



Commentary for the CBAI Simultaneous Pairs

Tuesday 4th March 2025

Dear Bridge Player,

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

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

We hope that you enjoyed the chance to test yourself against your fellow players across Ireland (and for those still playing online, maybe overseas as well). As always, the hands (which are randomly generated by computer with no manual intervention whatsoever) provided plenty of difficult decisions. Many thanks to our expert commentators Fearghal O'Boyle (Monday), Paul Delaney (Tuesday), Thomas MacCormac (Wednesday), Brian Senior (Thursday), and Enda Glynn (Friday) for their guidance through the maze. I hope that you have picked up some useful tips from their advice. For Wednesday's game, Thomas has done his commentary in a series of videos rather than as a written text, which is a new innovation begun in the IBU Simultaneous Pairs in November; we hope you'll like it, and would welcome your feedback.

Don't forget to check your standing in the national results at www.ecatsbridge.com/sims. You'll find the daily commentaries there too.

Catherine Byrne

President, Contract Bridge Association of Ireland

3 This Sims commentary will use the chess-style symbols! and? to denote good and bad plays or bids.

? poor bid or play
?? blunder
! excellent bid or play
!! brilliant

Board 1	♠ 42	Dealer N	
	♥ 1054	Vul: None	
	♦ AQJ1076		
	♣ A3		
♠ A1097		♠ KQJ653	
♥ KQ96		♥ J	
♦ K9		♦ 52	
♣ 982		♣ KQ76	
	♠ 8		
	♥ A8732		
	♦ 843		
	♣ J1054		
West	North	East	South
2♦*	1♦	1♠	Pass
4♥	3♦	4♠**	Pass
	All Pass		

* Unassuming Cue Bid (UCB) 10+ with support or 13+ points without support

** East decides they have a good overcall (perhaps an overbid)

4♠ East lead ♦3!

East West have the values for game with a strong 6-4 spade fit. However the lack of Aces means rapid defeat after the marked diamond lead.

NS should always collect 4 tricks against 4♠ for a 75% score for NS

Cautious EW bidders who stop in 3♠ will get a 75% score their way.

West uses an Unassuming Cue Bid (2♦) to ask about the strength of East's overcall.

With no interference East shows a minimum by bidding 2♠ and any other bid shows a feature of a good overcall of opening bid strength.

If North intervenes with 3♦ (as shown) then a pass by East shows a minimum overcall.

Winning Tip : With game interest use an Unassuming Cue Bid (UCB) to ask about the strength of partner's overcall.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 2	♠ 7	Dealer E
	♥ Q63	Vul: N-S
	♦ 62	
	♣ AKQJ1062	
♠ A10984		♠ K6532
♥ 4		♥ AJ5
♦ A10873		♦ Q954
♣ 74		♣ 9
	♠ QJ	
	♥ K109872	
	♦ KJ	
	♣ 853	

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♥*
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
4♠(!)	All pass		

* weak two – 6 hearts with 6 to 10 pts

4♠ West lead ♣K

If South opens 1♥ then E/W overcall and easily bid to 4♠

If South opens a weak two N/S quickly reach 4♥ hoping to shut E/W out of the auction.

Now it falls to West in the pass out seat to find the brilliant 4♠ bid by reasoning as follows:

N/S have found a fit which means that E/W have a fit also,

If their vulnerable game is making we may have a profitable sacrifice since we are non-vul

I have two 5-card suits surely partner has a good fit for spades or diamonds.

West's wildest dreams are exceeded when the 'sacrifice' bid makes 11 tricks 4♠+1 +450

Any North South allowed to play undisturbed in 4♥ will score the N/S top 80%+.

Winning Tip:

To win at pairs you must bid aggressively and find a way to get into the auction.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 3	♠ K9876	Dealer S
	♥ 103	Vul: E-W
	♦ KQ6	
	♣ A96	
♠ 1052		♠ AQ4
♥ QJ		♥ K9742
♦ 104		♦ J875
♣ KJ10742		♣ 5
	♠ J3	
	♥ A865	
	♦ A932	
	♣ Q83	

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT*
All pass			

* Natural invitational 10-11 or bad 12 pts

2NT South lead ♣J

Declarer Plan :

A heart lead from West leaves declarer with no chance to make this contract. A reward for any East brave or foolish enough to overcall 2♥ vulnerable with such a weak suit.

On the normal ♣J lead against 2NT South assesses the contract.

6 top Winners : 2 clubs, 3 diamonds and a heart. Where will you look for the other 2 tricks?

