



The January Charity Pairs

Wednesday 28 January 2026

Our January Charity Pairs, raises funds for UNICEF to help children in danger through the world.

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<https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/donations.asp> and
donate whatever you can – but read this first :
<https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/BeforeDonating.asp>
to make sure you don't add a "tip" to the donation –
quite unnecessary in our view.

Help us to help these children who are in such need. Please.

Board 1	♠ 93 ♥ AJ104 ♦ 86 ♣ 108765	Love All Dir: North																												
♠ K876 ♥ K5 ♦ K10532 ♣ J2	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ QJ2 ♥ Q9862 ♦ AQJ7 ♣ A																			
	N																													
W		E																												
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♠ A1054 ♥ 73 ♦ 94 ♣ KQ943		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	E	-	5	3	3	1	W	-	5	3	3	1	
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																										
N	-	-	-	-																										
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E	-	5	3	3	1																									
W	-	5	3	3	1																									

Given a free run sound bidding should reach the good 5♦ contract via 1♥-1♠-2♦-3♦-3♠-5♦. A match point phobia about minor suits might tempt some into the doomed 4♠. When South overcalls 1♥ with 2♣ West will usually double and North will raise to 3♠ or 4♠. East will double and the final contract will be diamonds –sometimes game, sometimes a diamond partial.

Board 2	♠ Q1062 ♥ J9 ♦ AQ75 ♣ Q73	NS Vul Dir: East										
♠ 4 ♥ A54 ♦ J432 ♣ AK1086	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K85 ♥ Q86 ♦ 1096 ♣ J954	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ AJ973 ♥ K10732 ♦ K8 ♣ 2		♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - - 4 5 3 S - - 4 5 3 E - - - - W - - - -										

Whether West doubles the 1♠ opening (over double the usual treatment is for North to bid 2NT to show a raise to 3♠ or better) or overcalls 2♣ (over an overall some play that 2NT shows a 4-card raise and a UCB 3♠ shows a 3-card raise) NS should reach 4♠. Any heroes who are attracted to sacrifice in 5♣ at the vulnerability will find this a painful experience. A good sacrifice requires a little more distribution – 7 losers are at least 2 too many.

Board 3	♠ AQJ74 ♥ 42 ♦ AK104 ♣ 104	EW Vul Dir: South																													
♠ 10 ♥ K85 ♦ 9732 ♣ KQJ98	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 953 ♥ AQ93 ♦ 5 ♣ A7532																				
	N																														
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♠ K862 ♥ J1076 ♦ QJ86 ♣ 6		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	3	-	4	-	S	-	3	-	4	-	E	5	-	2	-	-	W	5	-	2	-	-
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S	-	3	-	4	-																										
E	5	-	2	-	-																										
W	5	-	2	-	-																										

Double fits all round but many NS pairs will bid to 4♠ without a squeak from the opponents who are laydown for 5♠. Afficionados of the Raptor convention will be in rapture. East will overcall 1♠ with 1NT to show 4 hearts and a 5-card minor and strike gold. Whatever South does West can bid NT to show both minors and so find the club fit.

Board 4	♠ 976 ♥ 5 ♦ J874 ♣ K9832	Game All Dir: West																														
♠ KJ8 ♥ Q1076 ♦ A652 ♣ 64	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 103 ♥ AKJ93 ♦ 1093 ♣ Q105																					
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♠ AQ542 ♥ 842 ♦ KQ ♣ AJ7		<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>T</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	T	N	3	-	-	3	-	S	3	-	-	3	-	E	-	-	2	-	1	W	-	-	2	-	-
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S	3	-	-	3	-																											
E	-	-	2	-	1																											
W	-	-	2	-	-																											

Players who think it mandatory to take action in 3rd seat will open 1♥. South overcalls 1♠ and West shows a raise to 3♥ or better (some do this via 2♠, others with 2NT). Either way East's 3♥ should end proceedings. Where South is allowed to open 1♠ North should raise and bold Wests will balance with a double. East bids 3♥, but South will take further action and should win the contract in 3♠. Where South opens 1NT he should play there and finish 1 down.

