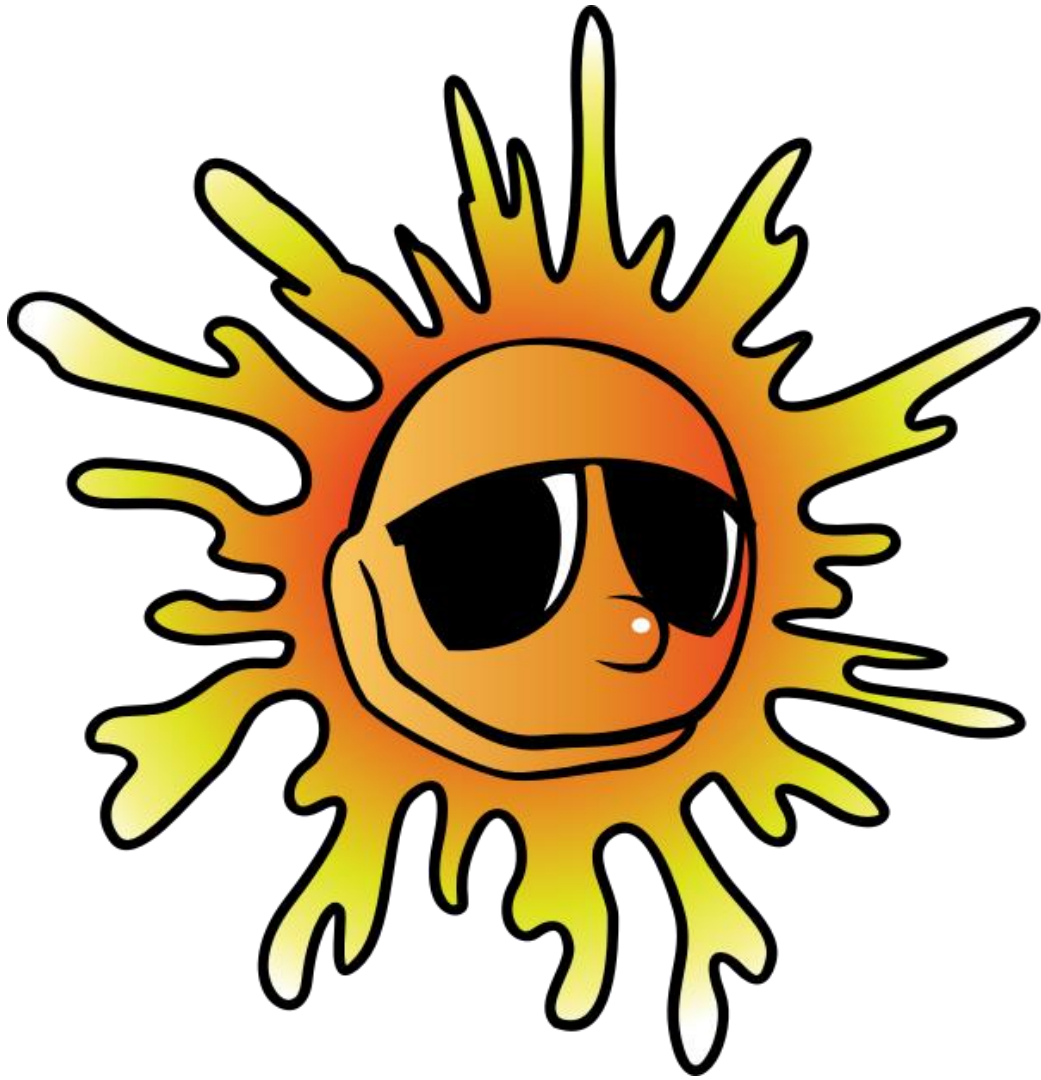


British Summer Sim Pairs



Wednesday
27th July 2016

Welcome to the British Summer Simultaneous Pairs. Thank you for playing. I hope you enjoy the event and also the commentary provided by a leading expert. The commentator for this set of hands is Mike Amos.

We hope you welcome the prize structure with cash prizes both for leading players and also for clubs who run heats. The leading pair drawn win £1000 and the same is the case for the first club drawn. There are other cash prizes. There will be a draw for major prizes at the AGM in November and a full list will be published on the website.

You can find all the full details, results and last year's prize winners at www.ebu.co.uk/sims/

You can earn Blue points and they are awarded to the top third of the field. Provisional master points are shown but the event is not finalised until all results are in and score corrections have been made. This usually takes about three weeks. It really helps us if you can keep your scorecard for that period. Clubs should keep the travellers if still used.

