

BRITISH



MONDAY

30th July 2012

Who doesn't know and love Andrew Robson?

His clear insight into the bidding and play make his commentaries a pleasure to read. Andrew is renowned as one of Britain's foremost bridge player-teacher-writers.

Through his acclaimed daily column in the *Times*, Andrew's clear yet relaxed style has inspired tens of thousands of bridge lovers.

Rated one of the world's best players, Andrew has had countless tournament successes over the past twenty-five years.

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<p>♠ A4 ♥ A1097 ♦ 842 ♣ AQ102</p> <p>♠ J109873 ♠ Q65 ♥ J5 ♥ Q64 ♦ AK ♦ Q63 ♣ J97 ♣ 8543</p> <p>♠ K2 ♥ K832 ♦ J10975 ♣ K6</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr></table> <table><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>4</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</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></table>	HCP		14	6	10	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	4	4	1	3	S	4	4	4	1	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>2♠</td><td>Dbl</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr><tr><td>End</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>One is taught not to bid again after opening 1NT, but when neither-side is vulnerable (the bidder's vulnerability in the part-score zone) and you have a doubleton in the suit overcalled, it pays to make a take-out double. At teams South would try for the game bonus and bid 4♥ but it doesn't pay to push for close games at pairs so he settles for 3♥ (hearts not clubs as North is morally certain to have four hearts for his double of 2♠).</p> <p>In 3♥, West cashes ♦AK and switches to ♠J. Playing flat out, win ♠K, cross to ♥A then cash ♣K, over to ♣AQ, cash ♠A then run ♥10. West wins ♥J but you ruff his forced spade return in hand whilst throwing ♦8 from dummy. Cash ♥K and claim 10 tricks. N-S +170.</p>	West	North	East	South		1NT	P	P	2♠	Dbl	P	3♥	End							
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<p>♠ 85 ♥ 8632 ♦ A105 ♣ Q853</p> <p>♠ A432 ♠ KQ106 ♥ A95 ♥ KQJ ♦ KJ3 ♦ Q7642 ♣ KJ9 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ J97 ♥ 1074 ♦ 98 ♣ 107642</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>16</td><td>1</td></tr></table> <table><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>6</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr></table>	HCP		6	17	16	1	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	6	5	6	6	W	2	6	5	6	6	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>4♣</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>4NT</td><td>P</td><td>5♠</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>6NT</td><td>end</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>East's 4♣ is a splinter – as you may have read in January's English Bridge I am happy to splinter into a singleton honour – because I love to splinter. West's club holding is rather wasted but his holding in partner's diamonds plus the two major-suit aces are huge and he bids Roman Key Card Blackwood. 5♠ shows two of the five aces (♠K is an "ace") plus ♠Q. West can anticipate that diamonds will run so there should be 12 tricks in NT as well as spades. Hungry for the extra 10 points he bids 6NT and earns a (shared) top. E-W +990.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♦	P	1♠	P	4♣	P	4NT	P	5♠	P	6NT	end		
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<div><div><div>♠ A10</div><div>♥ AKQ72</div><div>♦ A</div><div>♣ AQJ32</div></div><div><div>♠ Q42</div><div>♥ -</div><div>♦ J9642</div><div>♣ 98654</div></div><div><div>♠ J9763</div><div>♥ J84</div><div>♦ K753</div><div>♣ 7</div></div></div> <div><div>♠ K85</div><div>♥ 109653</div><div>♦ Q108</div><div>♣ K10</div></div> <div><table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>24</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>8</td></tr></table><table><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>6</td><td>-</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>7</td><td>-</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>7</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></table></div>	HCP		24	5	3	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	6	-	7	2	7	S	7	-	7	2	7	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<div>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>4♣</td><td>P</td><td>5♣</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>5♦</td><td>P</td><td>5♠</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>7NT</td><td>end</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>The key here is North's 4♣ bid – a natural slam try not just the lowest ace. South knows his ♣K is huge and cue bids it; North's 5♦ is a cue and South can cue bid his ♠K as he denied ♠A when he bid 5♣ (not 4♠). North can now count 13 tricks (assuming decent splits) – five in hearts and clubs, ♠AK and ♦A. Hungrily he bids for the extra ten points. N-S +1520 and a two-board round in which East-West will feel like asking for a refund on their table money.</p>	West	North	East	South			P	P	P	2♣	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	3♥	P	4♣	P	5♣	P	5♦	P	5♠	P	7NT	end	
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♠ KQ54