Board 5	♠ AJ876 ♥ AQJ9 ♦ K9 ♣ Q2	NS Vul Dlr: North																									
♠ 543 ♥ 862 ♦ 108 ♣ AJ854	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 1092 ♥ 75 ♦ Q654 ♣ 10973																
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W		E																									
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♠ KQ ♥ K1043 ♦ AJ732 ♣ K6		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	6	6	6	S	-	6	6	6	E	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-
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N	-	6	6	6																							
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This will start 1♠ -2♦ -2♥. Those playing 2-over-1 forcing to game will be able to bid 3♥ forcing; but most Souths will have to bid a fourth suit 3♣. Over that North bids 3♦ and South 3♥, setting the suit for the time being. North should start to show his extra values with 3♠. Thereafter most should reach slam either in hearts or in no-trump where South wants to protect his ♣K and/or score the extra NT premium.

Board 6	♠ KJ6 ♥ 86 ♦ J872 ♣ AQ87	EW Vul Dir: East																									
♠ 8543 ♥ Q1053 ♦ AQ95 ♣ J	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 2 ♥ KJ92 ♦ K1063 ♣ K1042																
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♠ AQ1097 ♥ A74 ♦ 4 ♣ 9653		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	2	-	-	2	S	2	-	-	2	E	-	2	2	-	W	-	2	2	-
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N	2	-	-	2																							
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E	-	2	2	-																							
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No-one has a traditional 12-count opening bid, but this is unlikely to be passed out. South might open 1♠ (only 7 losers, and acceptable according to the Rule of 19); if he does not West has a less attractive choice, but some just cannot pass in third seat. If there are 3 passes North will add his HCP to his spades and come up with just 14 Pearson points, but he may open a weak 1NT anyway. The trick will be to stop in a making contract.

Board 7	♠ A873 ♥ 1063 ♦ Q1054 ♣ J4	Game All Dir: South																									
♠ Q9 ♥ AK952 ♦ 96 ♣ K1075	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K1054 ♥ Q7 ♦ A82 ♣ Q632																
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♠ J62 ♥ J84 ♦ KJ73 ♣ A98		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	E	4	-	4	-	W	4	-	4	-
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E	4	-	4	-																							
W	4	-	4	-																							

Tough hand. After 1♥ -1♠ -2♣ comes the key moment: East has no satisfactory bid. The slight underbid of 3♣ or the slightly unsatisfactory 2NT will both produce plus scores. Some may try to solve the problem with the fourth suit (good when partner has ♦Qx) and end in an uncomfortable 4♥. This will make if declarer can divine to drop the ♠J (no chance if South ducks smoothly when declarer plays a club to the queen).

Board 8	♠ 7542 ♥ K ♦ K104 ♣ QJ854	Love All Dlr: West																									
♠ K108 ♥ Q4 ♦ AQ62 ♣ 9732	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J93 ♥ AJ852 ♦ 975 ♣ 106																
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♠ AQ6 ♥ 109763 ♦ J83 ♣ AK		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	2	-	-	2	S	2	-	-	2	E	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-
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South has an opening bid this time, and should prefer 1NT to 1♥ with such a poor suit. No-one has a bid over that, and South will score well. If West opens light and East responds in, or transfers to, hearts South may be frozen out of the bidding. 2♥ is an easy 2 down, but you need a third undertrick to compensate for your own part score. After 1NT-2♦-2♥ North might re-open with a double with pleasing results.

Board 9	♠ KQ10853 ♥ 8 ♦ 5 ♣ 98543	EW Vul Dir: North																									
♠ AJ76 ♥ J9753 ♦ AK ♣ J7	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 2 ♥ AK1064 ♦ 10942 ♣ KQ10																
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♠ 94 ♥ Q2 ♦ QJ8763 ♣ A62		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	E	-	6	-	4	W	-	6	-	4
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																							
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S	-	-	-	-																							
E	-	6	-	4																							
W	-	6	-	4																							

The time to pre-empt as high as you dare is first in hand at favourable, so North should start with 3♠ to test the opponents. This will keep some out of the heart slam. However many will open 2♠ and most Easts won't be denied. The Multi 2♦ comes off even worse, since East has an easy 2♥ bid. Worst of all is for North to pass – then opponents should sail into 6♥ via Jacoby and location of the spade shortage.

