

The ECatsBridge Summer Pairs Tuesday 4th July 2023



Thank you so much for joining us for our Summer Charity Pairs in aid of Kidney Research UK and the British Heart Foundation both of which are charities that need as much funding as possible in order to continue their work.

Our thanks go to the commentators for the event – Julian Pottage for the Monday and Wednesday commentaries, Mark Horton did the ones for Tuesday and Thursday and Mark Mortimer wrote the Friday commentary ... and by now you will know if they got it right!

We hope you enjoyed the hands and that they weren't too challenging – and whether or not you did well at least you can at least rest assured that you are helping to support two great charities.

The results are at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/default.asp> and if you want more general information about the event and a link to make donations then just go to : <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/Summer-Pairs/default.asp>

Board 1	♠ K932	Dealer N
	♥ 105	Vul: None
	♦ 10	
	♣ KQJ1043	
♠ QJ5		♠ 1074
♥ K92		♥ Q8743
♦ A653		♦ 942
♣ A86		♣ 72
	♠ A86	
	♥ AJ6	
	♦ KQJ87	
	♣ 95	

Board 2	♠ K2	Dealer E
	♥ J107532	Vul: N-S
	♦ AK62	
	♣ A	
♠ 876		♠ AQ1043
♥ AK84		♥ 96
♦ 84		♦ 75
♣ QJ102		♣ K954
	♠ J95	
	♥ Q	
	♦ QJ1093	
	♣ 8763	

There is something to be said for opening the North hand 3♣, despite the lack of a seventh card in the suit and the presence of four-card major. Were North to go down that route the lack of a fitting card in clubs points towards a pass by South. Were West to protect with 3NT a double from South results in a significant penalty.

Where North passes initially, and South opens 1NT (13-15/14-16/15-17) North will look for a spade fit before raising to 2NT/3NT.

If South opens 1♦ North might decide to respond 1♠ and then raise a 1NT rebid to 3NT.

3NT cannot be defeated. Indeed, declarer is a favourite to score at least 10 tricks unless West starts by leading a spade.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	4	3	1	3	3
S	4	3	1	3	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Some players looking at East's cards will be able to open 2♠, promising spades and a minor, while others might opt for an attenuated weak two in spades or a Multi 2♦. West might make a defensive raise to 3♠ or use a Pass or correct 2♠/3♠ after 2♦.

When East does not open West may occasionally be able to start with a 10-12 INT. If North doubles East has an interesting decision – bidding 2♠ is the down the middle approach. If North prefers to overcall, say 2♣ to show hearts and another suit then East is likely to come in with 2♠. At this point a bid of 2NT by South would clearly be looking for a minor suit fit and score a significant goal.

When West passes initially, North opens 1♥ and East overcalls 1♠. If West passes North might try doubling, intending to rebid 2♦ over a possible 2♣ from South. If West raises defensively to 2♠ North might be less inclined to double.

There is a beautiful double dummy defence to a spade contract. The defenders need to start with a club, North then underleading diamonds

twice to score two club ruffs after which South gets a trump to hold declarer to seven tricks.

If NS play in diamonds declarer has more than one way to score 10 tricks, the simplest being to play to cross ruff hearts and clubs.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	4	2	-	-
S	-	4	2	-	-
E	2	-	-	1	1
W	2	-	-	1	1

Board 3 ♠ 72 Dealer S
 ♥ K63 Vul: E-W
 ♦ K753
 ♣ 9874

♠ AJ984	♠ KQ65
♥ AQJ4	♥ AQ74
♦ AKQ5	♦ 92
	♣ J102

♠ 103
 ♥ J109852
 ♦ 1086
 ♣ 63

I doubt many people will open the South hand, but I confess I would be tempted to try 3♥. With North raising to 4♥ after a double by West it would at least deprive EW of valuable bidding space.

Given a free run, there is every chance that EW will find a route to 7♠. If West opens 2♣ once the spade fit comes to light East is likely to be as encouraging as possible. For example, after 2♣*-2♦*-2♠-3♠-4♣*-4♥*-5♦ it would be reasonable for East to jump to 7♠.