Jeremy Dhondy, Chairman EBU

<p>♠852 ♥KQJ10943 ♦84 ♣7</p> <p>♠AQJ64 ♠103 ♥A82 ♥76 ♦7 ♦AK652 ♣AJ84 ♣10932</p> <p>♠K97 ♥5 ♦QJ1093 ♣KQ65</p>		<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>3♥ Pass Pass</p> <p>3♠ Pass 4♠ All Pass</p> <p>This seems the likely auction, a standard pre-empt from North followed by two passes. West might think of bidding game at this turn, but choosing 3♠ with only a five-card suit. Some Easts might pass but with ♦AK and two trumps, I think this hand worth a raise. That’s the first part. The play is fascinating.</p> <p>Double-Dummy you can make eleven tricks. Easy – win heart lead – play a diamond to a top card in dummy and play ♠10 and finesse. Now draw trumps (3-3 phew) and play a small club to dummy’s ♣10 and South’s top honour. South is finished now because without a second heart to play and no trumps left, a minor suit return is inevitable and presents declarer with an entry to dummy and losing a club and a heart. If trumps break 4-2 or North has a club honour this might go horribly wrong.</p> <p>Single-dummy, I think you are likely to cash the second top diamond for a heart discard. You really do need to draw trumps because if you delay N/S may get a cross-ruff. With the luck of the King onside and 3-3 break you can make. Not all will.</p>																																																	
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<p>♠54 ♥KJ8 ♦AJ1098 ♣1064</p> <p>♠Q6 ♠K10983 ♥A1052 ♥Q6 ♦K5 ♦73 ♣J9875 ♣AKQ3</p> <p>♠AJ72 ♥9743 ♦Q642 ♣2</p>		<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>1♠ Pass</p> <p>2♣ 2♦ 3♣ 3♦</p> <p>? ?</p> <p>Some Norths may be reluctant to bid 2♦ at this vulnerability, but it’s a robust suit and safer to bid than pass now and think of bidding later. The hand becomes more difficult for everyone after 3♦, because it’s so hard to predict who can make what. West may feel that his ♦K is badly placed (it is) and fear that 4♣ will be doubled (it probably won’t) and go two down (it shouldn’t) and indeed if North impatiently cashes ♦A it will make. West’s best action is to bid 4♣ and N/S should then pass for a small positive score.</p> <p>Boards like this are much less spectacular than some others in this set, but you get just as many points for a top. It’s important to get this sort of thing right.</p>																																																	
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<p>♠A10872 ♥A105 ♦Q108 ♣A6</p> <p>♠KJ64 ♠Q9 ♥872 ♥KJ ♦K43 ♦J9752 ♣Q83 ♣KJ54</p> <p>♠53 ♥Q9643 ♦A6 ♣10972</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>6</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>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	HCP		14	11	9	6	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	3	1	2	S	1	-	3	1	1	E	-	2	-	-	-	W	-	2	-	-	-	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>After two passes, North will probably open 1♠. (I think this hand is considerably too strong for a 12-14 NT with a five card suit and those three tens. If partner made a Two Level response I'd be happy to show 15-16 and a balanced hand. Likewise, if I was playing 15-17 NT, I'd open 1NT to avoid rebid issues). East should pass – not a suitable suit for an overcall – and South will call 1NT, which I would expect to be the final contract. The only different contract which is at all likely is 2♥ played by North, because if North did choose to open NT, whether 12-14 or 15-17, South should transfer.</p> <p>West does not have a very obvious lead against 1NT, after North has opened 1♠. A small black card will hold South to seven tricks, but I'd lead a heart personally which gives South an easier life and eight tricks. This may look a poor score for E/W, but a heart contract for N/S should make nine tricks. I'm not sure that this proves much about weak or strong no-trumps, except perhaps that opening 1NT will quite often lead to the best contract.</p>												
