



u3a Bridge Simultaneous Pairs,
Celebrating our 40th Anniversary.

Monday 19th to Friday 23rd September 2022

Welcome to our Bridge Festival, a unique and innovative way of celebrating u3a's 40th Anniversary, bringing together bridge players from across the United Kingdom. Games will be played all week both Face to Face at local level and online.

All the results will be included in the overall scoring and each day's overall winners will be invited to nominate a Charity of their choice to receive an equal share of the 'surplus' from the donated "table money".

Thank you for joining in, playing and donating at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/donate/>

Have fun, enjoy yourselves and celebrate in style.

Steve Carter
National u3a Bridge Adviser

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Whether North opens 1♦ like a sensible person or 1NT like someone who does not think bridge is a partnership game, East-West are likely to find their heart fit and to compete to their best spot of 3♥. If the bidding begins 1♦-1♠-1NT, West will either be grateful for playing double as competitive (to show the unbid suits and some tolerance for spades) or make a note to suggest to East that they adopt the treatment in future. Any score better than -140 will be pretty good for North-South.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

East-West again belong in three of a major, although some declarers may misguess the trumps after South has doubled the opening 1♠. The vulnerability is wrong for North-South to compete to 4♦ – one down doubled for -200 will bring in precious few match points. Not that North-South are likely to bid as high as that; they are more likely to earn a good score from overbidding by East if West produces much in the way of voluntary spade support. There are Easts who will bid 4♠ after 1♠-Double-2♠-pass, and they will make it sometimes, but not today.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

<p>♠ K J 7 6 4 ♥ K 6 ♦ 3 ♣ 10 7 6 3 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 8 ♥ A J 10 5 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ Q J 5</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 5 ♥ 9 3 2 ♦ K J 7 ♣ A K 9 8</p>
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<p>♠ 3 2 ♥ Q 8 7 4 ♦ A 10 9 8 6 5 ♣ 4</p>	
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If South is using a weak 2♦ opening and doesn't mind having a side four-card major for the bid, he may steal the pot – West clearly doesn't have enough to act in second position, and East may feel that his diamond honours are badly placed for a marginal 2NT in fourth position. South may come to quite a lot of tricks in diamonds, but in any case he is playing with the house's money, since left to their own devices East-West will collect a comfortable nine or ten tricks in 3NT.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ 4 2 ♥ — ♦ 10 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ A Q 7 4 3</p> <p>♠ 8 ♥ 10 6 5 3 ♦ K Q 7 ♣ K 10 8 6 2</p>	<p>♠ A Q 10 6 3 ♥ A K Q 9 8 7 ♦ A ♣ 5</p>
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<p>♠ K J 9 7 5 ♥ J 4 2 ♦ J 9 3 ♣ J 9</p>	
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This is a slam for East-West, and not all that difficult a slam to bid – West's values in the minors are more or less completely wasted, except that they will encourage him to react positively when East's opening bid of 2♣ is followed by a bid in hearts. If West can show a singleton spade after that, Blackwood will do the rest, but even if not, momentum is likely to carry East-West to their best spot. Many match points will depend on whether South leads a club – maybe West responded 5♣ to Blackwood and gave North a chance to double.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ 8 7 2 ♥ K 6 5 ♦ J 10 9 7 6 ♣ J 4</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ A 10 ♦ K 8 5 4 3 ♣ 9 8 7 6 3</p>	<p>♠ Q J 9 5 ♥ J 7 4 3 2 ♦ A Q ♣ Q 2</p>
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<p>♠ A K 6 4 3 ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ 2 ♣ A K 10 5</p>	
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East really ought not to open that junk, but "I had twelve points, partner." Not that any great harm will come to him if he does bid – the problem will be for South not to do too much bidding of his own. He will take nine tricks in spades if he reads the position well, or if West leads ace and another heart because East did open that junk, and 140 will once again be a pretty good result, since there will be plenty who go down in game or make only eight tricks in a part score.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