The same is true where West starts with a Strong 1♣, a popular response for East being 1♠ to show a balanced positive. With spades 2-2 there is nothing to the play.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	6	5	2	7	6
W	6	5	3	7	6

Board 4 ♠ KQ83 Dealer W
 ♥ 54 Vul: Both
 ♦ AJ1095
 ♣ 102

♠ 107	♠ 642
♥ A1073	♥ J2
♦ K4	♦ Q873
♣ Q8754	♣ AK93

♠ AJ95
 ♥ KQ986
 ♦ 62
 ♣ J6

If North opens 1♦ (very much the modern style) South responds 1♥ and raises North's rebid of 1♠ to 3♠.

If North elects to pass and South opens 1♥ North responds 1♠ and then passes South's raise to 2♠.

If East opens 1♣ third in hand South overcalls 1♥. If West jumps to 3♣ North might elect to double which works well when South bids 3♠.

Assuming nothing unforeseen occurs, declarer should take nine tricks in spades.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	2	1	3	-
S	-	2	1	3	-
E	3	-	-	-	1
W	3	-	-	-	1

Board 5 ♠ J764 Dealer N
 ♥ 1053 Vul: N-S
 ♦ Q87
 ♣ 1063

♠ 85	♠ AK10932
♥ Q98762	♥ J
♦ J642	♦ 103
♣ 5	♣ AK94

♠ Q
 ♥ AK4
 ♦ AK95
 ♣ QJ872

When East opens 1♠ South doubles and North has the sort of hand you see in textbooks. The classic approach is to respond 2♣. When East rebids 2♠ South can raise to 3♣, ending the auction.

Were East to start with a Strong 1♣ the standard action for South is to pass and then come in on the next round, promising a hand with real values as opposed to the obstructive ones that an immediate overcall would suggest (notwithstanding the vulnerability).

The play in 3♣ is not complicated, declarer easily negotiating the trump position. Even if the defenders don't present declarer with a ninth trick in the diamond suit, a four-card ending can be reached where West has ♠5 ♥Q9 ♦J. Then declarer's last trump will force West to discard the ♠5 after which a diamond exit forces a lead into the split heart tenace.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	2	-	-	-
S	3	2	-	-	-
E	-	-	-	2	-
W	-	-	-	2	-

Board 6

♠ J76	Dealer E
♥ Q10742	Vul: E-W
♦ J76	
♣ 62	
♠ 1085	♠ AK932
♥ KJ93	♥ A6
♦ Q42	♦ 9
♣ K43	♣ AJ875
♠ Q4	
♥ 85	
♦ AK10853	
♣ Q109	

If East opens 1♠ South overcalls 2♦. If West doubles East rebids 3♣ and the spade game should be reached.

If East starts with a natural 1♣ and South overcalls 1♦ can bid INT. Once East introduces the spade suit it should not be difficult to arrive in 4♠.

Where East's 1♣ opening is Strong South may have a conventional option, perhaps overcalling 2♣ to show diamonds or the majors. When West doubles North bids 2♦ and when East continues with 2♠ EW are on route to the 10 trick game.

Unless something unusual happens there are three tricks to lose in a spade contract.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	1	1	4	2
W	4	1	2	4	2

Board 7

♠ AK2	Dealer S
♥ J8	Vul: Both
♦ K7542	
♣ 1083	
♠ J74	♠ Q853
♥ Q74	♥ A10532
♦ 1093	♦ 86
♣ Q962	♣ K4
♠ 1096	
♥ K96	
♦ AQJ	
♣ AJ75	

If South opens INT (13-15/14-16/15-17) North has enough to invite/raise to game.

If South starts with 1♣ North responds 1♦. If East decides to double and South rebids INT North will go on to game. Were South to redouble West can pass and leave NS to decide how to continue over East's 1♥.

Were South to open 1♦ one option for North would be to make an inverted raise to 2♦. If South then rebids 2♥ North continues with 2♠ and South becomes declarer in 3NT.

There should be no problem in securing nine tricks, but under certain circumstances declarer might emerge with 10. If West leads a low heart declarer can out up dummy's jack, forcing East to win. Then declarer can duck the second round of hearts, win the next one and cash five diamonds before playing a club. East's best shot then is to play the king, hoping that declarer will assume that is from ♣KQ. It might work, perhaps depending on East's action during the auction.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	4	-	2	3
S	3	4	-	2	3
E	-	-	1	-	-
W	-	-	1	-	-

promising both minors when West would have an easy 3♦ response.

