

Commentary

for the u3a Spring Charity Bridge Festival

Friday 28th March 2025

Dear Bridge player

Welcome to our fourth national Bridge Festival, uniting and re-uniting u3a bridge players from across the United Kingdom. Games will be played all week both offline locally and online.

All results submitted will be included in the overall national scoring and the names of each day's winning pair will be posted on the [u3a Bridge website](https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=u3abridgegroup&pid=display_page177) as soon as possible once all the results have been received.

Having raised over £5,000 for charities over the past three years, we hope you'll help to raise even more for Macmillan Cancer Support this year.

Thank you for joining in, playing and donating at https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwor/bw.cgi?club=u3abridgegroup&pid=display_page177

Have fun, spread the word and enjoy yourselves.

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

What else can you do with the East hand but open it 2NT? Most partnerships can now show 4-5 in the majors in response, either through a transfer auction or Smolen (Stayman then 3♠ over a 3♦ response). East actually has the perfect hand with which to make 6♥, on careful play. Declarer wins the club lead to take a trump finesse, then captures the club return and ruffs out the diamonds. He has plenty of trump and spade entries to establish the suit. Matchpoint hogs who opt for 6NT will be suitably punished!

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

We have another marginal 2NT opening, this time for South. I'd prefer to open 1♣ here, but it undeniably works better to open 2NT and be raised to 3NT, taking the nine top tricks when the ♣Q behaves like a lady and puts in an early appearance. After a 1♣ opening, when the opponents bid and raise spades, getting to 3NT might prove hard to do. That might be an argument for simplifying the auction; I'm unconvinced. +130 will probably not score well for N/S here.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ J 4 3 2 ♥ 5 ♦ 5 4 2 ♣ K 8 5 4 2	♠ 9 8 7 ♥ AKQJ1063 2 ♦ — ♣ Q 10
♠ A 10 6 5 ♥ 8 7 ♦ Q 10 8 6 ♣ 9 7 3	♠ K Q ♥ 9 4 ♦ A K J 9 7 3 ♣ A J 6

Whether North passes his partner's 1♦ opening or responds 1♠, in an attempt to steal the hand, East will surely bid 4♥ at his first turn. Now South has a problem: if his partner passed 1♦ he will sit back and defend, but if he had responded 1♠ what can South do but double – showing cards (much better than a unilateral call of 5♦)? It is hard to see how East can emerge with more than nine tricks, but a few defenders may slip up along the way. There will be few making contracts on this board.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

If West opens 1♠ then East may be tempted either to bid 4♠ at once or (if he has a call available – perhaps an immediate response of 3NT) he might show a good raise to 4♠. Even vulnerable, South would like to bid 5♣ as soon as is practical; competent defence will give the defenders their spade trick together with their two diamond winners. Still, 5♣ is a good sacrifice against a 4♠ contract that can only be held to 10 tricks by an immediate heart ruff.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Yet another 2NT opening bid! Unless East has a way to show his two-suiter (maybe by playing Astro against 2NT) N/S will bid unopposed to 4♥, probably via a transfer, to leave North declarer. On the lead of the ♦9 North should put up the ♦Q and play ♥K then finesse against West – since East is the safe hand. Now declarer can build a club trick for a spade discard and make 12 tricks. But on a spade lead an unlucky or careless declarer might struggle to make even eleven tricks in hearts.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

East's weak 2♠ bid might buy the pot. South rates to lead a heart, for North to shift to a trump. East can make ten tricks now only by rising with the ace; if he finesses, South wins and return a trump to hold declarer to +140. Most pairs will make +170 or even 420. But if South overcalls 2♥ over East's Multi 2♦, then N/S may play hearts and be held to eight or nine tricks. (After a top club lead, West must shift to diamonds, or lead a spade and have East shift to a LOW diamond, to hold South to eight tricks).

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Whether West treats his hand as a strong no-trump or a suit opening you'd expect the majority of E/W pairs to play 4♥, with the defenders leading spades. Logical play is to duck the spade, then take a spade ruff in the East hand. Cashing the ♥KQ discloses the bad trump break, and now declarer must take an early club finesse. The favorable break there lets declarer take 11 tricks, losing only to those pairs who play 3NT and manage to guess everything, for a score of 660.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

When West opens a weak no-trump (yes, there is a case for upgrading the hand to a 1♦ opening) East will use Stayman and bid the spade game over the 2♠ response. Even if North intervenes, E/W should be able to find their fit. Despite the bad trump break, E/W simply seem to have too much firepower for their opponents. The defenders have three top winners, but no material for a fourth trick. Still, I'm sure there will be many results other than E/W +420 (diamond contracts by North making eight tricks?).

