



# *Junior Squad Sim Pairs*

*Thanks to our commentators:*

*Kripa Panchagnula*

*Jonathan Clark*

*Liam Sanderson*

*Wednesday/Thursday*

*5-6.02.2025*

Welcome to the 2025 EBU's Junior Squad Sims Pairs. Thank you for playing and I hope you have enjoyed the event and will take pride in having supported our Junior International Teams and the squad system which trains them. Last year all four squads played in the European Youth Teams Championships in Wroclaw, Poland and qualified in their group for the World Championships later this year. The EBU can only provide limited funding for these teams, and it is these simultaneous pairs events (alongside much appreciated donations from County Associations, clubs and individuals) which make attendance at these events possible. I very much hope you will enjoy reading the commentary, which this year is provided by graduates from the Junior Squads of previous years. Our thanks for this brochure go to Jonathan Clark, Kripa Panchagnula and Liam Sanderson. Please continue to support this annual event, and encourage your club to participate in the future.

Patrick Shields, this year's Editor for this publication.

<p>♠9 ♥Q4 ♦A9642 ♣K8652</p> <p>♠J8754      ♠A6 ♥AJ            ♥K9532 ♦83            ♦75 ♣AJ43        ♣Q1097</p> <p>♠KQ1032 ♥10876 ♦KQJ10 ♣-</p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all <span style="float:right"><b>Kripa</b></span></p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>West</b></th> <th><b>North</b></th> <th><b>East</b></th> <th><b>South</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>With the first two bids being routine, South has a choice at their rebid, whether to bid 2♦ or 2♥. This is a matter of taste, as while the diamonds are prettier, getting hearts in the auction may be beneficial for bidding a thin game (and hearts scores better than diamonds). 2NT by North is now the least of all evils.</p> <p>Against 2NT, East may choose to lead a heart as dummy's second suit, but a club lead is also quite attractive. On a club lead, declarer will struggle to muster 8 tricks and will drift off.</p> <p>If South instead chooses to rebid 2♦, North will raise to 3♦ which should not trouble declarer.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT	All Pass																																							
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<p>♠ 3 ♥ AKQ42 ♦ K76 ♣ QJ98</p> <p>♠ KQJ952      ♠ 106 ♥ 76              ♥ 1083 ♦ 82              ♦ AQJ1093 ♣ 743             ♣ A2</p> <p>♠ A874 ♥ J95 ♦ 54 ♣ K1065</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 573 193 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>15</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>8</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 573 474 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		15	11	6	8	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	-	4	-	-	S	4	-	4	-	-	E	-	1	-	2	-	W	-	1	-	2	-	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♠</td><td>Dbl</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT*</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>3♣</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>West has an easy 2♠ opening bid, and now North has to decide what to do. While it's tempting to bid 3♥, this is a unilateral decision and can backfire should partner not have support. Double is much more flexible and allows partner to contribute to the choice of contract. As South has a weak hand, they can bid 2NT in Lebensohl-style to force partner to bid 3♣ which will be passed. A direct bid at the 3-level would show a stronger hand. In 3♣, declarer should not have much difficulty in wrapping up ten tricks.</p> <p>If North chooses 3♥, South will then raise to 4♥. This can be made with careful play, by taking a diamond ruff in the dummy. Making the heart game on a trump lead might need a one-suit squeeze on East.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	2♠	Dbl	Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣	All Pass	
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<p>♠ Q65 ♥ 42 ♦ AK6 ♣ QJ874</p> <p>♠ AK107432      ♠ J ♥ 86              ♥ AQJ973 ♦ Q                ♦ 9875 ♣ AK5             ♣ 92</p> <p>♠ 98 ♥ K105 ♦ J10432 ♣ 1063</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1245 193 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>12</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>4</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 1245 474 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		12	8	16	4	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	1	-	-	-	S	1	1	-	-	-	E	-	-	4	4	1	W	-	-	4	4	1	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>4♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Over 1♠, East has a decision to make – whether to bid 1NT, or 3♥ as invitational with six hearts. If the former is chosen, West will rebid 4♠ which has an easy 10 tricks (the losing club discarded on a heart).</p> <p>After 1♠–3♥, West needs to decide whether to play in spades or hearts. In 4♥, East can either try to ruff a diamond in the dummy, or set up the spades – which will again lead to ten tricks.</p> <p>Acol players will happily bid 2♥ over 1♠, leading to the spade game.</p>	West	North	East	South	1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass						
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<p>♠ J7653 ♥ 76 ♦ Q754 ♣ K5</p> <p>♠ Q2              ♠ K108 ♥ Q983           ♥ AJ1052 ♦ AK10           ♦ 6 ♣ A1086         ♣ J742</p> <p>♠ A94 ♥ K4 ♦ J9832 ♣ Q93</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1917 193 2103"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>6</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>10</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 1917 474 2103"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		6	9	15	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	1	-	1	-	S	-	1	-	1	-	E	4	-	4	-	2	W	4	-	4	-	2	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♦</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td><td>All Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>After a strong NT and transfer, if West has a transfer break available, they may choose to use it on this hand. There are multiple flavours of this, breaking to a strong suit, a strong doubleton (Ax/Kx) or any doubleton and if none of these apply, 3♥ with a minimum or 2NT with a maximum. After a transfer break, East has an easy 4♥ bid.</p> <p>To make 4♥, with one loser in both spades and hearts, the club suit needs to come in for only one loser. This can be achieved by running the ♣J and deciding which finesse to take on the next round, or by playing a club to the eight and subsequently to the ten (the latter being marginally better odds).</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
