

The ECatsBridge Charity Pairs Tuesday 6th July 2021



Thank you so much for joining us for our Charity Pairs in aid of Kidney Research UK and the British Heart Foundation both of which are charities really badly affected by the pandemic in terms of their funding capability.

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. Love All. Dealer North.

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

This would be a fair game for E/W to bid atimps (especially if you were vulnerable). At matchpoints, you could take it or leave it, and most pairs will leave it. Let's say West opens 1♠ in fourth seat – that East hand is probably only worth a single raise, with the sterile distribution. If East gives a stronger raise (a Drury 2♣ for example), then West will be interested. If E/W have the methods to allow a short-suit game try by West, then game will be reached.

In the play, West should go for an elimination. Win the diamond lead, ruff a diamond, draw trumps, diamond ruff, and now ace and queen of clubs. If the defence win this and return a club, win the jack and play a heart to the nine, endplaying North. If the defence ducks the club, a third club results in an immediate endplay. Very well done if you saw this possibility.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

This is a difficult part-score hand, and the whole auction depends on whether West makes a light takeout double of a 1♣ opening. He might regret it if he does, because should North end up declaring in say 3♠, a heart opening lead from East would be unfortunate.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

This deal demonstrates why aces and kings are worth more than 4 and 3 points, and queens and jacks are worth less than 2 and 1 points. N/S have 11 points in queens and jacks, and they are worth ... precisely nothing.

Conversely, E/W need to diagnose that their 4 aces, 4 kings, good fit and 3 side doubletons makes a slam in diamonds. Not easy by any means. There's a near top for those who reach slam here.

One way to succeed is for West to value his hand as worth an opening bid. There are just 7 losers, good intermediate cards, no rebid problems – but only 10 points. If West makes the normal pass, can he catch up after 1♦ – 1♠ – 2NT? That’s also difficult, because to make a slam try, you need to go past the matchpoint haven of 3NT.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

How should South react to a 2NT opening from North? At IMPs, perhaps you might head for 5♣ (and even sniff around for 6♣), then watch in horror as the defence takes its three aces.

Matchpoints is a different game, and this is like the previous board – it’s hard to leave 3NT behind in search for a minor suit slam. This deal is the flip side of Board 3 – it’s 3NT (or 4NT) or doom.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

6NT earns you a top here, but is it feasible to get there? Only the presence of the diamond jack makes 6NT desirable, and mere humans are going to have difficulty diagnosing this. 6♠ should give you an average score.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

In the bidding, West should realise that his hand is much too strong to just raise 1♥ to 2♥. It would be perfect to be playing “mini-splinters” (where a jump shift of 3♣ would show a game invitational splinter raise). Lacking that tool, West is worth an invitational raise, and East probably has sufficient extras to accept.

The play could be tricky for East on the lead of the singleton spade. North wins the first club and gives South a ruff, who should then return a trump. Now declarer is at the crossroads. If he wins the trump in hand and cross-ruffs the black-suits, he will make 4♥; but a reasonable alternative is to play a diamond: South wins the ace and plays his last trump, and declarer is left searching for the diamond jack to make the contract. It would be no surprise if a few declarers make only 9 tricks in hearts.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

How you Wests react to a 1♣ opening on your right goes a long way to defining your style as a bridge player.

If you pass, then you have high standards indeed, but who is to say you will not come out ahead in the long run?

If you bid a vulnerable 2♣ (Michaels), then you are a bit of a risk taker – prepared to get both

suits in at the risk of getting your partner over-excited. I'm in this camp.

If you overcall 1 of a major (presumably 1♠), then you are prepared to compromise, willing to make an imperfect bid in order to avoid the clear misdescriptions of Pass or 2♣.

The full deal doesn't really tell us which approach will work this time – there are too many variations on how the auction will proceed.

If South opens instead with a weak 1NT, West has a similar problem, although here, Pass is far more attractive.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

The November set had a similar hand to West's here: ♠K109xx ♥AKQxxx ♦- ♣AK.

I suggested 2♣ in November, and will stick with that philosophy here, recommending 2♣ again, even though it could come badly unstuck.

6♥ should be reachable whatever you open, but what about the grand slam? That's more of a challenge. Perhaps if East shows at least 4 card heart support (for example a 3♥ or 4♥ response to 1♥), then West can cue-bid a couple of times and wring a diamond cue-bid out of partner. Then the grand slam becomes a rather good bet.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

Finally N/S get a chance to do some serious bidding! 3NT is a fine contract due to the handy spot cards in the minors. South has to bid aggressively to get there, essentially gambling on 3NT when partner shows a weak-notrump sort of hand.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

The field will play 3NT here, and I don't think everyone will make it. If the defence gets off to a neutral lead like a club or heart, declarer doesn't yet have a 9th trick. On the run of the diamonds, everyone is squeezed ...

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Predicting the auction here is a bit like predicting the stock market – which means in my case that I have no hope.