South must develop the spade suit to make the contract.

How should declarer plan the play?

Play low on the club and win ♣Q. At trick 2 lead ♠J (!) losing to ♠Q.

East returns ♥4 which South wins ♥A (!) immediately hoping to block the heart suit.

Now a spade to ♠6 sets up the spade suit and the defenders are helpless with the hearts blocked.

Some Souths will now make 10 tricks for 2NT+2 +180 and a huge 90% score.

Winning Tip:

As declarer take time after the opening lead (30/45 seconds) to assess the whole hand. Do not play a card from dummy! Think! Assess each suit and count your winners and losers. What can you learn from the bidding and opening lead? Make a plan to play the hand. Only then call for a card from dummy.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 4	♠	AJ742	Dealer W
	♥	10	Vul: Both
	♦	A86	
	♣	A1086	

♠	83	♠	109
♥	AKQJ64	♥	952
♦	K1053	♦	QJ72
♣	3	♣	J742

♠	KQ65
♥	873
♦	94
♣	KQ95

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

* UCB 10+ with 3+card support or 13+ no support.

This asks partner how good their overcall is

** North improvises with a 3♥ bid to show a good overcall

4♠ North lead ♦Q

Declarer Plan :

Declarer has 10 tricks on top and 3 possible losers.

There is nothing to the play once North takes heed of the bidding.

Only East can have ♣Jxxx.

North ruffs the second heart draws trumps and plays ♣A and a club to dummy.

Now return to hand to take the marked finesse pf ♣9 making 11 tricks N/S +650

Winning Tip:

After partner overcalls cue bid the opponents suit (UCB) to ask "how good is your overcall"?

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 5	♠		Dealer N
	♥	8542	Vul: N-S
	♦	K53	
	♣	AKQ876	
♠	AJ43		♠ KQ10875
♥	K96		♥ AQ73
♦	1098		♦ 2
♣	J42		♣ 103
	♠	962	
	♥	J10	
	♦	AQJ764	
	♣	95	

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	2♦*
3♣**	4♦(!)	4♠	5♦

All pass

- * 2♦ shows 5+ diamonds and 9+ pts and is forcing for one round (F1)
- ** 3♣ shows good raise to 3♠ with 4-card support. The alternative 3♠ bid shows a weaker raise.

4♠ East will make 10 tricks for a 70% score for E/W.

To win the board for N/S North must evaluate their hand after opponents show good hands with a spade fit and partner shows diamonds.

All of North's cards work superbly for a diamond contract (♦Kxx, spade void and near solid clubs) Many enterprising N/S partnerships will bid 5♦ making +600 for a 90% score.

Winning Tip:

When opponents compete against you play immediate raises of partner's suit as weakish competitive bids. If you have a nice hand cue bid the opponents suit first to show support with good values.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 6	♠	K97	Dealer E
	♥	AK95	Vul: E-W
	♦	QJ983	
	♣	Q	
♠ 62	♠	1043	
♥ J863	♥	Q42	
♦ 7	♦	K642	
♣ 1098632	♣	KJ7	
	♠	AQJ85	
	♥	107	
	♦	A105	
	♣	A54	

It may be easier for the Strong No-Trump 2/1 Game Force bidders to get to this 6♠ slam

Weak No-Trump

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

All pass

- * 2NT 15-17
- ** 3♣ is forcing with 3-card support.
- *** Cue Bid

It is not clear that South can do any more. They know they are missing ♦K. They do not know about the club splinter in North's hand.

Strong No-Trump 2/1 Game Force

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

All pass

- * Game Forcing 5+ diamonds
- ** North's 4♣ bid is a splinter (singleton club) agreeing spades
- *** Cue Bid
- **** 4NT is Roman Key Card with 1430 responses - 5♥ shows 2 key cards without Q♠

The Play

6♠ South lead ♦7 12 tricks

The spade slam requires some play after the singleton diamond lead through the bid suit.

Declarer counts their top tricks 5 spades, 2

hearts, 3 diamonds (assuming ♦K onside), 1 club makes 11 tricks.

So we can make 12 tricks in two ways:

- Ruff a club, drawing trumps and finessing diamonds again OR
- Draw 3 rounds of trumps (so no club ruff), finesse diamonds and return to dummy to ruff out the ♦K

Most of the field will play in 4♠ making 12 tricks for an average score. Any N/S allowing a diamond ruff by West will score terribly with 4♠+1 making only 11 tricks.

Declarer top - 13 tricks

Ambitious declarers will look to make all 13 tricks on this board. This is only possible if the West hand has a singleton diamond and only 2 trumps. Now you can setup the long diamond and get a club ruff.