Where East passes and South opens 1♥ North will, depending on system, respond 1♠ or raise to 2♥. If East then decides to compete with 2NT it will turn out well.

If East does not overcall and South rebids 1NT West might find a diamond lead.

If South starts with 1NT that will probably conclude the auction although were West to risk 2♣ for the majors East would happily pass.

If NS are defending 3♦ and North leads a heart South wins, but must then switch to spades to ensure the defenders collect four tricks.

If South is in 1NT and West leads a spade declarer will be in good shape, especially if it is a second highest eight. By dropping East's ♠Q10 declarer will be sure of eight tricks in the major suits and will only need a defensive slip to get up to nine.

A diamond lead looks good, but East has to duck, which is difficult but not impossible. Then when West gets in with the ♥K the defenders can cash four diamonds after which the ♣Q will ensure one down.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	1	-
S	-	-	2	1	-
E	2	3	-	-	-
W	2	3	-	-	-

Board 11

♠ A10874	Dealer S
♥ Q10932	Vul: None
♦ Q	
♣ Q9	
♠ Q532	♠ KJ96
♥ J84	♥ 7
♦ K82	♦ J6543
♣ K83	♣ 765
♠	
♥ AK65	
♦ A1097	
♣ AJ1042	

If South opens 1♣ North responds 1♥ when one possibility for South is to jump to 3♠, promising a control in the suit and four-card

support. If North then cue bids 4♦ South could continue with 4♠, but knowing that North does not have a club control a direct 6♥ is simpler.

If South's 1♣ is Strong, North responds 1♥ and South can then allow the auction to develop by rebidding 2♥ (which for some pairs will be a trump asking bid, North responding 2NT to show five to one of the top three honours). I don't see South stopping short of 6♥.

There is nothing to the play, declarer losing only to West's ♣K.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	4	1	6	2	3
S	4	1	6	2	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 12

♠ 72	Dealer W
♥ Q1074	Vul: N-S
♦ J53	
♣ J1093	
♠ AQ10863	♠ 94
♥ K5	♥ J932
♦ AQ	♦ 109764
♣ K54	♣ Q2
♠ KJ5	
♥ A86	
♦ K82	
♣ A876	

If West opens 1♠ and East passes South might be tempted to bid 1NT. If West doubles that North has nowhere obvious to go.

If West starts with a Strong 1♣ East bids 1♦ and passes West's 1♠, which should be the final contract.

Defending a notrump contract a spade lead from West will see declarer win and play a heart. If West fails to take the king and clear the spades, declarer can win with dummy's queen and play the ♣J which should ensure seven tricks. Note that if West defends correctly declarer must cross to dummy with the ♥Q and run the ♣J, subsequently discarding the ♥A (or a club) on the run of the spades to get six tricks. Cashing the ♥A first will result in declarer being squeezed, eventually being

thrown in with the ♣A to lead into West's diamond tenace.

If West plays in spades, it should be possible to secure nine tricks. Were South to win a club lead from North and switch to the ♠5 declarer could make an extra trick by letting it run to dummy's nine and then taking the diamond finesse.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	2	1	3	-
W	-	2	1	3	-

Board 13 Dealer N
Vul: Both

♠ KJ94	♠ 105
♥ J1043	♥ Q976
♦ K2	♦ AQ63
♣ Q102	♣ 654

♠ 63	♠ AQ872
♥ A852	♥ K
♦ J984	♦ 1075
♣ A93	♣ KJ87

When South opens 1♠ North raises according to system. With the singleton ♥K being of uncertain value, South has no reason to look for a close game.

Barring some unforeseen incident nine tricks should be the limit in spades.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	-	-	3	-
S	2	-	-	3	-
E	-	2	1	-	1
W	-	2	1	-	1

Board 14 Dealer E
Vul: None

♠ Q1076	♠ AJ54
♥ KJ63	♥
♦ 1064	♦ AKQ82
♣ AK	♣ 10752

♠ 92	♠ K83
♥ A1052	♥ Q9874
♦ J973	♦ 5
♣ QJ8	♣ 9643

If East opens 1♦ West responds 1♥ and then rebids 2♦ over East's 1♠. There is no obvious way for NS to get involved, although anyone brave enough to overcall 1♥ with South's cards is likely to do well, even when North raises to game.

