



**Commentary
for the
IBU Autumn Simultaneous Pairs
Friday 6th November 2020**

Dear Bridge player

"Thank you for your support of the online IBU Simultaneous Pairs 2020. We hope you enjoy the opportunity to pit your wits against bridge players across Ireland, and perhaps even some of our friends from abroad.

This is an interesting and challenging set of hands - as they all are - and the advice of our expert commentators will tell us plenty about what we should and shouldn't have done. I hope you did at least one clever thing tonight - and more than that, I hope the advice of Hilary McDonagh will give us moral support in our never-ending discussions with our partners.

Hoping to see you all at a real table before long, but in the meantime stay safe, stay healthy, and enjoy your online bridge."

Jim O'Sullivan, President – Irish Bridge Union

The analysis is based on *4-card Majors, Weak No-Trump (Strong NT mentioned), Transfers and Weak Two Openings in 3 suits.*

<p style="margin: 0;">♠ 107 ♥ Q J 9 3 ♦ K J 10 ♣ AK 8 3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ AK 2 ♠ J 8 5 3 ♥ AK 7 ♥ 8 4 2 ♦ A 9 7 6 4 ♦ Q 8 5 ♣ 6 5 ♣ 9 7 4</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ Q 9 6 4 ♥ 10 6 5 ♦ 3 2 ♣ Q J 10 2</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">HCP</td> <td colspan="5" style="padding: 2px;">Makeable contracts</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">14</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♣</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♦</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♥</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">♠</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">18 3</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">N 2</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">5</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">S 2</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">E</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">2</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">W</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">2</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">2</td> </tr> </table>	HCP	Makeable contracts					14	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	18 3	N 2		1			5	S 2		1				E	2		1	2		W	2		1	2	<p style="margin: 0;">Board 1 : Dealer North : Nil All</p> <table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">West</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">North</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">East</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">DBL</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1NT</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">I would think that the auction should have been similar for all playing a weak NT – at least as far as North's Pass! This is the kind of situation we often find ourselves faced with - should we, as East pull partner's double? The answer is no, not unless we have a 5+ card suit and no points. Remember that with three points opposite partners fifteen +, the points are divided close to 20/20 so its about 50/50 who will make seven tricks at this stage. When East is on lead, this is not a time for leading 4th best of your longest and strongest as you need to have an entry to cash your long suit after it is set up. As partner has the strong hand, try to find their suit. In defence, it is better to lead 2nd highest from small cards so that you can follow with a higher card (middle-up-down) with an odd number and a low card (high-low) when you started with an even number of cards. Looking at my pips, I would prefer to lead the club seven than the heart four as the four looks like it might be from an honour. A small diamond is also an option. As long as West follows the NT principle of setting up winners before taking sure tricks the defence should take 4 diamond tricks, two heart tricks and two spade tricks for +300. South may feel like pulling the double but in standard methods you should not run unless you have a 5+-card suit. Playing Weak NT you should develop other escape methods, which should enable you to locate your club fit – DONT is a good example.</p>	West	North	East	South	DBL	1NT	P	P		All Pass		
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	All Pass																																																

♠ QJ
 ♥ K763
 ♦ Q984
 ♣ Q109
 ♠ K7642 ♠ A1095
 ♥ A42 ♥ J5
 ♦ A3 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ J53 ♣ 8764
 ♠ 83
 ♥ Q1098
 ♦ 7652
 ♣ AK2

HCP	
10	
12	9
9	

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

Board 2 : Dealer East : NS Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		P	P
1S	P	3S	All Pass

I would not expect many pairs to reach this 21-point game, or many to make ten tricks. You need to get everything right to make it. East should evaluate this hand as being worth inviting: with 9 HCP and a doubleton, it is too good for only 2S. While East has a minimum hand it is lot stronger than other 12-point hands because it is so rich in controls. While ten tricks can always be made declarer must be very careful. If North leads their 4th best heart, West can count one heart loser and three club losers minimum (assuming they don't lose a trump trick). Timing is all-important – on a heart lead, we can't afford to lose three clubs as well as a heart so we need to finesse North for the diamond Q to create a winner on which to discard a club. Now a spade to the King and a spade to the Ace (not holding a singleton increases the chance of neither defender holding a singleton) gives EW +170. If NS lead Clubs, declarer can throw one heart on the diamond Jack and one heart on the 4th club in dummy (if NS take three rounds of clubs). I have great sympathies for any West that started with the Ace of spades and when an honour fell in North took the 2nd round finesse against South (Following the Principle of Restricted Choice) This is the best % play to get five tricks (46%). Those declarers who started with the Spade King have no choice but to get it right. (In simple English "when the fall of an opponent's honour card creates a finesse position that you would not have had otherwise, it is right to finesse").