Draw two (!) trumps ending with ♠K in dummy. Finesse diamonds as West cannot ruff. Now ruff a club in dummy and ruff out the ♦K. You make all 13 tricks enjoying the club ruff and the long diamond.

This brilliant line is not risky because even if West does ruff a diamond you are back with the field making 12 tricks.

Winning Tip:

A Cue bid is used to show slam interest in a game forcing auction. In the modern game you cue bid an Ace, King, singleton or void. If you bypass a suit you deny control in that suit. For example North's 4♥ in the given auctions denied the ♦A or ♦K.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	1	6	3	7	5
S	1	6	3	7	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 7

♠	AKQJ10542	Dealer S
♥	Q	Vul: Both
♦	108	
♣	92	

♠	3	♠	96
♥	KJ984	♥	A1072
♦	AQ4	♦	J9632
♣	K543	♣	A8

♠	87
♥	653
♦	K75
♣	QJ1076

West	North	East	South
1♥	4♠	5♥	Pass
			All pass

With hands such as North holds it is good bridge to show your hand with one bid e.g. jump to 4♠

Now East has little option but to take the push to 5♥ and hope partner can make it.

Most players will make 11 tricks but 12 tricks are available if declarer counts to 13 and guesses well.

Declarer Counts to 13

5♥ West lead ♠K (asking for count from partner)

As declarer when one of your opponents makes a preemptive bid showing a long suit you should focus on finding out their full shape. This declarer technique is known as counting out their hand. Let's do this for the North hand as we play 5♥ as West.

North plays 2 top spades ruffed by West. With South's high low count signal we know that North has 8 solid spades.

We draw trumps ending in East to finesse ♦Q successfully noting North's ♦8

Now play ♣K and ♣A and we know 12 of North's cards 8 spades, 1 heart, 2 clubs, 1 diamond.

What is their last unknown card?

Our only hope to make an overtrick now is to play ♦J (!) to pin ♦10 with North. This line makes 12 tricks for a 90%+ score.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	2	-
S	-	-	-	2	-
E	3	5	6	-	-
W	3	5	6	-	-

=====

Board 8 ♠ AJ982 Dealer W
 ♥ A92 Vul: None
 ♦ J4
 ♣ 953

♠ Q64 ♠ 75
 ♥ KQ7 ♥ J843
 ♦ A762 ♦ KQ83
 ♣ AJ6 ♣ K104

♠ K103
 ♥ 1065
 ♦ 1095
 ♣ Q872

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

* Negative double 6+ pts with 4 hearts expected

** This double shows a good hand with no clear bid. Of course the normal bid is 2NT 15-17

3NT West lead ♠8 3NT-2 65% for N/S

The strong No-Trump bidders will have an unopposed auction and play 3NT-2 with no chance to make.

3♦ West 3♦+1 80% for E/W

After opening 1♦ the weak No-Trump bidders will attract a spade overcall and raise.

Now if West is nervous of the quality of their spade stop they can double showing a good hand with no clear bid (this shows doubt about 3NT)

With no spade help East will bid 3♦ which makes 10 tricks for a top score.

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

=====

Board 9 ♠ 1064 Dealer N
 ♥ 1083 Vul: E-W
 ♦ A7632
 ♣ K8

♠ J9 ♠ Q85
 ♥ 2 ♥ AQ9764
 ♦ KQJ ♦ 104
 ♣ AJ107543 ♣ Q9

♠ AK732
 ♥ KJ5
 ♦ 985
 ♣ 62

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

East must decide between opening 1♥ or 2♥ or Pass.

This is a competitive partscore deal with 3♣ making for E/W and N/S having the spade suit.

When West bids 3♣ North may be tempted to bid 3♠.

3♠ by South goes 2 down after the marked singleton heart lead and ruff.

If East has opened 1♥ West will frequently double 3♠ for penalties for +300 and a top score.

3NT contracts for E/W will fail on a spade lead as long as South ducks a spade to keep communication open with partner's hand.

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

=====

Board 10 ♠ QJ106 Dealer E
 ♥ 63 Vul: Both
 ♦ AJ654
 ♣ J10

♠ 98742 ♠ 53
 ♥ 107 ♥ AJ982
 ♦ Q8 ♦ 10732
 ♣ K754 ♣ A2

♠ AK
 ♥ KQ54
 ♦ K9
 ♣ Q9863

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠*	Pass	1♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	INT**
Pass		All pass	

- * INT by South balanced 15-17 pts is a better description of the hand than a 2H reverse

3NT West lead ♥10! is best other leads allow an easy 10 tricks.