Board 10	♠ Q1092 ♥ 6 ♦ A9876 ♣ Q107	Game All Dir: East									
♠ K7 ♥ AKQ1052 ♦ 102 ♣ A94	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J6 ♥ 98743 ♦ 543 ♣ 632
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ A8543 ♥ J ♦ KQJ ♣ KJ85		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT N 4 4 - 4 - S 4 4 - 4 - E - - 2 - - W - - 2 - -									

After South starts with 1♠ most Wests will bid 2♥, and North should stretch to 3♠, so reaching the spade game. Some Wests might choose to double with the same result. A more attractive option for West is to overcall an off-centre 1NT, testing NS's ability to raise constructively over that bid. This approach may lead to some missed games.

Board 11	♠ AQ54 ♥ 1098 ♦ - ♣ AK10984	Love All Dir: South									
♠ K632 ♥ Q7 ♦ K9852 ♣ 73	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 ♥ A643 ♦ Q10764 ♣ Q52
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♠ J987 ♥ KJ52 ♦ AJ3 ♣ J6		♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N 5 - 3 5 2 S 5 - 3 5 2 E - 2 - - - W - 2 - - -									

A tricky affair. The double dummy analysis is that 11 tricks are available in spades, but North may well fail in 4♠ on a diamond lead. Best is to win the ♦A discarding a heart and play 3 rounds of clubs. If West discards smoothly declarer will be fine if he continues with the ♠J but a spade to the Queen leads to complications. Declarers who play a spade to the Queen at trick 2 will, at some point, have to guess to play a heart to the king.

Board 12	♠ KQ93 ♥ J764 ♦ Q43 ♣ 52	NS Vul Dir: West																													
♠ A65 ♥ 83 ♦ 1095 ♣ KJ1093	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 1084 ♥ 1052 ♦ K762 ♣ Q84																				
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♠ J72 ♥ AKQ9 ♦ AJ8 ♣ A76		<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	5	4	2	S	-	-	5	4	2	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
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An easier heart game for NS after such a struggle on the previous board. The cards are friendly and there are no problems in reaching 4♥: 1♥-2♥-2NT-4♥ for those playing 4-card majors; or 1♣-1♥-4♥ for those favouring 5-card majors. 11 tricks are available stress free – just draw trump and knock out the ♠A.

Board 13	♠ 85 ♥ AJ106 ♦ J10 ♣ Q10984	Game All Dir: North																														
♠ AQ9 ♥ KQ85 ♦ 864 ♣ 532	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J104 ♥ 93 ♦ KQ97532 ♣ 6																					
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	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
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S	4	-	3	2	1																											
E	-	4	-	-	-																											
W	-	4	-	-	-																											

Tough decisions all round after East opens 3♦ and South doubles. First West has to decide whether to pass and defend or raise to 4♦, either buying the contract or defending and possibly doubling a major game. If West passes North should do no more than bid 3♥ and this will come back to West who, to be consistent, should defend and be disappointed - regardless of the lead declarer should make 9 tricks. Where West bids 4♦ over the double North has a close decision and may try 4♥.

Board 14	♠ K5 ♥ J43 ♦ QJ4 ♣ QJ432	Love All Dir: East																									
♠ 1097 ♥ AQ876 ♦ 632 ♣ K9	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 42 ♥ 52 ♦ A987 ♣ A8765																
	N																										
W		E																									
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	♠ AQJ863 ♥ K109 ♦ K105 ♣ 10	<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2 1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2 1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	-	2 1	S	-	-	-	2 1	E	1	1	1	-	W	1	1	1	-
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																							
N	-	-	-	2 1																							
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E	1	1	1	-																							
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Most tables will play in 2♠, making 8 tricks when East wins the opening diamond lead and switches to a heart. A passive trump lead gives 9 tricks and there will be a few of these. No doubt some Easts will balance with 2NT and now 2 down in 3♦ will be great or disastrous depending on whether North doubles.

