



The 2025 Welsh Bridge Union Autumn Simultaneous Pairs

Tuesday 23rd September

*Thank you for supporting the WBU Simultaneous Pairs 2025.
We are once more donating the proceeds to two very worthy
causes – The Air Ambulance and our WBU Juniors.*

*This year, we are running another Freshers Fair at Cardiff
University with follow up lessons for our new recruits. The juniors
have been a delight to have in our clubs and we would very much
like to extend this to other Universities (and schools) in Wales – if
you are interested in participating, please do get in touch. We are
also starting a new initiative working with Teacher Training
students at Cardiff Met University to introduce minibridge into
schools where student teachers are carrying out their teaching
practice.*

*We hope that you have enjoyed playing in the Sims this week
and that you enjoy the write up of the hands – we hope to
see you in future events.*

The Welsh Bridge Union

1

♠ K104
 ♥ 7653
 ♦ J4
 ♣ 10875
 ♠ Q3
 ♥ KQ42
 ♦ AK65
 ♣ J32
 ♠ J762
 ♥ 1098
 ♦ 873
 ♣ A64
 ♠ A985
 ♥ AJ
 ♦ Q1092
 ♣ KQ9

 Dealer: North
 Neither Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | 1 | - | - | 1 | - |
| S | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| E | - | - | - | - | - |
| W | - | - | - | - | - |

South's strong NT is presumably passed out, west having no clear-cut bid and discretion looking best. In practice, 1NT is unbeatable, every lead helpful in one way or other. Indeed, I can see eight tricks being recorded at some tables.

An Acol south 1♠ sees more bidding action, west doubling, and east having a choice of poor options, 1NT probably the least worst. Defending 1NT South is also a bit stymied on lead, but can manage seven tricks if he starts with diamond, and later plays north for the knave.

At love all, as usual, it pays to declare, N/S booked for 90 in 1NT, but only for 50 should they defend it. Of course they might get 100 should east select other than 1NT.

2

♠ AQ984
 ♥ AKJ5
 ♦ 8
 ♣ A105
 ♠ J7
 ♥ 1098
 ♦ A10976
 ♣ K98
 ♠ K65
 ♥ 43
 ♦ KQJ543
 ♣ Q3
 ♠ 1032
 ♥ Q762
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J7642

 Dealer: East
 N-S Vulnerable

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

Even an inverted 3♦ raise of east's 1♦ by west is unlikely to silence north whose double will find the 4:4 heart fit. I suppose some might bid 3♠ instead of doubling, afraid of landing in a 4:3 heart fit, with a 5:3 spade one available.

Today, as classically, the 4:4 fit plays a trick better, but only because the trump suit is more solid, meaning trumps can be drawn without losing a trick, obviating the defence's possible club ruff.

Those playing either major suit fit do need to take care or they can get forced. In addition, a guess may be required in clubs, east's doubleton honour needing divined. Short of south entries declarer may also have to pin west's spade knave, unable to finesse.

In practice, I foresee failures in both possible games.

3

♠ Q4
 ♥ Q9
 ♦ AKJ1064
 ♣ A105
 ♠ K953
 ♥ A107
 ♦ Q3
 ♣ 7632
 ♠ J872
 ♥ KJ8
 ♦ 98
 ♣ KQ84
 ♠ A106
 ♥ 65432
 ♦ 752
 ♣ J9

 Dealer: South
 E-W Vulnerable

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

A north strong NT will see 2♥ declared, and this should stagger over the line, so long as declarer keeps playing trumps, stopping the defence getting a ruff in one hand.

Where north opens 1♦ south could pass, allowing west to protect with a double. E/W's spade fit comes to light. Where south responds 1♥ it may well silence E/W, whether north rebids 2♦, a strong NT, or maybe even 2NT holding such nice diamonds.

Where E/W do get playing in spades the defence shouldn't make more than two trumps, two diamonds and the club ace, so they ought to make eight tricks.

However, north cannot be denied nine tricks playing in diamonds, or 120 in 2NT, so the aggressive N/S bidders should prevail, going plus.