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<p>♠ 108 ♥ 2 ♦ AK72 ♣ Q96532</p> <p>♠ AQ9765      ♠ 42 ♥ K97          ♥ A8543 ♦ 654          ♦ QJ83 ♣ 7              ♣ K8</p> <p>♠ KJ3 ♥ QJ106 ♦ 109 ♣ AJ104</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 577 193 763"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 577 474 763"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		9		9	10	12		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	3	1	-	-	2	S	3	1	-	-	2	E	-	-	2	2	-	W	-	-	2	2	-	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass                      Pass      1♣</p> <p>1♠      2♠*      Pass      2NT</p> <p>Pass      3♣      All Pass</p> <p>*=good club raise</p> <p>After a 1♣ opening bid and 1♠ overcall, North can make an unassuming cue bid showing a good raise in clubs. South can rebid 2NT showing a weak no-trump-type hand with a spade stop, and North will remove this to 3♣ as this is likely to play better with this shape.</p> <p>With perfect defence, the contract can be held to nine tricks with a heart lead to the ace, a spade through declarer, cashing a second spade and playing a third round for East to ruff with the ♣K. Otherwise, declarer will make ten tricks by attaining the lead and finessing the club.</p>
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<p>♠ AQ43 ♥ QJ974 ♦ 98 ♣ 103</p> <p>♠ 1092      ♠ KJ765 ♥ K53      ♥ 862 ♦ AJ62      ♦ 754 ♣ K64      ♣ 72</p> <p>♠ 8 ♥ A10 ♦ KQ103 ♣ AQJ985</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1249 193 1435"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>9</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 1249 474 1435"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		9		11	4	16		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	2	2	-	2	S	4	2	2	-	2	E	-	-	-	1	-	W	-	-	-	1	-	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass                      Pass      1♣</p> <p>Pass      1♥      Pass      2♦</p> <p>Pass      2♥      Pass      3♣</p> <p>Pass      3NT      All Pass</p> <p>After a fairly natural auction, with South reversing and North showing a fifth heart, North-South should alight in 3NT. While double dummy indicates that declarer should be held to 8 tricks, in practice this is quite tricky to achieve.</p> <p>After the natural spade lead from East, North will win the queen and take a club finesse. West can afford to duck the first one, and take the second round and then will play the ♠T. North must duck now, as otherwise when West gets in later they can play another spade to defeat the contract. If East overtakes and plays a heart, declarer can still make with careful play, rising with the ace and cashing the remaining clubs, watching West's discards astutely and then throwing that hand in. On a non-spade lead, declarer cannot muster 9 tricks with both finesses offside.</p>
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<p>♠ J ♥ KQ975 ♦ J53 ♣ AKJ7</p> <p>♠ Q1082      ♠ 9765 ♥ 6          ♥ AJ10432 ♦ 109876      ♦ AQ ♣ 1064      ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ AK43 ♥ 8 ♦ K42 ♣ Q9852</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1939 193 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>15</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 1939 474 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		15		2	11	12		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	5	1	2	1	3	S	5	1	1	1	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all <span style="float:right">Kripa</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass      1♥      Pass      2♣</p> <p>Pass      3♠*      Pass      3NT</p> <p>All Pass</p> <p>*=splinter</p> <p>To the surprise of East, North will open the bidding with 1♥. After North shows club support and a spade shortage, South needs to decide what to do. Despite North showing mild extras, 5♣ will be quite tricky to make with a shortage in opener's first suit. The double spade stop also suggests that 3NT will be the correct contract.</p> <p>If West leads a low spade and the queen scores, declarer can set up a heart perforce to make their contract, and unless East returns a top heart, they will find two overtricks come to them if they dare to play a diamond towards the king. With a top diamond lead, on this layout declarer can take two diamond tricks, two spades, five clubs and set up the heart for a tenth.</p>
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<p>♠ A4 ♥ 74 ♦ A9 ♣ AJ107642</p> <p>♠ 108                      ♠ KQJ53 ♥ A532                      ♥ KQJ1096 ♦ KJ864                      ♦ 102 ♣ KQ                          ♣ -</p> <p>♠ 9762 ♥ 8 ♦ Q753 ♣ 9853</p>	<p>Board 9 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Kripa</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>2♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td colspan="3">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>*=majors</p> <p>After a 1♣ opening bid, East has a very pretty hand to make a Michaels' cue bid showing at least 5-5 in the majors, and a constructive hand. West has an easy 4♥ bid over this and now North has to decide what to do. At this favourable vulnerability it might be tempting to take the sacrifice, but North can also hope to score the three aces and South could provide a setting trick in defence. On this layout, with partner providing no defence and having so many clubs, 4♥ will make with an overtrick while a sacrifice is profitable.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		1♣	2♣*	Pass	4♥	All Pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
	1♣	2♣*	Pass										
4♥	All Pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts					
13	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
13    12	N	3	-	-	-	-
2	S	3	-	-	-	-
	E	-	3	5	4	1
	W	-	3	5	4	1