Board 15	♠ AKJ2 ♥ A107 ♦ J98 ♣ J87	NS Vul Dir: South																														
♠ Q1098 ♥ Q5 ♦ AK6 ♣ 9432	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 6543 ♥ J8643 ♦ Q5 ♣ K10																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
	♠ 7 ♥ K92 ♦ 107432 ♣ AQ65	<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	3	4	-	-	3	S	3	4	-	-	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	3	4	-	-	3																											
S	3	4	-	-	3																											
E	-	-	-	-	-																											
W	-	-	-	-	-																											

The wrong hand for a fashionable opening on a balanced 11 count. A weak NT may escape a double from North, but East will Stayman and when West's 2♣ comes round to South he may balance with a double. Even if he passes 2♠ should cost 200, beating only those pairs that reach an unlikely 23-count 3NT that cannot fail on this friendly lie of the cards. A 1♣ opening may escape trouble, but could encourage NS to stumble into 3NT.

Board 16	♠ 9862 ♥ 9 ♦ KQJ875 ♣ 83	EW Vul Dir: West																													
♠ 107 ♥ Q108762 ♦ 103 ♣ KQ2	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AJ3 ♥ K54 ♦ 942 ♣ AJ96																				
	N																														
W		E																													
	S																														
	♠ KQ54 ♥ AJ3 ♦ A6 ♣ 10754	<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	4	-	3	1	S	-	4	-	3	1	E	-	-	3	-	-	W	-	-	3	-	-
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	-	4	-	3	1																										
S	-	4	-	3	1																										
E	-	-	3	-	-																										
W	-	-	3	-	-																										

A part score battle with heart, diamond and spade contracts possible. I suspect that most Wests will see nothing wrong with a weak 2♥ or a Multi, although some purists and those whose system is that 2♥ shows 2 suits will pass. When East passes 2♥ South may bid 2NT - 14 is an acceptable minimum in the balancing seat. Thereafter all things are possible. Well done to those NS pairs who judge to bid 4♦ over 3♥.

Board 17	♠ AKJ63 ♥ 62 ♦ J852 ♣ 74	Love All Dir: North									
♠ 9852 ♥ K975 ♦ Q107 ♣ J9	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ 1074 ♥ QJ104 ♦ A ♣ A8532
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q ♥ A83 ♦ K9643 ♣ KQ106	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - 4 - - 1 S - 4 - - 1 E - 1 - - - W - 1 - - -									

The usual start will be East: 1♣, South: 1♦ and a flimsy negative double from West, showing 4-4 in the majors. Modern Norths make a fit jump with 2♠ and NS should subside in 3♦ for a simple 10 tricks. Playing match points against timid opponents you should consider over-competing on part-score hands nonvulnerable if you have some hope of escaping for 2 down, -100 against their partial. Bidding 3♥ may work if you do it quickly – generally quick is good in competitive auctions. My opposite advice: think it out on big hands.

Board 18	♠ Q10 ♥ K105 ♦ A63 ♣ Q8742	NS Vul Dir: East									
♠ AK9762 ♥ 9 ♦ K1042 ♣ J9	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ 85 ♥ AQJ842 ♦ J87 ♣ 63
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ J43 ♥ 763 ♦ Q95 ♣ AK105	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N 1 - - - 1 S 1 - - - 1 E - 2 3 2 - W - 2 3 2 -									

East has a standard weak 2♥, which should be the final contract. South will lead a top club and then decide whether to switch to a trump or a diamond. Either way the result should be 9 tricks. Where the system forces East to pass West will usually declare 2♠, where only 8 tricks are available.

Board 19	♠ K6432 ♥ 93 ♦ J4 ♣ A432	EW Vul Dir: South									
♠ J108 ♥ A5 ♦ 1072 ♣ Q9875	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ Q97 ♥ KQJ1084 ♦ Q95 ♣ 10
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A5 ♥ 762 ♦ AK863 ♣ KJ6	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N 2 3 - 3 - S 2 3 - 3 - E - - - 1 W - - - - 1									

Weak no-trumpers start 1♦ - 1♠. Most of the world bids 2♥ as East - I am in the small minority who believe this to be too risky. The vulnerability, Qxx in 2 side suits, plus a partner who could not bid over 1♦, all suggest passing. Over 2♥ it is a good idea for South to double, showing a strong no-trump - North might pass for an easy 800. If South opens 1NT East will double North's 2♥ transfer. Standard practice (I am not convinced!) is for South to pass showing a doubleton spade and North will go quietly with 2♠.