4

♠ K7
 ♥ 742
 ♦ AQ10973
 ♣ A6
 ♠ J842
 ♥ AQ9
 ♦ 5
 ♣ QJ853
 ♠ 10953
 ♥ KJ103
 ♦ 84
 ♣ K92
 ♠ AQ6
 ♥ 865
 ♦ KJ62
 ♣ 1074

 Dealer: West
 Both Vulnerable

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

We could have another off-shape 1NT opener by north, alternatively 1♦. South surely passes the weak NT, but could raise or try a heavy 1NT to the latter, possibly paving the way to the thin nine trick game, though in truth I cannot see many reaching this.

Whatever lead the defence make defending a diamond contract all roads lead to 130, a loser going on south's third spade.

Where N/S declare no trumps the defence need to lead hearts at the start, easier from the east side. If this is missed ten tricks result.

Top looks like 3NT+1, where the defence go passive on opening lead, but any no trump contract should score well for N/S, beating all those in diamonds.

5

♠ K10854
♥ 75
♦ AK963
♣ 5

♠ 3
♥ 1043
♦ 1052
♣ A98743

♠ AQJ92
♥ QJ92
♦ Q8
♣ 62

♠ 76
♥ AK86
♦ J74
♣ KQJ10

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

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

North could try 2NT or 3♦ when south doubles east's 1♠ opener. The latter looks to be a reasonably comfortable make when clubs are set up and the trump queen falls.

The former could easily be raised and north will struggle without the present of a spade trick, the fall of the diamond queen being no help, the suit now blocked.

However, some may manage to get home on a spade lead after ducking a diamond and knocking out the club ace. A heart lead leaves declarer with no realistic chance, unless the defence seriously misfires.

Will many get more than 110 on this one? Will any N/Ss go minus?

6

♠ 2
♥ AQ53
♦ 764
♣ 109852

♠ J83
♥ K962
♦ 983
♣ AQ3

♠ K10974
♥ J107
♦ AJ105
♣ J

♠ AQ65
♥ 84
♦ KQ2
♣ K764

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

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

South's weak NT will normally be passed out, unless east is feeling adventurous at adverse vulnerability. Declarer should make seven or eight tricks, so long as he plays clubs from north, starts with the king or west dives in with the queen, crashing the knave.

Where south opens 1♣ east can bid 1♠ over the 1♥ response, and E/W could buy it in 2♠. The cards lie poorly, and this can suffer a heart ruff, lose two trumps and must lose one diamond at least, possibly two light.

N/S could do better advancing in clubs and they may well do so, north happy to go on with his 5 card support and shortage.

130 in 3♣+1 is theoretically best for N/S, though some might manage 150 in no trumps, or get a 200 penalty.

7

♠ 94
♥ K10875
♦ K986
♣ A2

♠ Q2
♥ A
♦ AQJ10
♣ KQ10653

♠ A1087
♥ 632
♦ 7543
♣ 94

♠ KJ653
♥ QJ94
♦ 2
♣ J87

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

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

West has a nice 1♣ opener, planning on a reverse into diamonds. However, it doesn't pan out that way when east passes and south protects with 1♠. Whether or not west bids again north surely tries 2♥, and should get to play part-score in the suit. Some norths might have overcalled a thin 1♥, now in danger of getting too high.

Declaring hearts north can manage nine tricks should he guess spades correctly. He is best not playing trumps, simply proceeding on cross-ruff lines.

East could belatedly get supporting partner in one of his two suits, clubs the better strain, where a winning guess in trumps could see the defence limited to four tricks. Diamonds are awkward, declarer forced on heart leads, establishing extra trump tricks in north.

8

♠ AJ74
♥ J95
♦ J10
♣ Q1063

♠ K1096
♥ 7
♦ 87542
♣ 854

♠ 532
♥ K864
♦ K
♣ AJ972

♠ Q8
♥ AQ1032
♦ AQ963
♣ K

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

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

South will open 1♥, or try 2NT over an east 1♣ opener. The latter makes it easier for north to evaluate his hand and game is unlikely to be missed.

Where east passes Acol responds 1♠ to south's 1♥ and gives simple preference to hearts over the 2♦ rebid. Some norths could sign off with 3♥ with the north cards when south rebids diamonds, though many souths will simply bid game anyway.

5 card majors raise hearts, and the 3♦ bid is a trial bid. North has a close decision, but with a maximum should raise to 4♥.

Today, a slam is there when the red suits play without loss, the spade finesse wins, and a club can be set up. Will everyone make the twelve tricks possible?