<p>♠ 83 ♥ 9873 ♦ 10932 ♣ KQ6</p> <p>♠ Q75                      ♠ AJ10642 ♥ KQ1054                      ♥ J ♦ 85                          ♦ Q ♣ A32                      ♣ J10987</p> <p>♠ K9 ♥ A62 ♦ AKJ764 ♣ 54</p>	<p>Board 10 : Dealer East : All vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Kripa</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>3♠</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td colspan="3">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>While East does have one fewer spade than traditional for a 3-level pre-empt, the extra shape and nice side suit compensates. This opening gives South a tricky decision, whether to bid an aggressive 3NT or bid 4♦. With a nice trick source and the incentive of the game bonus, South may prefer bidding 3NT. Now West also has to decide whether to pass and hope to beat 3NT or they can bid 4♠ as a two-way shot, as this can sometimes make or be a good sacrifice. Bidding seems safer. After two rounds of diamonds, declarer can play the ♥J which South must take and then declarer cannot avoid losing a trick in each suit.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			3♠	3NT	4♠	All Pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
		3♠	3NT										
4♠	All Pass												

HCP	Makeable contracts					
5	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
11    9	N	-	3	-	-	2
15	S	-	3	-	-	2
	E	2	-	1	3	-
	W	2	-	1	3	-

<p>♠ AQ962 ♥ J9 ♦ 542 ♣ K65</p> <p>♠ 743                      ♠ 105 ♥ K83                      ♥ A10542 ♦ AJ8                      ♦ KQ109 ♣ AJ73                      ♣ Q4</p> <p>♠ KJ8 ♥ Q76 ♦ 763 ♣ 10982</p>	<p>Board 11 : Dealer South : Love all <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td colspan="3">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Playing match-points, North's 2♠ bid is clear at Love All (the vulnerability that most favours competing more for the part-score). West might have jumped to a thin game without the 2♠ bid but their hand would have been borderline at best. The 2♠ intervention made their hand worse as it increased the chances of conceding a spade ruff, so 3♥ is enough. There isn't much to the play. North should not lead a black suit card playing match-points as it risks giving away a trick too often. A diamond lead is safer than a heart. On a diamond lead West will win in hand and play three rounds of trumps (not making the 'safety play' of the king followed by one to the ten as they are worried about a potential diamond or spade ruff). Whatever declarer or the defence do from here should result in nine tricks (losing two spades, a heart and a club).</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥	2♠	2NT	Pass	3♥	All Pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
			Pass																		
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass																		
2♥	2♠	2NT	Pass																		
3♥	All Pass																				

HCP	Makeable contracts					
10	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
13    11	N	-	-	-	-	-
6	S	-	-	-	-	-
	E	2	3	3	1	1
	W	2	3	3	1	1

<p>♠AQ63 ♥1063 ♦10952 ♣A6</p> <p>♠KJ10954      ♠87 ♥KJ              ♥A54 ♦-                 ♦8743 ♣K9843         ♣J752</p> <p>♠2 ♥Q9872 ♦AKQJ6 ♣Q10</p>	<p>Board 12 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♠*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p><small>*=spades+minor,55+</small></p> <p>Playing a modern style (without Strong Twos), it is usual for East to respond with only five points, especially holding an ace and with no sign of a misfit. South's risky vulnerable 2♠ forces their side to the 3-level and therefore shows a strong or very distributional hand. South's hand is about minimum strength for this and would prefer 2♥ if the red suits were the other way around. For the opening lead, East reasons that West is likely to be short in diamonds as their 3♣ bid seems to have been made on distribution rather than strength. It looks reasonable to play for a diamond ruff either at trick one or when in with the ♥A. On the ♦7 lead, declarer can carefully unblock the ♦J to keep the ♦T as a potential entry while West ruffs with the ♥J. West can try a spade to get another ruff but declarer finesses the queen so they can pitch a club on the ♠A later. Declarer can play trumps and those will be the only two losers to come. Ten tricks.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1♠	Pass	1NT	2♠*	3♣	4♥	All Pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
1♠	Pass	1NT	2♠*										
3♣	4♥	All Pass											

HCP	Makeable contracts																																				
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W	3	-	-	1	-																																