If EW play in diamonds the defenders should collect three tricks, while if NS are in hearts declarer always has eight tricks and get up to nine with a good guess in the spade suit.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	3	1	-
S	-	-	3	1	-
E	2	4	-	-	1
W	2	4	-	-	1

Board 15 Dealer S
Vul: N-S

♠ Q963	♠ K42
♥ J42	♥ 95
♦ AJ9	♦ 762
♣ Q82	♣ K10976

♠ 875	♠ AJ10
♥ A63	♥ KQ1087
♦ K10843	♦ Q5
♣ J4	♣ A53

If South opens 1♥ North responds 1♠ and then has a decision over a possible INT rebid. With a flat hand there is a lot to be said for choosing the nine-trick game.

The same is true if South opens INT.

If South starts with a Strong 1♣ North responds according to system – here a natural

INT works well, as it guards against a possibly awkward club lead.

If West leads a diamond against 3NT declarer will have an easy route to 12 tricks, forcing out the ♥A and picking up East's spades. The interesting situation is where West starts with a passive spade lead. Declarer can force out the ♥A and if West switches to the ♣J declarer wins with the ace and plays the ♦Q for the king and ace. If declarer then cashes winners a two card ending will be reached where declarer will know that East has the ♣K and a diamond left. If declarer takes the odds play in diamonds by finessing, 12 tricks will be scored.

Well done if you found the lead of the ♣J.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	3	6	6	6
S	2	3	5	5	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 16

♠ K9	Dealer W
♥ QJ43	Vul: E-W
♦ 8764	
♣ AJ5	
♠ QJ102	♠ 87653
♥ K52	♥ 98
♦ J10	♦ K92
♣ 10986	♣ 432
♠ A4	
♥ A1076	
♦ AQ53	
♣ KQ7	

If North decides to open the bidding South may be unable to resist the temptation to drive to slam unless North's choice is a 10-12 INT.

If South opens 1♦ North responds 1♥ and must then make a decision over South's 4♥ rebid. Say North decides to continue with 4♠. When South bids 5♣ and North can only bid 5♥ denying a diamond control South should let matters rest.

Where South starts with an Acol style 1♥ North responds according to system when it should be possible for NS to stop short of slam.

After a Strong 1♣ from South the heart fit should soon be located when as before the issue will revolve around a possible slam. On this layout there are 11 tricks in hearts.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	5	5	2	4
S	3	5	5	2	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 17

♠ 7	Dealer N
♥ KQJ104	Vul: None
♦ Q76	
♣ 9865	
♠ A953	♠ KJ82
♥ A85	♥ 76
♦ 53	♦ AK942
♣ AKQ3	♣ J2
♠ Q1064	
♥ 932	
♦ J108	
♣ 1074	

If North opens 2♥ (perhaps promising hearts and a minor) and East decides to double West will immediately think in terms of a possible slam. If West responds 3♥ and East rebids 3♠ West can continue with 4♣ or perhaps ask for keycards.

Where North does not open, East starts with 1♦ and raises West's 1♠ response to 2♠. At the very least West will make some overtures towards a possible slam.

How should declarer play 6♠ on a heart lead?

In the absence of any opposition bidding declarer will win and might cash the top spades intending to claim if the suit breaks 3-2.

If North has bid, 2♥ showing hearts and a minor declarer might adopt a different strategy, playing three rounds of clubs to get rid of a heart and then adopting a classical safety play in the trump suit, crossing to the ♠K and then playing a second spade to the nine. As the cards lie this will bring home the contract, but only if declarer follows the right order of play which depends on how many clubs/diamonds North holds. The clue may come on first round of clubs, as most players will signal to show their

length in the suit. Then declarer will know to play on diamonds after drawing a third round of trumps.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	5	2	6	4
W	5	5	2	6	4

Board 18

♠ 42	Dealer E
♥ AQJ87	Vul: N-S
♦ Q10	
♣ Q876	
♠ AJ1096	♠ KQ853
♥ 4	♥ K92
♦ A732	♦ 865
♣ K93	♣ 105
	♠ 7
	♥ 10653
	♦ KJ94
	♣ AJ42

If West opens 1♠ East raises. In practice I suspect that East will often bid 4♠.