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<p>♠KJ1085 ♥3 ♦AJ10 ♣A1062</p> <p>♠Q43 ♠76 ♥K94 ♥J1082 ♦K65 ♦987 ♣QJ97 ♣K843</p> <p>♠A92 ♥AQ765 ♦Q432 ♣5</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</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>2</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>5</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		13	4	11	12	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	6	4	6	5	S	2	6	4	6	5	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td></tr></table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>Twelve tricks are available according to the hand analysis. Although I should have learned not to make predictions, it seems likely that almost the entire field will play 4♠. Many will make plus two, so less tricks will be result in a bad score.</p> <p>I think the first issue is that it is difficult to know as declarer what you should be aiming for. It's easy when you know the diamonds are 3-3 with the king onside and the trumps 3-2 with the queen onside to make twelve tricks, but declarer's first concern is probably to sort out a way of making sure the contract makes and then to consider how safe it is to try for overtricks.</p> <p>One feature of the N/S hands is the very good intermediate cards in spades – the 8 9 10 and because of this it makes sense to try and ruff losing clubs in dummy, even with ♠A. The diamond finesse will work or it won't, and when it does, you are pretty certain to make eleven tricks and even twelve as you can here.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
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<div><div>♠ K984</div><div>♥ Q7</div><div>♦ QJ52</div><div>♣ K62</div><div>♠ Q1065</div><div>♥ A10</div><div>♦ 9864</div><div>♣ J104</div><div>♠ 732</div><div>♥ J5</div><div>♦ 1073</div><div>♣ A9753</div><div>♠ AJ</div><div>♥ K986432</div><div>♦ AK</div><div>♣ Q8</div></div> <div><table><tr><th>HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>17</td><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table></div>	HCP	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	11	N	2	3	5	3	2	7	S	1	3	5	3	2	17	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>Pass</td><td>1♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></table> <div>Hands like the South one are full of plus points and minus points; seven card suit - plus, only one top honour - minus, 17 points – plus, wasted values in those doubleton honours – minus. Nonetheless it’s an easy 3♥ rebid and with ♥Qx and a fair hand, North should be pleased to raise to game in the major. (3NT deserves to go down, so if you bid it and survived you were lucky ☺)</div> <div>It’s difficult to see much variation in the play with the trumps 2-2 and just two aces to lose, although if East chooses to duck a round of clubs at some point, conceding twelve tricks, will be a very poor result indeed.</div>	West	North	East	South			Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass					
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<div><div>♠ J84</div><div>♥ KQJ105</div><div>♦ 65</div><div>♣ 843</div><div>♠ A6</div><div>♥ A832</div><div>♦ J1073</div><div>♣ 1097</div><div>♠ KQ752</div><div>♥ 64</div><div>♦ A8</div><div>♣ AKJ2</div><div>♠ 1093</div><div>♥ 97</div><div>♦ KQ942</div><div>♣ Q65</div></div> <div><table><tr><th>HCP</th><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>17</td><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr></table></div>	HCP	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	7	N	-	-	-	-	-	9	S	-	-	-	-	-	17	E	4	3	2	4	4	7	W	4	3	2	4	4	<div>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>3NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <div>Not a very attractive auction I know, but what would be better? While neither player may be confident that it is the right contract, E/W are likely to end in 3NT.</div> <div>This is like a hand from a book on planning declarer play. North leads ♥K. How many times should you duck? Well you have six hearts and your opponents seven so assume their cards split 4-3 or 5-2 for a moment. If the suit breaks 4-3 you only have three heart losers. If the suit breaks 5-2 you have four losers but only when North can regain the lead. So duck at trick 1 and play ace at trick 2.</div> <div>But have you counted your tricks? You’ve only got nine if the spades break 3-3. Taking the club finesse gives you an extra chance of nine and chances of ten and eleven if everything lies well. Spades do break, but you cannot finesse in clubs after testing spades, because there is no entry back to hand. The best plan is to play spade to ace and lead ♣10. You don’t care if South gets the lead. Ten tricks.</div>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
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♠KQJ95