<p style="margin: 0;">♠ 6542 ♥ Q ♦ 84 ♣ KJ8765</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ J93 ♠ K87 ♥ 1074 ♥ KJ8652 ♦ AK9753 ♦ J6 ♣ 10 ♣ Q3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ AQ10 ♥ A93 ♦ Q102 ♣ A942</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 5px 0; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">10</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">16</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin: 5px 0; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	HCP		6		8	10	16		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4			3	3	S	4			3	3	E			3			W			3			<p style="margin: 0;">Board 3 : Dealer South : EW Vulnerable</p> <table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="padding: 2px 10px;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="padding: 2px 10px;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="padding: 2px 10px;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="padding: 2px 10px;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">1D</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">1S</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">2H</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">1C</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">3H</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">All Pass</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">2C</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">After a 1C opening, West should overcall 1 diamond – if only to direct partner’s lead. North may make only one bid on this hand and that should be to respond 1 Spade – as finding a Major suit fit is the 1st objective. East, with 10 points and a 6-card heart suit should bid 2 hearts (if partner overcalls, you should respond with 8+ points even with no fit, and a new suit guarantees 5+ cards). South would have originally rebid 1NT but now must settle for either the imperfect 2S, a take out double or the less perfect pass. West should raise East’s heart bid – 3H not being invitational but competitive, with a real invitational hand West should cue bid either spade or clubs (the opponents’ suits). In this type of competitive auction, it is often difficult to know when to bid one more – as a guideline, it is safe to compete to the level of the number of trumps you’re known to hold. On this example NS hold a 10-card club fit and can make 10 tricks and EW hold a 9-card heart fit and can make 3 hearts. If South is on lead against a 3-Heart contract they should lead a trump. It is rarely a good idea to lead away from an Ace that is not AK and here either a spade lead costs a trick or a club lead costs a tempo allowing East to ruff a club in dummy. A diamond is not attractive as it is dummy’s suit. On a small trump lead, East must now set up the diamond suit in dummy, either by double finessing South for the Q and 10 or by playing A-K and ruff a diamond while the heart 10 is still in dummy. Note that if West does not overcall 1D it is very difficult for East to bid a vulnerable 2H after 1C-1S and NS will get to play in NT for a top matchpoint score.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1D	1S	2H	1C	3H	All Pass		2C
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P	1H	1S	P																																																										
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2S	P	P	3H																																																										

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

HCP	
15	
12	9
4	

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

Board 5 : Dealer North : NS Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1S	2NT*	P
3H	3S	4H	4S
5H	DBL	All Pass	

North is too strong for a 4S opening and not strong enough for a Strong opening. Opening 1S North intends to rebid 4S if partner responds. At favourable vulnerability East should overcall 2NT (the unusual NT showing about 8-12 points and 5-5 in the minors). A bid of 3H from West shows a strong hand with 6-card or longer suit allowing partner to raise with doubleton support or better. North is worth 3S holding such a strong hand and the auction now comes alive with 4H from East. South having passed throughout should re-evaluate their hand and see that in spades, it is worth at least one – possibly two tricks and bid 4S. West holding a double fit and at favourable vulnerability should bid 5H as a sacrifice. Having so much defence, double is reasonable from North. Play in 5H is very interesting as North is almost end played from trick one, their best lead being a heart. Having three spade losers, a diamond loser and a club loser, we are unlikely to be able to ruff all three spades in dummy before either defender plays a trump, so we need to set up winners. A small club from West at trick two (having preserved the Ace of hearts entry) sees North faced with yet another problem. If they win the ace they are now end played in diamonds and spades (having to lead away from the Spade Ace or diamond King) and a club back will set up dummy's clubs. Playing low will see South on lead and on a spade or a heart return, declarer should win in dummy and ruff a club (South is unlikely to hold Ace & King and have been so quiet in the auction) Those that bid on to 5S and went one down might not have realised that they were in fact sacrificing!

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

HCP	
15	
16	3
6	

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

Board 6 : Dealer East : EW Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		P	P
1H	1NT	All Pass	

West opens one heart (playing 4 card majors open the higher of two four card suits except when the two suits are hearts and spades) and North should overcall 1NT. A double should attempt to produce a four-card spade suit and a 2C overcall should have a better suit or a better hand. East passes – 2H here would be weak but at unfavourable vulnerability (Vul vs. Non Vul) it is not worth risking –200 against a part score for North South. West is not worth any further action – knowing that there is a strong hand sitting over their KJ holdings devalues their hand. East should lead the heart 3, 4th best of the suit they have a fit in. Against NT you should treat the 10 as an honour. North correctly plays low and West should win the King and return the 2 (original 4th best). North can count three top tricks and a 4th in hearts. Needing three more tricks we will have to develop clubs, as diamonds will only produce one more trick and spades only one. As we have the most work to do in clubs we should start with a low club to the 10. When East wins and clears the hearts declarer can play Ace and another club and while the defence can get two heart tricks and three club tricks, either a spade or diamond doesn't stop declarer from having time to set up the long club for 7 tricks.