West on lead will not lead spades or clubs the suits bid by N/S. The doubleton ♥10 (!) is best which both East and declarer should duck. Hearts are continued as South wins ♥Q. Now declarer plays clubs and makes 10 tricks without difficulty.

If declarer wins the ♥10 then West still has a small heart so they win any club play immediately with ♣K to continue hearts. Now the hearts are setup immediately so declarer can get no club tricks. Declarer can still scramble 9 tricks elsewhere for a poor score.

Winning Tip:

As declarer in 3NT contracts look for opportunities to duck in opponent's danger suit to cut communication between their two hands.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 11				♠ AK2	Dealer S	
				♥ Q74	Vul: None	
				♦ AQ93		
				♣ Q108		
				♠ Q965	♠ 843	
				♥ A1032	♥ K9865	
				♦ K	♦ J872	
				♣ AK42	♣ 6	
				♠ J107		
				♥ J		
				♦ 10654		
				♣ J9753		
West	North	East	South			
1♣	INT*	2♥	Pass			
			All Pass			

- * With 4414 shape West opens the suit below the singleton

- ** 15-18 points. This range is now standard at expert level rather than the older 15-17 agreement

2♥ East lead ♠J!

This lead collects 3 spade tricks immediately for N/S.

East as declarer in 2♥ contract wins the club return and plays one round of hearts dropping the ♥J.

Now declarer gets the hearts right and finesses North for ♥Q, ruffing two diamonds in dummy making 2♥+1 for +140 and a top score for E/W.

Many Norths will be left to play INT which goes down 1 on a heart lead. INT-1 +50 E/W is a good score for N/S.

Winning Tip:

Play your INT overcalls as 15-18 points with your INT opening system of responses ("System On"). Make these overcalls as often as you can – they score well.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 12				♠ AK5	Dealer W	
				♥ J82	Vul: N-S	
				♦ J53		
				♣ KQ104		
				♠ Q4	♠ J108762	
				♥ Q10974	♥ 63	
				♦ 10	♦ K84	
				♣ J7652	♣ A3	
				♠ 93		
				♥ AK5		
				♦ AQ9762		
				♣ 98		
West	North	East	South			
Pass	INT	2♠	3♦			
Pass	3NT	All pass				

3NT North lead ♠

Nearly all Norths will play 3NT on a spade lead. In teams we might duck a spade but in pairs you should be optimistic that the diamond finesse will work. Win the first spade and play ♦J covered by ♦K and ♦A.

Noting the drop of the ♦10 we have 10 tricks and a club to the King will setup 11 tricks. Indeed most declarers will now make 12 tricks (scoring 75% or so) since West is squeezed in hearts and clubs on the run of the diamonds.

The correct technique after knocking out ♣A is to cash all your spade and heart winners before finishing running the diamonds. Now if West keeps the ♥Q the ♣J will fall. This is known as a 'show up' squeeze.

Winning Tip:

Running a long suit will put pressure on the defenders – they will frequently be squeezed or make mistakes with their discards.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 13		♠ KJ97 ♥ AK ♦ A105 ♣ KQ63	Dealer N Vul: Both	♠ A82 ♥ 987 ♦ 97643 ♣ A4
♠ 6 ♥ Q105432 ♦ Q8 ♣ 10975		♠ Q10543 ♥ J6 ♦ KJ2 ♣ J82		
West	North	East	South	
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♥**	
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT	
	4♠	All pass		

* 20-22 pts

** Transfer showing 5+ spades

4♠ North lead ♥9

If East leads a diamond this picks up partner's ♦Q and declarer makes an easy 11 tricks
4♠+1 +650

Only a trump or heart lead leaves declarer with a 50/50 guess to find ♦Q.

However good play will enable declarer to make 11 tricks. Declarer wins the heart lead, draws trumps, cashes the second heart, and plays a club towards ♣J which wins. Now a second club taken by ♣A and East is endplayed. They must play a diamond or give a ruff and discard in hearts.

So 4♠+1 will a fairly flat board around the country.

Winning Tip:

As declarer when you have trumps in both hands it is good play to eliminate side suits (cashing a second heart on this hand). When your opponents get in they may be endplayed to open a critical suit or give a ruff and discard.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 14		♠ Q85 ♥ AJ93 ♦ QJ1052 ♣ 4	Dealer E Vul: None	♠ 1093 ♥ KQ5 ♦ 83 ♣ KJ752
♠ 72 ♥ 8764 ♦ A976 ♣ A93		♠ AKJ64 ♥ 102 ♦ K4 ♣ Q1086		
West	North	East	South	
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠	
Pass	4♠	All pass	2♠	

With a singleton club, good diamonds and a spade fit North bids game immediately – no

need for an invite.