Board 20	♠ AQJ102 ♥ 972 ♦ J2 ♣ AK8	Game All Dir: West									
♠ 74 ♥ KQ6 ♦ Q953 ♣ Q1054	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ 63 ♥ 543 ♦ K84 ♣ 97632
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ K985 ♥ AJ108 ♦ A1076 ♣ J	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - - 4 5 4 S - - 4 5 4 E - - - - W - - - -									

Over 1♠ some Souths will splinter with 4♣ and North will sign off in 4♠. Some will think this hand too good to splinter and use the popular Jacoby convention - 2NT showing 4+♠ and game values. 6♠ is playable but unlucky without a diamond lead, hopeless with a diamond lead unless West has ♦98 doubleton or ♦98x.

Board 21	♠ AKQ1063 ♥ A105 ♦ 8 ♣ QJ7	NS Vul Dir: North																														
♠ 85 ♥ J98 ♦ Q10753 ♣ K83	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 742 ♥ K73 ♦ K94 ♣ 9652																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
	♠ J9 ♥ Q642 ♦ AJ62 ♣ A104	<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	4	5	4	S	-	-	4	5	4	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	-	-	4	5	4																											
S	-	-	4	5	4																											
E	-	-	-	-	-																											
W	-	-	-	-	-																											

The usual start will be 1♠-2♦-3♠. Then South has to decide whether to do more than raise to 4♠. I believe that South is just worth a 4♣ cuebid, but he should sign off in 4♠ over North's 4♥ return cuebid. Now North should pass but some will bid on to the 37.5% slam. This has no play when the club finesse fails, and even if West had the ♣K you would need to play hearts for just one loser.

Board 22	♠ J1094 ♥ J53 ♦ J32 ♣ A98	EW Vul Dir: East																														
♠ AQ863 ♥ 96 ♦ 987 ♣ K76	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 752 ♥ 84 ♦ AK1054 ♣ Q32																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
♠ K ♥ AKQ1072 ♦ Q6 ♣ J1054		<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	3	-	3	-	2	S	3	-	3	-	2	E	-	1	-	-	-	W	-	1	-	-	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	3	-	3	-	2																											
S	3	-	3	-	2																											
E	-	1	-	-	-																											
W	-	1	-	-	-																											

Again my conservative overall approach avoids any trouble for EW but many Wests will overall 1♠. Now EW are in danger. 2♠ is -200 and if East competes over 3♥ an 800 may be the result. Against a spade contract South should win the first trick and switch to the ♣J. It is a good defensive arrangement that during the play the lead of the 9 or 10 shows zero or 2 higher so that when South switches to the ♣J North knows that it is not from ♣KJ10.

Board 23	♠ QJ9764 ♥ 6542 ♦ 62 ♣ Q	Game All Dir: South																														
♠ AK ♥ Q ♦ Q109873 ♣ 9754	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 103 ♥ AKJ73 ♦ J5 ♣ 10862																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
♠ 852 ♥ 1098 ♦ AK4 ♣ AKJ3		<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	2	-	-	S	-	-	2	-	-	E	1	1	-	-	1	W	1	1	-	-	1
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	-	-	2	-	-																											
S	-	-	2	-	-																											
E	1	1	-	-	1																											
W	1	1	-	-	1																											

NS score best by playing in a comfortable 2♠, but getting there may not be so easy. Problems may occur when South starts with 1♣ and West makes a weak jump to 2♦. Now North will be in difficulty: he might bid 2♠ with insufficient values and risk getting too high; or pass and risk missing out.