9

♠ J7
♥ J84
♦ Q965
♣ 7642

♠ A10843
♥ 65
♦ A107
♣ K108

♠ K
♥ AKQ932
♦ J42
♣ A95

♠ Q9652
♥ 107
♦ K83
♣ QJ3

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 |
| W | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 |

Again we have slam, though this one is more solid, only requiring a squeeze! In practice, I can see few getting there, particularly should south overcall east's 1♥ with 1♠. West probably tries 2NT and east shuts up shop with either 4♥ or 3NT.

Declaring either, whatever the defence lead, a diamond can be played to the 10 and north's queen. Now east's heart winners have south in trouble, forced to cede an extra trick by unguarding one or more suits.

The squeeze is pretty well automatic, but will everyone find it? Indeed, had south held the K/Q of diamonds as well he could have been triple squeezed to make the lot should declarer read it.

10

♠ K7
♥ J87
♦ AK87654
♣ 6

♠ 62
♥ 964
♦ J10
♣ 1098432

♠ 10854
♥ AQ2
♦ 2
♣ AKQ75

♠ AQJ93
♥ K1053
♦ Q93
♣ J

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | - |
| S | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | - |
| E | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| W | 2 | - | - | - | - |

Like #2 south is 5:4 in the majors when there is an opener in front of him. However, at this lower level it is better to overcall 1♠ rather than double, doubling later if need be. An immediate double would get to a 4:3 heart fit rather than the 5:3 spade fit were north to be 3:3 in the majors.

Today, west might well bounce in clubs, but it is hard to see north failing to bid the diamond game, though he might toy with 4♠ given the chance.

Defending N/S's contract east needs to cash his heart ace after his club one or it finishes in his pocket.

The 650 in 4♠ could be top score, unless E/W get too high in clubs, 800 available at the 5 level, albeit with care needed in defence. I expect more will get 600 in 5♦.

11

♠ K75
♥ 7
♦ KJ
♣ AKJ10953

♠ AQ4
♥ KJ106
♦ 764
♣ Q42

♠ 1032
♥ AQ943
♦ Q932
♣ 7

♠ J986
♥ 852
♦ A1085
♣ 86

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

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

North doubtless has a red card for west's weak NT. Neither east nor west is likely to stick this, but left in, it could be let home should north start with two top clubs, rather than finding south's ace after the first.

Where east does remove to hearts there are eight tricks even if the defence find an early diamond ruff, as north gets endplayed.

North is much better declaring his clubs, where he can use dummy's sole entry to get trumps right, losing only two spades and a heart, so long as he plays east for the spade 10, when forced to open up the suit himself.

Another battle for the biggest plus score.

12

♠ A7532
♥ 54
♦ J63
♣ Q83

♠ J106
♥ KQ10986
♦ Q4
♣ 64

♠ Q94
♥ A2
♦ 10987
♣ AK92

♠ K8
♥ J73
♦ AK52
♣ J1075

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

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

West's Weak Two or Multi might well buy it in 2♥, the vulnerable N/S decidedly thin to participate. Even where east opens a weak NT or 1♦ it looks as if 2♥ will end up being the contract, though the declarer polarity could vary.

Double dummy, the defence lead king, ace and a third spade for south to ruff, and where south starts with the diamond ace he just might find the switch. Where north starts with other than a diamond or a low spade there is little or no chance.

It looks pretty flat in 140 E/W unless N/S are inspired.

13

♠ AJ1054
♥ QJ94
♦ 73
♣ 96

♠ K8732
♥ K106
♦ QJ42
♣ J

♠ 9
♥ A75
♦ K1086
♣ AKQ105

♠ Q6
♥ 832
♦ A95
♣ 87432

Dealer: North
Both Vulnerable

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

We have a repeat of #2 and #10, north wanting to compete with the majors over an opener in front of him. Although vulnerable, he is limited by being a passed hand. Again, with 5:4, 1♠ is preferable to doubling, which would beget a 4:3 heart fit, though in practice this fit actually plays better, thanks to the bad spade break.

As the cards lie N/S are in trouble if they bid at all, though east is unlikely to seek a penalty, more likely will bid 2NT or a heavy 1NT. The former should reach game, whereas the latter may not.

With useful spade pips between the two hands E/W have a double spade stopper and cannot be prevented from making 3NT. Indeed, declarer makes ten tricks should he duck the spade queen, north entryless.