It's possible that North might overcall, although the quality of the heart suit and the vulnerability argue against it. It catches South with a decent hand and after 1♠-(2♥)-4♠ South might bid 5♥. That will turn out very badly if East doubles, but that is probably not necessary, for as long as East leads a top spade and switches to a club the defenders should collect five tricks.

If EW play in spades nine tricks are the limit.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	-	2	-	-
S	2	-	2	-	-
E	-	1	-	3	1
W	-	1	-	3	1

Board 19

♠ KJ652	Dealer S
♥ 73	Vul: E-W
♦ 9654	
♣ 72	
♠ Q1074	♠ A83
♥ K10984	♥ A5
♦ K1073	♦ Q8
♣	♣ AQJ943
	♠ 9
	♥ QJ62
	♦ AJ2
	♣ K10865

If South opens 1♣ West might be tempted to overcall 1♥. North has no reason to bid and East will either settle for 3NT or keep the auction going before deciding between the nine trick game and 4♥.

If South opens a Precision style 1♦ West can still overcall, but now East will probably start with 2♦. Even so, 3NT is still the likely outcome.

Where South starts with a limited 2♣ East will have an interesting decision if the next two players pass. I have already spent more than 24 hours wondering what to do, which is a lot longer than the contestants have! If East decides to double and West bids 4♥ a playable contract will have been reached. 3NT is a possibility, but is certainly risky when you know your main suit probably contains a couple of losers. (Perhaps West should bid 4♣ over 3NT?)

If South decides to pass as dealer West might open with something conventional, the options including 2♥ to show hearts and a minor, or hearts and another suit, or even both majors – *you pays your money and you takes your choice.*

There is not much to choose between 3NT and 4♥. A key factor will be how declarer tackles the heart suit. In isolation the best line is to cash the ♥AK, which yields four tricks 64.4% of the time.

If East is in 3NT and gets a club lead, following that line is not guaranteed to deliver nine tricks, as playing a third heart allows South to win and switch to the ♠9 when the defenders should collect five tricks. If declarer decides to play a heart to the ten on the second round of the suit, then nine tricks are very likely and even 10 are not out of the question.

If West is in 4♥ and North leads a club, declarer's first decision is whether to win with dummy's ace or put in the queen. This is a really tough hand to play, and the best line is unclear. If declarer follows the second alternative South plays the ♣K and a ruff is followed by a diamond to the queen and ace. If South switches to the ♠9 it is covered in turn by the ten, jack and ace. Now comes a second diamond. If declarer wins with the king, ruffs a diamond, cashes the ♥A, pitches a spade on the ♣A and ruffs a club South can then be endplayed with two rounds of hearts, having to lead into dummy's ♣9 at the end. Not an easy line of play to find!

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	3	3	4	4	3
W	3	3	4	4	3

Board 20

♠ Q1096	Dealer W
♥ 65	Vul: Both
♦ J8742	
♣ K3	
♠ 7	♠ AKJ85
♥ AQ10	♥ K942
♦ Q1093	♦ 65
♣ AQ987	♣ J5
♠ 432	
♥ J873	
♦ AK	
♣ 10642	

If West opens 1♣ East responds 1♠. At one time rebidding INT with a singleton in partner's suit was considered to be a poor choice, but times have changed so that will certainly be an option for some partnerships. Whatever West does 3NT is likely to be the final contract.

If North leads a diamond against 3NT South is likely to cash the ♦KA and switch to a club. North can win with the king, but declarer has the rest.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	2	4	3	4
W	4	2	4	3	4

Board 21

♠ KQ5	Dealer N
♥ Q763	Vul: N-S
♦ A4	
♣ AJ98	
♠ A1032	♠ 98764
♥ AK9	♥ J5
♦ KJ2	♦ 10965
♣ 1074	♣ K5
♠ J	
♥ 10842	
♦ Q873	
♣ Q632	

If North opens INT (14-16/15-17) South has nothing to say. If West doubles East will bid 2♠. An adventurous South might double that for takeout, North bidding 3♣ (Passing is perhaps an option, but there is a lot to be said for Edgar Kaplan's dictum, 'Takeout doubles should be taken out!'). If West goes on to 3♠ (or finds a double) EW will have won the bidding battle.

