

The 2019 WBU Charity Autumn Pairs

Tuesday 3rd September, Session # 4276



Dear Bridge Player

Thank you for supporting the WBU Simultaneous Pairs - I hope you enjoyed the hands and the commentary which, in order to give our faithful commentators a rest, was taken from an old set of hands from a simultaneous pairs that none of the WBU clubs played in.

We are absolutely delighted to have a sponsor to cover all necessary costs and I would like to thank Bridge Overseas (<https://bridgeoverseas.com/>) for their generosity. I have been looking at their website and there are some great holidays there – do check it out, I am sure you would find something to suit you !

Because of this, all funds raised from this event will be donated to [Wales Air Ambulance](#)- In order to maximise this donation a decision was taken not to print booklets as I am sure most of you have internet access and can read it online, or download and print it.

The results of this event can be found at www.ecatsbridge.com as usual - just click on the link to Sims and you will see how to find them.

Best wishes - and enjoy your bridge! Remember by being nice to your partner and courteous to the opposition everyone will have an enjoyable evening.

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Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Not a bad sort of mitt, that West hand, opposite a hand which can not only open the bidding but even reverse. One wonders if EW will land in 7NT, in preference to 7♠, if 4th suit becomes an issue. The auction, after all, may start 1♣ pass 1♦ pass 1♥. The responders who play 1♠ as natural in this auction will certainly be well-placed to get to the spade grand-slam. Then there are the strong clubbers to consider...in this case presumably West will be forced to respond 1♠ and now it is hard to believe EW would stop out of the suit grand-slam. So, my first prediction for this set is that 7♠ will be beaten only by pairs who aren't quite sure what they are doing after an unclear definition of the spade suit, thus ending up in a lucky making 7NT.

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Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

It looks like staying off a red suit opening lead by South against 4♠ will hold it to 10 tricks as East can't ruff two clubs in dummy. However, after ruffing one club high he can draw trumps and come down to a 5 card ending where East and South hold 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and 1 club, West holds 2 hearts and 3 diamonds. Now East plays 2 rounds of hearts, pitches a diamond from dummy on the club which South cashes....and now South has to lead a diamond from the king. Impossible? Well, South is going to bid over East's 1♠ opening and whether it is 2♣ or a take-out double East is a chance to get it right.

Have you looked at the WBU Website recently ? There are lots of interesting events coming up during the Autumn and into next year.

For example

14/15 September: the **Welsh Foursomes**;

29 September: **Green Pointed Swiss Pairs**

The new **WBU Congress** is on 8th October

The **Premier League** kicks off on 19th October, and of course there is the **Porthcawl Congress** on 15th November and the ever-popular **Llangollen Congress** on 23rd November.

Lots of great bridge events to enjoy !

There is a full calendar of all the WBU Events at

<https://welshbridgeunion.org/bridge-calendar-wbu/>

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

NS do well on this hand to bid quickly to 4♠. What is West to do over a 2♠ opening? He is not likely to make a bid which will make it possible to come up with a heart opening lead. The club lead looks normal enough, but is utterly disastrous, costing not one but two tricks as the heart now disappears on a diamond. Compare the auction where South begins with pass and West opens, say, 1♣. North will double, East has a 1♥ response and NS are booked for a deservedly bad score as West gets off to the now-normal heart lead to 4♠. Bid quickly and uninformatively is the message of this hand.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Nothing past 1♠ EW makes on this deal, but the auction can't stop there. Whether North or East opens, one side or the other will bid a part-score which is a little too high. My guess is that one side or the other will play INT. According to Deep Finesse neither side will make. That must mean tempo is everything.

Let's suppose it is played by West on a club lead to the queen, spade to the king and heart to the 10 and king. Another round of clubs and another heart. South rises and plays a spade to the ace. North cashes 3 clubs. Well, INT is definitely making on this line as North will be forced to give a trick away next.

Double-dummy best will be a diamond to the queen, king and ace. Now a spade to dummy and a heart to the king. Another diamond won in dummy

and another heart. South wins and shifts to the ♣10. This is looking better for the defence.

Meanwhile, the other likely candidate to be playing INT is North, for example after 1♣ 1♠ Dble Pass. Again, leading the long suit will let declarer make easily. I expect a heart is best by East. Perhaps now a diamond to the ten and ace and a spade to the queen followed by another heart. Declarer does best to win and run the ♣10 to the ace. East will exit with a heart to West who will play another spade. It looks like the defence is still difficult. There are 7 tricks but can they be taken without setting up 7 for declarer first?