<p>♠A104 ♥10 ♦A109862 ♣643</p> <p>♠Q9863      ♠J75 ♥KQ5         ♥J98763 ♦53            ♦- ♣Q95         ♣AJ102</p> <p>♠K2 ♥A42 ♦KQJ74 ♣K87</p>	<p>Board 13 : Dealer North : All vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> </table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>I've never been a fan of playing a Multi-2♦ and so am very pleased to report that the weak two diamonds opening wins the board again! 3NT will always make nine tricks on the ♥K lead but on the normal ♠6 lead declarer will most likely make ten tricks should East play the jack (hoping their partner led from a KQ holding). There is a case for leading the nine from a Q/J98x(x) holding to avoid this problem. Without the heart lead declarer might also make a trick from ♣K.</p> <p>If North-South are not playing a weak 2♦, East could start with a weak 2♥ (leading to 2NT-3♥-Dbl-Pass-3NT). Although North-South have still reached a making game, all of 2NT, Dbl, and the 3NT bid were quite uncomfortable and risky. Even assuming North-South get these guesses right and play 3NT, there is little prospect of them making more than nine tricks on the ♥K lead.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		2♦	Pass	3NT
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>						
	2♦	Pass	3NT						

HCP	Makeable contracts																																				
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<p>♠Q973 ♥A97 ♦AJ62 ♣103</p> <p>♠AK8      ♠J6542 ♥852      ♥K10 ♦1095     ♦KQ ♣9642     ♣AKJ7</p> <p>♠10 ♥QJ643 ♦8743 ♣Q85</p>	<p>Board 14 : Dealer East : Love all <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣*</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♦*</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p><small>*=3♣/3♦=natural, length</small></p> <p>Whether you play four- or five-card majors, it is correct to raise 1M to 2M with three cards. South should probably lead the ♥Q on the assumption their partner has four trumps and declarer five. The idea, called 'a forcing defence', is the try to keep forcing declarer to ruff hearts in the long trump hand, in the hope they lose trump control. After the ♥Q lead, North could decide to duck (mistake) and let declarer win the king. After a spade to the ace and a club to the jack losing to the queen, South can continue the forcing defence by playing a heart to the ace, letting North play a third, declarer ruffing. East plays a spade to the king and discovers the bad break but can make their contract by playing a spade towards the jack as when North wins the queen, they are out of hearts and can no longer continue the force. North-South could have defeated the contract, using diamonds instead of hearts to force East; North might have diagnosed this early and taken ♥A and switched to diamonds.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♠	All Pass
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
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<p>♠ K9542 ♥ 85 ♦ K109 ♣ 862</p> <p>♠ 107 ♥ AJ10 ♦ 8632 ♣ KQ95</p> <p>♠ Q6 ♥ Q976 ♦ Q75 ♣ J1043</p> <p>♠ AJ83 ♥ K432 ♦ AJ4 ♣ A7</p>	<p>Board 15 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>South's 3♠ bid showed 4♠ and 16-18 points. To make four of a major with nine trumps you usually want 21-22 points with 'some shape' or 23-24 points without it. Here, North does not have shape but knows they and their partnership has 22-24 points between them and reasons that that is enough to go for game.</p> <p>East can lead the ♣J which is won in dummy with the Ace. With a nine-card trump fit missing the queen, the odds (slightly) favour playing for the drop instead of the finesse. So declarer plays two rounds of spades and a heart to the king which loses. So long as the defence don't lead a diamond, the contract will depend on whether declarer guesses the correct way to take the diamond finesse.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
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<p>♠ A963 ♥ 43 ♦ KJ103 ♣ Q63</p> <p>♠ K8 ♥ KQ96 ♦ Q9865 ♣ 74</p> <p>♠ 10754 ♥ A72 ♦ A42 ♣ K92</p> <p>♠ QJ2 ♥ J1085 ♦ 7 ♣ AJ1085</p>	<p>Board 16 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>No-one is particularly close to opening. Both East and West are one short of a rule of 20 opening. On top of that, if West opens 1♦, they don't have an attractive rebid after a 1♠ response. Opening 1NT with East has little merit at this vulnerability since going one or two down is worse than conceding 1NT= or 1NT+1 respectively.</p> <p>Curiously the pair with fewer HCP can actually make more tricks than the others on this deal.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>						
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass						