4♠ South lead ♥7

The heart lead is essential for E/W to get the 3 tricks they are due.

On a passive trump lead declarer knocks out the ♦A and makes 11 tricks for a top score.

Winning Tip:

On lead your first decision is whether to lead actively or passively. On this hand East is concerned that the diamond suit shown in the bidding will be setup for discards. So East opts for the active ♥K lead.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 15	♠ AQJ	Dealer S
	♥ J102	Vul: N-S
	♦ QJ64	
	♣ 965	
♠ 9		♠ 1086542
♥ 965		♥ AKQ43
♦ 109		♦ 3
♣ AKQ10873		♣ 2
	♠ K73	
	♥ 87	
	♦ AK8752	
	♣ J4	

West	North	East	South
2♣	3♣*	3♥**	1♦
4♥	All pass		4♦

* 3♣ shows an invitational or better diamond raise (4+ diamonds 10+ pts)

** East has a difficult bid and guesses to bid their stronger major which hits the jackpot.

4♥ East lead ♦K (King asks for count)

South wins the ♦K lead. Now at trick 2 South must switch a club (!!) hoping to cut off declarer from the club winners. Declarer stills makes 4♥ since they can now play on spades for 10 tricks.

Defenders who do not find the club switch will concede 11 or 12 tricks for a duck on the board as declarer draws trumps and enjoys those clubs.

5♣ West is a laydown contract but E/W will try 4♥ looking for the extra matchpoints.

Winning Tip:

In defence when you see a strong suit in dummy you have two main defensive tactics:

1. Attack the side entries to the strong suit;
2. If the only entry is in the suit itself play their strong suit early before trumps are drawn. You hope to force declarer to run the suit prematurely with trumps outstanding.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 16	♠ Q82	Dealer W
	♥ K3	Vul: E-W
	♦ 10943	
	♣ KJ108	
♠ AK107		♠ 963
♥ 97654		♥ Q2
♦ KQJ		♦ 852
♣ 6		♣ AQ742
	♠ J54	
	♥ AJ108	
	♦ A76	
	♣ 953	

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	INT	All pass

INT East lead ♠4

West has opening values but no bid is attractive. Indeed you might briefly consider opening 1♥ 1♠ 1♦ or even INT before coming back to a 'least of all evils' 1♥ opening. With no fit INT is a reasonable spot

On a spade lead by South declarer ducks in dummy as North wins ♠Q. Now declarer makes INT with 3 spades, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs when the club finesse works.

It takes an unlikely club lead and continuation to stop E/W from making INT. After a club lead the defenders are a tempo up on declarer and get their clubs running before declarer can knock out ♦A and duck a spade.

Winning Tip:

On many partscore boards the first pair to bid INT will get 65%+ of the matchpoints.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 17 ♠ A Dealer N
 ♥ A9 Vul: None
 ♦ Q987643
 ♣ Q76

♠ QJ3 ♠ 109854
 ♥ KJ8742 ♥ Q63
 ♦ 10 ♦ AK
 ♣ 1043 ♣ AK2

♠ K762
 ♥ 105
 ♦ J52
 ♣ J985

West	North	East	South
	1♦	INT	Pass
2♦*	3♦	3♥	Pass
4♥	All pass		

* transfer bid showing 5+ hearts

4♥ East lead ♦2

This will be a flat board across the country with nearly all E/W pairs playing 4H 10 tricks +420

Winning Tip:

Many regular tournament players play Texas transfers after a INT opening or INT overcall.

INT 4♦ is a transfer showing 6+ hearts

INT 4♥ is a transfer showing 6+ spades

Texas pre-empts the opponents and a follow up 4NT is played as RKC 1430

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 18 ♠ J3 Dealer E
 ♥ J984 Vul: N-S
 ♦ AQ532
 ♣ 103

♠ K5 ♠ AQ104
 ♥ AQ7652 ♥ 10
 ♦ KJ64 ♦ 87
 ♣ 9 ♣ AJ7652

♠ 98762
 ♥ K3
 ♦ 109
 ♣ KQ84

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

* 2♦ is 4th suit forcing – best played as game forcing

** North makes a lead directing double of 2♦

3NT West lead ♣10!
 (or the equally good ♥4! Lead)

This is a difficult hand for both declarer and the defence. Hats off to any declarer who makes this 3NT for a top score.