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

N/S have two entirely balanced hands facing one another, and 27HCP. That means they can make a game, right? Not exactly: the foul splits mean that if the defenders lead hearts early against 3NT they will collect five tricks with the minimum of effort. The best N/S can do is somehow stop in partscore or defend to hearts, if East gets carried away by his hand of power and quality. On a trump lead, East will be struggling to take even seven tricks.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

It may be dangerous to predict a flat board in a Simultaneous game, but that's why they pay me the big bucks! Here goes: South will open 1♥, North will force to game and let his partner play 4♥, or if in optimistic mode he will put South in a delicate 5♥. With trumps 2-2 and the minor-suit honours lying well, +650 will be close to an average, beating only those who go down in slam or who settle in 5♦. Anyone finding 3NT may get a top, but will also need to re-examine their bidding methods!

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ 8 ♥ A 7 5 3 2 ♦ Q J 6 3 ♣ Q 10 9</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ K 8 ♦ K 10 8 4 2 ♣ A 8 7 5 4</p>	<p>♠ K 5 3 2 ♥ Q J 10 9 4 ♦ 9 7 5 ♣ 2</p> <p>♠ A Q J 10 7 6 4 ♥ 6 ♦ A ♣ K J 6 3</p>
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The South hand does not quite qualify for an Acol 2♠ but it may be the simplest way to describe the hand. Whatever route South chooses, he rates to end up in 4♠, a contract that looks painless enough. And so it is, but the key to the deal is the overtrick. When East gets in with the ♠K he must play for a club ruff to hold South to ten tricks. A few pairs will make 450 – but there again, quite a few pairs will play the N/S cards in contracts less rewarding than 4♠.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

<p>♠ A K 7 2 ♥ 10 ♦ A 9 8 6 5 ♣ K 9 5</p> <p>♠ 4 ♥ A J 8 5 2 ♦ Q J 7 ♣ 10 8 7 4</p>	<p>♠ Q J 10 6 5 ♥ 7 6 4 ♦ K 10 4 2 ♣ 6</p> <p>♠ 9 8 3 ♥ K Q 9 3 ♦ 3 ♣ A Q J 3 2</p>
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When North opens 1♦ in second seat, vulnerable, I know quite a few Easts who will feel it their duty to bid spades – and some might even produce a weak-jump overcall! N/S should still find their way to game, and 3NT would be the normal spot. Nine tricks are easy, ten look very hard indeed against competent defence. A tougher question may be whether N/S want to be in 6♣ and if they can make it. Not today – indeed, even 5♣ is a struggle.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

<p>♠ Q 9 7 6 4 3 ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ 7 2 ♣ K Q</p> <p>♠ K 10 8 5 ♥ J 7 3 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ J 8 6</p>	<p>♠ J 2 ♥ A Q 10 8 5 4 ♦ K 10 ♣ A 7 2</p> <p>♠ A ♥ K ♦ A Q J 8 6 5 ♣ 10 9 5 4 3</p>
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Surely no-one would open the North hand 2♠ (don't all raise your hands at once!). If North passes, then East will open 1♥, South will overcall 2♦ – NOT an unusual 2NT with such disparate suits – but all bets are off as to what happens next. N/S may come to rest in spades, clubs or diamonds (best is a diamond contract, where 10 tricks look eminently achievable) while E/W can play hearts and make anywhere between six and nine tricks depending on which side guesses better in the play.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ J 8 7 5 2 ♥ K J 7 5 ♦ 5 ♣ 9 4 3</p> <p>♠ K Q 6 3 ♥ 8 ♦ K 10 6 3 ♣ K Q 8 6</p>	<p>♠ 9 4 ♥ A Q 9 6 ♦ A Q J 8 7 2 ♣ 7</p> <p>♠ A 10 ♥ 10 4 3 2 ♦ 9 4 ♣ A J 10 5 2</p>
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Sophisticated E/W pairs will bid unopposed: 1♦ – 1♠ – 2♦ – 3♥, the last call showing a forcing diamond raise with short hearts. This lets East settle in 3NT (dangerous with no club stop and such a slam-suitable hand) or raise to 4♥ to show extras and the ♥A. Now West will sign off in 5♦, and though East might be tempted to bid slam, he probably should trust his partner and pass. With the cards lying very well, 3NT makes 430 and 5♦ makes 400, so this will be a good hand for the matchpoint mavens.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