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<p>♠ 964 ♥ 43 ♦ K96 ♣ Q8532</p> <p>♠ Q ♥ AQ96 ♦ Q108 ♣ AJ964</p> <p>♠ AJ108753 ♥ KJ5 ♦ 754 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ K2 ♥ 10872 ♦ AJ32 ♣ K107</p>	<p>Board 17 : Dealer North : Love all <span style="float: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>An aggressive East may open 4♠ arguing 'we were non-vulnerable', but this is not a sound strategy when second in hand. Second-in pre-empts should be up to strength (as if you were vulnerable) because they are just as likely to pre-empt your partner as the opponents.</p> <p>South leads the ♥8 as any other suit looks too risky. Declarer needs to pitch a diamond quickly in case the jack is offside and so flies in with ♥A (playing the jack from hand as it's their only chance of making four heart tricks later) and plays the ♣A. Declarer then runs the ♠Q and after winning South cashes the ♦A and plays another on seeing their partners encouraging nine. Ten tricks made.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass		
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<p>♠ J8 ♥ AJ10762 ♦ 987 ♣ 83</p> <p>♠ A63                      ♠ 542 ♥ KQ8                      ♥ 53 ♦ J43                        ♦ AQ102 ♣ A1076                    ♣ K942</p> <p>♠ KQ1097 ♥ 94 ♦ K65 ♣ QJ5</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 611 193 792"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>6</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>11</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 611 474 792"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		6	9	14	11	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	-	-	S	-	-	1	-	-	E	2	2	-	1	1	W	2	2	-	-	1	<p>Board 18 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>I don't hate opening 1♠ with South; there is much more upside if you play five-card majors, though I would still recommend pass, especially at adverse vulnerability. Against 1NT, North is likely to lead the ♥J. Declarer can count: one spade, one heart, one diamond, and two club tricks, which means they need two more tricks to make the contract. They can easily guarantee two additional diamond tricks by losing a round to the king, so they win the ♥K and play a diamond to the ten. The worst-case scenario then ensues, with South playing back a heart, finessing West's queen. The defence cash five heart tricks and the ♦K but declarer has the rest. Contract made. One might think West is better off ducking the first heart to cater for this 6-2 break and cut off the North hand. However, after the ♥J holds, North might recognise that there is no point continuing to play hearts and can switch to the ♠J. Now after the diamond finesse loses the defence will have seven tricks for down one. Another reminder of why, as declarer, it's important to count your tricks.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass		
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<p>♠ J1097 ♥ Q8 ♦ A95 ♣ QJ87</p> <p>♠ A2                        ♠ K64 ♥ 975                      ♥ AK10 ♦ Q10632                ♦ J874 ♣ 964                      ♣ K32</p> <p>♠ Q853 ♥ J6432 ♦ K ♣ A105</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1256 193 1438"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>10</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>10</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1256 474 1438"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		10	14	6	10	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	2	3	-	S	1	-	2	3	-	E	-	1	-	-	-	W	-	1	-	-	-	<p>Board 19 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1NT</td><td>All Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>South could bid a Landy 2♣ showing 5-4 in the majors if they have that available, and at this vulnerability that will surely pay. If defending against 1NT, South will probably lead the ♥3 to North's queen. Declarer should not hold up the ace as their clubs are weaker than their hearts and they don't want a club switch. Declarer will start on the diamonds and is rewarded for not holding up as South wins the singleton king and cannot lead another heart (without giving away a trick). South's best is to play a passive spade allowing declarer to knock out the ♦A, and make 7 tricks (three diamonds, two spades, and two hearts). An initial spade lead – which can be continued easily from either side – is needed to defeat 1NT.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass
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<p>♠ A103 ♥ Q963 ♦ 982 ♣ 1095</p> <p>♠ J9                        ♠ KQ8 ♥ 1054                    ♥ KJ72 ♦ QJ103                ♦ 765 ♣ KJ86                    ♣ AQ2</p> <p>♠ 76542 ♥ A8 ♦ AK4 ♣ 743</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1966 193 2148"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>6</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>11</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1966 474 2148"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		6	15	8	11	Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	2	2	1	1	W	3	2	2	1	1	<p>Board 20 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Jonathan</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td></tr> <tr><td>2♥</td><td>2♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>South has too many points to consider not overcalling 1♠ despite the poor suit. With a good suit you should overcall with 8+ HCP at the 1-level but with ten or more points you should overcall regardless of your suit quality. West's 2♥ bid is a necessary evil, even though it's not certain you have a fit, in case partner wants to compete to 3♥. Against 2♠, West will lead the ♦Q. Declarer and dummy unfortunately have mirrored shape in the minors, meaning there is no chance for a ruff in dummy or a length winner in any suit. Declarer should try a heart to the queen as if the king were onside they could pitch a diamond on the queen but here they are out of luck. Declarer loses two trumps, a heart, a diamond and three clubs for two down. +200 would be an excellent score for East-West, beating 1NT by East, which would be the contract if East-West played strong NT. At other Acoll tables East-West may compete over 2♠ if West had chosen to respond with a double or 1NT initially, which would also lead to a worse score.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠	All Pass	
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<p>♠ Q82 ♥ K62 ♦ AQ1084 ♣ 75</p> <p>♠ 9765      ♠ AKJ104 ♥ 84      ♥ A73 ♦ 5      ♦ J763 ♣ AJ10942      ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ 3 ♥ QJ1095 ♦ K92 ♣ KQ83</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="73 573 193 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 573 472 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		11		5	13	11		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	3	2	-	-	S	-	2	2	-	-	E	3	-	-	4	1	W	3	-	-	4	1	<p>Board 21 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable <span style="float:right">Liam</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass      1♠      2♥</p> <p>2♠      3♥      3♠      All Pass</p> <p>North deals and passes. East opens 1♠ and South justifies a 2♥ overcall with good intermediates in the bid suit, points outside and a singleton spade. With support West raises to 2♠ and North supports their partner with a raise to 3♥. With a trump more than promised, East competes in spades to the three level and wins the auction. North should bid 2NT on the second round to show a good heart raise if the partnership has that agreement.</p> <p>South leads the ♥Q and declarer ducks to set up a heart ruff. As soon as they get in, declarer should turn attention to diamonds to take a few more ruffs in dummy. If South finds a trump switch, there is still time to take two ruffs in dummy which is enough to make your 3♠ contract, and if South does not pick up the ♠Q for you, there are three ruffs available.</p>
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<p>♠ J9 ♥ AJ ♦ K107 ♣ A108643</p> <p>♠ A74      ♠ K108652 ♥ 6532      ♥ 98 ♦ 943      ♦ J8 ♣ QJ5      ♣ 972</p> <p>♠ Q3 ♥ KQ1074 ♦ AQ652 ♣ K</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="73 1245 193 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>13</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1245 472 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</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> </tbody> </table>	HCP		13		7	4	16		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	5	5	-	1	S	4	5	5	-	1	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 22 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable <span style="float:right">Liam</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass      Pass      Pass      1♥</p> <p>Pass      2♣      Pass      2♦</p> <p>Pass      2♠*      Pass      3♦</p> <p>Pass      3♥      Pass      4♥</p> <p>All Pass *=Fourth suit forcing</p> <p>South opens 1♥ which gets 2♣ from partner. Opener now bids 2♦ to show his second suit and five+ hearts. Responder bids fourth suit forcing, and opener rebids his second suit which usually shows five cards (but may just deny a spade stopper). North is still concerned about 3NT and chooses to show secondary support for hearts with ♥AJ. From opener's perspective, it looks like partner is still concerned about spades, so they raise 3♥ to game. Declarer has ten tricks on top and is looking for overtricks; if the defence do not cash their spade winners early declarer could end with twelve or thirteen tricks (the latter by setting up the clubs – just one ruff is needed).</p>
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<p>♠ AK4 ♥ 7632 ♦ K107 ♣ KQ10</p> <p>♠ Q52      ♠ J6 ♥ KQJ8      ♥ A54 ♦ Q85      ♦ AJ943 ♣ J75      ♣ 642</p> <p>♠ 109873 ♥ 109 ♦ 62 ♣ A983</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="73 1939 193 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>15</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1939 472 2125"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		15		11	10	4		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	-	2	-	S	2	-	-	2	-	E	-	2	2	-	1	W	-	2	2	-	1	<p>Board 23 : Dealer South : All vulnerable <span style="float:right">Liam</span></p> <p><b>West      North      East      South</b></p> <p>Pass      Pass</p> <p>Pass      1♥      All Pass</p> <p>South deals and North opens 1♥. East has ten points and a five-card suit but the suit quality is poor and their shape is balanced - so East passes. Without enough points to respond, South passes and West will choose to defend with KQJx of trumps. South may choose to respond with five spades and an ace but it could get North-South too high. Today, responding will be the winning action and get you to 2♠ which can be made.</p> <p>Missing all the honours in trumps, North will not enjoy playing in 1♥ and should go down with just 5 top tricks available. An unlucky hand for Acol with a weak no-trump.</p>
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<p>♠ QJ8 ♥ 865 ♦ A865 ♣ AQ10</p> <p>♠ K32                      ♠ A10965 ♥ Q1094                    ♥ KJ ♦ KJ1074                   ♦ Q932 ♣ 3                            ♣ 92</p> <p>♠ 74 ♥ A732 ♦ - ♣ KJ87654</p>	<p>Board 24 : Dealer West : Love all <span style="float: right;"><b>Liam</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣*</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>North opens a 12-14 1NT and responder chooses to transfer to clubs. They could bid Stayman but if partner bids 2♦ or 2♠, you are stuck for a rebid. You could rebid 3♣ but that would game force the auction which is a lot with just eight points.</p> <p>Today game can be made in no-trumps with nine cashing tricks but in practice it's very tricky to get there and making the ten tricks available in clubs is a perfectly respectable result.</p> <p>East-West can make a plus score in diamonds, but are more likely to end up in spades if they do bid (West might double after 3♣-Pass-Pass) and that will go down on diamond ruffs. That's still cheaper than 3♣ making.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣*	All Pass	
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
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8	E -	3	-	2	-	
	W -	3	-	1	-	