♥ 3

♦ 754

♣ A10762

♠ 76

♠ 1083

♥ J7642

♥ 1085

♦ Q1092

♦ KJ63

♣ J8

♣ KQ4

♠ AJ92

♥ AKQ9

♦ A8

♣ 953

HCP		
9		
4		9
18		

Makeable contracts						
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
N	5	1	2	5	3	
S	5	1	2	5	3	
E	-	-	-	-	-	
W	-	-	-	-	-	

Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
------	-------	------	-------

P	P	P	1♥
---	---	---	----

P	1♠	P	4♠
---	----	---	----

End

Should be a relatively flat board here, although one or two N-Ss may err by bidding 1♥-2♣-3NT. Both the 2♣ response – without the values to bid again over a 2♥ rebid – and the 3NT bid – 2NT should be forcing after a two-over-one response – are mistaken. To make 11 tricks in 4♠ declarer discards diamonds on South's hearts and sets up clubs giving up two tricks in the process. Will one or two make 12 after ♣K ducked then ♣Q squashing ♣J? I rather think so. N-S +650.

♠ 74

♥ 74

♦ QJ762

♣ K1074

♠ 832

♠ KQJ109

♥ AJ93

♥ KQ85

♦ K9853

♦ -

♣ 6

♣ A953

♠ A65

♥ 1062

♦ A104

♣ QJ82

HCP		
6		
8		15
11		

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

Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable

West	North	East	South
------	-------	------	-------

	P	1♠	P
--	---	----	---

2♠	P	3♥	P
----	---	----	---

4♥ **end**

Note East's 3♥ bid – realising the importance of playing in a 4-4 fit over a 5-3 fit. Here, as so often, the 4-4 fit plays a trick better than the 5-3 – make the same-length suit trumps and the uneven-length suit a side-suit and you have extra ruffing tricks in either hand plus a better trick source. Best play in 4♥ looks to be winning ♣Q lead with ♣A, ruffing ♣3 and leading to ♠K. You will likely score six trump tricks (including two club ruffs in dummy), four spades plus ♣A. E-W +650.

♠ KQJ105

♥ AJ6

♦ 106532

♣ -

♠ 943

♠ A2

♥ K4

♥ 1097

♦ QJ87

♦ AK9

♣ AK105

♣ QJ874

♠ 876

♥ Q8532

♦ 4

♣ 9632

HCP		
11		
13		14
2		

Makeable contracts						
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
N	-	-	1	3	-	
S	-	-	1	3	-	
E	4	2	-	-	2	
W	4	3	-	-	4	

Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all

West	North	East	South
------	-------	------	-------

3NT	Dbl	1NT	P
-----	-----	-----	---

end

East has one of those hands which is both a 12-14 and a 15-17 1NT opener, upgrading his 14 because of the decent five-card suit, outside tops and good intermediates. West has an obvious 3NT bid and now comes the twist. If North passes, South will lead his normal ♥3, ♥K will lose to ♥A and ♥J then ♥6 will see South's suit run. Down one. North may be very tempted to double 3NT however (I would) telling partner to try to find his (normally major) suit. South would lead his weaker major, spades and North would briefly be happy. Not for long though, as declarer would rack up the first ten tricks. Doubled game plus one. E-W +650.

♠AQJ76
 ♥A985
 ♦95
 ♣102
 ♠109543 ♠8
 ♥76 ♥KQ42
 ♦108 ♦KJ2
 ♣AJ83 ♣KQ964
 ♠K2
 ♥J103
 ♦AQ7643
 ♣75

HCP		Makeable contracts					
5	11		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	14	N	-	2	2	2	1
	10	S	-	2	2	2	1
		E	3	-	-	-	-
		W	3	-	-	-	-

Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable

West North East South
2♦ End

South's (maximum) Weak Two in diamonds should probably end the auction, North not quite having good enough spades to bid 2♠ (non-forcing, constructive chez moi) and East deciding not to protect for the lack of spades (plus a defensive diamond holding). If N-S are not playing Weak Twos in Diamonds (a recommended tool, and much more frequent and less confusing than Benji in my view), then South may pass, after which the bidding should go something like: P-P-1♠-Dbl-2♦-P-2♥-P-2♠-end (note South's simple false preference 2♠ bid – better than repeating the emaciated diamonds at the three level). Other Souths might chance their arm with a vulnerable 1♦. This may backfire after 1♦-P-1♠-Dbl-2♦-3♣-3♦-end, East's double after two suits have been bid promising at least four cards in the other two suits, enabling West to bid 3♣, a making contract (unlike 3♦ which should go down one on West's semi-marked ♥7 lead). So really it's all about South's opening bid.