When South opens a weak no-trump North will settle for a simple 4♥ call, perhaps persuading East to stick his neck out and bid 4♠ – an action I like at this vulnerability. South ought to pass this round to North, who will bid 5♥ of course, and West will balance with 5♠. Now it becomes a game of chicken, with both sides needing to bid on until E/W reach 6♠, against which the defenders need to take their club ruff even to manage 500 – less than the value of their own game.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

When North opens 1♠ in second seat a discreet East will pass – why come in when your side rates to be outgunned, and the opponents have the boss suit? My advice is singularly ill-timed today, since N/S can make no more than eight tricks in spades, while a good guess in both minors sees E/W able to take no less than 11 tricks in diamonds. I'd guess spade partscores making between seven and nine tricks will be the norm – any E/W pair making a contract will surely score well.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

If North does not produce a kami-kaze preempt, East will open INT and South will bid hearts (or show the majors) after which West should just blast 3NT and dare N/S to beat him. On a low heart lead to the king East needs to find ♣Q to make his game. As South has long hearts he is less likely to have this card. An alternative, unlucky, approach might be to cash ♣AK and finesse in spades – quite reasonable if South has shown a single-suiter. Making 3NT will score E/W well...and some might manage eleven tricks.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Another weak no-trump for East, with South bidding spades (2♠ is enough at this vulnerability – 3♠ would suggest a better hand and suit). Whether North tries for game (or even ups and bids it) a lot of matchpoints ride on whether the defenders can cash their four winners – not nearly as easy as it looks! Even if they do not cash out, declarer does not have ten winners, but the defenders will have to keep their heads, by ducking ♠A, and not broaching diamonds, to take their fourth trick.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

<p>♠ J 6 3 ♥ J 8 2 ♦ K 10 8 2 ♣ A K 6</p> <p>♠ K 8 4 2 ♥ 10 9 6 5 ♦ 6 ♣ Q 9 8 7</p> <p>♠ A 7 5 ♥ 3 ♦ A J 9 5 4 ♣ 10 5 3 2</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 9 ♥ A K Q 7 4 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ J 4</p>
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Whether North opens 1♦ or INT in third seat E/W figure to find their heart fit. Once N/S find their diamond fit, the deal may turn into a bidding war. If we are talking strictly about par, then E/W must compete to 3♥, and N/S must bid on to 4♦ and find the ♦Q (or arrange a strip and endplay) to escape with nine tricks. I'm guessing that N/S may end up with -50 or -100 at quite a few tables, which will score them well enough.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ A 10 ♥ Q 10 7 6 ♦ 10 9 7 5 2 ♣ K Q</p> <p>♠ K Q 7 4 3 2 ♥ K 4 ♦ 8 6 ♣ 8 7 5</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ A 2 ♦ A K Q J 3 ♣ 10 9 4 3 2</p>	<p>♠ J 8 6 5 ♥ J 9 8 5 3 ♦ 4 ♣ A J 6</p>
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A classic weak 2♠ by West will be raised to 4♠ by East – anything less would be cowardly. Now South has a call of 4NT available (two-suited, implicitly the minors) and North has the real problem; should he gamble out a slam or play for South to act in this seat with shape and not necessarily a strong hand? I'd go low here and bid only 5♦, and apologize if we missed a slam. And this would be the right choice today; 5♦ collects 600, while 5♠ can only be set 800 if the defenders find the club ruff.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ A 7 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A Q 10 8 6 5 2 ♣ 8 6</p> <p>♠ Q J 10 9 6 3 ♥ A 7 5 4 ♦ K 3 ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ 5 4 2 ♥ K Q 10 2 ♦ 4 ♣ Q J 10 4 2</p>	<p>♠ K 8 ♥ J 6 3 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ A K 7 5 3</p>
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When North opens 1♦ (the hand is too good for a diamond preempt, even at this vulnerability) some Easts will overcall 2♣, others will pass. It is the wrong suit on which to overcall, but you do have a decent hand, and you are keeping the opponents out of the majors. Par here is for N/S to bid no higher than 2♦, since repeated black-suit leads promote an extra trump tricks for the defenders, while E/W can make only 2♠ on accurate defence. Again, making contracts may be relatively uncommon here.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