♥3

♦10984

♣J94

♠8

♥A10762

♦52

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<p>♠ A7432 ♥ Q92 ♦ 105 ♣ Q53</p> <p>♠ 6 ♠ KQJ1085 ♥ A1084 ♥ 765 ♦ A9832 ♦ K6 ♣ KJ4 ♣ 86</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ KJ3 ♦ QJ74 ♣ A10972</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable West North East South Pass 2♠ ?</p> <p>East has a solid maximum weak two opening and South has to decide whether to do more than pass. The real problem is that partner is entitled to expect a take-out double to show four hearts, and without them double is too dangerous. The club suit is pretty anaemic and pass seems the likely choice for the majority. The outcome might be that 2♠ is passed out.</p> <p>5-1 trump breaks often ruin even sound contracts, but here it doesn't seem to make much difference. There will be a lot of difference between the MP score for making eight or nine tricks in 2♠. The crucial decision is the choice between playing the ♣J or ♣K when leading the suit towards dummy. Of course South can give the game away by playing the ace or indeed by thinking or hesitating when the suit is played. An experienced defender will anticipate that clubs will be lead from declarer's hand at some point and be ready to play low smoothly leaving declarer what looks little more than a straight guess. It pays to be lucky sometimes.</p>																																																
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<p>♠ 542 ♥ 8432 ♦ J108762 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ K10873 ♠ A96 ♥ AKJ1096 ♥ 7 ♦ - ♦ A543 ♣ 43 ♣ AKQ97</p> <p>♠ QJ ♥ Q5 ♦ KQ9 ♣ J108652</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <p>No one will be able to go home tonight complaining that the hands were dull. As you can see, West can make thirteen tricks in either major or indeed no-trumps. That is course due to the fortuitous position of the ♥Q and ♠QJ. There are one or two questions to consider.</p> <p>How do we plan the bidding on the West hand when East opens 1♣? Lots of you are going to disagree with me here, but I think the best plan is to start with 1♠, because then if you jump (say to 4♥) on the next round of bidding partner will probably realise that you are 5-5 in the majors. If you bid 1♥ first it might work out OK, but you may find it difficult to show your second suit, especially if N/S start to bid lots of diamonds. (I accept that bidding 1♠ might turn out badly)</p> <p>We definitely want to bid a slam in a major here. The probability of success is high. My calculations (OK OK my computer's calculations) suggest 6♥ is about 94% likely to succeed, with 6♠, a better bet (Double Dummy at least) by almost 4%. However 6♥ is much more likely to make an overtrick. Just be pleased if you bid a small slam and made 13 tricks. What score will you get? 75% - 80% I'll boldly predict.</p>																																																
<table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>11</td></tr></table> <table><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>5</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td></td></tr></table>	HCP		1	17	11	11	Makeable contracts								♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	-	-	-	-	-		S	-	-	-	-	-		E	5	2	6	6	7		W	5	2	7	7	7		
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<p>♠AQJ764 ♥104 ♦6 ♣A1087</p> <p>♠952 ♠108 ♥Q8632 ♥A9 ♦QJ1082 ♦A953 ♣- ♣KJ432</p> <p>♠K3 ♥KJ75 ♦K74 ♣Q965</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td></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>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	HCP		11	12	5	12	12		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	-	1	2	2	S	4	-	1	3	2	E	-	2	-	-	-	W	-	2	-	-	-	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♥*</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♠</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>*transfer</p> <p>I suspect that some N/S pairs are going to end this hand feeling they have been rather unlucky to go down in a normal looking 4♠ contract. At other tables, West will be bemoaning the fact that East never managed to lead a club, while East will be shrugging and asking “How could I have known?”</p> <p>On the given auction, what is likely to happen? West leads ♦Q. East has to win that, knowing that there is a singleton in dummy and declarer has ♦K. It also looks like a good idea to try for two heart winners before one of dummy’s hearts is discarded on that top diamond. Do you see what is wrong with this? East can see 23 points between his hand and dummy, South has at least 12, so there is not room for West to have ♥K as well as ♦QJ. When declarer has made a limit bid you can often work out a very narrow range for partner’s values. Maybe you should try a club. (Now if you lead ♥9 at trick 2 and declarer guessed to play ♥K you would be very unlucky).</p>	West	North	East	South				1NT	Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass	
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<p>♠AKJ102 ♥763 ♦Q3 ♣KJ6</p> <p>♠63 ♠Q98 ♥A5 ♥K9842 ♦KJ10865 ♦A9 ♣A53 ♣Q74</p> <p>♠754 ♥QJ10 ♦742 ♣10982</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>3</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>4</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	HCP		14	11	12	3	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	4	3	1	4	W	2	4	4	1	4	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>1♦</td><td>1♠</td><td>2♥</td><td>(2♠?)</td></tr><tr><td>3♦</td><td>?</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>I am generally keen to raise partner’s overcall with three card support at this vulnerability, but maybe this is taking a good thing too far. If South bids 2♠, North will feel justified in raising to 3♠ and might go three down for -150. This could be pretty much a bottom, as I don’t see E/W really bidding nor making 3NT, nor coming to more than nine tricks with diamonds as trumps.</p> <p>If E/W defend 3♠ , they need to achieve a heart ruff to reach this fine score, but this really should not be too difficult.</p> <p>E/W’s best contracts might be with hearts as trumps as even ten tricks can be made, unless South kicks off with a club lead to establish four tricks for the defence. Strange game sometimes.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♦	1♠	2♥	(2♠?)	3♦	?								