1♥ by South is a fairly safe prediction, but should West pass or overcall 1NT? The terrible heart spots argue for keeping quiet, but my guess is that most will be unable to contain themselves.

After a 1NT overcall, 4♣ from North feels right: North splits his 6 losers 3-3 (3 covered by partner, 3 with the 1NT overcaller), and out pops 4♣.

And over 4♣ (or 5♣), what should East do? Consult his astrologer, I suppose.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

They say you shouldn't preempt with a side major – does that affect East's decision in third seat? They also say that 7-4 shapes should play in the 7 card suit. I wonder who "they" are! In this case "they" are right: hearts is good for 8 tricks, whilst spades only makes 7, even with 5-card support from West.

If East takes the bull by the horns and opens 4♥, then presumably South can double for takeout. Then North has an interesting choice: passing feels wrong at this vulnerability - perhaps the best move is to bid 4NT for the minors. This has the added benefit that if South has equal length (3-3 or 4-4) in the minors, he will bid 5♣, and that is the longer fit.

There is nothing to the play in 5 of a minor, but if N/S should happen to reach 3NT, then the defence better not start with ace-king-and-another spade. Then five rounds of diamonds would destroy West, and an overtrick might result.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

On paper, this is a superb bidding problem. The top score goes to the 4-3 (Moysian) 4♥ contract, which makes 11 tricks, even though N/S get a club ruff.

In practice however, it is normal to reach 3NT by East (for example: 1♦ – 1♠ – 2NT – 3NT), and the likely ♣Q lead will result in 10 tricks.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

4♠ is the normal contract, and playing ace and another spade is the normal play: down 1.

There could be a number of variations in the bidding however. After 1♠ – 2♣ – 2♠, what should North rebid. 2NT might be popular, irrespective of whether it's forcing or not. That might lead to 2NT or 3NT: 8 tricks.

A weak two opening by East will surely propel N/S into game.

Game is not very good: well done to anyone who can stop in a partscore – however I expect a string of 50s in the E/W column.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

3NT is the contract and the battle is for the 10th trick. It would be fine card reading for South to work an endplay against West – more likely, declarer will hope for hearts 3-3 and lose two hearts, a spade and a diamond.

Meanwhile, East has the weakest hand at the table, but can still contribute to a good score for his side. At hundreds of tables, after INT-3NT, West will lead a diamond, and South will lose a heart finesse to East at trick 2. Now if East succumbs to a spade switch, rather than

returning a diamond, he delivers 10 tricks to South.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

<p>♠ A Q J 7 ♥ 10 9 6 5 4 ♦ Q 2 ♣ 9 6</p>	<p>♠ 10 6 ♥ Q 3 2 ♦ K 10 7 5 ♣ 10 7 5 2</p> <p>♠ 5 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ A 9 8 6 4 ♣ A K Q 3</p> <p>♠ K 9 8 2 ♥ A K J 8 ♦ J 3 ♣ J 8 4</p>
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A tricky part-score deal (actually, most part score deals are tricky, because of the balanced strength between the two sides).

The most middle-of-the-road auction I can think of is Pass – Pass - 1♦ – Double – 1♥ – Pass – INT, all pass. In INT, it is a dogfight over the overtrick.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

<p>♠ Q 7 6 4 ♥ 10 8 2 ♦ J 5 4 3 ♣ K 2</p>	<p>♠ A 9 8 5 3 ♥ J 9 4 ♦ 8 2 ♣ 7 6 3</p> <p>♠ K 10 2 ♥ A K Q 5 ♦ A 10 6 ♣ J 10 5</p> <p>♠ J ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ K Q 9 7 ♣ A Q 9 8 4</p>
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There's a hard-luck story to be had on this deal. East declares INT and South leads a low club. Declarer looks long and hard at dummy and thinks: my best chance of an extra trick here is to finesse North for the spade jack. But I don't have any obvious entry, except for the club king. So up with the king and a spade to the 10 and jack. Unlucky!

Most declarers probably won't go that way, preferring to bang out the hearts. Then a spade from East will deliver the easiest of 8 tricks.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

<p>♠ Q 10 7 6 5 3 2 ♥ 3 ♦ 4 3 ♣ A 10 4</p>	<p>♠ A K ♥ K 9 6 4 ♦ J 10 9 ♣ J 9 6 5</p> <p>♠ 9 8 ♥ A 2 ♦ K Q 5 2 ♣ K Q 8 7 2</p> <p>♠ J 4 ♥ Q J 10 8 7 5 ♦ A 8 7 6 ♣ 3</p>
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4♠ can be defeated by giving South a club ruff, but how likely is that to happen? Not very! It would take a minor suit lead, and it's hard to argue for such a lead assuming South has shown hearts. So it's time for South not to criticize North in the post-mortem!

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

<p>♠ J 10 8 3 ♥ K 10 9 4 2 ♦ 7 6 5 4 ♣ 7 6 5 4</p>	<p>♠ J 10 8 5 2 ♥ K 7 5 4 2 ♦ A 6 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ K Q 4 ♥ 9 ♦ Q J 8 7 5 ♣ J 10 8 2</p> <p>♠ A 9 7 6 3 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ 3 ♣ K Q 9 3</p>
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There are piles of values for N/S here and one would expect 6♠ to be the common contract.