North leads the deadly ♣10 confident that partner will switch diamonds when they get in. When declarer covers the ♣10 with ♣J if N/S attack diamonds vigorously then declarers ♦6 will quickly be promoted to become a trick.

The sure way to knock the contract is ♣10! lead and ♥K! switch which targets collecting 2 diamonds, 2 hearts and a club while destroying declarers communications.

Winning Tip: Opening lead - a active or passive?

On this hand North decides that hearts, clubs and diamonds are not lying well for declarer. So a passive (short suit) lead of ♣10! is in order. The active lead of a 4th best ♦3 gives

declarer and easy diamond trick and a great start to make the contract.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 19		♠ 96 ♥ AK32 ♦ KJ9 ♣ A1076	Dealer S Vul: E-W
♠ J104 ♥ 64 ♦ Q10863 ♣ 954		♠ AQ852 ♥ J7 ♦ 74 ♣ KJ32	
		♠ K73 ♥ Q10985 ♦ A52 ♣ Q8	
West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	2♠	INT
Pass	4♥	All pass	3♥

4♥ South lead ♠J

East wins the spade lead and continues the suit. Declarer draws trumps and has a club and a diamond loser. What is the best line of play? Diamond finesse? Are there any extra chances?

The diamond finesse can wait. Playing on clubs gives you an extra chance to avoid a diamond loser.

Play a small club towards the ♣Q. East wins ♣K and now you have a discard for your diamond loser on a club winner. You make 11 tricks 4♥+1 +650 to N/S without the diamond finesse.

On this deal thoughtful declarer play is not rewarded when the diamond finesse is also on. So all declarers make 11 tricks for a flat board.

Winning Tip: Read Your Opponents Cards

As declarer after the opening lead count the points in dummy and your hand (15+11 = 26 on this hand). Consider what points or strength has been shown by your opponents

during the bidding.

East's 2♠ bid must show a good hand with spade length perhaps 10+ pts.

So East is a favourite to hold the ♣K.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 20		♠ K1073 ♥ 9842 ♦ J7 ♣ 1053	Dealer W Vul: Both
♠ AQJ2 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ A ♣ AK72		♠ 9854 ♥ A1065 ♦ Q62 ♣ 94	
		♠ 6 ♥ 3 ♦ K1098543 ♣ QJ86	

Almost everybody will open a strong bid with the West hand and reach 4♥. Now if declarer plays the best line and ruffs two clubs in dummy they will make at least 11 tricks for a top score. The 4/1 trump break will prove awkward for some declarers who will make only 10 tricks.

On this hand West can use Stayman (asking for 4-card major suits) or Puppet Stayman (asking about **both** 4- and 5-card major suits)

Stayman Auction

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass

* 3♣ Stayman – asking for 4-card majors

Puppet Stayman Auction

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♦**	Pass	4♦***	Pass
4♥	All pass		

* 3♣ is Puppet Stayman – asking for 5-card majors

** West's responses to puppet Stayman are

3♦ I don't have a 5-card major but I do have at least one 4-card major

3♥ 3♠ I have this 5-card major

3NT I do not have a 4- or 5-card major

*** East now bids the major they don't have or continues with 4♦ with both majors

The bidding is arranged so that the strong hand always plays the contract.

Winning Tip: Puppet Stayman is well worth adopting as you move up the grades.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 21	♠ J94	Dealer N
	♥ 1084	Vul: N-S
	♦ J742	
	♣ 1096	
♠ KQ52	♠ 76	
♥ 52	♥ AKQJ73	
♦ Q653	♦ A9	
♣ KQ5	♣ A74	
♠ A1083		
♥ 96		
♦ K108		
♣ J832		

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
All pass	Pass	3NT*	Pass

* This 3NT rebid is frequently used to show a solid suit

3NT East lead ♠3

Declarer's ♠K wins the first trick. They will later play towards the ♠Q to make 12 tricks and a top score 85%+

Many Easts will play in 4♥ on a club lead. After drawing trumps and playing a spade towards dummy they will make 12 tricks also +480 and perhaps a 70% score.

Intrepid bidders who reach the giddy heights of 6♥ will score 95% or so when their fortunate slam romps home.