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

HCP	
15	
11	11
3	

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

Board 7 : Dealer South : All Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
P	1H	1S	P
2H	P	2S	All Pass

After two passes, North opens 1H and East has an easy 1S overcall – because they have a 5+card suit and the suit quality is good enough. South hasn't enough to bid and now West would like to know if East has a real opening hand – and so they try for game, or just a minimum overcall in which case EW compete for the partscore. Bidding 2H – an unassuming cue bid of the opponents' suit - asks partner just that. With less than opening values, East rebids 2S to show minimum for overcall. (With full opening values East would make some other rebid – a new suit showing a feature and non-minimum). After the standard heart lead, declarer should ruff the third heart with the 7 and when this is not over ruffed East knows that the spade King is in North's hand. We can count two heart losers, a spade loser and a club loser needing both the diamond king and Club Ace right. Using the information gained from South not over-ruffing, we can play a spade to the Ace and another spade shunning the finesse and establishing a discard for our little club on the heart Jack (now a winner). We can't make the contract unless the diamond finesse works, so we win North's continuation and take the finesse. Remember that as we think that the King must be with North and we will never make the contract, not finessing South for the diamond K is a no win line of play. It is worth noting that while there is no play for 4 Spades because there are too many top losers EW can actually make 3NT although they are unlikely to bid it holding 22 points.

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

HCP	
8	
5	14
13	

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

Board 8 : Dealer West : Nil All

West	North	East	South
P	2S	3C	3S
All Pass			

After West's pass, North has a perfect weak 2S opening – 6-9 HCP and a 6-card suit (a baby pre-empt). East has enough to overcall 3C and South must decide what to do? They know that NS have an 8-card spade fit. With very little defence for clubs South should compete to 3S or higher. As the cards lie NS will actually make 11 tricks in Spades. East is stuck for a lead and rather than either under-leading an Ace or leading out an unsupported ace, will probably select a low diamond. Declarer must decide whether to play East for a singleton diamond or three to an honour. Missing QJx, if West has H9x you must always lose a diamond but if East holds it you can pick it up so you should win the first diamond in hand. Your best chance of 6 tricks is to play East to have doubleton K Spades – lead the Q and when this is covered, finesse West for the 10; this is your best probability of making all 6 tricks at 10%. If you are trying to guarantee 5 tricks play the Ace and low to the Q – 79%. It so happens that the King pops up singleton from East; but this is not the most likely distribution. Depending how declarer elects to play the diamond suit or the spade suit they could make up to 11 tricks – this is only because the club and heart finesses are right and you can pick up the diamonds and/or spades.

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

HCP	
14	
6	9
11	

Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	5	4	3	1	4
S	5	4	3	1	4
E					
W					

Board 9 : Dealer North : EW Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1NT	P	2C
P	2D	P	2NT
P	3NT	All Pass	

A normal auction after a 1NT opening. South's first objective is to find a Major fit and when this doesn't transpire, invites North to bid game in NT. With a maximum for opening 1NT, North bids game. East has an automatic spade lead and from a broken sequence should select the Jack (for J-10-8). North should duck the spade twice and win the third round (the rule of 7 states that holding just one sure stopper in a suit in NT, if you add together the number of cards in your hand and dummy and subtract the answer from seven, the result is the number of times you should hold up, in this example 7-5= 2: hold up twice) Having only 5 top tricks we need to develop 4 more and keep East – (the danger hand) off lead. Hearts can provide one more trick if the finesse works; diamonds one more and clubs need to provide two. We need to work on diamonds first so we should play a diamond to the 9 (keeping East off lead). When West switches to a club (the obvious switch up to weakness) North must decide. If they reason that if East holds the club king their only chance to make the contract is if it is singleton and they go up the Ace, their hard work will be rewarded and they will make 10 tricks. Realistically however this play is far more likely in Teams and most declarers will play West for the club king and play low resulting in -1. It is worth considering whether West would actively switch away from the club king or passively exit on a diamond leaving declarer to play clubs. What would you do?

