board 7      ♠ 105                      Dealer S  
                  ♥ Q1093                  Vul: Both  
                  ♦ QJ862  
                  ♣ A9

♠ K97                      ♠ QJ8  
 ♥ K864                    ♥ J72  
 ♦ K7                        ♦ A10954  
 ♣ KJ107                  ♣ 85

♠ A6432  
 ♥ A5  
 ♦ 3  
 ♣ Q6432

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
			Pass
INT	All Pass		

South has 10 points and two five-card suits. His two long suits and high-card points come to 20 which normally qualifies as an opening bid. There is one drawback. The suit quality of both suits is poor and pass is recommended. That will hardly happen at every table. When people have a toy, they like to play with it. After a INT opening by West, South has the same 10 points he started with. His reason for passing on the first occasion was the poor quality of his two suits. That thinking still remains valid. South chooses to defend. South is destined to make six tricks in spades conceding 200. West will make seven or eight tricks in a no-trump contract. Good judgement is a key part of the game and is rewarded here.

**Tip:** When wondering whether to bid or not to bid examine the quality of your suits.

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
♠		-	-	-	-
E	-				
W	-				

=====

Board 8      ♠ 9                      Dealer W  
                  ♥ 10732                  Vul: None  
                  ♦ Q87  
                  ♣ KJ642

♠ AKJ63                      ♠ 10875  
 ♥ ♥                              AKQ65  
 ♦ J654                        ♦ K2  
 ♣ AQ107                      ♣ 98

♠ Q42  
 ♥ J984  
 ♦ A1093  
 ♣ 53

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♠*	All Pass

West has a difficult decision over 2♥. A bid of 2♠ will tend to show six spades. And with a void in hearts a bid of 2NT is not recommended. When East bids 4♠ he tells partner that he is minimum for his original game forcing bid of 2♥. North has a difficult hand to lead from. In effect he is endplayed and will probably try a minor suit lead. Ironically a heart lead works out well and the defence will score two tricks with the possibility of a third if declarer does not finesse in trumps. A void in partner's suit is not a good feature in the hand and West should restrain himself from advancing beyond game.

**Tip:** With minimum for a 2-over-1 bid raise to game with fit in partner's suit on the second round of bidding.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 9      ♠ 108                      Dealer N  
                  ♥ Q643                  Vul: E-W  
                  ♦ 85  
                  ♣ QJ1083

♠ A6532                      ♠ KQ94  
 ♥ K752                        ♥ AJ  
 ♦ 2                              ♦ A943  
 ♣ 942                        ♣ AK7

♠ J7  
 ♥ 1098  
 ♦ KQJ1076  
 ♣ 65

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
	Pass	2NT	3♦
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass

South with a good suit and at favourable vulnerability decides to make a timely intervention but the consequence is that West takes off. With a good fit a series of cue bids follow. A cue bid below the level of game shows first- or second-round control. Thereafter 4NT Roman Keycard Blackwood can identify the number of key-cards held. The singleton diamond is a valuable asset as is the heart Jack in the East hand. A successful heart finesse (likely on the bidding) will see declarer score all thirteen tricks. If South did not intervene a bid of 3♠ by West will show five spades and four hearts. East, with great controls, should make a forward move and the slam will likely be reached. Bidding a grand slam on these types of hands is usually a bridge too far. Without South's intervention E/W may not even reach a slam.

**Tip:** It is best to use the 3♠ response over a 2NT opening as showing five spades and four hearts.

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
♠	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	2	5	7	5
W	4	2	5	7	5

=====

Board 10      ♠ K1064      Dealer E  
                  ♥ 4                      Vul: Both  
                  ♦ K8753  
                  ♣ 1075

♠ J52                      ♠ 9  
 ♥ A1053                ♥ KQ8762  
 ♦ QJ                      ♦ 102  
 ♣ K864                ♣ AQJ2

♠ AQ873  
 ♥ J9  
 ♦ A964  
 ♣ 93

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		1♥	1♠
2♠*	4♠	5♥	X*
All Pass			

The 2♠ bid by West shows a raise to 3♥ or better. North with four trumps, an outside king, and a singleton applies the pressure with a bid of 4♠. East with a sixth heart and a good side suit advances to 5♥. South makes a penalty double. He has two aces and plays his partner for one trick which is not unreasonable. 4♠ is a makeable contract so 5♥ is a good save. When assessing whether to double for penalties or bid on take a look at your sure tricks. It is usually best to double and take the money unless you are highly distributional.