14

♠ J975
♥ A1074
♦ 1085
♣ J7

♠ AK104
♥ K5
♦ K73
♣ A543

♠ 63
♥ Q9832
♦ 4
♣ Q9862

♠ Q82
♥ J6
♦ AQJ962
♣ K10

Dealer: East
Neither Vulnerable

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

South presumably tries 2♦ or shows a single suiter over east's strong NT or Acol 1♠. After the former west may well compete, but could easily do so in hearts, where there is a poor fit, rather than clubs, where ten tricks are straightforward.

A west heart contract looks awkward on a diamond lead, declarer shortened early on, but he can succeed in making eight tricks on trump elopement lines, using dummy's entries to take multiple ruffs in hand.

Allowed to play in diamonds, it looks as if N/S can score the 110. However, entries to north are poor, eight tricks the limit, unless the defence help. A spade lead, third round ruff, then heart switch is the easiest route to five defense winners, but a heart lead also suffices.

15

♠ Q8
♥ AJ8742
♦ A
♣ QJ42

♠ KJ74
♥ 65
♦ K8
♣ 87653

♠ 953
♥ Q9
♦ J1097652
♣ A

♠ A1062
♥ K103
♦ Q43
♣ K109

Dealer: South
N-S Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | 4 | - | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| S | 4 | - | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| E | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| W | - | 1 | - | - | - |

With three tens south's flat hand looks just about worth a weak no trump or 1♣ opener. West may aggressively bid diamonds, but it is hard to see north settling for less than 4♥.

Indeed, many will make twelve tricks when east leads the diamond king. It looks as if a passive lead by the defence scuppers 6♥, but luck is with declarer when the diamond king ruffs down short and south has enough trump entries to get back for a spade pitch on the queen.

This could be pretty flat in 680 N/S, but someone might manage 1430.

16

♠ AQ
♥ AKJ1054
♦ 653
♣ 85

♠ J96542
♥ Q86
♦ 8
♣ J32

♠ 83
♥ 97
♦ AK1042
♣ KQ94

♠ K107
♥ 32
♦ QJ97
♣ A1076

Dealer: West
E-W Vulnerable

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

North has a maximum 1♥ overcall of west's 1♦ opener, doubling then bidding hearts showing a better hand, close to an Acol Two. South may well try 1NT over east's 1♠ or pass, and north could now get overboard into 3NT or 4♥, though perhaps his diamond holding should dampen his ardour.

In practice 4♥ could easily survive, east getting a third round diamond ruff with his trump winner. A club switch is now too late, declarer pulling trumps, overtaking the spade queen and disposing of his last club on a diamond. An early club switch is needed to ruin declarer's entries.

Likewise, defending no trumps west must find the early club switch, east getting on lead with the heart queen to lead through south's 10.

17

♠ A864
♥ J62
♦ 653
♣ A105

♠ 10532
♥ 10
♦ AJ87
♣ 8742

♠ KJ7
♥ AK984
♦ Q4
♣ KQ9

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

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

South may end in 4♥ after opening the suit and rebidding 2NT over either north's 1♠ or 2♥ raise. With such a flat hand some norths will elect for 3NT instead.

Only anti-percentage play is likely to bring home 4♥, declarer felling the spade queen rather than finessing.

3NT should be beaten, whether or not the defence cash four diamonds immediately, as a heart needs lost to the queen, and the other red suit is wide open. I suppose some could lead and continue clubs after taking the heart queen, reluctant to lead from the diamond king.

Will any manage to get a N/S plus score on mis-defence or inspired play?

18

♠ J96
♥ Q873
♦ Q94
♣ Q107

♠ A
♥ AKJ5
♦ AKJ62
♣ 952

♠ KQ10532
♥ 6
♦ 85
♣ J863

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| S | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| E | 3 | 6 | 6 | - | 6 |
| W | 3 | 6 | 6 | - | 6 |

I can see some opening east's hand 2NT, though 1♦, planning on a 2♥ reverse, looks sounder. South just might venture a weak jump in spades over 1♦, but east can double when this comes round, raising west's 3♥ to game. Over 2NT 4♥ is easily found via Stayman.

Whatever the lead declarer has club entries to take the trump and diamond finesses, so can manage twelve tricks. Had trumps been 3:2 all the tricks would have been there, west's club and one spade loser going on diamonds, the last spade ruffed.