<p>♠ 10 8 ♥ A 4 3 ♦ 10 9 6 5 ♣ J 8 6 2</p> <p>♠ A K Q 2 ♥ K Q 9 7 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ A 10</p> <p>♠ J 7 5 4 3 ♥ J 8 5 ♦ A K J ♣ 5 4</p>	<p>♠ 9 6 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 4 3 2 ♣ K Q 9 7 3</p>
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Easts may reach 3NT on an auction such as: 1♥-1NT-2♠-3NT. If East bids less at his second turn, his side will settle in 2NT or 3♥. Par today is for East to play 3NT – on a top diamond lead and spade shift to the ♠Q. East now takes the top clubs. When they not break, East's only realistic chance is to pass the ♥10, hoping the jack is onside. His luck is in today, and when the defenders can only cash three diamonds, he has his game. The same sort of play allows West to bring home +620 in an inelegant 4♥ contract.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ J 8 5 2 ♥ K J 5 ♦ 8 5 3 ♣ Q 9 3</p> <p>♠ K Q 9 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ A Q J 7 2 ♣ J 4</p>	<p>♠ 7 6 3 ♥ A 9 8 3 ♦ — ♣ A K 10 7 6 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 4 ♥ 7 6 2 ♦ K 10 9 6 4 ♣ 8 5</p>
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E/W should reach 3NT after: 1♦ – 2♣ – 2NT – 3♥ – 3NT. Now East has no reason to bid on and the defenders are likely to lead and continue spades (South might shift to a diamond at trick two but that would not work well today). Declarer will run the clubs and should find a way to read the heart position to come home with 11 tricks. I'm sure the traveller will record several examples of +630 and +690 too, along with pairs attempting different games – or even the club slam.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ 5 4 ♥ A J 10 9 3 2 ♦ A K 3 ♣ J 2</p> <p>♠ Q 10 ♥ K Q ♦ Q J 9 ♣ A K Q 9 6 3</p> <p>♠ A K 3 2 ♥ 8 7 4 ♦ 10 8 2 ♣ 8 5 4</p>	<p>♠ J 9 8 7 6 ♥ 6 5 ♦ 7 6 5 4 ♣ 10 7</p>
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Another seriously flawed 2NT opening for West (the attractions here are that it might keep the opponents out, and neither partner nor the opponents will ever work out what you have!). If West does open 2NT he rates to play there for -50, or be transferred into 3♠ and come to about seven tricks. Since North has a comfortable +140 in hearts, and would surely collect it after a 1♦ opening by West, the experiment will work well enough, I suppose.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ A 10 2 ♥ A 10 8 ♦ J 7 ♣ 10 9 6 5 3</p> <p>♠ 8 3 ♥ Q J 7 ♦ 10 8 6 4 ♣ K J 7 4</p> <p>♠ K 9 7 6 5 4 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ Q 5 3 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ Q J ♥ K 9 6 ♦ A K 9 2 ♣ A Q 8 2</p>
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There will be some tables at which N/S will not bid at all, luring N/S into playing 3NT, off the whole spade suit and ♥A. That would be a painless way for N/S to collect +150 and a great score. But at other tables N/S might steal the hand in a spade part-score (sometimes doubled) and score up a painless nine tricks. All things considered, any plus score for E/W will matchpoint exceedingly well, and -50 or -100 might be a great deal better than one might imagine.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ 9 6 4 3 2 ♥ A J 8 ♦ A 7 3 ♣ J 5</p> <p>♠ 10 8 7 5 ♥ K 7 6 3 2 ♦ J ♣ A 10 4</p> <p>♠ A J ♥ 10 5 4 ♦ K 10 8 6 4 2 ♣ K 9</p>	<p>♠ K Q ♥ Q 9 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ Q 8 7 6 3 2</p>
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This deal looks like a battle of the minor-suits, with N/S having the higher-ranking suit and the balance of aces, if not a clear lead in high-cards. In fact you cannot prevent N/S making nine tricks in no-trumps by guessing both minor-suits if necessary. Diamonds also plays well enough, for nine or ten tricks, so if E/W can somehow steal the hand in a club partscore they will do exceedingly well.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ 10 8 7 5 ♥ J 9 4 2 ♦ 9 4 ♣ 10 5 3</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ 10 6 3 ♦ Q J 10 8 7 ♣ J 9 7 2</p>	<p>♠ Q J 9 3 ♥ A Q ♦ K 5 3 ♣ A Q 6 4</p> <p>♠ A K 6 4 ♥ K 8 7 5 ♦ A 6 2 ♣ K 8</p>
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Acolites may disagree as to what to open the South cards, but the bottom line is that while N/S may find a fit in one of the majors, E/W have slightly the bigger guns, and fits in both minors. While neither side can make much of anything in no-trumps, you'd expect many E/W pairs to compete to the three-level in a minor and make it. N/S do not appear to have any reason to go beyond the two-level (unless North raises one of his partner's majors preemptively).