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

HCP	
13	
5	13
9	

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

Board 10 : Dealer East : All Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		1H	P
1S	P	2S	All Pass

Even though West holds only 5 points, to pass East's opening bid of 1H would be crazy. North, while they hold opening values should not enter the auction when EW have opened and responded, with only a weak NT hand. Having found a fit, East is worth 15 support points (13 HCP and 2 points for 2 doubletons) but a single raise shows this. Remember that playing a weak NT, partner does not have a 12-14 balanced hand when they open 1 heart and bid one spade. If they are balanced (4-4 in the Majors) they have 15+ HCP and if unbalanced their worst hand types are 4-5-2-2 minimums – still worth 15 support points. With up to 17 support points, East still should not jump to 3 spades!(Inferences like this keep experts from overbidding: in theory!) On lead against 2S, South has an automatic trump lead – knowing that East holds at least four hearts South can foresee heart ruffs in dummy. Following South's plan for the defence North should play Ace and another spade. Now East can ruff one heart but can't get back to hand – their best attempt being a diamond to the K. If North is awake and plays the diamond Ace and another trump, declarer is held to 7 tricks. Note that on any other defence declarer will score one diamond, two hearts, two heart ruffs and three trump tricks for + 110. When in doubt lead a trump!

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

HCP	
13	
14	4
9	

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

Board 11 : Dealer South : Nil All

West	North	East	South
1NT	All Pass		P

West opens a normal weak NT and buys the contract (most players would play 2C over opponents NT as a conventional bid usually the Majors). Against NT, North is leading a club, which club is a matter of convention. In standard leads you would lead the Ace -Top of a broken sequence, (although many players would play that the Ace looks for attitude and the King looks for count or unblock against NT). On the Ace lead, South should encourage with the 10 and North should continue with a low club to South's Q. South should use this opportunity to switch to a diamond. North beats the diamond King with the diamond ace and cashes three clubs South throwing a high heart on the 5th club – suit preference for a Spade. How the defence will proceed depends on what three discards declarer has made from their hand. They can afford one heart and if declarer throws the diamond 10 and a spade, North can continue with a low diamond before South's spade ace is knocked out. If declarer throws two spades, South wins the Ace and comes another Spade and declarer can only make 6 tricks. Any players playing a strong NT would have scored better on this board as they locate their 4-4-heart fit and can always make 8 tricks in hearts. 1NT may have been let make at some tables but +110 EW should still be the best score.

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

HCP	
10	
15	8
7	

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

Board 12 : Dealer West : NS Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1D	2C	2H	P
P	2S	P	4S All Pass

After a 1D opening from West, North overcalls 2C and East if not playing negative doubles finds themselves in a bit of a predicament! Not strong enough to bid at the two-level East would have to pass. The variety of negative doubles shown here allows East to bid a new suit at the 2 level non-forcing and when this is passed around to North they continue bidding out their hand with 2S. South should not make a free bid opposite a 2-club overcall with no support but when North bids 2 spades South has an easy raise to Game. There are 11 tricks available on any lead – the secret on this hand is getting to game. While North has only 10 points they have only 6 losers if they can find a fit and so are worth bidding both their suits. If West bids 2NT or 3H it is much more difficult for NS to find their game. North should start with a two-club bid and not a double as if South responds in hearts and North pulls to clubs it shows an 8 playing trick hand!

<p style="margin: 0;">♠ A J 9 7 4 ♥ 2 ♦ A K 4 ♣ K J 10 8</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ 8 2 ♠ Q 10 5 3 ♥ A 8 7 5 4 3 ♥ Q J ♦ Q 10 5 ♦ 6 2 ♣ 3 2 ♣ A Q 7 6 5</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ K 6 ♥ K 10 9 6 ♦ J 9 8 7 3 ♣ 9 4</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6 11</td> <td>S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td>W</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	HCP	Makeable contracts					16		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	2	3	1	2	2	6 11	S	1	3		1	2		E						7	W						<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All Vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2C</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2S</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">All pass</p> <p>After a 1S opening from partner, South responds 1NT and North rebids 2C to show 5-4, South corrects to 2S and there the bidding finishes. East has an interesting lead problem, with such poor clubs, the normal logic of preventing ruffs in dummy is outweighed by the risk of sacrificing a trump trick for no gain. Settling then for either red suit on this hand, a diamond works best. The defence should collect two spade tricks, two club tricks & one heart trick but with the hearts and diamonds as they are, they are unlikely to get a second red suit trick.</p>	West	North	East	South		1S	P	1NT	P	2C	P	2S
HCP	Makeable contracts																																																					
16		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																
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<p style="margin: 0;">♠ A Q 10 2 ♥ J 4 ♦ K 10 7 ♣ Q 9 8 3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ K 9 6 5 4 ♠ J 7 3 ♥ A K Q 10 8 3 ♥ 7 2 ♦ - ♦ A J 9 8 6 3 ♣ J 5 ♣ 10 7</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ 8 ♥ 9 6 5 ♦ Q 5 4 2 ♣ A K 6 4 2</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td></td> <td>♣</td> <td>♦</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♠</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">13 6</td> <td>S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>E</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td>W</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	HCP	Makeable contracts					12		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT		N	3	1				13 6	S	4	1			1		E			1	2		9	W			1	2		<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Nil All</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1H</td> <td style="text-align: center;">DBL</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2D</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3C</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3H</td> <td style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">After a one-heart opening and a take out double from North, 2D from East now shows less than 9HCP. (With 9+HCP East should start with a redouble). South is worth a 3C bid – this free bid showing about 9 HCP and a 5-card suit (If East had not bid, South would have jumped to 3C). Knowing that North holds Spades and with a void in partners suit, West is content to compete only to three hearts. On a normal club lead, declarer should lose two clubs, two spades and a spade ruff. As North-South are cold for 9 tricks in clubs this is not as bad as it feels. The moral here is, on misfit hands put the brakes on!</p>	West	North	East	South			P	P	1H	DBL	2D	3C	3H	All Pass		
HCP	Makeable contracts																																																									
12		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																																				
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♠ A J 10 6 5
 ♥ Q J 2
 ♦ 9 8 2
 ♣ 8 5
 ♠ 3 ♠ Q 8 7
 ♥ A 10 6 ♥ 8 7 5 4 3
 ♦ A K 10 5 ♦ Q J 6 4
 ♣ A 10 9 4 2 ♣ 7
 ♠ K 9 4 2
 ♥ K 9
 ♦ 7 3
 ♣ K Q J 6 3