**Tip:** Double high-level contracts for penalties – best to take the money rather than bidding one for the road.

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	4	-	4	-
♠	-	4	-	4	-
E	4	-	4	-	-
W	4	-	4	-	-

=====

Board 11      ♠ K105                      Dealer S  
                  ♥ 86                      Vul: None  
                  ♦ KJ8643  
                  ♣ A10

♠ 7642                      ♠ AJ8  
 ♥ KJ753                ♥ AQ104  
 ♦ 5                      ♦ AQ  
 ♣ 865                ♣ J932

♠ Q93  
 ♥ 92  
 ♦ 10972  
 ♣ KQ74

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♦	X	3♦
Pass	Pass	X	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

East has a choice on the first round of bidding – a takeout double or a simple overcall of INT. West passes on the first round of bidding. He has five hearts but only 4 points. A bid of 3♥ should show some values over the bid of 3♦. If West bids 3♥ over 3♦ East will probably raise to game which is not a success. In practice 3♥ will probably make after the likely diamond lead from North. If North is inspired to lead the club ace the contract will fail. After four round of clubs a successful diamond finesse does not help the cause as two spade losers cannot be avoided. The 3♦ bid by South over East's double works a treat. With a good 18 points a double rather than a INT overcall is recommended.

**Tip:** To make a free bid have the appropriate values.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 12      ♠ 65      Dealer W  
                  ♥ A84      Vul: N-S  
                  ♦ 9754  
                  ♣ KQJ8

♠ J843      ♠ AK10  
 ♥ QJ5      ♥ 109763  
 ♦ QJ108      ♦ K  
 ♣ 75      ♣ A964

♠ Q972  
 ♥ K2  
 ♦ A632  
 ♣ 1032

**The Bidding**

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

2♥ can be defeated if South can avoid a spade lead. On a club lead declarer can win and play the diamond King. If that is ducked East has no recourse. If he continues a club a trump can be switched and there will be six tricks for the defence – three clubs, two trumps and a spade. On a probable spade lead the play will get interesting. Declarer can advance the diamond King. If South wins and switches a club declarer can access dummy with a club ruff or the trump queen if defence switch to trumps. Two clubs can be discarded on dummy’s winning diamonds. The defence will score just five tricks. A spade ruff can also be organised but declarer will prevail.

**Tip:** After an opening lead that does not work out well, it is best to move on to the next hand without post mortems.

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N			-	-	-
♠			-	-	-
E	-	-			
W	-	-			-

=====

Board 13      ♠ K82      Dealer N  
                  ♥ J1042      Vul: Both  
                  ♦ A76  
                  ♣ AK3

♠ AJ6      ♠ Q973  
 ♥ 83      ♥ AK75  
 ♦ K10984      ♦ Q2  
 ♣ J64      ♣ 1052

♠ 1054  
 ♥ Q96  
 ♦ J53  
 ♣ Q987

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	INT	All Pass	

The issue on this hand is whether South should bid or pass on the first round of bidding. 2♣ is not ideal with only four clubs and INT is an overbid. Pass is probably the best option but South invented a 1♦ bid deciding not to leave the gate open.

After a rebid of INT by North, West will not be well pleased to see the dummy but is best advised not to comment on South’s strategy which may well work out on this occasion.

East will lead a major and declarer might scramble seven tricks. If East finds the diamond switch early it will help the defence but many declarers will make seven tricks. The disadvantage of the spade lead is that it removes the entry for the diamond winners unless West is inspired to insert the spade Jack at trick one – an unlikely play. After the appearance of dummy West may call the TD claiming to have been damaged by South’s strategic bid of 1♦. In the context of the Tournament Director’s ruling, the words of Desmond Deery (one of the best players ever to play for Ireland) when playing in the European Championships come to mind: “The Tournament Directors liked us, they always tended to rule in our favour even when we hadn’t a foot to stand on”. Des also believed the lead should always be coming around to the stronger player!