<p>♠ J43 ♥ 1072 ♦ A93 ♣ 7653</p> <p>♠ 10975                      ♠ KQ ♥ K8                           ♥ J54 ♦ QJ42                      ♦ K1086 ♣ K98                        ♣ AQJ2</p> <p>♠ A862 ♥ AQ963 ♦ 75 ♣ 104</p>	<p>Board 25 : Dealer North : EW vulnerable <span style="float: right;"><b>Liam</b></span></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dbl</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>With two four card minors, East chooses to open his better suit, clubs. South has a routine 1♥ overcall which West doubles to show some values and this will almost guarantee four spades if you play negative doubles. At favourable vulnerability North supports partner with 2♥, mostly to disrupt opponents' bidding. East needs to show their points and here chooses to bid 2NT to show 15-17 points despite holding a less-than-ideal ♥Jxx holding. Double would be an alternative, getting 2NT from partner. With nine points West raises to 3NT. The defence kick off with a heart lead, and declarer looks at dummy with disappointment. They start by running off clubs hoping for some useful pitches before switching to diamonds. North will win the ace and the defence can cash four hearts and two aces for two down. Unlucky if you played this hand in 3NT.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		Pass	1♣	1♥	Dbl	2♥	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
	Pass	1♣	1♥														
Dbl	2♥	2NT	Pass														
3NT	All Pass																