If North starts with an Acol style 1♥ South raises to 2♥. If West elects to double, East's 2♠ might end proceedings.

Where North opens 1♣ the auction will turn on how South and West react, which is not easy to predict. If South elects to pass West's options will include double, 1♠ and INT.

It is clear that if EW play in spades they should secure nine tricks.

If North is left to play in INT a spade lead puts the defenders on track for seven tricks.

If NS play in clubs eight tricks should be the limit.

If NS play in hearts, then a diamond lead from East is best. Declarer wins with the ace and plays a spade, West winning and switching to a club. That should ensure that East scores a club ruff, putting the defenders on course for six tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	-	1	-	-
S	2	-	1	-	-
E	-	1	-	3	-
W	-	1	-	3	-

Board 22

♠ A6543	Dealer E
♥ K1087	Vul: E-W
♦ 84	
♣ Q6	

♠ J2	♠ K98
♥ QJ965	♥ AJ532
♦ AKJ542	♦ A7
	♣ 1087

♠ Q107
♥ Q964
♦ K1032
♣ 93

If East opens 1♥ West responds 2♣ and rebids 3♦ over East's 2♥, leading to 3NT.

If East starts with 1NT West might begin by transferring to clubs and then bidding 3♦, letting matters rest when East then bids 3NT.

If South leads the ♠7 against 3NT North wins with the ace and returns a spade, declarer winning with the king. If declarer cashes the top clubs nine tricks are certain. If declarer reads the spade position it is safe to play two rounds of diamonds after winning with the ♠K, which secures a useful overtrick.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	5	5	-	-	3
W	5	5	-	-	3

Board 23

♠ QJ72	Dealer S
♥ AK7	Vul: Both
♦ A	
♣ KQJ86	

♠ A93	♠ K1085
♥ J653	♥ Q98
♦ J876	♦ 42
♣ A2	♣ 9754

♠ 64
♥ 1042
♦ KQ10953
♣ 103

A weak 2♦ opening will be the choice of some players holding South's cards when North is more or less certain to take a shot at 3NT.

Where South passes and North opens 1♣ a response of 1♦ might see North rebid 2♠ and continue with 3NT over South's 3♦.

Where an opening bid of 1♣ is Strong and South responds 1♦ North can rebid 2♣ and then bid 2♠ over South's 2♦. If South continues with 3♦ North might get the message and pass, but if South bids 3♣ then North is likely to try 3NT.

If East leads a spade against 3NT declarer can win the third round of the suit, unblock the ♦A and play a club to the ten, but when West proves to have the ace there will only be eight tricks.

If South plays in diamonds West needs to find a heart lead to be one step ahead. If declarer wins in dummy, unblocks the ♦A and plays a club to the ten West wins and plays a second heart to dummy. Declarer plays two top clubs pitching a heart but West ruffs and must now cash the ♠A and exit with a spade, East winning and playing a club to promote West's ♦J into the setting trick.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	2	1	1	2
S	2	2	1	1	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 24 ♠ KQ97 Dealer W
 ♥ 32 Vul: None
 ♦ K7642
 ♣ 62

♠ AJ86 ♠ 43
 ♥ KJ10 ♥ Q98765
 ♦ 98 ♦ J53
 ♣ KJ87 ♣ 109

♠ 1052
 ♥ A4
 ♦ AQ10
 ♣ AQ543

If West opens 1NT (12-14/13-15) North is not strong enough to get involved and East transfers to hearts. If South then bids 2♥ (the equivalent of a takeout double) West can double to show three hearts and North will bid 2♠, bringing the auction to a close unless South continues with 2NT.

If West starts with 1♣ North might overcall 1♦, but it can backfire when partner has a good hand. Here South might bid 2♣ and then try 3NT over North's rebid.

If North plays in spades nine tricks should be easy enough, declarer using dummy's entries to play trumps (there is no need to finesse against the jack) and then playing on diamonds, allowing EW to score two trump tricks.