HCP	
8	
15	5
12	

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

Board 15 : Dealer South : NS Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1C
P	1S	P	2S
DBL	3S	All Pass	

While West has points they have no bid over South's 1C opening: Dbl would imply both Majors and you have no rebid if partner bids Spades; you can't overcall 1NT with a singleton small spade. After 1S – 2S: Dbl now shows the other two suits (diamonds & hearts and short Spades by virtue of your failure to double 1C), and probably some club length by inference. North should bid on to 3S – holding an extra trump, and there the contract rests. East leads their singleton club and West should win the ace and return the club 2 (a suit preference signal for diamonds). East ruffs the club low and returns a low diamond to West's Ace, King and now the 10 of clubs is played (suit preference for hearts). This is the first decision that North has had to make as declarer. Having lost a club, two diamonds and club ruff and a heart still to lose we must decide who to play for the Spade Q. If I play for West to hold the Q, I ruff the spade low and if that holds play a spade to the King and a spade back to the Ace. If I play for East to hold the spade Q I must ruff this diamond with the spade Ace or else East can over ruff and score the spade Queen "En passant". In deciding which defender has long spades, declarer must look at the clubs: 1. If bidding went as suggested, West's failure to double 1 club implies spade shortage 2. As West shows up with 5 clubs, there is more room in East's hand for spades. Any declarer who ruffed with the Spade Ace and finessed East's Q – Well played!

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

HCP	
6	
8	9
17	

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

Board 16 : Dealer West : EW Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1C
P	1H	P	3D All Pass

After three passes, South opens 1C. West's hearts are not good enough to overcall one heart and so they pass. North – holding only 6 points, responds 1H in preference to 1D (on a weak hand that may only make one bid always prefer the Major to a minor even if the minor is 5 card) South enthusiastically responds 3D, this rebid showing an unbalanced hand with 5+ C and 4+D and 16+ HCP and there the contract rests, as North is minimum. West is a bit stuck for a lead. They can't lead a spade away from the Ace and the lead of the spade Ace would also cost a trick. A singleton trump is not attractive and neither is a club into declarer's 5 card suit and so West should settle on a heart. East West should take the first three tricks – one heart and two spades South as declarer can count a heart loser, two spade losers, a diamond loser and a possible club loser. If declarer plays Ace of clubs and ruffs a club, a heart to the King and ruffs a club East following with the Q. Now play the heart Q; if East ruffs or shows out South has a full count on West's hand: having shown up with three spades, four clubs and five hearts they have at most 1 diamond therefore East started with 4. How you make your tricks depends on East's action. If East ruffed the heart Q, you over ruff play a diamond to the Ace and the diamond 10 finessing East for the Jack making +1 If East discarded on the heart Q, you can throw a Club but can't help losing a trick to East's long trump. Contract making. With a natural trump trick, be slow to ruff!