**Tip:** Use your judgement whether to bid or leave the gate open

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 14	♠ K5	Dealer E
	♥ 942	Vul: None
	♦ Q10532	
	♣ 854	
♠ A10987	♠ Q2	
♥ A853	♥ KQ	
♦ 84	♦ J97	
♣ K3	♣ A109762	
	♠ J643	
	♥ J1076	
	♦ AK6	
	♣ QJ	

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		1♣	X
1♠	2♦	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

With a five-card suit a redouble by West is not recommended. East could have passed over 2♦ but decided to show his six-card suit simultaneously denying three spades as he did not make a support double. West comes again and East figuring his spade queen was a good working card belatedly supports spades. The play in 4♠ is interesting after three rounds of diamonds. The winning line is to cash the heart king and queen, followed by two clubs and ruffing a club in hand. The heart ace is cashed and now the last heart is played. North is helpless and South will probably already have discarded a heart. Declarer can ruff with spade queen and his only loser will be a trump in addition to two diamonds. The timing must be perfect to arrive at the end trump position.

**Tip:** Play for the lie of the cards that enables you to make the contract.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 15	♠ AKJ852	Dealer S
	♥ AKJ	Vul: N-S
	♦ 10	
	♣ 732	
♠ ♠	♠	109
♥ Q964	♥	872
♦ AJ542	♦	Q9873
♣ 9864	♣	A105
	♠ Q7643	
	♥ 1053	
	♦ K6	
	♣ KQJ	

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass
All Pass			4♠

When vulnerable it is best to keep opening bids up to scratch. Otherwise, there is a danger partner may advance too far with a good hand. South's spade's quality is poor and an opening pass is recommended. South comes to life after partner's opening and bids a comfortable 4S. If South makes some temporizing bid at the second time of asking there is a danger that partner might pass and sometimes it is good to have a little in reserve for your bid. With a successful heart finesse there are eleven tricks for declarer. There are eight tricks for E/W in a diamond contract but N/S have the bully suit and 5♦ is a bridge too far. Some scholars may have the Drury convention in their armoury and it will work well here. Drury will see South bidding 2♣ guaranteeing spade support as a passed hand, and opener will simply re-bid 2♠ if they opened light. In this instance he will bid 4♠ after partner wheels out Drury.

**Tip:** When considering opening with less than twelve high-card points take account of vulnerability, distribution and suit quality.



Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	5	1
♠	-	-	1	5	1
E	-	2	-	-	-
W	-	2	-	-	-

=====

Board 16	♠	105	Dealer W
	♥	1052	Vul: E-W
	♦	Q86	
	♣	A8543	
♠	KQJ97	♠	
♥	Q7	♥	J98643
♦	AK1053	♦	J972
♣	9	♣	KJ2
	♠	A86432	
	♥	AK	
	♦	4	
	♣	Q1076	

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	All Pass		

East drums up a 1NT response to partner's 1♠ opening. 2♦ is sufficient from West and East with minimum values plus a void in partner's first suit passes. South may be tempted to balance the bidding with 3♣ in the pass-out position. That will work out well in this hand as North can compete with 4♣ after East's 3♦. The vulnerability is favourable and minus 100 will work out well for N/S. The 3♣ bid by South is not outlandish as North is known to be short in spades and E/W appear to have a diamond fit. If E/W compete with 4♦ there are four tricks for the defence.

**Tip:** Consider balancing the bidding with appropriate values.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	-	-	1	1
♠	3	-	-	1	1
E	-	3	3	-	-
W	-	3	3	-	-

=====

Board 17	♠	A83	Dealer N
	♥	KQ10953	Vul: None
	♦	64	
	♣	107	
♠	J76	♠	KQ4
♥	A8	♥	J642
♦	A53	♦	1082
♣	AQJ32	♣	984
	♠	10952	
	♥	7	
	♦	KQJ97	
	♣	K65	

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

2NT is a possible bid by West after North opens a weak 2♥ and it is passed around to him. 3♣ is also a possibility. If East has some values, he can always explore a possible 3NT final contract. There are nine tricks in notrump on this hand as dummy has two spade entries for club finesses. A diamond lead and a heart switch fares no better. If opponents bid 3NT in this hand you can consider yourself unlucky – but then luck always plays a part in matchpoint competitions. The spade ace and club king are favourably placed for declarer. Even a diamond lead can be ducked once as there is no quick entry in the South hand. Should West decide to bid 2NT at first time of asking it is unlikely East will raise to 3NT.