Could anyone get to the respectable slam and make it? It needs one of the finesses to work, or both when trumps prove to be 4:1, plus the chances of a singleton trump queen, in all about a 60% shot.

19

♠ J3
♥ KQ
♦ AK10854
♣ Q62

♠ AKQ642
♥ J10964
♦
♣ K5

♠ 87
♥ 8752
♦ J72
♣ A1098

♠ 1095
♥ A3
♦ Q963
♣ J743

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

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

Despite the vulnerability west may well venture his heart suit when his 1♠ is overcalled 2♦ and south raises. East may not raise to game, but perhaps should, having four trumps and an ace more than promised.

E/W's 4♥ is an easy make with an overtrick when west's club king become a trick and trumps prove to be 2:2.

N/S need to go on to 5♦ to improve their score, and can hold the penalty to 300 by playing west for a doubleton club honour, likely on the bidding.

Lots of results possible. I bet someone makes 4♥x up one.

20

♠ KJ4
♥ Q
♦ AQ108432
♣ 107

♠ 832
♥ 87432
♦ 97
♣ KQ9

♠ A7
♥ KJ106
♦ 6
♣ AJ6542

♠ Q10965
♥ A95
♦ KJ5
♣ 83

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

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

We have another competitive hand, east bidding his clubs over north's 1♦. It is wrong to double, as west would likely bid spades and a club bid over that would show a much stronger hand. Today, the unsound double is the winner, finding the heart fit, where an extra trick and game is makeable.

In theory, N/S have to sacrifice in diamonds, and should lose the obvious three tricks, ceding only a 200 penalty, a considerable improvement on the loss of 620.

However, in practice I reckon few will get to either E/W possible game. Indeed, those that try 5♣ should be defeated, north winning the dutiful diamond lead, but switching to the heart queen, and getting a ruff.

Multiple results look possible on this one.

21

♠ AQJ
♥ KJ5
♦ 87
♣ KJ987

♠ 102
♥ AQ7432
♦ 3
♣ A432

♠ K976543
♥ 6
♦ AQ94
♣ Q

♠ 8
♥ 1098
♦ KJ10652
♣ 1065

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

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

East is near certain to overcall north's 1♣ or strong no trump with spades. The main danger now is partner, who has a decent hand, and may try to improve the contract by bidding hearts.

E/W should still survive in 3♠ as south is most unlikely to find the winning trump lead, which holds it so long as north continues the good work. Indeed, on a diamond lead a second round of the suit can be ruffed on dummy, ten tricks resulting.

I trust nobody goes minus E/W, but who knows?

22

♠ A1032
♥ KQ103
♦ KJ106
♣ 4

♠ KJ6
♥ J2
♦ Q85
♣ AKJ52

♠ Q9
♥ 764
♦ 742
♣ Q10983

♠ 8754
♥ A985
♦ A93
♣ 76

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

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

The best outcome for N/S could be where west is passed out in his strong NT, which can be defeated 400 on a red suit lead, though a spade allows six tricks.

Instead, north may well show his majors over 1NT, assuming he has the system to do so, getting to the heart fit. It is easier over a 1♣ opener, double getting all of the other three suits into the picture.

However, it is hard to see either major suit game being bid, which in any event needs the diamond queen to be picked up, and so may not succeed anyway.

It looks like a fair few major suit part-scores N/S, mainly 140s and 170s, but there might be the odd decent penalty.

23

♠ 96
♥ Q10982
♦ AK93
♣ J8

♠ K1054
♥ 653
♦ 1065
♣ Q76

♠ AJ8732
♥ 4
♦ QJ4
♣ K94

♠ Q
♥ AKJ7
♦ 872
♣ A10532

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | NT |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| N | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 1 |
| S | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 1 |
| E | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| W | - | - | - | 2 | - |

South should have some way of showing a sound 4 card raise when east intervenes with 1♠ after north has responded 1♥ to his 1♣. Some play a 2♣ cue bid as being a good 3 card raise, 2NT as a 4 card raise, leaving a simple 2♥ raise to show three decent trumps but limited opening values.

I can see some missing game on this one, except where south over-states his hand with a 3♠ splinter. 4♥ is a comfortable make, despite south's wasted queen in his singleton suit.