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 9 7 6 5 3 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ K Q ♣ Q 9 4</p> <p>♠ A Q J 10 ♠ K 8 4 ♥ 10 8 6 4 ♥ A ♦ 10 9 7 ♦ A 5 4 2 ♣ J 6 ♣ A K 10 7 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ 2 ♥ J 9 5 3 2 ♦ J 8 6 3 ♣ 8 3 2</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">8 18</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	HCP	Makeable contracts					12	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	8 18	N						S					2	E	5	4	5	5		W	5	4	5	5	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Nil All</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1S</td> <td>DBL</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2H</td> <td>P</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>To pass with North's 12 points would not be the worst bid you ever made and playing a weak NT you must decide between opening 1NT and 1 spade. A good guideline is with a minimum hand that would not accept a game invite open 1NT even holding a 5 card major. If you would accept a game invite from partner then you should open 1 M (Note that modern bidding recommends you rebid a 3 card minor with 5-3-3-2 rather the 2M so 1M-2M rebid always promises 6) In response to a take out double West holds 8 HCP but I think is still only worth 2H (jumps here should show 5 card suits) and with 10+ HCP and 4 card M start with UCB (Unassuming cue bid) of opponents opened suit. After 2H, North should pass and East holding a better than minimum hand is worth one more move. 2NT is reasonable with spades stopped and the right values and opposite 18-20 West has no problem bidding on to 3NT. The best lead for the defence is a heart – difficult after 1H from West but declarer can always make 11 tricks by finessing North for the club Q. Note that declarer can count 26 points between their hand and dummy and if North opened the bidding, placing them with an average of 13 HCP, you know that all the missing cards are in North. For more information on card reading read Mike Laurence – How to Read Your Opponents Cards</p>	West	North	East	South		1S	DBL	P	2H	P	2NT	P	3NT	All Pass		
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<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 9 ♥ A J 10 4 3 ♦ K 6 4 2 ♣ A 10 7</p> <p>♠ K Q J 10 6 3 ♠ 8 7 5 4 2 ♥ Q 9 ♥ K 5 ♦ A 7 3 ♦ Q 10 9 8 ♣ K 9 ♣ Q 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A ♥ 8 7 6 2 ♦ J 5 ♣ J 8 6 5 4 2</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">HCP</th> <th colspan="5">Makeable contracts</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15 7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	HCP	Makeable contracts					12	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	15 7	N	4	4				S	4	4			6	E	1		3			W	1		3		<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS Vulnerable</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1S</td> <td>2H</td> <td>3S</td> <td>4H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4S</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>After a 1 spade opening from West, North should overcall 2 hearts. Many people think they should double here to show opening values but it is far more important that North communicate to South that they have a good 5+ card heart suit – double implying 4 cards in the other Major or a longer suit of poor quality. Modern Bidding Theory encourages us to bid to the level of the number of trumps we are known to hold – so with 9 trumps, East should bid 3 spades (with only 8 trumps combined bid only 2). Real invitational hands with approx 10 points (8 losers) should “cue” bid the overcalled suit instead so 1S-2H-3H* would show a normal limit raise. The same principle applies for NS, after a two heart vulnerable overcall, South is worth 4 hearts (with a stronger raise, cue bid 3S on the way) West is always bidding 4S over 4H and knowing that South doesn't hold many values, North would be excused in passing. + 50 is a meagre replacement for +620 but decidedly better than -100. Note that players who started with a double from North are unlikely to reach game.</p>	West	North	East	South			P	P	1S	2H	3S	4H	4S	All Pass		
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♠ A 7 3
 ♥ 10 4 2
 ♦ K Q 9 8 5 3
 ♣ 6
 ♠ K J 10 9 5 4 ♠ 6
 ♥ J 8 ♥ A K 7 5 3
 ♦ 10 7 6 ♦ J 4
 ♣ Q 10 ♣ J 7 5 3 2
 ♠ Q 8 2
 ♥ Q 9 6
 ♦ A 2
 ♣ A K 9 8 4

HCP	
9	
7	9
15	

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

Board 19 : Dealer South : EW Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1C
2S	DBL*	P	2NT
P	3NT	All Pass	

After a normal 1 club opening West should make a weak jump overcall with 2 spades. North is not quite strong enough to bid a game forcing 3 diamonds (new suit at the 3 level is game forcing) but does not like to pass with 9 points. Negative double – not perfect but better than pass. (Note that if 3D is forcing, double followed by 3D is non-forcing). South should be brave and rebid 2NT in preference to rebidding 3C, Qxx is not a perfect stop but without the length (4 + at two level) and strength (2+ hons at two level) to convert North’s take out double to a penalty double by passing, North/South’s next best score will be in NT as no Major fit exists. Opposite 15-17 HCP and with help in spades, North has no problem raising 2NT to 3NT, where there are 9 top tricks and plenty of chances for more. While on this particular lay out, West could have gone for a penalty in 2S, the reality of the situation is that with such good trumps it is often difficult for your opponents to penalise you and they may end up playing in only a part score.