Board 24	♠ A982 ♥ 54 ♦ AQJ9 ♣ 872	Love All Dir: West																													
♠ 5 ♥ KJ10 ♦ K875 ♣ K10943	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ QJ764 ♥ 863 ♦ 62 ♣ AQJ																				
	N																														
W		E																													
	S																														
♠ K103 ♥ AQ972 ♦ 1043 ♣ 65		<table><tr><td>N</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	N	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	1	3	1	1	S	-	1	2	1	1	E	1	-	-	-	-	W	1	-	-	-	-
N	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	-	1	3	1	1																										
S	-	1	2	1	1																										
E	1	-	-	-	-																										
W	1	-	-	-	-																										

For some this will be a boring All Pass. For others it will be a contested part score. It is fashionable to open balanced 11 counts and North has a good 11. If he starts with a weak NT he may be allowed to play in a peaceful 2♥ after a transfer. However some EW pairs will compete – possibly 2NT for the minors when 2♥ comes round to West. In an ideal world South doubles 3♣ and North with only 2 hearts will choose to defend. When North passes initially it is definitely good practice for East to bid 1♠ in 3rd seat and West may buy the contract in 1NT.

Board 25	♠ AQ94 ♥ 3 ♦ 10876 ♣ K1042	EW Vul Dlr: North									
♠ J63 ♥ 8652 ♦ KQ54 ♣ Q5	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ K107 ♥ AKQJ4 ♦ 9 ♣ A976
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ 852 ♥ 1097 ♦ AJ32 ♣ J83	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - - - - S - - - - E - - 4 - 3 W - - 4 - 3									

This one may be the flattest board of the day with a string of 4♥ making 10 tricks. After Pass - 1♥ - Pass - 2♥ North is worth a takeout double as a passed hand, but East will bid game, and South has the wrong distribution to even think of a sacrifice.

Board 26	♠ AKJ43 ♥ 103 ♦ J43 ♣ Q32	Game All Dlr: East									
♠ Q65 ♥ AQJ94 ♦ 95 ♣ 1087	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ 1098 ♥ K87 ♦ Q7 ♣ AK965
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ 72 ♥ 652 ♦ AK10862 ♣ J4	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - 3 - 3 - S - 3 - 3 - E 1 - 1 - - W 1 - 1 - -									

When East starts with a weak NT West will transfer to 2♥ and South may decide to bid 3♦ - a dangerous bid in front of an unlimited West. Pass is more sensible. When 2♥ is passed round to North he should balance with 2♠. If EW press on - East seems to have the right hand to compete with 3♥ - the defenders can cash their 5 winners in spades and diamonds, then wait for their club trick. Minus 200 may be quite a common result.

Board 27	♠ J9 ♥ KJ73 ♦ Q96 ♣ Q743	Love All Dlr: South									
♠ 108 ♥ 652 ♦ K532 ♣ AK105	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ A732 ♥ 1084 ♦ AJ10 ♣ J62
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ KQ654 ♥ AQ9 ♦ 874 ♣ 98	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - - 1 1 - S - - 1 1 - E 2 2 - - 1 W 2 2 - - 1									

Unless South opens this will be passed out. If he does open an ugly 1NT he will play there, two down on a diamond lead. Over 1♠ North will respond 1NT, and may escape for 1 down if East chooses the unattractive heart lead rather than the unattractive club lead.

Board 28	♠ 105 ♥ 7 ♦ Q976543 ♣ Q73	NS Vul Dlr: West									
♠ AQJ964 ♥ A10953 ♦ K ♣ 10	<table> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W		E		S		♠ 87 ♥ K42 ♦ A102 ♣ 96542
N											
W		E									
	S										
	♠ K32 ♥ QJ86 ♦ J8 ♣ AKJ8	♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT N - 1 - - - S - 1 - - - E - - 4 4 3 W - - 4 4 3									

What should West rebid after 1♠-1NT? Too strong for 2♥, so 3♥ unless playing one of the modern gadgets: Gazzilli (finding out more, then telling more, via 2♣); or transfers where 2♦ shows hearts. All routes lead to 4 of a major. In 4♥, if North leads a diamond, declarer wins, crosses to the ♥K, discards his club on the ♦A, takes the spade finesse and makes 11 or 12 twelve tricks depending on what he does after cashing the ♠A. On a club lead and continuation declarer dare not play the ♥A before ruffing the 3rd spade. 4♠ presents fewer problems.

