



# The 2026 Celtic Simultaneous Pairs

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May

We are so pleased to welcome you once again to the Celtic Simultaneous Pairs, supporting the Celtic Nations. Funds raised will be used to support bridge within your own Bridge Union, whether that is the Scottish, Welsh, Northern Ireland or Irish Bridge Union.

We really hope you enjoyed the event and found the hands fun and challenging. Hopefully the commentators managed to get it right but by now you will be able to judge that for yourself !

Anna Newton,  
Simultaneous Pairs Organiser  
on behalf of the SBU, WBU, NIBU and IBU

## Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Our first deal is a tough one for both you the players and your commentator. East has an obvious opening bid but then South will have to decide on how many clubs to bid. (For those who like to bring a little humour into the game how about overcalling INT?)

4♣ would be my choice and then West will be under pressure. The auction can go in several different ways from here but the matchpoints should go to the pairs who play in spades, where 12 tricks are theoretically possible.

## Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

North/South have enough points for game and should reach 3NT easily enough, a possible sequence being 1♠-2♣-2NT-3NT. I would be tempted to lead a heart but the two of diamonds will be a popular choice. Declarer's communications are less than ideal, but if the trick is won in dummy to play a spade to the nine and ten East will have to switch to a heart now to be sure of defeating the contract.

*Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.*

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

Where South opens INT that will be the final contract and unless the defenders make a mistake seven tricks is the limit. Where South is able to start with 1♣ or 1♦ (greetings Precision players) then a part score in hearts will be reached and that will usually result in nine tricks and an excellent score.

*Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.*

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

When two players have a good hand it is always difficult to predict the outcome. If West opens 1♠ North doubles, East raises – I would try 3♠ but

other bids will attract support – and South will have a decision, especially if East has bid 4♠. That contract will be defeated by a club lead followed by careful defence but it will be tempting to bid a seven card suit. That will transfer the plus score to East/West.

*Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.*

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

This looks simple enough – two possible contracts, 3NT or 4♥. With both North and South having a plausible diamond lead against the former, declarer should not take more than nine tricks. However, the vast majority will play in the 4-4 fit and anyone who fails to score +450 will have done something foolish.

*Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.*

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

If East opens INT your system will hopefully allow you to bid with the South hand – your side can make ten tricks in hearts. Of course you can expect East/West to outbid you this time as they have the spades. Assuming West is declarer in some number of spades North must lead a diamond to hold declarer to nine tricks. Otherwise it is easy enough to set up a long club for a diamond discard, despite the 4-1 trump break.

*Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.*

<p>♠ A 10 7 6 4 ♥ 9 5 2 ♦ 7 ♣ J 9 6 4</p> <p>♠ K J 9 8 5 ♥ 8 7 ♦ A J 10 9 3 ♣ 5</p>	<p>♠ 3 2 ♥ A 6 4 3 ♦ K 8 6 ♣ K Q 3 2</p> <p>♠ Q ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ Q 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 8 7</p>
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This promises to be a tough part score battle. I would open 1♣ as South, as that puts all three suits into the picture, but 1♦ and 1♥ will doubtless feature. In any event there will be a few twists and turns before the merry go round stops. If South is in 3♣ West will have to lead a trump to give his side a chance, but if his side get to 3♦ then it will take a heart lead from either side to put the contract at risk.

*Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.*

<p>♠ Q 8 5 3 ♥ 4 ♦ Q J ♣ J 10 8 6 4 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 2 ♥ K Q J 3 ♦ 10 9 8 ♣ A K 5</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ A 10 9 8 6 ♦ A K 5 3 2 ♣ 9 7 3</p> <p>♠ K J 9 7 6 4 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 7 6 4 ♣ Q</p>
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East/West can make all the tricks in three denominations, but you don't really want to go past 6♥. How to get there? If West opens 1♥ then the continuation 3♠-4♣-4♦-4♠-5♦ is enough for West to bid the slam. If West starts with a strong notrump then East will transfer to hearts and although I usually don't I would make an exception here and break the transfer, making it easy for the slam to be reached.

*Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.*

<p>♠ Q J 9 6 4 3 ♥ A K 9 7 6 ♦ Q ♣ K</p> <p>♠ A 10 8 2 ♥ 8 5 ♦ 5 4 3 ♣ Q 7 6 5</p>	<p>♠ 5 ♥ Q J 4 2 ♦ A K J 8 ♣ A 9 8 2</p> <p>♠ K 7 ♥ 10 3 ♦ 10 9 7 6 2 ♣ J 10 4 3</p>
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The first three bids are easy to predict – 1♠-Dbl-Pass. The West must choose between 1NT and 2♣. I prefer the latter by a wide margin and whereas you can make only seven tricks in notrumps you make no less than 10 in clubs. Of course North is going to bid 2♥ and then East will bid 3♣. North will not give in and if he bids 3♥ South will give preference to 3♠. West might double that, but +100 may not be enough for a top.

*Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.*

<p>♠ J 10 3 ♥ K 9 6 5 ♦ A K Q ♣ K J 9</p> <p>♠ A 7 5 ♥ 7 3 ♦ J 10 4 3 ♣ 10 5 3 2</p>	<p>♠ K Q 8 6 4 ♥ A J 10 8 ♦ 8 5 ♣ 6 4</p> <p>♠ 9 2 ♥ Q 4 2 ♦ 9 7 6 2 ♣ A Q 8 7</p>
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I wouldn't open the East hand unless playing a strong club – even then its pushy – but its obvious to overcall North's opening bid – in spades if it's 1♥ or with something to show the majors if it's 1NT.

I leave you to judge how clever that may prove to be – 2♠ can be made even on a trump lead – win in hand and play the ♥J – but you stop N/S from bidding a hopeless 3NT.

*Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.*

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

All roads should lead to 3NT, with North as declarer. The play can develop along many lines, but let's say East leads a low spade. Declarer wins with the nine and maybe tries the club jack, covered all round. West plays a spade, dummy wins and the ten of diamonds goes to East who plays a third spade, declarer winning and ducking a diamond. The defenders have three tricks, but any minute now West is going to be squeezed in the red suits to give declarer the rest.

*Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.*

<p>♠ A K 7 6 ♥ — ♦ A Q 9 6 5 3 ♣ 10 3 2</p>	<p>♠ 9 ♥ Q J 9 8 5 4 2 ♦ J 10 4 ♣ A 7</p>
<p>♠ Q 10 8 5 2 ♥ 10 3 ♦ 8 2 ♣ Q 9 6 5</p>	<p>♠ J 4 3 ♥ A K 7 6 ♦ K 7 ♣ K J 8 4</p>

West may get the chance to make a 'master bid' on this deal. After the auction starts 1♠—some number of hearts (put me down for 2♥)—Pass—4♥ it just feels right to bid 4♠. As you can see, it works like a charm, as they are cold for ten tricks while you are only one down, and unlikely to be doubled. I hope East doesn't spoil things by making an emaciated negative double on the first round.

*Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.*

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

If West gets to open 1NT should East raise? At pairs there is no need to press for thin games, so I would pass. What should North lead? This is an old chestnut. With no possible side entry a low heart is best, in case partner has ♥Ax. In this case a low heart allows declarer to score nine tricks in comfort, so I hope you led a top heart (the queen for attitude is the modern style). Especially if they have bid the thin game.

*Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.*

<p>♠ Q 6 3 2 ♥ 7 5 ♦ A J 9 ♣ Q 4 3 2</p>	<p>♠ 9 7 5 ♥ 10 9 8 6 ♦ 10 3 ♣ K J 8 6</p>
<p>♠ 10 ♥ K J 4 2 ♦ Q 5 2 ♣ A 10 9 7 5</p>	<p>♠ A K J 8 4 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ K 8 7 6 4 ♣ —</p>

Given a free run it is not impossible for East/West to reach 6♠. One plausible sequence is: 1♠-2♠-3♦-4♠-5♣-5♦-6♠, and you might even omit the two cue bids. A few South's will venture a first round double which may cause East to simply bid 4♠ at his second turn. Notice that West's club queen has no offensive value.

*Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.*

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

The simple question on this deal is, 'Can North/South stop out of game?' If you open the South hand 1♠ it won't be easy. If you open with a very heavy weak two then you will be fine. Finally if North is allowed to open 1♦ then it should be possible to stop in time. For example: 1♦-1♠-2♦-3♠-All pass.

The only consolation for the overbidders is that 4♠ is cheaper than 3NT.

*Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.*

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

For the second deal in a row there is a danger that North/South will reach an unmakeable game. If we ignore the possible complications that a weak two in diamonds from West might cause then you can see East opening with a third in hand 1♣ and South overcalling 1♥. If North bids 2♣ showing a good raise then South might try for game with 2♠ and North might accept.

*Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.*

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

Where East opens INT South will always have a way to enter the auction and should end up in 2♠, a contract that cannot be defeated unless declarer makes a mistake. If East opens anything else other than 1♠ South will overcall 1♠ and West will make a negative double. Even so, South should get a chance to show the diamonds and North will give preference to spades, which is where we came in.

*Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.*

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

If the bidding starts 1♥-1♠-3♥-4♣-4♦-4♠ then it will simply be a question of where the music stops. On this layout it won't matter how high East/West go, as luckily thirteen tricks are available in both hearts and notrumps. In terms of the matchpoints the best contract looks to be 6NT played by West.

*Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.*

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

This deal is going to be tricky to play, especially if the contract is 4♥. Say West leads a trump. Declarer wins in hand and might well try a spade to the queen – and that should lead to one down.

On the other hand 3NT is much more likely to come home unless declarer does something foolish in diamonds.

*Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.*

<p>♠ K Q 3 ♥ Q 5 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ K J 10 6 4</p>	<p>♠ 9 6 5 2 ♥ A 10 7 6 4 2 ♦ A 8 5 ♣ —</p>
<p>♠ A 7 ♥ K J 9 3 ♦ K 10 2 ♣ A 8 7 2</p>	<p>♠ J 10 8 4 ♥ 8 ♦ Q J 7 6 ♣ Q 9 5 3</p>

There will be a few heroes who open the West hand, giving North an easy overcall. When West passes North has far too many flaws – four cards in the other major, two aces and a void – to contemplate a weak two in hearts. So if South is allowed to open 1♥ then its just possible that the laydown slam might be reached, although a plausible sequence is not easy to construct, especially as South is hardly going to envisage twelve tricks facing a passed partner. Now if North opens 1♥...

*Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.*

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

Bidding philosophy will play a large part on this deal. After South opens 1♠ West may elect to double and East will respond INT (1♠ does go down, but East's spades are too weak to risk a pass). Now, should South go quietly? Nine tricks are available in clubs and it is impossible to defeat INT on this layout.

Does that argue in favour of South bidding 2♣? I'm not convinced, but it works like a charm this time.

*Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.*

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

One of the many secrets of being successful at the bridge table is to find the right opening lead as often as possible. If East/West reach 3NT a club lead from South and a heart lead from North will be required if the contract is to be defeated. Otherwise declarer will have enough time to establish nine tricks. If the bidding were to go 1♦-1♠-INT-2♣\*-2♦\*-3NT then it should not be so difficult for South to do the right thing.

*Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.*

♠ 9 5 ♥ K 9 ♦ A K J ♣ A 10 8 7 5 3 ♠ A K Q 8 4 ♥ A J ♦ 7 ♣ Q J 9 4 2 ♠ J 10 ♥ Q 8 5 4 2 ♦ Q 9 8 6 3 2 ♣ —	♠ 7 6 3 2 ♥ 10 7 6 3 ♦ 10 5 4 ♣ K 6
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I can predict the first three bids easily enough: 1♠-(2♣)-2♠, but then my crystal ball clouds over. I suppose a South who is feeling lucky might risk a double to show the red suits and you can make ten tricks in diamonds, but it's not my cup of tea. Should West make a try for game over 2♠? Not obvious when North has overcalled in your second suit. In any event, those who bid 4♠ are unlikely to make it.

*Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.*

♠ J 6 4 2 ♥ J 4 2 ♦ A K J 4 ♣ 6 3 ♠ Q 3 ♥ A 10 8 7 3 ♦ 8 7 6 3 ♣ 7 5 ♠ A 10 9 5 ♥ Q 5 ♦ Q 5 2 ♣ A 10 8 2	♠ K 8 7 ♥ K 9 6 ♦ 10 9 ♣ K Q J 9 4
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If the bidding goes INT-2♦\*-2♥-Pass-Pass then there is a good case for North to protect with a double – even more so when the bidding goes 1♣-1♥-2♥. With East/West able to record eight tricks in hearts you can see how important it is for you not to give your opponents an easy ride on the part score deals. You will not have to play like Garozzo to record nine tricks in spades.

*Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.*

♠ A K 10 8 ♥ 4 ♦ A K 3 ♣ Q 10 5 4 2 ♠ J 7 6 5 3 ♥ 8 6 ♦ J 4 ♣ A K 9 6 ♠ 9 4 2 ♥ A K 5 2 ♦ Q 9 7 ♣ J 8 3	♠ Q ♥ Q J 10 9 7 3 ♦ 10 8 6 5 2 ♣ 7
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Given a free run I expect North/South to arrive in 3NT, where the favourable layout allows no less than eleven tricks to be made. The fun might start where East gets involved over the opening bid. If South decides to play for penalties then +500 will be a real possibility.

*Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.*

♠ A J 8 ♥ J 10 6 ♦ A Q 10 7 4 ♣ J 9 ♠ 10 6 2 ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ K 9 5 ♣ K 8 4 3 ♠ K 7 5 4 ♥ A K 9 2 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A 7 5	♠ Q 9 3 ♥ Q 7 3 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ Q 10 6 2
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There is not much to this deal in the bidding, with INT-3NT being a popular sequence. If West sticks to basics, leading the fourth best of his longest suit, in this case a club, then declarer will be held to nine tricks. Anything else and the total will go up, with eleven tricks being possible if declarer risks the heart finesse.

*Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.*

<p>♠ A 7 5 2 ♥ K Q 6 5 4 ♦ 3 ♣ K 10 7</p> <p>♠ J 9 6 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ K J 5 2 ♣ 9 8 6</p>	<p>♠ K Q 10 8 ♥ 9 8 3 2 ♦ A 9 7 4 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ — ♥ A J 10 ♦ Q 10 8 6 ♣ Q J 5 4 3 2</p>
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If South decides to open the bidding then North is going to drive to game. One possible auction: 1♣-(Pass)-1♥-(Dbl)-2♥-(2♠)-4♥-(4♠)-Pass-(Pass). Now

North has to choose between 5♥ and double. 4♠ is due to fail by a trick and that is what may happen to 5♥ if East leads the ♣A and follows it with a low diamond. A stronger defence that requires nothing flashy is to simply lead spades.

*Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.*

<p>♠ K Q 2 ♥ K 10 9 ♦ 4 ♣ K Q 9 8 6 5</p> <p>♠ 10 7 5 3 ♥ 7 5 ♦ Q J 9 7 6 ♣ A 7</p>	<p>♠ A 9 4 ♥ A Q 8 6 3 ♦ 10 ♣ J 10 3 2</p> <p>♠ J 8 6 ♥ J 4 2 ♦ A K 8 5 3 2 ♣ 4</p>
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It looks as if North will end up in some number of clubs. Say East, having overcalled in hearts, leads his singleton diamond. Declarer wins and plays a second top diamond discarding a heart. East ruffs, and already in difficulties plays ace and another spade. Declarer unblocks on the ace, wins the next spade in dummy, plays a club to the king and ducks a club. West plays a diamond, but declarer ruffs high, cashes the king of spades and exits with a club to endplay East for eight tricks in total.

*Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.*

<p>♠ 9 7 ♥ J 5 4 ♦ A 9 5 4 ♣ J 9 7 6</p> <p>♠ A K Q 3 ♥ 9 2 ♦ 7 6 2 ♣ K 8 5 4</p>	<p>♠ 10 6 2 ♥ A K 8 3 ♦ 3 ♣ A Q 10 3 2</p> <p>♠ J 8 5 4 ♥ Q 10 7 6 ♦ K Q J 10 8 ♣ —</p>
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Full marks if you managed to bid the East/West cards to 6♣. Here is how it might be done: 1♣-(1♦)-1♠-(2♦)-2♥-3♦\*-3♠-4♣-4♦-4♠-6♣. I'm still trying to decide if that is slightly contrived – these things are always a little easier when you are looking at all four hands. For example, East might prefer to raise spades, rather than bid 2♥, especially as West will usually have at least five in this situation.

*Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.*

<p>♠ A 9 ♥ K J 7 6 2 ♦ 5 3 ♣ A Q 7 6</p> <p>♠ 10 4 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ K 9 7 6 ♣ K 10 3 2</p>	<p>♠ 8 6 5 ♥ A 9 ♦ A J 10 2 ♣ J 9 5 4</p> <p>♠ K Q J 7 3 2 ♥ 10 5 3 ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ 8</p>
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This one looks easy to predict. Either South opens 2♠ and everyone passes, or North opens 1♥ and South bids spades a couple of times. There is no problem taking eight tricks but if West leads a trump then declarer will have to risk the club finesse if he wants to emerge with nine. Interestingly enough nine tricks are also available in hearts.

*Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.*

♠ J 7 6 ♥ 10 9 7 6 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ K 10 2 ♠ K Q 10 8 4 2 ♥ K Q 3 ♦ 4 2 ♣ A 3	♠ 9 5 3 ♥ 8 ♦ A 10 6 ♣ Q J 9 8 7 6
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♠ A ♥ A J 5 4 2 ♦ K Q 8 5 3 ♣ 5 4	
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I will risk predicting that the auction unfolds like this: 1♥-(1♠)-2♥-(2♠)-3♦-(3♠)-All Pass. The importance of the three diamond bid is revealed when North leads that suit, as it holds declarer to nine tricks. A heart lead would see declarer scoring ten – and an extra trick is everything at this form of scoring.

*Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.*

♠ A 9 7 6 4 ♥ K Q 9 6 ♦ 8 2 ♣ Q 9 ♠ 3 ♥ A 10 5 3 ♦ A K J 10 4 ♣ K 10 5	♠ K 10 5 2 ♥ J 4 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ A J 3 2
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♠ Q J 8 ♥ 8 7 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 8 7 6 4	
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Will we get an auction duplicated all around the room on the final deal? 1♦-(1♠)-2NT-(Pass)-3NT-All Pass is my suggestion. South leads the queen of spades and declarer will make at least ten tricks, eleven if he plays North for the doubleton queen of clubs.