N-S +90

♠6
 ♥J2
 ♦QJ87432
 ♣AQ3
 ♠KJ108 ♠AQ32
 ♥AQ1097 ♥K853
 ♦6 ♦95
 ♣J42 ♣1065
 ♠9754
 ♥64
 ♦AK10
 ♣K987

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
10		N	4	4	-	-	-
11	9	S	4	4	-	-	-
10		E	-	-	3	3	-
		W	-	-	3	3	-

Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable

West North East South
1♥ 2♦ 3♥ 4♦
End

Although E-W have both bid soundly in our featured auction, there is much to be said for either to bid 4♥ - as soon as possible. Though they lack the values, they hope to "bounce" N-S into a phantom sacrifice of 5♦. Indeed North would almost certainly succumb to the temptation given his seventh diamond if West bids a tempo 4♥ in our auction. 5♦ has three top losers but I can see the odd embarrassing defence to 5♦ - perhaps ♥3 to ♥A, ♥10 to ♥J and ♥K and then, understandably reluctant to switch to a spade from his ♠AQ, a club/trump switch from East, letting 5♦ make as declarer later throws his spade on dummy's fourth club. West should lead ♥Q at trick two to prevent this, holding the lead and enabling him to switch to a comfortable spade at trick three around to dummy's weakness. N-S +130.

♠AJ53
 ♥K95
 ♦965
 ♣AJ7
 ♠KQ9 ♠642
 ♥8763 ♥AJ2
 ♦KJ32 ♦A87
 ♣104 ♣KQ86
 ♠1087
 ♥Q104
 ♦Q104
 ♣9532

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
13		N	-	-	-	-	-
9	14	S	-	-	-	-	-
4		E	1	2	2	1	2
		W	1	2	2	1	2

Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all

West North East South
1NT end

East's barren 14-count does not warrant a bid, so 1NT will be the final contract at those tables where N-S play a 12-14 1NT. If N-S play Strong, then North will open 1♣ playing Five-card Majors and this will be passed to West who should reopen with a light protective take-out double. East will cut his partner some slack and jump to 2NT (not 3NT), ending the bidding. If N-S are playing Strong and Fours, then North's 1♠ opener will probably close proceedings. Defending 1NT as East, the choice of lead lies between ♣6, ♣K and a passive ♠6. I hate to give a trick on the lead so would opt for ♠6, but this sees partner's spade honours get squashed – although after ♠6, ♠7, ♠Q, ♠A, might not declarer lead back ♠3 to ♠9 playing East for ♠9642? If so he will go down three; if not (leading back to ♠10) he may escape with down one (if he guesses ♥J). Taking a midway position: E-W +100.

♠ 543

♥ AQ10

♦ J1098652

♣ -

♠ AJ1096

♥ 75

♦ -

♣ AQJ753

♠ K872

♥ K93

♦ AQ

♣ K982

♠ Q

♥ J8642

♦ K743

♣ 1064

HCP

7

12

15

6

Makeable contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	4	1	-	-
S	-	4	1	-	-
E	6	-	-	5	6
W	6	-	-	6	6

Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable

West

North

East

South

P

P

1♠

P

4♦

P

4♠

P

5♣

P

6♠

P

P

Dbl

6NT

end

West's 4♦ is a splinter bid showing diamond shortage. With shortish diamonds himself plus some wastage there –and mediocre trumps – East signs off in 4♠. But when West bids again – he is clearly worth it – adopting a cue-bidding route (not Blackwood) given his two losing hearts – East jumps to 6♠ as he has second-round heart control. North, who might have doubled 5♣ for the lead (except that it makes Six!) doubles 6♠ - Lightner, requesting an unusual opening lead normally based on a void (I doubt South will lead a club though, with just three cards). East anticipates the possibility of a ruff so converts to 6NT, which cannot be beaten with ♠Q falling. Exciting stuff and E-W +990.