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<p>♠A4 ♥A1043 ♦K7 ♣QJ1072</p> <p>♠9652 ♠K1083 ♥KQ65 ♥72 ♦A532 ♦Q1096 ♣5 ♣A83</p> <p>♠QJ7 ♥J98 ♦J84 ♣K964</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>9</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>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	HCP		14	9	9	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	1	-	1	S	2	-	1	-	1	E	-	2	-	3	-	W	-	2	-	3	-	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <p>I wouldn’t open the North hand with a 12-14 no-trump, not because of the shape, but because I think it’s too strong. I’d open 1♣ and if partner responded 1♠, I’d be happy to rebid 1NT to show a hand in the range 15-16/17. However partner won’t respond 1♠ this time, but is likely to bid a discouraging 2♣ (or an inverted minor 3♣, showing support and 6-9). These responses are likely to end the auction.</p> <p>Somewhat surprisingly the only lead to hold a North club contract to eight tricks, is the doubleton heart from East which will allow the defence to score a ruff. Well done if you sorted this out and kept North to +90.</p> <p>There is another way N/S might get the same score, because those playing a 15-17 no-trump might choose to open 1NT and then play there. All roads seem to lead to seven tricks. Not the most exciting of hands, but they all count.</p>																		
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<p>♠ Q873 ♥ K43 ♦ Q1084 ♣ 43</p> <p>♠ AK ♠ 1052 ♥ J752 ♥ AQ9 ♦ AK9 ♦ 7632 ♣ KQ106 ♣ 987</p> <p>♠ J964 ♥ 1086 ♦ J5 ♣ AJ52</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>20</td><td>7</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>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	HCP		7	6	20	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	3	4	1	3	W	3	3	4	1	3	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p>So often when one opens 2NT, dummy turns out to be a real horror and 2NT or 3NT contracts drift two or three tricks off. This one isn't so bad, but there is still work to be done. I don't think I'd bother with Puppet Stayman on the East hand even if it was available. Any five card suit with declarer is likely to help and 3NT is one less trick than four of a major.</p> <p>When North leads a ♠3 against 3NT, declarer will need to play carefully. Two spade tricks and two diamond tricks, two hearts for sure and possibly a third, means we need two clubs at least and maybe a third. That ♠3 suggests that the suit is divided 4-4 which is good news because three spade losers would probably have been too many.</p> <p>We need to get to dummy to play clubs and so should play hearts at trick 2. 3NT contracts are often about the Js,10s and 9s. If North has the ♥10 it might be a bright idea to finesse the nine here. On the other hand, I'm desperate to play clubs so perhaps I should play the queen. Even if it loses I could consider playing the nine on the next round. I'm going to play queen. Club next. It feels to me that this is the key suit. If South has the ♣J we are going to make this contract and there are still other chances. I lead ♣9 and it probably wins the trick. Nine tricks are safe now.</p>												
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<p>♠ 1072 ♥ A10 ♦ A9763 ♣ J107</p> <p>♠ K5 ♠ AQ64 ♥ KQ97652 ♥ 8 ♦ J54 ♦ KQ82 ♣ Q ♣ 9653</p> <p>♠ J983 ♥ J43 ♦ 10 ♣ AK842</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>9</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>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	HCP		9	11	11	9	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	-	1	1	S	2	-	-	1	1	E	-	1	2	-	-	W	-	1	2	-	-	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>Should West open 1♥, 2♥ or 3♥? This looks like a pre-emptive opening to me, so I'd discount 1♥. It feels much more like a three level pre-empt than a weak two, so I'd go for 3♥ and probably end up declaring that contract.</p> <p>3♥ can and should be defeated. Good defence is one of the most satisfying aspects of a partnership. The key is to play diamonds soon enough to ensure that the defence gets three trump tricks alongside their two aces.</p> <p>North will probably lead ♣J. South can play ace and when ♣Q is played, it's time to switch to the singleton diamond. North wins the ♦A and returns for South to ruff. There's nothing declarer can do now to avoid two further losers because when North wins ♥A, a third round of diamonds can be ruffed by South. Even if West has discarded his diamond on his spade winner, it won't help because North's ♥10 will be promoted when declarer has to use a top trump to over-ruff South's ♥J.</p> <p>On this hand, a weak two opening might also have succeeded in silencing the opponents and West will then make a valuable plus score.</p>												
