

## The January Charity pairs, in association with the World Bridge Federation Tuesday 26th January 2021

Our January Charity Pairs, raises funds for [UNICEF](https://www.unicef.org/) to help children in danger through the world. They need so much help now, not just because of war, famine, the need for medicines, clean water but now there is the added threat from the coronavirus. Please help us raise as much money as we can – send your donations to us and we will gather them together and pass them on to UNICEF from bridge players all over the world.

Just go to : <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/wbfcharity/payments.asp> and you will see how to do it ... there is no specified amount but we do suggest £3 per player if you can manage that !

**Help us to help these children who are in such need. Please. And please read the bit at the end of the commentary about future events (and to see the butterfly!)**

### Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Predicting what will happen after North opens INT is NOT going to be easy. But East will show a two-suiter, perhaps specifically the majors. South will now bid diamonds, and West may get a chance either to bid clubs or raise hearts. N/S can make 4♦, (and also 3NT if East leads anything but a club or heart to the JACK!). E/W will struggle to take more than eight tricks in any of their three plausible fits. And minus numbers figure to be the order of the day!

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

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

Some Easts will pass, some open at any level between 1♥ and 4♥ (everything has some merit I suppose). If East passes, then E/W will find hearts, but not before N/S have found their spades. Now what? It is hard to see East selling out below 5♥, where the defenders had better cash their ♣A before it gets away. You'd expect to see heart contracts, some doubled, making at least 11 tricks here, mixed with N/S pairs conceding 500 or so in spades.

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

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

An unopposed auction for N/S to 3NT at 98.7% of tables will see West lead a low spade to the ♠J and ♠A. Declarer has nothing better to do but go after hearts, and with the suit 3-3 and the ♠Q as an entry to dummy, he has nine winners without needing the diamond finesse. His best chance of manoeuvring a tenth trick comes from West winning his ♥K and underleading in spades. Now West might get thrown in with ♠K to lead diamonds at the death for -430.

**Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.**

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

A point of bidding theory arises here. If East bids 1♥ and then competes to 3♥ opposite a silent partner, is West supposed to raise to 4♥? I'd say no if playing Acol Twos, but if not, it is quite close. It is hard to argue with East going on to 3♥, but best defence of early trump leads does hold him to eight tricks, which argues for him not doing so. Meanwhile, N/S can make 2♠ easily enough, and might be allowed to find a way to a ninth trick on sloppy defence.

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

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

East will open 1♣ and hear his LHO overcall 1♠, and partner bid 2♥. Now he must ignore the three-card support and his six clubs, and instead rebid 2NT. When raised to 3NT, East should simply pass now, and not revert to hearts. That would be correct today, since 3NT handles very nicely on a spade lead. Declarer must play on hearts, not clubs, and that way will come to 11 tricks without too many problems. Note: communications are far more awkward on a diamond lead.

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

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

Most will open 3♠ as East – though a 2♠ call would be fine at the vulnerability. Over 3♠ everyone will bid 4♥, won't they, and an alert West will double. The lead is critical; a low diamond allows the defenders three ruffs in all, for down three. The more likely ♣A lead lets declarer out for down one. Any N/S pair who stay out of things and defend to a spade partscore will do very well here.

**Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.**

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

When West opens 1♦, North can overcall 2♣, letting East show a decent diamond raise by a 3♣ cue-bid. South should double 3♣ for the lead, letting West retreat to 3♦. Might South contemplate balancing now with 3♥? Only if he has great respect for the soundness of his partner's overcalls! 3♦ handles like a dream for +110, so the issue is whether South might buy the hand in 3♥, and if so whether he can escape for -100. The jury is still out!

**Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.**

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

West's INT opening will be raised by East to 3NT, an auction that will be repeated at most tables. On the lead of ♣Q declarer should win in dummy, run the diamonds, then take the ♥K, then ♥A, and cash two more hearts when the ♥J falls. In the three-card ending West now has to decide whether to cash ♣K before leading a spade towards the ♠K. I suppose some might wrongly pitch a spade from dummy, and then get the ending wrong, to hold themselves to 430.

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

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

East might do best to open 3♣ – very unsound at the vulnerability – but a winner today, since ten tricks are easy and 11 entirely possible (on pardonable misdefence) in a club contract. Assuming East passes, then N/S will probably find their way to spades, but at what level? There is nothing really wrong with 4♠ here except that the 4-1 diamond break might defeat you (but again, the defenders could be forgiven for not finding the winning line).

**Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.**

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

The world is divided into those who pass the East hand, those who open 1♦ to rebid clubs, and those who open clubs and lose the diamonds. All these approaches make sense, but today is a day to pass. Otherwise, whatever East opens, West will find it hard to stop in a makeable contract. In fact, the highest sensible contract E/W can make is 2♥, since North is likely to find a diamond lead and hold West to eight tricks. Plus scores will be very good for E/W.

**Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.**

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

South will open 1♦, West will overcall 1♠, and North can either bid hearts, make a negative double, or bid no-trump. East may well raise spades, after which it will be hard for N/S to go plus. The point is that when South introduces his clubs, North might take a shot at 3NT and be disappointed by the bare dummy. In fact 4♥ is a far better spot for N/S, and if South were to declare it on the lead of ♠A he might even make! (A trump or club lead sets the game.)

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

♠ A Q 4 ♥ Q 9 7 6 ♦ 6 ♣ A K 6 5 4 ♠ J 9 8 7 6 ♥ K 10 ♦ K Q 9 4 3 ♣ 3	♠ K 5 2 ♥ A 4 3 2 ♦ J 10 5 2 ♣ Q 8 ♠ 10 3 ♥ J 8 5 ♦ A 8 7 ♣ J 10 9 7 2
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After North opens 1♣ N/S want to up the ante to 4♣ as quickly as possible, which should not be so hard to do. Meanwhile, after West passes he will want to find a way to come in to show one or both of his suits as efficiently as possible. He may be forced to bid the suits in turn, and hope for a suitable dummy (and he will get one). Since E/W can make nine tricks in either of their fits, and N/S can make 4♣, +100 is par for N/S by doubling E/W at the four-level.

**Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.**

♠ 2 ♥ Q 9 8 6 4 ♦ A K Q J 9 7 ♣ 7 ♠ A J ♥ K 7 3 ♦ 6 5 2 ♣ A J 10 8 2 ♠ K 9 8 7 6 4 3 ♥ J ♦ 10 ♣ K Q 5 3	♠ Q 10 5 ♥ A 10 5 2 ♦ 8 4 3 ♣ 9 6 4
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I'm reluctant to suggest what N/S SHOULD do here – there are so many possible actions. North could sensibly open either red-suit, South could insist on spades, or play one of his partner's suits, and if he does play spades there are many options in the play and defence. As to par: South should insist on playing spades, and the defenders do best to lead to the ♥A for a trump shift. If declarer guesses to duck, he can bring home nine tricks, otherwise eight.

**Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.**

♠ A Q 9 6 5 ♥ A Q 9 ♦ Q J 2 ♣ 9 7 ♠ K 8 7 2 ♥ J 10 5 4 ♦ 9 ♣ Q J 5 3 ♠ 3 ♥ K 8 7 6 2 ♦ 10 6 4 ♣ K 10 6 4	♠ J 10 4 ♥ 3 ♦ A K 8 7 5 3 ♣ A 8 2
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When East opens 1♦ West will respond 1♥, thereby effectively stealing that suit from his opponents for the duration. N/S cannot compete sensibly in spades, so may sell out to 2♦, a contract that can be set two tricks on repeated spade ruffs. If N/S could find a way back into the auction they might declare a heart partscore; nine tricks look easy enough against any defence. My guess is that making contracts will be few and far between here.

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

♠ A K J 2 ♥ Q J 10 8 3 ♦ 5 ♣ K J 9 ♠ 10 8 6 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ Q J 6 ♣ Q 7 6 5 ♠ Q ♥ A 9 6 5 ♦ 10 7 4 3 2 ♣ 10 4 2	♠ 9 7 5 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ A K 9 8 ♣ A 8 3
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When North opens 1♥ in third seat some Easts will double, some overcall INT, but passing looks correct to me. As it happens, when South raises to 2♥, North has enough for a game-try, or even an unsubtle leap to game – a view that would be well rewarded today. With the club and heart finesses succeeding, declarer can take 11 tricks, although it is easy to see some Norths misguessing spades. A few E/W's will steal the board in spades....and not enjoy themselves.

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

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

If West passes, then North will open 3♣ and perhaps be raised to 5♣ by South as a sort of two-way shot. With the club finesse succeeding there is no defence to 11 tricks in clubs. Hearts is more challenging, and many pairs will go down in heart games, though 11 tricks might also be made. If West gets in first with a weak 2♦ (not recommended with such good spades on the side) E/W might steal the board in diamonds or spades, where they can make nine or ten tricks.

**Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.**

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

South will open 1♦ in third seat and jump to 3♣ over the 1♠ response. Now all roads lead to 3NT by South. On a spade lead what is South to do? One line is to win the ♠A and pass the ♦10, then ♦9, aiming to play clubs from hand and guess hearts. That line produces between seven and ten tricks! A heart lead and continuation gives South an equally difficult problem. Relying on the diamond finesse would suggest playing clubs from hand at trick three, also.

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

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

South has too much to open 4♠ (maybe a 2♣ opening and a jump to 4♠ shows these values). After 2♣-3♣-4♠ North should assume he is facing about 8½ playing tricks, and that he does not have enough to advance to the five-level. But in fact slam is not at all bad from the South seat; on a spade or diamond lead it is excellent, on a club or heart lead South needs the club finesse, and gets it.

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

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

N/S will have an easy fourth-suit auction to 3NT by South (1♥-1♠-2♦-3♣-3NT) but making game is quite another matter. West appears to have a natural lead of ♦Q, and declarer's communications are shot. If he wins in hand and leads a spade to dummy it is hard to see how he might emerge with nine tricks. A better line is to win ♦K and play spades from the board. Eventually South will have to try to cross to hand in clubs – and the roof will fall in!

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

What would you do with the South cards facing a vulnerable 4♠ opening bid? You might pass, fearing heart losers, or you might advance. But in practice you might face a different problem today, since many Easts will double 4♠, to show cards, optional. Now will South bid on in spades or try to double a heart contract instead, for which the reward will be a paltry 500 (and a bottom at this vulnerability)? Of course 6♠ is no better than a finesse, but it works today.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Every weak no-trump pair will start 1♥-1♠-INT ...but what next? If the INT rebid showed 15-16 East might just pass, although correcting to 2♥ to show constructive values and three trump also makes sense. Today no game is that good for E/W, and in fact four rounds of clubs might promote the ♥J to hold West to 110. That overtrick in a heart partscore is vital, since no-trumps can make a comfortable 120 (though finessing the ♠J would not work well!).

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Even at unfavourable vulnerability most Easts will open 3♣, South will overcall 3♦, and what happens after that is anybody's guess. North might well drive the hand to slam, but if he does he might, fatally, select no-trump not diamonds. Alas, South's unexpected club void makes 6♦ easy today, while 6NT is a catastrophic failure. If West tries to get in the way by raising clubs, North might work out that 6♦ might be safer.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

The West hand may be too good and too suit-oriented for a INT opening bid. Regardless, even if West does opt to treat it as 12-14, E/W will still surely find their spade fit and get to game; any N/S pair whose opponents miss 4♠ will be gifted almost a clear top. As to the play; with the ♥A and ♣Q onside there is only one top loser – but also only 11 top tricks. Since spades are 3-1, and the hand long in spades has only three diamonds, 11 tricks are the limit today.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

When East opens 1♠ South will have to overcall 2♥ with his feeble suit – what else can he do? Some Souths will be left there, and they can make 110 unless West leads a diamond (in which case there would be a steward's enquiry!). A rather easier route to 110 would be for North to declare 3♣. Indeed, that contract might make 130 on a good day. If East plays spades the defenders must cash ♣A and shift to diamonds to get their trump promotion for down one.

Remember that we are planning to run other Charity events during the year – the **Charity Challenge** for 2021 will be raising money for two Cancer Charities, which have been so badly affected by COVID ... Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie with the funds split between them. That will be held from 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March with different hands each day and we expect it will all be played online but we are getting used to that aren't we ☺

In July there will be the **Kidney Research Pairs** – again we are looking at running this for a full week, with different hands each night, starting on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> and with the last day on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July. And we may include a second charity as we are doing for the Charity Challenge and split the funds raised between them. Maybe, just maybe, some clubs will be playing face to face by then, it would be lovely to think so, but in any case we can mix and match with the scoring to accommodate both online and face-to-face clubs. All part of the challenges we are facing at the moment!

Then comes November and our **Children in Need event** – maybe there is an even better chance of being back at the bridge table by then, I know we must all be looking forward to that. As ever, different hands each night and I am looking at the dates being Friday 5 November, then Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>. We don't yet know when the BBC will be doing their CiN “night” but I am guessing it will either be 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> so our dates should be just fine.

Do keep an eye on the website – obviously we will publish the amounts raised for the various events, and of course it's quite different with individuals donating but hopefully we can raise some goodly amounts for charity – the charities are all having such a tough time of it at the moment, so hopefully by doing these events we can all help a bit.

Thank you for joining us, thank you for your support – really truly we appreciate it so much – and here's a lovely butterfly to say thank you !

Best wishes

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