Although 3NT is theoretically too high, only a heart lead will prevent declarer from securing at least nine tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	4	-	3	1
S	2	4	-	3	1
E	-	-	2	-	-
W	-	-	2	-	-

Board 25 ♠ 10743 Dealer N
 ♥ KQ6 Vul: E-W
 ♦ Q1082
 ♣ 96

♠ QJ9 ♠ AK85
 ♥ J9 ♥ A87542
 ♦ A9 ♦ J76
 ♣ J108543 ♣

♠ 62
 ♥ 103
 ♦ K543
 ♣ AKQ72

If East opens 1♥ South will probably overcall 2♣, despite the lack of a sixth club. If West passes East will have to choose between reopening with a double or rebidding 2♥. West will pass a reopening double, but might raise 2♥ to 3♥, expecting partner to have at least six-hearts. Then East can advance to game.

If EW defend a club contract declarer should be restricted to six tricks.

If East is in 4♥ and South leads a top club, declarer ruffs and does best to play two rounds of diamonds. If North wins and plays the ♥6 declarer is very unlikely to withhold the ace (which would result in an overtrick on this layout) and after winning, ruff a diamond, ruff a club and exit with a heart for 10 tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	1	-	4	3	-
W	1	-	4	3	-

Board 26 ♠ Q104 Dealer E
 ♥ AJ95 Vul: Both
 ♦ 962
 ♣ AJ7

♠ K9872 ♠ J
 ♥ Q ♥ K876432
 ♦ Q107 ♦ J843
 ♣ 8642 ♣ 5

♠ A653
 ♥ 10
 ♦ AK5
 ♣ KQ1093

Although East's suit is poor this is the type of hand where I suspect the majority will open 3♥. When South doubles North might decide the best option is to play for a penalty, rather than bid 3NT.

Where East does not open and South starts with 1♣ West might venture 1♠. If North doubles South has an awkward rebid, but 3NT should be the final contact – indeed, North might bid it directly after West's 1♠ overcall.

Without intervention NS might bid 1♣-1♥-1♠-2♦*-3NT.

If South's 1♣ is Strong North responds according to system, the final contract almost certainly being 3NT.

If East plays in 3♥ doubled South can cash a top diamond, then take a club and a spade before playing two more rounds of diamonds. Declarer wins and plays a heart but North wins and exits with a club, subsequently scoring two more trump tricks for three down.

Playing in 3NT declarer starts with nine top tricks. If East is on lead and starts with a heart declarer is up to ten tricks and only needs to negotiate the spade suit to get up to eleven.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	5	3	1	4	5
S	5	3	1	4	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 27

♠ Q1032	Dealer S
♥ A62	Vul: None
♦ A10	
♣ 10763	
♠ K975	♠ AJ8
♥ J83	♥ K5
♦ 982	♦ K7653
♣ QJ8	♣ AK9
♠ 64	
♥ Q10974	
♦ QJ4	
♣ 542	

If East opens 1♦ West responds 1♠ and then raises 2NT to game.

If East starts with a Strong 1♣ the end result is likely to be the same.

It's possible that South might overcall 1♥ in either case, with North raising but it will probably not deter EW from reaching 3NT.

After a heart lead declarer cannot hope for more than eight tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	4	1	3	2
W	2	4	1	3	2

Board 28

♠ KQJ10986	Dealer W
♥ 82	Vul: N-S
♦ 72	
♣ A4	
♠ 73	
♥ AJ9	♥ 754
♦ AKQ8	♦ J10943
♣ K109875	♣ QJ3
♠ A542	
♥ KQ1063	
♦ 65	
♣ 62	

If West opens 1♣ North overcalls in spades and South raises. Imagine the sequence was 1♣-(2♠)-Pass-(4♠). Then West could bid 4NT and East would have an easy 5♦ bid.

After 1♣-(1♠)-Pass-(3♠) West might double despite holding only three hearts. When East responds 4♦ declarer might bid one for the road.

After 1♣-(1♠)-Pass-(3♥*) West could consider bidding 4♦, which East will surely raise to game.

If West's 1♣ is Strong, North is sure to overcall. After 1♣-(2♠)-Pass-(4♠) West will either double or bid 4NT, East responding 5♦ in either case.

If EW play in diamonds only a heart lead will hold declarer to eleven tricks – after a fit jump auction where West is declarer North would have a chance of finding one.