Maybe West has to duck the first diamond. Now the ♣A is knocked out and a heart to the ace is followed by another club finesse. The difference is that the defence, once in, can cash their hearts without worrying about a diamond entry in dummy to the set-up heart trick. There are still two entries with West for two spades through, so now the defence can managed to untangle their tricks.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Double-dummy, at least, NS make 4♣ as EW can't get all their winners before declarer sets up spades, timing the drawing of trumps with this to finish up with an entry to the spades once they are good. But it wouldn't be impossible to imagine EW playing 3♥ doubled:

West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♥	Dble
3♥	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

That goes two off for +300 to NS as long as they get their spade ruff and why wouldn't they?

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

The question on this Board is just how bad is spades for NS. Although the layout looks unkind, apparently NS still make 8 tricks, which is more than enough vs EW's vulnerable 4♥ contract. Way too many variables for me to start analysing with club ruffs, diamond ruffs, not to mention the simply two rounds of hearts start...For once I'm taking Deep Finesse's word for it.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

With NS's interference starting perhaps even at the first bid of the auction I can't see EW getting to 7♣, but six will surely seem like a good punt to some, so I don't see +1460EW being an uncommon score. Meanwhile, any thought NS might have of the heart save should be saved for some other hand as it is disastrous. Still, Deep Finesse says hearts doesn't even make 7 tricks and I can't see that. In fact I have consulted two experts neither of whom agree with Deep Finesse. Deep Finesse is wrong!!

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Well, it IS pairs, so there will certainly be some pairs NS in 3NT making the same number of tricks as the ones in 4♥. But the contract taking all the money is 6♠, making because of the ruffing happening in the short hand combined with being able to discard a losing heart on a diamond. Of course! What were you all thinking about in the auction?!

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

This is one of those completely disgusting hands that makes you want to take up some other game. NS will probably bid to 3NT and it is that hand where 3NT goes down while the minor suit misfitting slam makes. How irritating is that? And all over the room South will be telling North that 'Of course at TEAMS, I would have removed 3NT, but it's PAIRS. So I HAD to leave it in'.

There is one thing that remains to be asked about this hand...will any West, faced with a heart lead from partner put up the king. If he does, let's hope he wasn't hoping for a lift home from partner after the game.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

INT EW, which might be the opening bid and end the auction, will make comfortably even against the best lead of a heart as long as East ducks the first round before playing on spades. If North wins the first heart he shifts to a club. If South wins the first heart he can shift to the ♣Q if he wants to get fancy. Either way as long as NS get clubs going in time they will hold EW to 7 tricks in INT.

But at some tables where East opens lower than INT South will get to overcall 2♣. Lucky lucky South – not. I don't see why the auction won't proceed pass, pass double all pass. Running to 2♥ might be a trick better, but -200 at pairs won't really be much better than minus a larger number. Leaving 2♣ doubled in on the West hand is a punt, but perhaps not a bad one at pairs.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

This Board has the potential to force some difficult decisions on EW. I'm thinking of the tables where South opens 2♠ or even 3♠. If the latter, then surely it will be passed around to 3NT by East which can't be made even if South doesn't find the club lead at trick one.

But even if East's decision is at the two level, will he double or bid 2NT. In balancing seat especially, maybe it is just too good for 2NT. If double, West might decide on a speculative pass. Then, if North decides not to run, EW do well...better than the 4♥ they make. If North does run, then 3♣ is only a couple off assuming that East gets into the spirit of

things by doubling and leading a trump. Or will West, happy enough with 2♠ as a gamble, now remove to hearts?

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

The sides have equal assets on this Board, and actually there is more potential on the hand for NS than for EW. EW make only hearts, while NS make 8 tricks in diamonds and 7 in everything else but hearts. Any time West opens INT EW are likely to buy the contract there...I don't fancy balancing with that South hand. It can handle any lead partner makes and is balanced-ish.

Most likely North will begin with a club to that contract and I don't know if it will be so easy for NS to shift to diamonds in time to avoid West setting up a spade trick for his seventh. That's okay for NS, as long as it scores up against some EW pairs making +110 in hearts. In fact, again, NS do have to get their diamond trick going before it runs away on a spade.

Meanwhile, perhaps the odd NS will find it possible to save in 2♠, either because South balances over INT or gets to double an auction beginning 1♣ Pass 1♥. IF he gets out for one down, as Deep Finesse claims is possible, and IF East doesn't take a swing at it, that might get some matchpoints.