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
5	N -	-	1	-	-	
9      16	S -	-	1	-	-	
10	E 3	4	-	1	1	
	W 3	4	-	1	1	

<p>♠ K42 ♥ QJ7 ♦ Q1087 ♣ A82</p> <p>♠ Q93                        ♠ 86 ♥ AK94                      ♥ 865 ♦ 65                           ♦ AKJ43 ♣ K654                      ♣ QJ7</p> <p>♠ AJ1075 ♥ 1032 ♦ 92 ♣ 1093</p>	<p>Board 26 : Dealer East : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>West</b></td> <td><b>North</b></td> <td><b>East</b></td> <td><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>There is a case for shirking from a weak 1NT opener, vulnerable opposite a passed partner but there are times – like here – where it turns out that you have a clear majority of the HCP. It is normal for North to be leading a diamond against this contract and when declarer wins the first trick and tackles clubs – the defence are powerless. It's natural for North to try a top heart after winning the ♣A but even if they find a spade switch declarer can block the suit.</p> <p>If East-West are playing a weak 1NT opener, South might get a chance for a cheeky spade bid, which will reap positive dividends here.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass	2NT	All Pass
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
		Pass	Pass										
1NT	Pass	2NT	All Pass										

HCP	Makeable contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
12	N -	-	-	1	-	
12      11	S -	-	-	1	-	
5	E 3	3	3	-	1	
	W 3	3	3	-	2	

<p>♠ AQJ6 ♥ J6 ♦ 9543 ♣ K109</p> <p>♠ 1095                      ♠ K74 ♥ Q7                              ♥ A85432 ♦ A1062                        ♦ KQ7 ♣ 8543                           ♣ 2</p> <p>♠ 832 ♥ K109 ♦ J8 ♣ AQJ76</p>	<p>Board 27 : Dealer South : Love all</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Dbf</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>It pays for South to get into the bidding with 11 HCP when non-vulnerable and the pre-emptive effect of the weak NT adds to the value. North's double on the second round indicates that this was not a "garbage Stayman" bid and that North-South own the hand.</p> <p>Against 3♣ it is difficult for West to avoid leading a heart and although it looks a horrible start it does not cost a trick. When East gets the lead with the ♠K, it should be clear to switch to diamonds for the defence's tricks and the result should be 3♣ just making.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				1NT	Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass	Pass	Dbf	Pass	3♣	All Pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>																		
			1NT																		
Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass																		
Pass	Dbf	Pass	3♣																		
All Pass																					

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
11		N	3	-	-	2	1
6	12	S	3	-	-	2	1
		E	-	1	3	-	-
11		W	-	1	3	-	-

<p>♠ K952 ♥ A42 ♦ Q92 ♣ A96</p> <p>♠ 87                              ♠ QJ10 ♥ J963                            ♥ Q85 ♦ KJ64                            ♦ A1075 ♣ 854                              ♣ K102</p> <p>♠ A643 ♥ K107 ♦ 83 ♣ QJ73</p>	<p>Board 28 : Dealer West : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>Strong no-trump openers will benefit from finding this spade fit and that contract has only four losers (the losing heart going on a long club) and they will score +140. Those playing in 1NT will struggle to get a score to beat that, so a player in 1NT needs to concentrate on beating the others in the same contract.</p> <p>Against 1NT, East has only one four card suit to lead but it's always unattractive to lead away from a four-card suit headed by the ace, so some will prefer the spade sequence. This is the opponents' suit and East is likely to know not to continue the suit by the time they win the ♣K. It remains unclear whether it is safe to lead a diamond – and that decision makes the difference between five tricks for the defence and six.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>										
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass										
Pass													

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
13		N	2	-	-	3	1
5	12	S	2	-	-	3	1
		E	-	1	-	-	-
10		W	-	1	-	-	-

<p>♠ 1087 ♥ J10 ♦ AJ6 ♣ AKQ95</p> <p>♠ QJ9642                      ♠ K3 ♥ Q87                            ♥ K9632 ♦ 1085                            ♦ Q973 ♣ 4                                ♣ 72</p> <p>♠ A5 ♥ A54 ♦ K42 ♣ J10863</p>	<p>Board 29 : Dealer North : All vulnerable</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>West</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>North</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>East</b></td> <td style="width: 25%;"><b>South</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♥*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>On this sequence 2♥ is showing a good raise in clubs, and despite having fifteen HCP, the North hand is a 7-loser hand and has nowhere else to go but 3♣. Getting to 3NT will be common enough, but it won't all be played by South with a heart lead – as if East does not produce that very light overcall West will lead a spade, or North will play the hand on a heart lead. If the bidding starts with 1♣-Pass then South might be bidding 3NT on the first round rather than the second.</p> <p>Declarer has nine top tricks on any lead, and the result will revolve around whether or not declarer can produce an extra one. The East hand is ripe for an end-play and if the play starts with three rounds of hearts, then East must be careful not to get end-played with the ♠K to lead diamonds at the end.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>		1♣	1♥	2♥*	Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>														
	1♣	1♥	2♥*														
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT														
All Pass																	