Board 29	♠ 83 ♥ AKQ7 ♦ A10752 ♣ 109	Game All Dir: North																														
♠ A765 ♥ J62 ♦ 98 ♣ QJ32	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J9 ♥ 109843 ♦ KQJ3 ♣ 54																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
	♠ KQ1042 ♥ 5 ♦ 64 ♣ AK876	<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	4	3	-	4	3	S	4	3	-	4	3	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	4	3	-	4	3																											
S	4	3	-	4	3																											
E	-	-	-	-	-																											
W	-	-	-	-	-																											

A really tough deal to bid, play and defend. Most Norths will start with 1♦ and rebid 2♦ over 1♠. Then South bids 3♣ and North 3NT. A few Norths may start with 1♥. After 1♠ - 2♦ South may content himself with 2NT, which North may pass conservatively. A club lead is fatal for the defence, but red suit leads give declarer problems. If he plays on clubs West will need to duck the first time spades are played.

Board 30	♠ KJ62 ♥ 752 ♦ K ♣ AQ942	Love All Dir: East																														
♠ Q98 ♥ AK9 ♦ QJ8754 ♣ K	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10743 ♥ J864 ♦ 3 ♣ 10653																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
	♠ A5 ♥ Q103 ♦ A10962 ♣ J87	<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	4	-	-	-	4	S	4	-	-	-	4	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	4	-	-	-	4																											
S	4	-	-	-	4																											
E	-	-	-	-	-																											
W	-	-	-	-	-																											

South's 11 count looks like 13, good enough for 1NT, so reaching 3NT via Stayman. West leads a diamond and lack of entries guide declarer into playing the ♠A. When West obligingly contributes the ♠K finessing ♣8 gives declarer 9 top tricks which he will be forced to cash rather than risk the spade finesse. If South passes West opens 1♦ and North should double. Now South will choose 2NT or 3NT - pass is not recommended even though it works well.

Board 31	♠ J9 ♥ AQ108 ♦ AJ10965 ♣ 10	NS Vul Dir: South																														
♠ 10652 ♥ J43 ♦ K2 ♣ K972	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AQ83 ♥ K76 ♦ 843 ♣ AJ4																					
	N																															
W		E																														
	S																															
	♠ K74 ♥ 952 ♦ Q7 ♣ Q8653	<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	3	2	-	1	S	-	3	2	-	1	E	-	-	-	2	-	W	1	-	-	3	-
	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																											
N	-	3	2	-	1																											
S	-	3	2	-	1																											
E	-	-	-	2	-																											
W	1	-	-	3	-																											

Another delicate part score tussle. East doubles North's 1♦ opening. When South bids 1NT West will usually pass and North will rebid 2♦. When this comes back to West he will do well to act. 2♣ works well, protecting the ♦K. Now North should bid 3♦ and East has a decision. To defeat 3♠ North must find an imaginative lead of the ♥Q! Double dummy enthusiasts will spot that West can still make 9 tricks by leading the ♠J from dummy, pinning the ♠10. Playing in diamonds if East leads a passive trump declarer will make 10 tricks.

Board 32	♠ 73 ♥ K874 ♦ KJ85 ♣ 976	EW Vul Dir: West																									
♠ 2 ♥ 102 ♦ 9764 ♣ QJ8543	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q98 ♥ AQJ93 ♦ AQ2 ♣ A10																
	N																										
W		E																									
	S																										
	♠ AKJ10654 ♥ 65 ♦ 103 ♣ K2	<table><tr><td>♠</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	♠	♦	♥	♣	NT	N	-	-	2	2	S	-	-	1	1	E	5	3	2	-	W	5	3	2	-
♠	♦	♥	♣	NT																							
N	-	-	2	2																							
S	-	-	1	1																							
E	5	3	2	-																							
W	5	3	2	-																							

Over East's 1♥ opening I like 2♠ on the South cards even if your partnership plays weak jumps. Facing a passed partner game for NS is unlikely and 2♠ puts pressure on the vulnerable opponents. However most Souths will bid 1♠; when this comes back to East he will risk 1NT and now West can introduce his club suit.