♠ AKJ82

♥ K10843

♦ A8

♣ 8

♠ 10964

♥ AJ75

♦ 7

♣ QJ96

♠ 75

♥ 9

♦ KQ9652

♣ A754

♠ Q3

♥ Q62

♦ J1043

♣ K1032

HCP

15

8

9

8

Makeable contracts

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

Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable

West

North

East

South

P

1♠

2♦

P

P

2♥

end

P

North's 2♥ reopener – as opposed to double – implies a fifth heart. Hence South does not revert to 2♠. Indeed South is close to raising 2♥ to 3♥ with his huge major-suit queens, but it does not pay to push for close games at pairs. In 2♥, win ♦K with ♦A and lead ♥3 to ♥Q. West wins ♥A and switches to ♣Q. East wins ♣A, cashes ♦Q and switches to ♠7 (best). Win ♠Q and lead ♥6 but West covers with ♥7 and although your finesse of ♥8 wins, East discards and you have no convenient way back to dummy to repeat the finesse, thereby having to lose to ♥J. Nine tricks and N-S +140 (yes, 4♥ can be made double dummy, but our line is normal).

♠ 1075

♥ AQ4

♦ 96

♣ A10532

♠ KQ63

♥ 92

♦ AJ852

♣ 86

♠ J984

♥ J10853

♦ 104

♣ Q4

♠ A2

♥ K76

♦ KQ73

♣ KJ97

HCP

10

10

4

16

Makeable contracts

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

Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable

West

North

East

South

P

P

P

1♦

P

2♣

P

2NT

P

3NT

end

Whether West leads the traditional ♠3 or the more modern ♠K (as I've mentioned experts hate to give away cheap tricks on the lead), declarer should win and advance ♣J. West might have to cover if he holds ♣Qx (declarer might have ♣Jx or ♣Jxx), so when he doesn't, declarer rises with ♣A and leads one back planning to finesse. Here ♣Q pops up and he has nine tricks, via five clubs, three hearts plus ♠A. N-S +600.

♠ A8
♥ A2
♦ AK9864
♣ KJ8

♠ Q10 ♠ K953
♥ QJ987 ♥ 43
♦ 10752 ♦ 3
♣ 102 ♣ AQ6543

♠ J7642
♥ K1065
♦ QJ
♣ 97

HCP		
19		
5	9	
7		

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	4	1	2	3
S	-	4	1	2	4
E	1	-	-	-	-
W	1	-	-	-	-

Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbl
P	3NT	end	

It would not be outrageous for North to open 2NT with his trick-rich hand and stoppers in all suits. Either way 3NT will be reached. East is likely to lead his clubs, although a spade lead would work better. On a club to the ten and jack, declarer crosses to ♦QJ, back to ♥A and runs four more diamonds. He then crosses to ♥K, back to ♠A and leads a second spade. If East has just ♠K remaining, he will be endplayed to give declarer a second club trick. But he should drop ♠K under ♠A so that his partner can win the second spade. Now declarer is held to ten tricks. N-S + 630.

♠ K
♥ 1063
♦ Q42
♣ Q109732

♠ Q9876 ♠ AJ
♥ K95 ♥ AQ742
♦ 953 ♦ AK876
♣ 86 ♣ J

♠ 105432
♥ J8
♦ J10
♣ AK54

HCP		
7		
5	19	
9		

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	-	-	-	-
S	2	-	-	-	-
E	-	5	5	3	1
W	-	5	5	3	1

Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		1♥	P
1♠	P	3♦	P
4♥	end		

West is correct to scrape up a response – he has security given his partial heart fit; he may have a 4♥/4♠ game and/or wish to keep N-S out. South leads ♣AK v the ensuing 4♥. As declarer, ruff, and lead out ♦AK and a third diamond, setting up the suit early whilst dummy still has trumps to ruff a club return. When North's ♠K later pops up, you have a comfortable 11 tricks losing just a club and a diamond. You may have noticed that N-S have a profitable sacrifice at the favourable vulnerability. Pretty tough to find though, as sacrifice bidding is not generally advisable [because sometimes you are too expensive, sometimes the opponents were not making and even if both those conditions do not exist, unless the field were bidding and making the game your sacrifice will not score that well anyway].. E-W +650.

♠ J9643
♥ 74
♦ A1092
♣ 72

♠ Q5 ♠ 107
♥ K83 ♥ 1052
♦ KJ43 ♦ Q875
♣ KJ84 ♣ AQ109

♠ AK82
♥ AQJ96
♦ 6
♣ 653

HCP		
5		
13	8	
14		

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	3	4	1
S	-	-	3	4	1
E	1	1	-	-	-
W	1	1	-	-	-

Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♥
P	1♠	P	3♠
End			

North might bid 4♠ at teams/rubber but at pairs he's glad he responded at all (pretty clear to respond, though, given his fair five-card major and robust side four-card suit headed by an ace). 3♠ plus one – losing two clubs and the losing heart finesse should score okay – very few N-Ss will bid game (although it is a very good one – the hands fit like gloves). N-S +170.