A safety play is needed in spades – crossing to dummy and running the spade jack. All declarer needs to be concerned about is a ruff: suppose West hits upon the ♥J lead: then East's ♥9 looks like, and indeed is, a singleton. Then the safety play could turn out to be unsafe indeed, should East have started with ♠Kx or ♠Qx. Declarer crosses to dummy anyway to lead the ♠J to try to coax a cover. It's up to East to play low and leave South with a very nasty decision.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

If you can get to a notrump game from the South side, more power to you!

Perhaps there's a way. Playing a 15-17 INT, I would rate that North hand as too strong, wouldn't you? I'd open 1♦, and when partner responds 1♠, I'd start loathing the low doubleton heart, and might just rebid 2♣ (or maybe 3♠?). Over 2♣, South might bid 3NT (and North bump this to 4NT?), or instead go through fourth suit. Convoluted stuff.

Well, this is all probably insanity. Sane people just bid INT-3NT, and lose the first four tricks.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

This is an interesting part-score battle where lots of the scores might be separated by just 10 points. After two passes, I would suggest a start of 1♣-1♥-double-pass-INT. Now West might be a bit of a hog and bid 2♥, emboldened by the favourable vulnerability. North doesn't like the sound of this and feel he is being stolen from, and therefore bid something – double? 3♦? 3♦ is in danger of going two down for a near bottom.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

West's third seat choice depends on system. Playing Muiderberg, a 2♥ opening (hearts and a minor) is available. Even with this option, I would sing the praises of a 1♥ opening.

Opening 2♥ with this hand opposite a passed partner says to the opponents: "double me" – and that's not what West wants to happen at this vulnerability. A 1♥ opening is much safer, not exposing your weak hand to N/S.

Either way, N/S should be able to find a way to 3NT by South. After 1♥, double, South can bid INT (assuming pass or 1♠ from East), and North can raise.

After 2♥, it's a bit harder, as Lebensohl might "get in the way". North doubles, and if N/S play Lebensohl, South must bid 3♦, showing values. Now North can bid 3♥, asking for a stopper, and South obliges.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

What a hand! There's a straightforward way to get to the technically correct contract of 7♥ here. West opens 1♣, East responds 1♠, and now West reverses with 2♥.

Now 5NT – do you have two top honours in hearts partner? - and there you are in 7♥.

It's a shame that on the layout 7♠ and even 7NT also work. I'm sorry, but you only get full credit if you reach 7♥.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

A quiet one down in a quiet 3NT? East clears diamonds and declarer eventually takes the heart finesse.

Just like Board 20, I cannot see an obvious way to declare NT from South, and on this particular N/S combination, there's no real reason to think that South should be declarer.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

E/W own this deal, but it's not that easy for them to ever take a bid. West has 14 points of junk. If N/S bid for example 1♣ – 1♥/♦ – INT, won't that be the end of the auction?

In INT on a spade lead say, North must decide that even if diamonds are friendly, it takes too long to set them up. In hearts however, a 3-3 break will develop an extra trick immediately. It's not totally clear (a lot depends on who has the spade 8), but I think the percentages favour playing on hearts. The difference between -100 and -150 will be considerable.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

Yet another positional hand for N/S – is there no end to them? North needs to declare 3NT to protect the diamond king – just like Board 20.

Depending on the auction, South might survive in 3NT because sometimes West will lead a spade (and if East puts in the eight ...).

It's also a good test of system to not get to clubs: 5♣ or worse 6♣ is not going to deliver many matchpoints. One neat way to solve all problems is to play inverted minor raises. 1♣ – 2♣. Is South now allowed to splinter with 3♦? If so, North has a comfortable 3NT rebid: the right contract declared by the right hand.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Now for a hobby-horse of mine: the Law of Total Tricks. In its simplest form, the Law tells you to bid to the same level as the number of trumps you hold. Here, E/W have a 10-card fit and should bid to 4♥ – the 10-trick contract.

It just so happens that 4♥ (doubled) is the par spot, and E/W can put a lot of pressure on by getting there quickly. After South opens 1♣ and West bids 1♥, North presumably doubles and East, despite his meagre hand, just obeys the Law and bids 4♥. N/S will do well to

double that contract and take 100 points – some will try 5♣ and go down.

Now let's see what happens if East bids only, say, 3♥. That rides round to North who tries 4♣ – the perfect spot for N/S (South will pass it happily with his bare minimum). If East now bids 4♥, it's much easier for North to just double this, having shown his entire hand earlier.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

If South is inspired, he will pass this hand out in 4th seat. Most would open (as would I), and I expect West to double 1♣, resulting in a making E/W spade partscore.

If you happen to play weak notrumps, there's a lot to be said for a fourth seat opening of INT by South – preempting the opponents out of their possible major suit fit.