<p>♠ A J 7 ♥ 6 4 2 ♦ A K 8 ♣ 8 5 4 2</p> <p>♠ K 8 5 ♥ A Q 10 8 5 ♦ J 10 7 4 2 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 2 ♥ K J 9 7 3 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ Q J</p>
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<p>♠ 10 6 4 3 ♥ — ♦ 6 5 ♣ A K 10 9 7 6 3</p>	
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Another hand on which South has the option of making a pre-emptive opening bid with a side four-card major. If he does, he will facilitate reaching five clubs, and if East-West have entered the auction he may end up being doubled there. This is a rare hand on which East-West have a paying vulnerable five-level sacrifice, since the defenders can't collect two spade tricks before West's diamonds are established. Although plus 200 is the theoretical par for North-South, I don't expect it to occur very often – all sorts of results will litter this traveller.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ Q 10 9 6 ♥ A 5 ♦ Q 7 6 ♣ Q 9 7 5</p> <p>♠ A J 3 2 ♥ Q J 8 2 ♦ 10 4 ♣ A 3 2</p>	<p>♠ K 8 7 4 ♥ 10 9 7 4 3 ♦ K 3 2 ♣ 8</p>
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<p>♠ 5 ♥ K 6 ♦ A J 9 8 5 ♣ K J 10 6 4</p>	
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If West doubles South's opening bid of 1♦ – an aggressive action but a sensible one – the deal is likely to become highly competitive. North-South can actually make ten tricks in no trumps if declarer handles the diamonds to advantage, but again the theoretical par won't be achieved very often. Instead, North-South's clubs will compete with East-West's hearts, and anyone who emerges with a plus score above 100 will obtain a fair number of match points thereby.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ K ♥ K Q 10 9 7 2 ♦ J 4 ♣ Q 10 9 3</p> <p>♠ Q 9 7 5 2 ♥ 8 6 5 4 ♦ Q 5 ♣ K 2</p>	<p>♠ J 8 3 ♥ A 3 ♦ A 10 3 2 ♣ A 7 5 4</p>
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<p>♠ A 10 6 4 ♥ J ♦ K 9 8 7 6 ♣ J 8 6</p>	
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It's not impossible that the auction will begin with 1♥ by North, double by East and 1♠ by South. West will view this with a good deal of suspicion – is that a “baby psyche”? Not to worry – West can either double for penalty or bid a natural 2♠ anyway; in either case his side will eventually end up in 2♠ and careful play will bring home the contract. If North feels compelled to compete to 3♥, East-West should double him and collect 300, otherwise they may find that they do not score very well.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ A K 9 8 6 ♥ — ♦ K Q J ♣ Q J 10 5 3</p> <p>♠ Q 10 3 2 ♥ J 10 6 4 ♦ 9 8 5 ♣ A 9</p>	<p>♠ 7 5 4 ♥ A K Q 9 7 ♦ A 4 ♣ 8 6 2</p>
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<p>♠ J ♥ 8 5 3 2 ♦ 10 7 6 3 2 ♣ K 7 4</p>	
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Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ — ♥ 7 2 ♦ J 10 9 8 6 5 3 ♣ 10 7 6 2</p> <p>♠ J 10 7 ♥ Q J 10 9 8 4 ♦ K Q 2 ♣ Q</p>	<p>♠ Q 8 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ 5 ♦ 7 ♣ K J 8 5</p>
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<p>♠ A K 9 ♥ A K 6 3 ♦ A 4 ♣ A 9 4 3</p>	
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South has a lot and North has a little, and the cards do not lie very well, which means that North-South are going to get a minus score at many tables. In bygone days North-South could have used a convention known as Gladiator and bid 2NT-3♣-3♦ (forced)-pass. Nowadays, North can try some version of puppet Stayman (3♣ asks for five-card majors) with the same fortuitous outcome. But it's not unreasonable for North just to bid 5♦ and hope for the best while fearing – justifiably in this case – for the worst.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

North will double West's opening 1♥, but thereafter North-South will retire from the fray and wait to see how much bidding East-West do. They had better not do too much of it, because they can't make anything above the two level, but either of them may be goaded by the good six-card major into an indiscretion. In these days of aggressive opening bids, West may feel that he has to rebid 3♥ considering what he might have to open 1♥ and rebid 2♥ – but there is no harm in being maximum for your actions once in a while.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

East has a clear-cut opening bid of 3♣ after two passes, and that will set North-South a problem. South, facing a passed partner, may not act, but North will protect with something when 3♣ comes round. If that something is 3♠, South will raise to four and that will make in comfort. If that something is double, South may well end up in 4♥ (which can be made after a long struggle) or 3NT (which can't be made at all). What can we learn from all this? If we knew that, we'd have learned it by now.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

Hands where both sides have a “double fit” – two suits which will provide a lot of tricks – are notoriously volatile. Here, both sides can make game in their major, and scores of 620 and 790 are likely to appear in both columns of the traveller. South ought to open a weak 2♥ (if available) or 1♥ after two passes, and West probably ought to double, hoping that East won't bid too many diamonds. He won't, as it happens – he'll bid spades, but whether he'll bid them at the four level is not clear.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