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

<p>♠ A Q 5 3 ♥ Q 8 ♦ 10 7 6 4 2 ♣ 10 6</p> <p>♠ J 9 8 2 ♥ K 9 7 4 2 ♦ A 8 ♣ 8 5</p>	<p>♠ K 7 6 4 ♥ 6 ♦ K 5 ♣ A Q J 9 7 2</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ A J 10 5 3 ♦ Q J 9 3 ♣ K 4 3</p>
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When West hears East open 1♣ in third seat and South overcall 1♥, he can go one of three ways. He can ignore his hearts and make a negative double, he can bid no-trump, or he can pass and play for penalties. I can't say which strategy is best in abstract, but today it looks best to locate the spade fit (even the 4-1 break does not prevent E/W from having a shot at 140). N/S have their own fit, though reaching diamonds may not be that easy. +110 in that strain looks straightforward enough.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

<p>♠ 7 6 ♥ Q 8 5 3 ♦ K J 8 ♣ K J 8 2</p> <p>♠ 3 ♥ A K J 10 7 2 ♦ 10 5 ♣ A Q 7 6</p>	<p>♠ A K Q 9 5 2 ♥ — ♦ 9 6 3 2 ♣ 10 5 4</p> <p>♠ J 10 8 4 ♥ 9 6 4 ♦ A Q 7 4 ♣ 9 3</p>
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The East hand is a somewhat heavy weak-two but vulnerable in second seat that action looks reasonable enough. West should surely pass – albeit reluctantly – and now some Norths will re-open with a take-out double. Bad decision! The defenders might guess to double 3♦ and collect at least 500, not bad against the +110 they had coming from spades. Successful contracts will surely be the exception not the rule here.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ A Q 8 5 ♥ K 5 ♦ A 8 4 2 ♣ 10 9 8</p> <p>♠ 10 3 ♥ A 9 8 7 6 ♦ K Q J ♣ 5 4 3</p>	<p>♠ K 9 6 ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ 10 7 5 ♣ A K J</p> <p>♠ J 7 4 2 ♥ Q 10 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ Q 7 6 2</p>
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A skinny no-trump by East will see West transfer into hearts and pass 2♥. North will balance with a take-out double, and South can bid 2♠ now. Now West must surely re-compete with a double, showing these values. East will remove the double to 3♥, and play there, for +140 when hearts behave, even though the club finesse loses. That will probably be an average plus – though some Souths might innocently lead a club against hearts, and concede the tenth trick

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

When North opens 1♥ East has just enough to double and bid spades at his next turn. Even so, it will be hard to get West to join in the fun, so you would expect to see some Norths buy the hand in hearts. He can make no more than seven tricks unless something goes seriously wrong in the defence. Conversely, the fall of the ♠Q gives East +110 in spades, the same score that they can achieve from playing in diamonds.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Despite the intermediates, West is not worth a weak no-trump at unfavourable vulnerability. Even if East opens a weak 2♦ -- assuming he has one available -- N/S should find their heart fit, where ten tricks are relatively painless despite the low combined HCP for the two hands (and equally so in spades). You'd guess that the traveller would consist almost exclusively of results of +170 and +420 for N/S, but there will always be surprises on deals like this.