Winning Tip:

Weak No-Trump players should consider revising their NT rebids from the commonly taught model as follows:

1NT rebid 15-17 points

2NT rebid 18-19 points

3NT rebid solid suit 18+ points

The key benefit is staying low with 17 points

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 22	♠ QJ943	Dealer E
	♥ AQ7	Vul: E-W
	♦ 83	
	♣ J84	

♠ K752	♠ 1086
♥ 1094	♥ J865
♦ K7654	♦ J92
♣ 9	♣ AKQ

♠ A
♥ K32
♦ AQ10
♣ 1076532

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

* 2♦ is 3rd suit forcing – best played as invitational to game

** South could bid 2NT/3NT but decides to go the low road with shortage in partners spade suit

2♣+1 will be the normal contract and will quietly make 9 tricks +110 for an average score.

2NT South lead ♦5

In 2NT the normal declarer plan is to play on clubs. This will fail when clubs prove to be 3/1

with East getting in to switch to diamonds and later spades defeating 2NT/3NT contracts.

Double dummy analysis (see below) looks at all 4 hands and makes 3NT on a diamond lead by ignoring the club suit! Win the diamond lead. Cash ♠A. Heart to ♥Q and play ♠Q making 4 spade tricks when the ♠10 drops.

Winning Tip:

After opener rebids their suit responder will often have a problem as to how to continue the bidding when they hold a good hand. Experienced players play that a bid of the lowest suit (2♦ on this auction) is artificial, forcing for one round and contains invitational or better values. Opener rebids naturally and usually jumps to show extra values.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 23 ♠ K4 Dealer S
 ♥ AJ32 Vul: Both
 ♦ AQ104
 ♣ Q106

♠ 652 ♠ 10983
 ♥ 8654 ♥ K1097
 ♦ K73 ♦ 52
 ♣ 975 ♣ J32

♠ AQJ7
 ♥ Q
 ♦ J986
 ♣ AK84

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

* 1♠ is best played as wide ranging 11 to bad 18 pts

** 2♣ is 4th suit game-forcing

*** raising 4th suit forcing is natural and shows 4 clubs so a 4144 hand is likely

*** South's 4NT is RKC 1430 with 5♠ showing 2 key cards with ♦Q

N/S have the values for slam with a combined 33 points and a good diamond fit.

Many pairs will undervalue their hands and play 3NT as North making 13 tricks with clubs and diamonds lying well.

6♦ South lead ♥6

There is nothing to the play in 6♦ with ♦K onside and declarer makes all 13 tricks.

The top spot to win matchpoints is 6NT by North. Protected against a heart lead declarer takes the diamond finesse in comfort and later enjoys the club break for 6NT+1 and a 90% score.

Winning Tip:

When you bypass 3NT and agree partner's minor you show slam interest. In response you cue bid or use 4NT RKC 1430.

Makeable Contracts

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

Board 24 ♠ 109642 Dealer W
 ♥ 85 Vul: None
 ♦ KQJ985
 ♣

♠ KQ875
 ♥ K764 ♥ 32
 ♦ A74 ♦ 6
 ♣ AQJ1065 ♣ K9732

♠ Aj3
 ♥ AQJ109
 ♦ 1032
 ♣ 84

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♦	1♠	2♥
3♣	Pass	5♣	All pass

5♦ West

In a normal auction such as that shown above E/W will bid to 5♣. This contract makes with an overtrick if declarer plays a ruffing finesse with ♠K through South.

There are new methods available such as “fit jumps” which enable N/S to compete accurately and aggressively.

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♦	1♠	3♥*
3♣	4♦**	5♣	5♦
X	All pass		

* South's 3♥ bid is a fit jump showing jump 7-10 pts with 5+ good hearts and diamond support

** North jump supports diamonds bolstered by the side void and the fit jump values.

5♦ North is a great contract - 5♦x-2 on ♠K (!) lead or 5♦x-1 any other lead.

Of course if E/W push on to 6♣ this contract will make for a 100% score for E/W.

Winning Tip:

Fit jumps are great fun and improve your competitive bidding accuracy.

When partner opens the bidding and opponents overcall a suit (or double) a jump in a new suit shows that suit and support for partner's suit. You show values for the level of the fit e.g. 7-10 pts for 3 level.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	3	-	1	-
S	-	4	-	1	-
E	6	-	-	-	2
W	6	-	1	-	2

=====

Board 25	♠ J6	Dealer N	
	♥ K1094	Vul: E-W	
	♦ J754		
	♣ K92		
♠ K3		♠ 1097	
♥ AQJ62		♥ 8753	
♦ A108		♦ Q93	
♣ 1085		♣ A73	
	♠ AQ8542		
	♥		
	♦ K62		
	♣ QJ64		
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
2♥	Pass	Pass*	2♠**
All pass			

* East counts losers (10) and refrains from a preemptive 3♥ bid which North will punish severely

** South's best bid at pairs is actually to make a take out double (!!)

2♥x-1 West lead ♠J

Sharp pairs players will double with the South hand and North will pass for penalties.