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

HCP	
8	
11	15
6	

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

Board 20 : Dealer West : All Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
P	P	1H	P
2D	P	2NT	P
3NT	All Pass		

While I have nice distribution and good values I don’t like the idea of opening light when my 6 card suit is headed by the 8 so I prefer a pass 1st in hand Vul. Opposite partner’s 1 heart opening I have a clear cut 2 D response, partner rebids 2NT showing 15-17 balanced. While I hold a void in partners suit, 3NT is a far more likely contract than 5m and likely to score better. The fact that partner holds long hearts means they are more likely to hold good cards in hearts and so 3NT is a safer spot. The Spade Q is the normal lead and it looks like we have two spade tricks, two heart tricks, one diamond and two clubs and must decide where to get two tricks from. The most likely suits are the minors – as I can’t play hearts myself! . The best line of play to bring the clubs home for 4 tricks not holding the 10 is to play the Ace and King – 33%of the time but not on this hand. In diamonds - the suit will break 3-2 68% of the time, but not on this hand. While double dummy we can always make 9 tricks, it is not a likely outcome having to play anti % to make it, so sympathies to any Easts who went down 1!

♠ QJ10854
 ♥ AK7
 ♦ K4
 ♣ Q6

♠ - ♠ 62
 ♥ J109854 ♥ Q2
 ♦ 98 ♦ J6532
 ♣ AK743 ♣ 10952

♠ AK973
 ♥ 63
 ♦ AQ107
 ♣ J8

HCP	
15	
8	3
14	

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

Board 21 : Dealer North : NS Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1S	P	3NT*
P	4D	P	4S All Pass

After a 1S opening, South is faced with a dilemma in standard bidding. A bid of 4S can be either weak or strong, so bidding it risks missing a higher contract. Traditionally this problem was dealt with by making a delayed game raise – responding 2D and over partners 2S rebid jumping to 4S. The obvious problem with this bidding is that North does not know that South has five-card spade support to the AK. One treatment of this issue is to sacrifice the natural direct jump NT responses to 1M opening (when you have 11+ balanced, you can just start with a change of suit response and rebid NT later) and use 2NT to show a limit raise or 16+HCP with 4 card support and 3NT to show 13-15 with 4 card support. Such conventions make bidding this hand easy. After a 3NT* response, North bids 4D, a cue bid showing 1st or 2nd round control in diamonds (When game is certain and a fit established, new suits below game show 1st or 2nd round control in suit bid and new suits above game show 1st round control). As North has not shown a club control and South hasn't got one, South can settle for 4S and know that slam isn't on. A lot of people would err and ask for aces either as North or South but you should never use Blackwood when you might have two top losers in a suit. Cue bid first!

♠ 7
 ♥ AJ6
 ♦ K85
 ♣ K108643

♠ J82 ♠ K10643
 ♥ 73 ♥ Q542
 ♦ A109764 ♦ 2
 ♣ A9 ♣ Q75

♠ AQ95
 ♥ K1098
 ♦ QJ3
 ♣ J2

HCP	
11	
9	7
13	

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

Board 22 : Dealer East : EW Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		P	1NT
P	3NT	All Pass	

After a 1 NT opening from South, North should jump directly to 3NT (evaluate length aggressively opposite a known balanced hand: +1 for 5 card suit, +3 for a 6 card suit and +5 for a 7 cards suit) as their hand is worth 14 pts. West's normal lead is a diamond but if they listen to the bidding they realise that North did not look for a Major fit. On lead against NT you are actually trying to lead the longest suit held by your partnership rather than your hand in isolation so a spade lead is best. On a small spade lead, Declarer ducks the first spade and wins the second, now takes a club finesse and wins the spade return; plays another club and West does not have another spade to return – (9 tricks for declarer). A careful West could have defeated the contract even after declarer ducks the first spade by hopping up the club Ace and coming a spade while East still has the club Q as an entry. Note that on any other lead declarer is likely to make 10 tricks