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<p>♠ 62 ♥ 74 ♦ AJ105 ♣ KJ1076</p> <p>♠ A97 ♠ Q853 ♥ KQ532 ♥ A1098 ♦ Q643 ♦ 97 ♣ A ♣ Q43</p> <p>♠ KJ104 ♥ J6 ♦ K82 ♣ 9852</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>15</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>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	HCP		9	8	15	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	1	-	-	-	S	2	1	-	-	-	E	-	-	3	1	1	W	-	-	3	1	1	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>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>It is easy to imagine E/W pairs getting too high here. Well "too high" in the sense that if they bid 4♥, not many Wests will be lucky enough to make it (and certainly will have needed a little help from their friends). Although it is not a winning policy to bid too many close games at match-point pairs, I don't think it's really possible to be too critical about the suggested auction. West's 3♦ - <i>a long-suit trial bid</i> - invites game and asks East to consider if the raise to 2♥ was better than it might be. West is showing length in diamonds – at least three cards and asking for some help in that suit: ♥xx or ♥xxx would be typical holdings. Both East and West have better hands than some of the rubbish people bid 1♥ 2♥ on.</p> <p>The success or failure of 4♥ is more or less dependent entirely on the spade suit. If North has ♠K, then 4♥ will probably make and there are other chances. In the long run E/W will gain if they bid 4♥ on hands like these. Tonight however minus one. I expect the majority of the field will be in the same boat.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass
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<p>♠ J108 ♥ K875 ♦ KQ954 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ A92 ♠ 75 ♥ J643 ♥ AQ10 ♦ 1062 ♦ 873 ♣ 963 ♣ KJ875</p> <p>♠ KQ643 ♥ 92 ♦ AJ ♣ AQ102</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>16</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>2</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</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		9	10	5	16	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	3	3	4	3	S	2	3	3	4	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <p>If South opens 1♠, what should North respond playing a four card major opening style? Marks out of ten for 1NT, 2♦, 2♠ and 3♠. I'm not sure it's going to make a lot of difference this time because South has such a good hand that N/S will surely reach 4♠ at every single table. (This isn't a prediction – I know they won't)</p> <p>I'd like to give -5 for 1NT. This is a fantastic hand in support of spades and in my (not so) humble opinion, 1NT is quite wrong. Generally with a hand in the range 5-9 and three card support for partner's major and a singleton or doubleton in a side suit, it is much better to respond with a raise to two of the major. Here though I give 2♠ about 4/10. I think the hand is too strong for this limit bid. The singleton club with a fit is worth two or three points so this hand is equivalent to eleven points or so. Does that mean I think you should bid 3♠? No, because in Acoll you should reserve this for four card support. A consolation award of 6/10 for Norths who bid 3♠, because you recognised that this was a very good hand.</p> <p>I think the right approach with three card support is to bid at the two Level, planning to rebid 3♠, showing just three-card support and 10-12 points. 2♦ = 10/10</p> <p>The defenders may need to be awake to ensure they get three tricks.</p>												
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<p>♠ KQ32 ♥ 1064 ♦ A65 ♣ AK9</p> <p>♠ A1087 ♠ J64 ♥ KQJ ♥ A82 ♦ K8 ♦ QJ1094 ♣ Q1064 ♣ 82</p> <p>♠ 95 ♥ 9753 ♦ 732 ♣ J753</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>16</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>15</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>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	HCP		16	8	15	1	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	-	2	1	2	3	W	-	2	1	2	3	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <p>I think North might have a pretty rough ride on this board. Standard English teaches that we should open the West hand 1♠, if we are playing a weak no-trump, intending to rebid in no-trumps to show our range. North will probably bid 1NT and any East still awake will double happily and get ♦Q ready for the opening lead. If no one can think of anything better and I don't see why they should, 1NT doubled by North will be the final contract and South will table the dummy with a resigned air.</p> <p>North can ensure a fourth trick by playing a top spade at the first opportunity and doesn't seem to have much other choice. At the end of the hand having conceded -500, North might be quite optimistic "They can make 3NT of course. It should be good for us". Will it be? I'm not so sure.</p> <p>The variation in the outcome may come where E/W are playing different methods. Many players prefer to open 1♣. The auction then might be much the same with a 1NT overcall and the same contract. The big difference will come when E/W are playing a strong no-trump. E/W may or may not bid 3NT (I'd raise directly to game with the East hand because of the powerful diamond suit). A spade lead from North will give away the ninth trick immediately, but a more sensible passive lead will leave declarer with eight tricks and needing to read the cards very well to make.</p>												