HCP		Makeable contracts					
			♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
15		N	4	1	-	-	3
5	8	S	4	1	-	-	3
		E	-	-	1	1	-
12		W	-	-	1	1	-

<p>♠ J764 ♥ KQJ94 ♦ 542 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ AQ8                      ♠ 952 ♥ A102                     ♥ 8653 ♦ 98                         ♦ AJ10 ♣ J10965                 ♣ 732</p> <p>♠ K103 ♥ 7 ♦ KQ763 ♣ KQ84</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 573 193 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>11</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 573 474 759"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</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> </tbody> </table>	HCP		11		11	5	13		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	3	2	2	1	S	1	3	2	2	1	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-	<p>Board 30 : Dealer East : Love all</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td><b>West</b></td><td><b>North</b></td><td><b>East</b></td><td><b>South</b></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♣</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>3♦</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>It's a close call what North should bid on the second round with this hand, both 3♦ and 2N showing invitational values. As is the case here, declarer can have entry problems in making use of the heart suit – but a club ruff gives a crucial extra entry when diamonds are trumps. With aces outside and long clubs, it is natural for West to start the defence with a trump, ducked by East. All routes lead to the defence getting just the four aces.</p> <p>Against 2NT by North, East should lead a club – conscious of the fact that partner will have ~12 HCP on this auction (opponents having 23 usually) and did not overcall in spades. If West has a five card suit it must be clubs! If declarer can win the ♣A and play a diamond to hand and then a heart, the defence will struggle to beat 2NT, but they can.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>			Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass	3♦	All Pass	
HCP																																																													
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Pass	3♦	All Pass																																																											
<p>♠ AK1087 ♥ K62 ♦ K63 ♣ A4</p> <p>♠ Q96532                 ♠ J ♥ 9                         ♥ AQJ85 ♦ 10                        ♦ AQJ84 ♣ KQ1086                ♣ J3</p> <p>♠ 4 ♥ 10743 ♦ 9752 ♣ 9752</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1245 193 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>17</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>0</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1245 474 1431"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		17		7	16	0		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	3	2	2	2	2	W	3	2	2	2	2	<p>Board 31 : Dealer South : NS vulnerable</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td><b>West</b></td><td><b>North</b></td><td><b>East</b></td><td><b>South</b></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>The shape and the scanty defence of the West hand screams out for a pre-empt at this vulnerability, but the suit quality isn't quite good enough for 3♠. Over 2♠, some Norths will bid 2N but there is no source of tricks and that choice rarely works out. On this deal some Easts will make a game try, but again the odds favour passing as there are plenty of potential losers and not enough trumps.</p> <p>Against 2♠, North has a tricky lead – either red suit could give away a trick, which makes the ♣A seem the best choice. On seeing dummy, North should cash a top spade (to avoid being end-played with it) and try a second club. Deep Finesse tells us that the defence can find seven tricks against 2♠, but where the North gets something to add to the five trumps and ♣A is left as an exercise for the reader!</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>				Pass	2♠	All Pass						
HCP																																																													
17																																																													
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2♠	All Pass																																																												
<p>♠ K52 ♥ K62 ♦ A92 ♣ K854</p> <p>♠ Q10                      ♠ A864 ♥ AQ3                     ♥ 875 ♦ J743                     ♦ K105 ♣ AQJ3                    ♣ 1072</p> <p>♠ J973 ♥ J1094 ♦ Q86 ♣ 96</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="71 1917 193 2103"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="2">HCP</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>13</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 1917 474 2103"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="6">Makeable contracts</th></tr> <tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	HCP		13		16	7	4		Makeable contracts							♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	1	1	-	S	-	-	1	1	-	E	1	1	-	-	1	W	2	2	-	-	1	<p>Board 32 : Dealer West : EW vulnerable</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td><b>West</b></td><td><b>North</b></td><td><b>East</b></td><td><b>South</b></td></tr> <tr><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>The strong 1NT openers will end up in the same contract and might well get a club lead. On this layout that does no harm and if 1♣ might be less than four it would be the normal choice of lead on this auction. A lead from either major suit by North at trick one will cost a trick.</p> <p>If North manages to lead a club, declarer can win in hand and play diamonds. When South gets in with the ♦Q, it is natural to play the ♥J and that clarifies the position in that suit for North (who also knows now that South is almost out of high cards). Declarer cannot be sure when ♥J is led where the king is, but rising with the ace to continue diamonds is very attractive as leading up to the ♥Q can come later. On this deal rising with the ace and continuing diamonds will give North a headache and they will struggle to avoid giving away an eighth trick. Winning the ♦A and continue diamonds, and later winning ♣K and continuing clubs is the successful path.</p>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT	All Pass						
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