If East is a member of the Light Brigade (those whose opening bids are based more on hope than expectation) his side is likely to reach a game and, despite a reasonably favourable lie of cards, not all that likely to make it. If West is allowed to open a weak no trump, his side will end up scoring 140 or perhaps 170 in hearts, which is about par for the course. Any North-South with a plus score will do very well indeed.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

This is an excellent slam for North-South on minimal values – you’d like to be in six diamonds at IMPs (because it’s safer) and six spades at pairs (because it scores more). A natural auction beginning 1♠-2♦-4♦ ought to get the job done one way or another, but whatever way you found of reaching either slam should be worth a lot of match points, since there are always pairs who miss out.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

If East-West play the weak no trump, South may find that the auction has begun INT-pass-3NT before he has a chance to get a word in. Especially at the vulnerability, he will be tempted to bid 4♥ – and he will be right to do so. It appears that there are only five losers, but if the defence lead clubs at every opportunity South will lose trump control and not have time for a second spade trick. Still, minus 500 is better than -660 defending 3NT, so East had better find the courage to continue to 4NT if the auction does take this course.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

In battles of the major suits, spades usually wins – and this deal is no exception. East-West may feel that they have done enough if they can push North-South to five spades over five hearts – but five spades will make in comfort, so the best East-West can do is sacrifice in six hearts and concede 300 points. Anyone who judges matters as well as that will have earned a good score – probably not a top, because some pairs will bid a slam with the North-South cards and go down.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

If West opens a weak no trump he may very well steal the pot, since neither North nor South may feel that they have quite enough to take any action. But experienced pairs players know that defending INT with the opponents non-vulnerable usually produces a poor result however many tricks the contract makes, so South may be inclined to double “on the way out”. If INT is passed out North-South should pick up 150 for around an average – anything better than that will score pretty well.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Whether playing five-card majors or not, North is unlikely to be able to resist opening 1♥ in third position, and that will set a problem for East-West who may not find their highest-scoring contract of 1NT or 2NT. If North fails to do this, the East-West top will go to those who are using a strong no trump, because South's natural spade lead will give them nine tricks. If East-West do play in a suit, they had better choose diamonds rather than clubs, in order to prevent North-South from taking a trump trick by playing four rounds of hearts.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

1♦-1♥-4♣-4♦-4♠-4NT-5♠-6♥ is how I would bid the North-South hands.

After the 4♣ splinter, South waits for North to show a spade control before checking on key cards. You can make 6♥ even on a spade lead if you reject the trump finesse and play three rounds of diamonds to pitch your spade loser.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

This ought to be one of the flatter boards of the evening, with North-South reaching a comfortable 4♥ after North has shown a strong no trump in one way or another. Of course, there will be people who reach 3NT because there always are, especially in pairs events. The reason for this is that even if 3NT is not the best contract, it often scores very well – if the auction has been uninformative, East may lead a spade rather than a club, and that will generate a bottom for his side.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Those who open the South hand (a pretty horrible thing to do, but that never stopped anyone) may shut East-West out of the auction altogether and play in 3♣ after 1♦-1♠-2♣-3♣-pass. Not that this will be a triumph – those who allow East-West a free run are likely to collect 200 or so from whatever their opponents end up in, since no contract will play particularly well for East-West. Will that prevent South from opening the bidding next time he has this hand? Of course not.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ K J 10 9 ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ Q 9 2 ♣ A J 7</p> <p>♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ 10 4 ♦ K J 8 7 6 ♣ 4 2</p> <p>♠ 5 2 ♥ A K 7 6 5 ♦ — ♣ K 10 8 6 5 3</p>	<p>♠ 8 6 3 ♥ J 3 2 ♦ A 10 5 4 3 ♣ Q 9</p>
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South has more excuse for opening the bidding on this ten count, and the question of whether to open 1♣ or 1♥ has divided bridge philosophers since at least the time of Pythagoras and possibly earlier. It ought not to make a whole lot of difference – North-South are likely to come to rest in 4♥ by one means or other, since the vulnerability will dissuade East-West from bidding too many diamonds. Of course, with this lie of the cards North-South can make a slam – if they reached one, they will score a top on this board, but probably not on too many others.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