I'm not sure if it is necessary, but it seems to be a good idea not to ruff the third round of hearts but instead to pitch the ♣10. West now has a couple of options: a ruff and discard or a club. Let's suppose a club to the ace, diamond to the king and diamond to the ten and ace. Now West has to choose between a club play or a ruff and discard...either will end up with declarer getting his trick count up to seven.

The early ruff and discard is no better: now we are assuming the defence begins with 4 rounds of hearts. Declarer pitches a club on the third round and ruffs the fourth in dummy while pitching a diamond from hand. A club to the ace, diamond to the king and a diamond to West. Supposing he exits a diamond you ruff your winner in dummy with the ♠J in order to play another club. 7 tricks!

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

A strong NT by NS will keep EW out of their 8 trick contract in diamonds...but it will also keep NS out of THEIR 9 trick contract in spades. Is anybody moving over a 15-17 NT with the South cards? I guess maybe. Anybody who happens to be playing Cappalletti on this hand and has one of those 'you've got to be in it to win it' attitudes that some pairs players have will get SO lucky on this hand. Played by East diamonds makes only 8 tricks, but by West it is a different story.

If played by East, South begins with heart, covered, and won by North who continues a heart to South. South plays a spade to partner's hand who continues with a low heart. Declarer will be able to make one heart trick eventually, but that is not enough.

If played by West, however, North has to begin with something else: let's say ♠A, spade. Declarer plays diamond, diamond and South can shift to a heart and win the next heart as in the previous analysis. But now declarer can ruff out the ♥Q while making TWO heart tricks in all and that brings the tally to nine.

NS cannot avoid being endplayed. Eg spade, spade by North. Diamond, diamond by declarer. South wins, shifts to a heart, covered and won by North. Now a heart to South, but that merely delays the endplay. South can shift to clubs or spades.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

EW don't do so badly in hearts: 8 tricks...but are they likely to get into the auction? Are there West players overcalling 1♥ on that collection? A diamond part-score NS seems most likely to be the end result and I'm thinking there won't be too many Wests getting off to the lead which holds it to 10 tricks: West needs to start with spades and then EW have to continue them from either side when next in. South won't be able to take a discard then on the ♠J before finishing the necessary business of drawing trumps. East will be able to trump it.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

If EW are to bid to slam it's got to be NT to avoid the spade ruff. In practice, unless the vulnerability makes him very nervous, South is going to start with something: a 2-suited opening, a weak 2 in hearts or perhaps even 3♥, depending on system requirements, how many Weeties he had for breakfast or...I'm guessing this will make slam bidding tough as West will never be able to show just how good he is, but on the other hand, if EW do take an optimistic view and bid high, they will surely get to the right strain. 6NT will be a more common score than 6♣.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

EW should be bidding to the 3♦ level but if, instead, they defend 2♠ it is imperative to get the heart ruff or 2♠ will make, so West will have to be alert to the necessity of ducking the first heart when East shifts to them. With a bit of luck the auction will have made that obvious.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

In theory the aggressive 3NT EW fails. In practice? Let's suppose normal spade lead by South to the ten and ace, heart to the 9, 10 and ace. A club shift (or diamond) does no good as North has no entry. Declarer will comfortably set up spades and hearts, losing only 2 tricks in each major in the process. In theory? South begins with a club. Declarer cannot afford to duck and can't afford to win either. Note if declarer does win the first and continue with a heart it is best for South to split honours on the first round and for North to duck the king. Now nothing can go wrong.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

The field will be in 4♠ making six. There is nothing clever to the play with hearts breaking and the diamond onside.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Frankly I don't think that North hand deserves to play the club slam, but lots of natural auctions will begin 1♥ by South 2♣ by North. As you can see East is in trouble from the start. With the diamonds behaving as they do, 13 tricks should be pretty easy.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

4♠ NS may make on this hand, but it isn't a claim, by any means, and there may be pairs who aren't even in it.

As the auction will often start

West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	Dble

at least some of the time it will be North who ends up in spades as South will double to show only 4 of them. Although West would not find it easy to begin with a trump, East will, so let's suppose the defence plays trumps whenever they can. Now there are nine top tricks and various possibilities for 10. The simple soul will play for an appropriate diamond break and that isn't happening.