**Tip:** It is best to use a bid of 2NT in fourth position after a weak 2 opening to show 15-18.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
♠	-	-	-	-	-
E	3	-	1	-	3
W	3	-	1	1	3

=====

Board 18      ♠ 108      Dealer E  
                  ♥ 9                      Vul: N-S  
                  ♦ AKJ109653  
                  ♣ K10

♠ A642                      ♠ QJ97  
 ♥ 1075                      ♥ Q86  
 ♦ 4                              ♦ 87  
 ♣ AQJ93                      ♣ 8652

♠ K53  
 ♥ AKJ432  
 ♦ Q2  
 ♣ 74

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
2♣	2♦	4♣	4♥
All Pass			

It is not clear that South should bid 4♥ on the second round of bidding after East jumps to 4♣. South really needs a better hand for that bid. But 5♦ is destined for failure if East finds the spade queen lead. The diamond queen is a useful filler for partner's hand. If South passes the 4♣ bid North will bid 5♦ and that is a bridge too far. West, at favourable vulnerability and holding 5/4 distribution, is worth a 2♣ bid. Given the vulnerability South may well judge that East's bid is primarily pre-emptive so maybe at this juncture it will be his last opportunity to show a reasonable six-card suit. It is interesting to note that 5♣ doubled can go down four after a heart lead. North can discard both spades and obtain a spade ruff. A low diamond to the queen and the club king is promoted for the fifth trick for the defence. When South plays the spade 3 it shows a preference for the lower-ranking suit. North should also realise that plus 500 will not score well and optimum defence is required to score 800.

**Tip:** Bid your hand to maximum potential against pre-emptive bidding.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 19      ♠ J9                      Dealer S  
                  ♥ 832                      Vul: E-W  
                  ♦ 1075  
                  ♣ AK986

♠ 85                              ♠ KQ107642  
 ♥ KJ1076                      ♥ 95  
 ♦ J63                              ♦ 84  
 ♣ J54                              ♣ Q2

♠ A3  
 ♥ AQ4  
 ♦ AKQ92  
 ♣ 1073

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

Against a 3NT contract West may lead the heart Jack. That will give declarer twelve tricks as four clubs can be established. If West is inspired to lead a spade, East can win and switch a heart. Declarer can rise with the ace and after cashing diamonds can play on clubs for ten tricks. Twelve tricks are more likely than ten. South with a good five-card suit and 19 high-card points is well worth upgrading to a 2NT opening. It describes the hand best by some distance.

**Tip:** With a good five-card suit upgrade your opening bid or re-bid.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	5	4	1	-	4
♠	5	5	1	-	4
E	-	-	-	1	-
W	-	-	-	1	-

=====

Board 20      ♠ J10                      Dealer W  
                  ♥ 1072                      Vul: Both  
                  ♦ QJ9  
                  ♣ KQJ93

♠ AK765                      ♠ 9832  
 ♥ Q6                              ♥ A854  
 ♦ 82                              ♦ 7643  
 ♣ 7642                              ♣ 10

♠ Q4  
 ♥ KJ93  
 ♦ AK105  
 ♣ A85

### The Bidding

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
1♠	2♣	3♠	X
All Pass			

West drums up a 1♠ overcall and North who passed initially comes in with a bid of 2♣ showing where his values are. With four-card spade support, an outside ace, and a singleton, East raises to 3♠. South doubles – showing a strong notrump type of hand. He cannot have a spade stack but a double best describes his hand. Another possibility is a bid of 4♣. There are ten tricks in clubs. The play in 3♠ will be interesting. Repeated diamond leads will leave declarer a trick short and plus 200 will score well for N/S.

**Tip:** After partner opens followed by an overcall, a bid by you and a jump by overcaller's partner; a double by partner shows a strong NT type of hand. It is primarily takeout but can be passed.

#### Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 21	♠	82	Dealer N
	♥	Q7	Vul: N-S
	♦	1063	
	♣	A98752	
♠	A653		♠ 7
♥	AJ94		♥ K10632
♦	K52		♦ A9874
♣	104		♣ J3
	♠	KQJ1094	
	♥	85	
	♦	QJ	
	♣	KQ6	

### The Bidding

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
X	INT	4♥	All Pass

Many E/W partnerships will have Tartan Two bids in their armoury which will be beneficial in this hand. If using this toy an opening bid of 2H by East will show five hearts and five of a minor. If

East decides to pass on the first round of bidding, West may drum up a takeout double (at least two places to play) and East now with two five-card suits should bid 4♥. To make the heart game locating the heart queen will be vital. As South has long spades he is unlikely to have three hearts. Playing the heart ace first from dummy will be successful on this occasion. On the second heart the queen will appear leading to ten easy tricks. Once a fit is established the value of a second five-card suit cannot be underestimated. Good distributional values will always make up for a shortage of high-card points.

**Tip:** With two five-cards suits once a fit has been established bid them up.

#### Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 22	♠	Q1092	Dealer E
	♥	A6	Vul: E-W
	♦	AJ962	
	♣	J5	
♠	KJ		♠ A8754
♥	KJ		♥ Q8743
♦	K854		♦
♣	AQ743		♣ K96
	♠	63	
	♥	10952	
	♦	Q1073	
	♣	1082	

### The Bidding

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♣	1♦	X	3♦
X	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

East is close to an opening bid and many will open. His high-card points in addition to his two longest suits come to 19 which is usually sufficient for an opening bid. However, the suit quality of both suits is poor and maybe pass at this juncture is a better option. The double of 1♦ shows both majors. West's double of 3♦ shows a strong NT hand and East's bid of 4♦ requests West to bid his best major. 5♣ is also a possible making contract.

5♦ doubled is one too many even at favourable vulnerability. North has a difficult opening lead but all roads should lead to ten tricks. Declarer will lose three tricks in the majors and the good clubs will be helpful in handling the 4/2 trump break.

**Tip:** Assess the quality of your suits when contemplating a light opening bid. Partner will need to be a good guesser if you frequently engage in light openings.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 23      Dealer S  
Vul: Both

♠	AJ108	♠	Q953
♥	Q3	♥	J762
♦	QJ753	♦	98532
♣	AJ	♣	98532

  

♠	K6	♠	Q953
♥	AK954	♥	J762
♦	A1098	♦	98532
♣	104	♣	98532

  

♠	742
♥	108
♦	K642
♣	KQ76

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♦	3♥	Pass
X	All Pass		4♦

With 15 high-card points an overcall of 2♦ is favoured over a double. 3♥ from East is a weak distributional raise. South with four-card diamond support is worth a raise. West has a choice of doubling or bidding 4♥. With good diamonds he chooses to take the money. There is one spade, two hearts, and two diamonds for the defence. Plus 500 will score well as not all partnerships will bid game.

**Tip:** Wisdom is required whether to bid on or take the money.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 24      Dealer W  
Vul: None

♠	J95	♠	AK87643
♥	QJ5	♥	K972
♦	AQ109	♦	86
♣	K62	♣	

  

♠	Q102
♥	A1043
♦	KJ2
♣	J73

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
INT	3♣	4♠	All Pass

This should be a straightforward auction and 4S will be the final contract at most tables. If North decides to come again at the five-level it is once again a bridge too far. Declarer can enter dummy with heart ace and successfully finesse in clubs but there are five losers in a club contract nonetheless. To make eleven tricks in spades declarer will need to double finesse in diamonds as a 3/3 heart break or a doubleton ten of hearts coming down is against the odds. North's 3C bid on the first round of bidding sums up his piece and he should not come again.