<p>♠ 9 7 5 ♥ A J 7 ♦ K 10 6 3 ♣ 10 4 2</p> <p>♠ A Q J 6 ♠ 8 4 3 ♥ 10 6 ♥ K Q 5 3 2 ♦ J 7 5 ♦ Q 4 ♣ A K J 5 ♣ 9 7 6</p> <p> ♠ K 10 2 ♥ 9 8 4 ♦ A 9 8 2 ♣ Q 8 3</p> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin-right: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-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><th>N</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><th>S</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><th>E</th><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><th>W</th><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> </table>	HCP		8		16	7	9		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N						S						E	3	1	4	3	2	W	3	1	4	3	2	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All Vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: center;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1S</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Playing Weak NT and 4 card Majors West should open 1S (the correct treatment for balanced hands being either to open NT or open 1-of-a-suit and rebid NT) as they will only get to tell their partner about 1 suit before rebidding NT and the Major is more important. Many of you may have learned “bid 4 card suits upwards” but now you have progressed it’s time to improve your bidding methods. After partner’s 1NT response, it is reasonable for West to pass, especially in pairs. You will only have enough points for game if partner has absolute max – 9 pts – for their 1NT response and you have no 5 card suit as a source of tricks.</p> <p>South should make a normal diamond lead to the King and a diamond back and when West wins the lead, play a heart to hand and a club to the jack straight away. With only one certain entry to declarer’s hand and one has being used up, if clubs are 3-3 with the Q on side or with the 10 coming down doubleton, the finesse of the club Q may be all I need. The spade suit, by comparison would need two finesses to establish three/four tricks.</p> <p>Declarer should be held to 8 tricks: 4 clubs, one diamond, one heart and two spades (the defence winning 3 diamonds, one heart and one spade) As you can ruff to create an extra entry to your hand in hearts, and hearts are 3-3 with the Ace on side this 7-card fit (H) will actually provide 10 tricks but NT is the normal spot.</p>	West	North	East	South		P		P	1S		1NT	All Pass
HCP																																																									
8																																																									
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<p>♠ J 9 7 3 2 ♥ 10 4 ♦ J 8 ♣ K 10 5 3</p> <p>♠ K 8 4 ♠ A 5 ♥ 7 3 ♥ K J 9 ♦ A K Q 4 3 ♦ 10 9 6 ♣ J 7 6 ♣ A Q 9 4 2</p> <p> ♠ Q 10 6 ♥ A Q 8 6 5 2 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ 8</p> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin-right: 10px;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-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><th>N</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><th>S</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><th>E</th><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><th>W</th><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>5</td></tr> </table>	HCP		5		13	14	8		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N						S						E	6	5	1	2	6	W	4	5	1	1	5	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Nil All</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">West</td> <td style="text-align: center;">North</td> <td style="text-align: center;">East</td> <td style="text-align: center;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Did all weak NT players open the West hand 1NT? You should have! I know that your diamonds are very nice and you don’t have a heart stopper but 1D-2D rebid should be saved for unbalanced hands. After 1NT-3NT, North must pick which Major suit to lead. Here spades is your longer suit but your partner’s hand must be stronger and therefore more likely to have an outside entry and so their longest suit is likely to be hearts.</p> <p>Anyone who selected the heart 10, well done! Declarer covers and now South is faced with a problem, do I duck this and hope to take 5 tricks later or should I cash out.</p> <p>We know that EW have at least 26HCP between the two hands and as I hold 8, partner has a maximum of 6. Holding a singleton club, it is likely partner has club length and therefore club values and that is good news for declarer and bad news for the defence.</p> <p>Playing teams, a reasonable choice of action would be to play the heart 8 (encouraging) and hope partner has an entry, your objective being to knock the contract and not worry about overtricks.</p> <p>Playing pairs taking the Q and Ace of hearts should get you a very good score.</p> <p>Make sure you thank your partner for finding such a good lead! On any other, declarer can make 12 tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South	1NT	P	3NT	All Pass
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<p style="margin: 0;">♠ A J 10 6 ♥ 6 ♦ A Q J 5 4 ♣ A 5 4</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ K 9 ♠ 7 2 ♥ J 10 9 5 ♥ 8 4 3 2 ♦ 7 6 2 ♦ K 10 9 8 3 ♣ J 10 9 6 ♣ K 7</p> <p style="margin: 0;">♠ Q 8 5 4 3 ♥ A K Q 7 ♦ - ♣ Q 8 3 2</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <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>5</td><td>7</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>7</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		16		5	6	13		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	5	4	5	7	5	S	5	3	4	7	5	E						W						<p style="margin: 0;">Board 27 : Dealer South : Nil All</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; width: 80%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="padding: 5px;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="padding: 5px;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="padding: 5px;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">4H</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">1S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">4NT*</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">4S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">6S</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">All Pass</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">6D*</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">After a 1S opening from South, North has a classic splinter – 4H: enough values for game, a trump fit and a singleton or a void in the suit bid. Splinters are shown when responder jumps one level higher than would have been necessary to be natural and forcing, and the singleton is not a singleton honour. (Here 2H response natural, 3H jump shift Natural and forcing, therefore 4H is a splinter – South remember not to pass!) Knowing that North is short in Hearts does not help South’s hand and they sign off in 4S but North is worth one more move and knowing there are not two top losers in any suit, 4NT is a reasonable action. Whether playing ordinary Blackwood or RKCB, South has one Ace and a void. A standard method of responding to 4NT with a void is 5NT = 2 Aces + void, 6 of suit below trumps = 1 Ace + that void, 6 of trump suit shows 1 Ace + higher void. North now settles for 6 Spades. Declarer can make all 13 tricks if they throw North’s two small clubs on the K & Q of hearts; finesse the spade; play Ace of diamonds throwing a heart, diamond ruff and a club ruff. Now Ace of spades, and with spades 2-2 13 tricks are there with one more ruff in dummy. While there are 13 tricks do not worry about missing a grand slam: <i>Grand slams should only be bid when you can count all 13 tricks before you see dummy!</i></p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	P	4H	P	1S	P	4NT*	P	4S	P	6S	All Pass	6D*
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