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<p>♠ QJ53 ♥ Q84 ♦ KJ54 ♣ J6</p> <p>♠ K4 ♠ 972 ♥ A1076 ♥ 95 ♦ A1098 ♦ Q2 ♣ K82 ♣ A97543</p> <p>♠ A1086 ♥ KJ32 ♦ 763 ♣ Q10</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>14</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>-</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>4</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	HCP		10	6	14	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	4	1	1	-	3	W	4	1	1	-	3	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>It looks to me as if it is East who will make the decisive choice on this board. Should we pass 1NT and hope for a better score than for a part score in clubs, or should we transfer and play 3♣? Whichever choice East makes, neither North nor South has any justification for intervention holding flat ten counts.</p> <p>Because of the 2-2 club break, the higher-risk strategy of playing 1NT will surely reap rich dividends. Nine tricks will be made on a spade lead and a diamond might result in ten. N/S may feel they scored badly on this board through very little fault of their own. Even a dubious "I never let them play in 1NT" action by South isn't likely to save the day and might even make things worse, because two of a major might lead to three of a major and the kiss of death, -200.</p> <p>=</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	1NT	Pass	?	
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<p>♠ Q86 ♥ AQ106 ♦ J95 ♣ K92</p> <p>♠ 9752 ♠ J104 ♥ 9873 ♥ KJ4 ♦ 873 ♦ A1042 ♣ QJ ♣ 753</p> <p>♠ AK3 ♥ 52 ♦ KQ6 ♣ A10864</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>16</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>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</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		12	9	3	16	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	5	4	3	4	5	S	5	4	3	4	5	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>Pass 1NT Pass 3NT</p> <p>All Pass</p> <p>Weak no-trumpers will have a quick and easy auction to 3NT played by North. Systemic variations, including no-trump range may result in different auctions but the same outcome seems extremely likely.</p> <p>No lead is very threatening and the only point of interest seems to be whether declarer will lose a club trick or not. The normal way of tackling the suit would appear to be to lead ♣K from hand or play small from South. In either case, West will produce an honour and declarer will have to decide whether to play East for ♥xxx or West for a doubleton honour. The odds favour the finesse – The Principle of Restricted Choice – but this time the finesse will fail and the educated bridge-player will score ten tricks and the AK bashers will make eleven. In my experience, partners are often unsympathetic in these circumstances. “Oh, I see a few declarers got it right and made eleven tricks”. I’ve also discovered that a free lesson on odds in Bridge or the retort “I played it better, but was unlucky” will not generally cut much mustard. It’s a hard life being right.</p>
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<p>♠ Q108 ♥ QJ108532 ♦ 106 ♣ Q</p> <p>♠ J95 ♠ AK3 ♥ A7 ♥ 94 ♦ AKQJ42 ♦ 983 ♣ A7 ♣ K9542</p> <p>♠ 7642 ♥ K6 ♦ 75 ♣ J10863</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>19</td><td>4</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>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr></table>		HCP		7	10	19	4	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	5	1	4	5	W	3	5	1	4	5	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>3♥ Pass Pass</p> <p>3NT All Pass</p> <p>Apocryphally one leading English player once said “diamonds are for girls”. If this were to be true, it would be very bad, because of the sexist connotations. Let’s rephrase “diamonds are for match-point losers”. If you bid 3NT here and the oppo take the first five spades tricks you have my sympathy, but at least you’ll be in the same boat as lots of other match-point winners.</p> <p>Here, of course, this will be a very quick hand with eleven tricks. “We might have been have been making 6♦” Well yes but pre-empt makes it difficult to investigate sensibly. I’m not sure how you could possibly find out without the danger of ending in 5♦, (almost null points) or worse 6♦ (less than null points)</p>
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<p>♠ 10984 ♥ AQJ72 ♦ Q10 ♣ 109</p> <p>♠ AJ2 ♠ 75 ♥ 1095 ♥ K64 ♦ K964 ♦ J8753 ♣ K87 ♣ A62</p> <p>♠ KQ63 ♥ 83 ♦ A2 ♣ QJ543</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</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>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr></table>		HCP		9	8	11	12	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	1	1	-	S	1	-	1	1	-	E	-	3	-	-	1	W	-	3	-	-	1	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <p>West North East South</p> <p>Pass Pass 1♣</p> <p>Pass 1♥ Pass 1♠</p> <p>Pass ?</p> <p>N/S will feel a little foolish if they end up bidding 4♠ here but I’m pretty sure there will be pairs who do exactly that. North probably should bid just 2♠ at this point, but some at least will consider 3♠. And a few will choose the more aggressive option. Even passing this will could be -200 and some optimistic soul will bank on good luck and poor defence and may even concede 300.</p> <p>Maybe I am exaggerating a little for it will take very accurate defence (clairvoyance?) to keep South to the minimum seven tricks. Only a club lead and diamond switch will do.</p>
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<p>♠J4 ♥K743 ♦KQJ432 ♣5</p> <p>♠87652 ♠K3 ♥AQJ2 ♥985 ♦10 ♦A95 ♣A97 ♣KQJ86</p> <p>♠AQ109 ♥106 ♦876 ♣10432</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>6</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>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr></table>		HCP		10	13	11	6	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	3	-	-	-	S	-	3	-	-	-	E	3	-	1	1	1	W	3	-	1	1	1	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <p>Pass Pass? I confess I’ve been addicted to opening 3♦ on hands like these for most of my (OK spectacularly unsuccessful) bridge career. After partner has passed you know you are not making much and 3♦ gives you a chance of playing the contract and them a chance of bidding too much.</p> <p>What can East do? 3NT is a bit rich for most and will be down two if you grab seven tricks (“A good save against 3♦, partner”) or down lots (“I had to take the marked heart finesse, partner”). Even if East passes, West may protect with a double and that won’t end happily.</p> <p>Simple, aggressive play is so rewarding. ☺</p>		