<p>♠ 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 10 2 ♦ Q 2 ♣ J 6 3 2</p> <p>♠ A 9 7 ♥ 9 3 ♦ A K 9 4 3 ♣ K Q 8</p> <p>♠ K J 2 ♥ Q J 8 7 5 ♦ J 10 8 ♣ 7 4</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 4 ♥ A 6 4 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ A 10 9 5</p>
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East-West have not been holding too many cards over the last few boards, so it is to be hoped that declarer is awake enough to cope with the play in 3NT if a heart is led. On winning the third heart, East leads a diamond and attempts to duck the trick to North – but South should put in the jack or ten to prevent this. Now declarer will probably attempt to run clubs before leading another diamond – that will set up a club winner for North, and East-West will have to settle for 400. Anything better than that will score very well indeed.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

<p>♠ 10 7 5 4 ♥ K Q 10 8 7 5 ♦ A Q ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ J 9 8 2 ♥ A ♦ 6 3 ♣ A K 6 4 3 2</p> <p>♠ K ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ K J 8 4 2 ♣ J 10 8</p>	<p>♠ A Q 6 3 ♥ 9 6 ♦ 10 9 7 5 ♣ Q 7 5</p>
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West will find himself awkwardly placed if North opens 1♥ and South bids 3♥, either preemptively as some play these days or as a minimum limit raise. If East-West do manage to get spades into the game, they may find a rare unfavourable-vulnerability “sacrifice” against North-South’s 4♥ – indeed, 4♠ may even be made by a declarer who divines the trump position. The likelihood is, though, that North-South will be left to play in 4♥, a contract that will make without difficulty.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ A J 8 5 ♥ J 10 8 6 ♦ Q 7 6 ♣ 8 4</p> <p>♠ K ♥ K Q 3 2 ♦ 10 9 ♣ Q 9 7 5 3 2</p> <p>♠ 9 6 2 ♥ A 5 4 ♦ A K J 4 2 ♣ J 10</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 7 4 3 ♥ 9 7 ♦ 8 5 3 ♣ A K 6</p>
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This deal belongs to East-West in a club part score, but it’s not impossible that North-South will have the auction to themselves, since West may not be inclined to make a vulnerable overcall facing a passed partner. If South opens a weak no trump West may use whatever his gadgets are to get into the bidding, but since this runs the risk of playing in 3♣ facing no great fit, he could still decide to go quietly. The best North-South score will go to those allowed to play in 1NT – those who compete to 3♦ over 3♣ will wish they hadn’t.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

In the normal run of events, it would be best for East-West to play these cards in 4♥. But the appalling trump break means that those who do reach that contract will be outscored by the field, who will come to rest in 3NT and lose only three diamond tricks. The moral is that if you want to be rewarded for good bidding, you will do better in the long run to stick to auction rooms and stay out of pairs tournaments.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

Here is another bad trump break – if North-South reach the eminently sound contract of 4♠, declarer will have reason to curse his luck. Mind you, if West has doubled the final contract, East had better lead a red suit or declarer can succeed – and if South has become declarer after a Multi auction, West must lead specifically a heart. But very few will actually succeed in 4♠, and the North-South pairs who play in the vastly inferior contract of 3NT will rack up yet another unwarranted triumph.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

North has a weak no trump and West has a double. If East sits for this and leads fourth highest of his longest and strongest, the penalty is likely to be 500 for a top, but I would forgive an East who ran to 2♣ and played there. If not playing a weak no trump, North-South might start 1♥-2♥, leaving West with an awkward call – best is to pass and collect 200, but I would forgive a West who doubled and scored 110 or 130 in clubs. It's also possible for West to score 120 in INT if North opens a prepared minor, but that will probably be a little below average.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

There are some Easts who will open 2NT, but the less said about them the better. A likely auction will begin with 1♣ by East and 1♠ by South, whereafter the final contract will be 3NT by West in one way or another. North will lead the jack of spades against that, with unfortunate results for his side since declarer can come to ten tricks easily enough. If South refrains from overcalling, declarer may have to fight harder for his tenth winner and the good matchpoint score that this will bring.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

South might reasonably open 2NT with this, and West will look at him askance. If West does join in with 3♥, North has an awkward decision unless playing double for takeout – but the play will not go at all badly for West, who may even make his contract. The same sort of thing could happen if South opens 1♣ and West overcalls 2NT to show the red suits – but that might result in 3♥ doubled being played by East, and South’s trump lead will do some serious damage. It’s hard to say what the average result on this deal will be, but scores of more than 500 in both directions are entirely possible.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

North-South are likely to have this to themselves and to finish in 3NT, where much will depend on the play in the club suit. Technically, the best play is to begin by running the jack, but those who do not know this will start with the ace and have a rather happier time than their more educated counterparts. If you were one of the latter, please remember not to go out muttering into the night, and do not kick the cat when you get home. This is for charity, after all.