If the defence avoids playing the diamond suit West's 2♥x contract goes one down +200

2♠ South lead ♣5

Declarer has 8 easy tricks after losing the spade finesse, drawing trumps, and knocking out ♣A.

Diamonds are a 'frozen suit' whichever side plays diamonds first loses tricks in the suit. Indeed if N/S play diamonds they are due to lose 3 diamond tricks.

If E/W keep off diamonds South will eventually have to play a small diamond towards the ♦J.

Now when the ♦Q does not appear declarer must play low in dummy. Now declarer makes a diamond trick for 2♠+1 +140 and a great score.

Winning Tip:

Learn to identify frozen suit combinations and try to force your opponents to play these suits first e.g.

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

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 26	♠ 986	Dealer E	
	♥ 6	Vul: Both	
	♦ K1083		
	♣ AQ982		
♠ AKQ53		♠ 1072	
♥ K2		♥ AQJ9	
♦ J5		♦ A64	
♣ J1063		♣ K74	
	♠ J4		
	♥ 1087543		
	♦ Q972		
	♣ 5		
West	North	East	South
		1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣**	Pass	4♠	All pass

* transfer showing 5+ spades

** West shows club values. This enables partner to accurately decide between 3NT/4♠ contracts

4♠ East lead ♣5

The singleton club lead gets a quick ruff but that is the end for the defence as declarer takes the rest.

4♠+1 +650 to E/W

The 4♠ contract is superior to 3NT if N/S find a diamond lead which holds declarer to 10 tricks.

If South leads a heart against 3NT declarer has time to establish clubs making 11 tricks and a top score.

Winning Tip:

It is good bridge to 'bid your side values' during the auction to help partner bid accurately.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 27	♠ Q852	Dealer S	
	♥ Q874	Vul: None	
	♦ K742		
	♣ 5		
♠ AJ74		♠ 63	
♥ 3		♥ 1095	
♦ A6		♦ J109853	
♣ AK10762		♣ 84	
	♠ K109		
	♥ AKJ62		
	♦ Q		
	♣ QJ93		
West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♣	3♥	Pass	4♥
All pass			

Many Souths will find themselves in 4♥ on this hand. They need to guess well and time the play to make the contract.

4♥ South lead ♣A or ♣K

A high club lead from West helps declarer and sets up an early ruffing finesse. Now declarer needs to play West for ♠J to make 10 tricks.

4♥ South lead ♥3

The small heart does not help declarer who wins ♥J and plays to ♦Q taken by the ♦A. West continues their good defence by playing back a diamond. Now declarer plays a club and West is endplayed to play spades or clubs and declarer makes 10 tricks.

Winning Tip:

As declarer inspect your assets closely when you first see dummy.

On this hand you note the ♠8 in dummy now it is clear that you will make 4♥ easily if West has the ♠J

Makeable Contracts

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

=====

Board 28	♠ AK109	Dealer W	
	♥ A109	Vul: N-S	
	♦ Q4		
	♣ 10754		
♠ Q83		♠ J752	
♥ K4		♥ Q862	
♦ K965		♦ 1073	
♣ Q962		♣ J8	
	♠ 64		
	♥ J753		
	♦ AJ82		
	♣ AK3		
West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT
All pass			

3NT North lead ♦3

The auction indicates that South has 4 hearts so East leads a diamond.

On the ♦3 lead declarer plays low and West plays ♦6 smoothly as ♦Q wins.

Now declarer is not quite sure as to how the diamonds lie. They cross to ♣K and play to ♠10 losing to ♠Q. East continues with ♣J! and now declarer is in some difficulty. They win ♣A and finesse ♥10 now a diamond switch ♦7 (!) puts declarer to a serious guess. If they finesse the defence makes 4 tricks as the fortunate drop of ♥K rescues declarer from defeat.

On this hand getting 4 tricks as E/W will be a top score.

This looks like an easy 9 or 10 trick hand. The key defensive ideas used to pressure declarer were

Ducking key honours e.g. ♦K

Returning suits to damage declarers communications e.g. ♣J and ♦7

Winning Tip:

In defence you may not be sure of your trick target against 3NT. A good defensive strategy to adopt is to disrupt declarers communications as they play the hand.

Makeable Contracts

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

=====