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<p>♠Q10942 ♥Q93 ♦1052 ♣AJ</p> <p>♠AJ86 ♠K7 ♥J4 ♥A8762 ♦A9 ♦J63 ♣87643 ♣Q105</p> <p>♠53 ♥K105 ♦KQ874 ♣K92</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td></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>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		HCP		9	10	10	10	11		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	2	-	1	2	S	-	2	-	1	-	E	2	-	1	-	-	W	2	-	1	-	-	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <p>I frequently meet people (poor deluded souls) who play mini no-trumps, either 10-12 or (currently <i>a la mode</i> in Merseyside and Cheshire) 9-11, who will open the West hand with a song in their heart.</p> <p>I can’t believe there are any North players who will open the North hand at this vulnerability if West passes. (Well I can believe it, I just don’t want to).</p> <p>So on to East. Almost all the bridge players I know (for they are a pretty rum lot) would either open 1♥ or something more deviant.</p> <p>This reminds me of a statistics examination question: If 25% of bridge players are bonkers, what is the probability that this board will be passed out?</p> <p>My answer? About one in three.</p>
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<p>♠109872 ♥Q543 ♦AKJ6 ♣-</p> <p>♠KQ5 ♠A63 ♥106 ♥AK982 ♦7432 ♦Q10 ♣A943 ♣J52</p> <p>♠J4 ♥J7 ♦985 ♣KQ10876</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>7</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>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr></table>		HCP		10	14	9	7	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	1	-	2	-	2	W	1	-	2	-	2	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <p>At least we’ve got an opening hand this time. (Just depends who you think we are). I wouldn’t pass as North. What can go wrong? (Watch this space)</p> <p>1♠ from North 2♥ from East might well be followed by three passes. This won’t be an exciting contract, but who needs exciting? It will make.</p> <p>If North passes, East can open 1♥ and will pass West’s response of 1NT. This looks like eight tricks too.</p> <p>What variation can we expect? Not much I think. If South, perhaps encouraged by North’s opening values tries a club contract, this might be much more exciting, and much less successful for N/S if it goes two down.</p>		
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<p>♠ K3 ♥ AJ92 ♦ KQJ86 ♣ K10</p> <p>♠ AQ6 ♠ J8542 ♥ 865 ♥ Q3 ♦ A754 ♦ 92 ♣ J73 ♣ 9642</p> <p>♠ 1097 ♥ K1074 ♦ 103 ♣ AQ85</p>	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>3♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">All Pass</td></tr></table> <p>This might be the most straightforward auction of this set of hands. Apart from systemic variations, it's difficult to think of any different choices.</p> <p>It seems that there will be only two scores on the traveller – N/S +450 and N/S +420.</p> <p>It's all about the ♥Q. South's best chance is to find a West who leads a trump. +450 it is.</p> <p>On any other lead, you seem to have two aces to lose and that pesky ♥Q to find. No doubt you felt clever if you finessed the right way and grumpy and disappointed if you guessed wrong, but I think it is exactly that. A pure guess and a simple matter of luck.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass																																	
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<p>♠ A84 ♥ KQ3 ♦ KQ965 ♣ A6</p> <p>♠ 753 ♠ K9 ♥ 962 ♥ J875 ♦ J1074 ♦ A2 ♣ K103 ♣ Q8754</p> <p>♠ QJ1062 ♥ A104 ♦ 83 ♣ J92</p>	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♣</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>After 1♦ from North and a 1♠ response from South, 2NT from North is showing 17-18 using traditional methods. Club players are often a little vague about what is forcing and what is not in sort of auction, but you cannot reach the best contracts unless you are sure. South would like to know North has three card support for spades. If North has a doubleton, 3NT is likely to be the best contract but if there is support, 4♠ may well be safer. 3♣ is the best way to proceed here, basically natural and forcing but only showing three cards; it guarantees a five card suit in responder's first bid suit. If South isn't confident here, they may bid 3NT to avoid a missed game. This won't be a success on these hands, because the obvious club lead will quickly spell defeat for 3NT, while 4♠ has just three losers.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass																															
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<p>♠ A108 ♥ 953 ♦ AK92 ♣ 653</p> <p>♠ 42 ♠ KQ63 ♥ AQJ ♥ K7642 ♦ 874 ♦ QJ6 ♣ QJ872 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ J975 ♥ 108 ♦ 1053 ♣ K1094</p>	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>4♥</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>I accept that East does not have a great hand, but the simplest way of describing it after the two level response by a passed hand is to bid 2♠, showing values for game and at least 4-5 in the majors. West has a simple raise to a game contract which may well be doomed to fail.</p> <p>If the defence are able to cash their two diamond winners at the start of the hand, declarer does not have the entries or time to come to ten tricks. If the defence is less accurate declarer may do better, but it will require enormous luck or a very kind defence.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass																																				
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