Indeed, some will play on clubs and register eleven tricks when the suit ruffs good for two diamond pitches.

Will many have 650 on the card?

24

♠ 1075
♥ KQ10964
♦ 1063
♣ 6

♠ AKQ2
♥ J7
♦ QJ852
♣ A4

♠ J83
♥ 2
♦ A97
♣ QJ10987

♠ 964
♥ A853
♦ K4
♣ K532

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

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

This hand provides an interesting bidding challenge when north pre-empts 2♥ over west's 1♦, south quite likely raising whether or not east bids.

East is a bit thin to double 2♥ without four spades (though some might), and too weak to introduce his club suit at the 3 level, effectively game forcing.

A brave west might double himself, but that will almost certainly paint the partnership into playing in clubs, where they cannot avoid losing three tricks.

4♠ is the spot if any can find it. Declaring this strain north can lead his singleton, forcing declarer to pull trumps or cede a ruff. However, he still only loses two hearts and a diamond, scoring a heroic 420, or 450 if the ruff is missed, a heart ruffed in dummy.

25

♠ J9854
♥ AQ986
♦ 8
♣ Q9

♠ Q76
♥ 102
♦ A1094
♣ 10765

♠ 102
♥ K743
♦ KQ63
♣ AJ8

♠ AK3
♥ J5
♦ J752
♣ K432

 Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

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

Where east opens a weak NT south has no sound bid, but north shows his majors, assuming he can, and N/S should get to a spade part-score, where there are nine fairly straightforward tricks. Even declaring hearts north could score 140, since the defence may fail to force in diamonds. The main danger is getting too high, failing in game.

5 card majors open east 1♦, again silencing south. However, here west could make a pre-emptive jump to 3♦, assuming playing Inverted Minors. This could easily buy the contract.

East could be held to eight tricks in 3♦, but if he guesses both minors correctly it is possible to scramble 110 for a great score. Even one light shouldn't be bad.

26

♠ 832
♥ J642
♦ AJ10962

♠ AKQ9
♥ AJ864
♦ K9
♣ Q8

♠ 105
♥ KQ95
♦ Q85
♣ K743

♠ J764
♥ 10732
♦ A1073
♣ 5

 Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

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

E/W surely get to 4♥ and now it is up to north to find the club lead and second round ruff. Declarer still cannot avoid the loss of a diamond trick.

Holding 4♥ to 620 looks a great effort unless any inexplicably miss game, or go off in an ambitious slam, off two aces, an unlikely prospect.

Looks pretty flat at 650 E/W at most tables.

27

♠ KQ4
♥ Q865
♦ QJ1084
♣ 9

♠ 3
♥ KJ1042
♦ AK9762
♣ Q

♠ A1098652
♥ 9
♦ 5
♣ A743

♠ J7
♥ A73
♦ 3
♣ KJ108652

 Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

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

E/W could get into trouble on this one if they elect to bid over south's club pre-empt. North probably hasn't enough top cards to double anything, but I can see several losing 200 in a red suit, when west thinks he has a decent hand.

E/W's best denomination is spades, where they might manage nine tricks in the absence of a trump lead. Unfortunately, few will be in spades at the Three level.

The usual maxim applies. Misfits are best played in no trumps, or defended, the latter the winner today.

28

♠ 7643
♥ K102
♦ KQ2
♣ AJ4

♠ K5
♥ AQJ754
♦ J85
♣ Q6

♠ AQJ1098
♥ 96
♦ A10
♣ 832

♠ 2
♥ 83
♦ 97643
♣ K10975

 Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

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

This could be another hand where the bidding gets overboard, east bidding then jumping in spades after west has opened and rebid his hearts. There is every possibility that west will raise to game rather than pass out 3♠.

The defence do need to be careful to lead diamonds early on, or declarer could get his hearts going before the diamond ace is knocked out, allowing a beatable contract through.

Accurate (or otherwise) defence seems to be rather a theme on this set, which it is hoped proved enjoyable.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|----------|-----|------|------|------|
| Ave HCP | N 10.32 | S 9.71 | E 10.00 | W 9.97 | Balanced | N 9 | S 17 | E 10 | W 12 |
| Voids/singleton | N 1/11 | S 0/10 | E 0/16 | W 1/10 | 7+ suit | N 3 | S 1 | E 2 | W 1 |