**Tip:** Do not bid the same values twice.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 25      ♠ A8      Dealer N  
                  ♥ AKQ      Vul: E-W  
                  ♦ J1042  
                  ♣ K872

♠ Q32      ♠ KJ54  
 ♥ 764      ♥ 102  
 ♦ Q63      ♦ K9875  
 ♣ AJ105      ♣ Q9

♠ 10976  
 ♥ J9853  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ 643

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♥*
2♦	X*	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

With both majors South has a choice of doubling or bidding his five-card heart suit. With a weaker hand 1♥ is recommended – even though this may only show four cards in the suit. North makes a support double and 2♥ becomes the final contract. On the lead of the diamond 3 (low from an honour) East plays low. Declarer can play ace and another spade. The defence can switch to a trump. Declarer will be able to ruff two spades in dummy but will eventually run out of steam. In addition to a spade, the defence will score two clubs and a trump holding declarer to nine tricks. Over the support double the bid of 2♥ shows a minimum hand and there is no need for North to bid again.

**Tip:** Use the support double when opponent overcalls to show three-card support for partner's suit.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 26      ♠ J864      Dealer E  
                  ♥ QJ83      Vul: Both  
                  ♦ Q5  
                  ♣ AQJ

♠ K10973      ♠ AQ  
 ♥ K42      ♥ A10765  
 ♦ 106      ♦ A97  
 ♣ K83      ♣ 1095

♠ 52  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ KJ8432  
 ♣ 7642

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

In the pass-out position many South players with 6/4 distribution will balance the bidding with a bid of 3♦. That proves an effective bid as E/W cannot make nine tricks in hearts on best defence. If South leads a club against a possible 3♥ contract North will win and switch a diamond. Declarer can win and cash two top spades. Dummy can be entered on a top trump and a club discarded on spade king. There are five tricks for the defence. 3♦ is a comfortable make and South will be rewarded for his adventurous bid. Terence Reese was a strong advocate of always bidding a good six-card suit. As E/W cannot advance past 2♥ South knows that partner has reasonable values.

**Tip:** With a good six-card suit after opponents have found a fit, balancing the bidding is frequently a good policy.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====

Board 27      ♠ 32      Dealer S  
                  ♥ K7652      Vul: None  
                  ♦ Q83  
                  ♣ 1032

♠ AQ84      ♠ K965  
 ♥ AQ98      ♥ 4  
 ♦ 6      ♦ AKJ52  
 ♣ AK87      ♣ 964

♠ J107  
 ♥ J103  
 ♦ 10974  
 ♣ QJ5

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦*	Pass	5♥*	Pass
6♣*	Pass	6♠	All Pass

4441 hands are difficult to bid. West is best to jump in hearts on the second round. After Roman Key Card blackwood responses indicate that E/W have all the key-cards East enquires about the trump queen with a bid of 5♥. 6♣ shows the trump queen and the club king. Fortune favours the brave who bid the slam. The diamond finesse is required to make thirteen tricks and it works on this occasion. A grand slam on a finesse is not recommended. If you are the victim of defending a grand slam on this hand and declarer plays it properly you can count yourself very unlucky. Without finessing in diamonds there are only twelve tricks.

**Tip:** Bidding a grand slam on a finesse might work Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday but it could fail the other days of the week ... and today is Friday!

**Makeable Contracts**

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
♠	-	-	-	-	-
E	6	6	4	7	5
W	6	6	4	7	6

=====

Board 28      ♠ A962      Dealer W  
                  ♥ 6      Vul: N-S  
                  ♦ K1084  
                  ♣ A1065

♠ K104      ♠ QJ875  
 ♥ 109742      ♥ Q85  
 ♦ Q76      ♦ 93  
 ♣ J8      ♣ KQ2

♠ 3  
 ♥ AKJ3  
 ♦ AJ52  
 ♣ 9743

**The Bidding**

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♠	X
2♠	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

With two aces and a king North is worth an opening 1♣ bid. South's doubles are all for takeout. North passes 2♠ to indicate a minimum opening. The bid of 3♠ by South looks for a spade stop and North bids a reluctant 3NT. The contract depends on finding the diamond queen. It is good technique to wait until the third round to win with the spade ace. A club and a heart can be discarded on the second and third spade. As the heart finesse is required to make the contract that play should be attempted early. Once East has shown five spades and three hearts West is favourite to have longer diamonds. A successful diamond finesse against West will bring home the contract. If you bid them up you must be able to play them.

**Tip:** If a finesse is required to make the contract make that play early if you can. When it succeeds you will frequently find out more information about another critical suit.

**Makeable Contracts**

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

=====