Maybe declarer will win the spade in dummy and decide to play on diamond straight away. He ruffs the third round and plays a heart to table and another diamond ruffed. Now 10 tricks are always there...at worst declarer will lose a club, a heart and a trump.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

For those in 3NT EW: Let's suppose the defence manages to begin with a spade. Win and duck a heart. Win the next spade and duck another heart. That's rectified the count. Now South is squeezed in spades and diamonds. In all he has to find 3 pitches, two on hearts and one on clubs. The first two are easy, the third impossible. There are variations on this – after all, North may not be bidding at the vulnerability...eg duck a spade, find out they are not breaking and then take the heart finesse. That will do just as well and is, well, a tad less double-dummy.

Meanwhile those in 6♣ have their bit of fun too. Pitch a heart on a diamond and cash a couple of spades after drawing 2 rounds of trumps. Now ace and another heart forces a ruff and discard by North. Again, if North has opened this sort of line will be suggested by the auction.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

The opening lead is everything on this deal. If South opens 1♠ and North manages a non-descript auction to game West will begin with a diamond and now the defence can no longer get their 4 tricks. In my opinion any system which makes North bid 2♦ over 1♠ deserves everything it gets, so no sympathy for the -50s NS.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

If EW can't bring themselves to play a minor suit game then I think they should figure out that hearts, ruffing in the short hand, is the way to go. Both red suit games are on the diamond pick. I doubt any declarer will have cause to do so.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Can't imagine why the contract will be other than 4♥ NS making 11 tricks.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

The official verdict on this hand is 10 tricks to EW in 3NT...I can't see any reason to disagree.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

10 tricks to EW in spades...if a trump lead East will play diamond, diamond. NS have an excellent save in hearts: one down at the five level due to the diamond ruff.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

I imagine there are various ways to set about 11 tricks in spades for NS. Certainly there is the straight-forward setting up of the club suit. If declarer was thinking of taking heart ruffs in dummy, this line will be troubled by the bad trump break and West having only 2 diamonds. In fact the auction may well alert declarer to these issues. North will be opening 1♣ in third seat and East will be

overcalling 1♦. Most likely it will be North bidding the spades first and receiving a big heart lead.

That leaves East with a range of poor choices as to how to proceed. Maybe a trump shift? From here I am not sure how declarer should continue. There is nothing in the auction to indicate whether East has one, two or no club honours. At the table maybe declarer will take a double-finesse in clubs? Given East's spade shortage he is likely to have at least a doubleton club. I quite fancy starting with a low club from dummy to see what happens. There might even be an East who puts the queen on that, thus making the rest of the play simple as the queen must be from the king. If, instead, he puts the king up, then play for them to be 3-3 once East has only one spade...

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

I'm thinking it is going to be hard for NS to stay out of the heart save against 4♠ – but it is -500 against a not-vul game, so the NS pairs who avoid it will get a good score – well, unless North feels obliged to take a shot at 4♠...perhaps -500 NS will gain some matchpoints against -590!

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

A straight-forward, if thin, 3NT making 9 tricks EW.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

NS might have 4 losers in 3NT, but EW cannot untangle them. Meanwhile 4♠, the righteous contract NS, goes down as long as West overtakes the first heart to play 2 more rounds promoting a trump trick for the defence.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

4♠ NS failing to the diamond ruff looks like the common result.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

4♠ NS will be usual and there is no reason to think West won't get off to the best lead of a heart. Declarer has 4 losers, but a couple of ways to dispose of the heart loser: it could go on a club or on a diamond. But playing on clubs creates a source of tricks, even if it fails, whereas diamond up only works half the time and is only good for one trick.

If the ♥10 opening lead denied the queen I think it is normal to rise ace and finesse the club. Win the heart continuation, unblock clubs and play two rounds of trumps to dummy. Now clubs. East can ruff in but will only be able to take 1 diamond trick.

If the opening lead does not deny the queen it is got to be tempting to try the jack. Then, I guess you cross to dummy in trumps and finesse the club. Nothing much is different, 10 tricks in the same manner.

Board 33. Love All. Dealer North.

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

If North has to start with a strong 1♣ on this hand, West will get a chance to bid clubs vigorously and receive a club lead against 3NT. Those Norths opening 2NT, on the other hand, will have a descriptive auction to 3NT that will put East off either major. He'll start with a diamond, or perhaps a club if West has managed to double a 3♣ bid – Stayman or Baron - as will sometimes happen.

Either way the layout for declarer is kind. After a start something like win the club in hand, diamond to the queen, heart to the queen, declarer will be forced to play for the ♠K onside – ie before the jack – and so it is. Pianola!