If NS play in spades 9 tricks should be the limit.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	3	1
S	-	-	1	3	1
E	5	5	-	-	-
W	5	5	-	-	-

Board 29

	♠ Q86	Dealer N
	♥ K75	Vul: Both
	♦ 9	
	♣ Q107432	
♠ A754		♠ KJ103
♥ Q94		♥ AJ83
♦ AK73		♦ QJ64
♣ 65		♣ 9
	♠ 92	
	♥ 1062	
	♦ 10852	
	♣ AKJ8	

If East opens 1♦ West responds 1♠ and then goes on to game when East raises.

The same thing happens if East opens 1♥.

Were East to start with 2♥ to show a limited three suiter (a method outlined in *The Mysterious Multi*) West would ask with 2NT and then bid 4♠ over East's 3♠ (showing a singleton club and 10-12).

If North leads the ♦9 against 4♠ declarer will need to get the trump suit right for 11 tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	5	5	5	1
W	-	5	5	5	1

Board 30

	♠ 1043	Dealer E
	♥ A3	Vul: None
	♦ KQ1076	
	♣ 1083	
♠ Q76		♠ K92
♥ 9642		♥ 75
♦ 982		♦ AJ543
♣ KQJ		♣ 742
	♠ AJ85	
	♥ KQJ108	
	♦	
	♣ A965	

If South opens 1♥ and North responds with an Acrol style 2♦ a rebid of 2♥ should end the auction.

If North responds 1NT South rebids 2♣ and North gives preference with 2♥.

Were South to start with a Strong 1♣ North responds 2♦ and then has to find a bid over South's 2♥. Were that to be a slightly odd looking 2NT South is likely to raise to game.

The 3-3 breaks in the black suits mean that South should score 9 tricks in hearts.

If NS happen to reach 3NT it can be made, but is far from easy. Say the defenders attack clubs. Declarer needs to win the second round and then cash five hearts keeping three spades and three diamonds. Then declarer exits with a club before exiting with a club and one way or another should emerge with nine tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	2	3	3	3
S	3	2	3	3	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Board 31 ♠ 62 Dealer S
 ♥ A73 Vul: N-S
 ♦ QJ105
 ♣ A852

♠ KQ1075 ♠ 98
 ♥ K1098 ♥ QJ652
 ♦ AK4 ♦ 982
 ♣ 7 ♣ K43

♠ AJ43
 ♥ 4
 ♦ 763
 ♣ QJ1096

If West opens 1♠ East responds 1NT and sees West rebid 2♥. Raising with five-card support looks reasonable and will see West advance to game.

If East does not raise, South might, despite the vulnerability, re-open with 3♣ and now East is sure to bid 3♥. If North then goes on to 4♣ East is unlikely to double.

After 1♠-1NT suppose West were to bid 2♦ as a transfer to Hearts? Would it occur to you as North to double that?

If EW play in hearts a diamond lead is the only way to ensure that the defenders collect four tricks, otherwise declarer will have time to establish the ♣K for a diamond discard. East enough if North is on lead, but much harder for South.

If NS play in clubs there are nine tricks if South is declarer (a spade lead would hold North to eight).

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	1	-	-	-
S	3	1	-	-	-
E	-	-	3	1	1
W	-	-	3	1	1

=====

Board 32 ♠ J2 Dealer W
 ♥ 10 Vul: E-W
 ♦ AJ97542
 ♣ A97

♠ Q8743 ♠ 1096
 ♥ KQJ3 ♥ A9852
 ♦ Q ♦ K6
 ♣ K103 ♣ J84

♠ AK5
 ♥ 764
 ♦ 1083
 ♣ Q652

If West opens 1♠ North overcalls 2♦ and East will have choices depending on system. In any event, South has enough to raise to 3♦ and if EW happen to compete at the three-level in a major North will find it difficult not to bid 4♦.

If EW play in hearts NS need to find the ruff that is available in spades to restrict declarer to eight tricks.

If NS play in diamonds there is one important point. If East switches to a club at any stage and declarer plays low from dummy, West must put in the 10, ensuring two tricks in the suit.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	1	3	-	-	-
S	1	3	-	-	-
E	-	-	2	2	-
W	-	-	2	2	-

=====