



The 2025 Welsh Bridge Union Autumn Simultaneous Pairs

Wednesday 24th 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

♠ K
 ♥ AK108
 ♦ 84
 ♣ 986542
 ♠ A9763
 ♥ J5
 ♦ 962
 ♣ J103
 ♠ 105
 ♥ Q963
 ♦ J1073
 ♣ AK7
 ♠ QJ842
 ♥ 742
 ♦ AKQ5
 ♣ Q

 Dealer: North
 Neither Vulnerable

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

North could respond a heavy 1NT to south's 1♠, the alternative being 2♣ on a poor suit. South's 2♦ bid gives north the awkward choices of 2♠ preference, or (re-)bidding 3♣. In practice either could work out okay.

3♣ might well make, north getting his heart losers away on diamonds and spades, losing only three trumps and the spade ace, though the defence can get a ruff in one or other hand, scoring four trump tricks.

South's 2♠ can make nine tricks on trump elopement lines, south ruffing two clubs in hand, also making two high spades and five red suit winners.

(David) Burn's First Law states that - "When declaring a trump contract thou shalt have more trumps than the opponents". It is rare that the top-scoring spot breaks that Law, proving it is not infallible.

2

♠ 642
 ♥ 98
 ♦ AJ2
 ♣ K7654
 ♠ QJ3
 ♥ Q104
 ♦ 9875
 ♣ J83
 ♠ K1085
 ♥ AJ7
 ♦ 1064
 ♣ AQ2
 ♠ A97
 ♥ K6532
 ♦ KQ3
 ♣ 109

 Dealer: East
 N-S Vulnerable

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

East will play his weak NT on a heart lead. Declarer needs to use this dummy entry or a later spade one to finesse clubs, ideally running the knave, the 10/9 later dropping and allowing eight tricks. If he simply plugs away in spades, south wins the 3rd round, gets to north in diamonds and another heart lead leads to defeat.

5 card majors open east 1♣, over which south might venture 1♥. Either west or north could now try 1NT. West should manage his contract if he is careful, but north has little chance on a spade lead from east, and could finish two light, losing 200.

Declaring 1NT vulnerable you need to make it, as you are going light in 100s, this hand demonstrating the risks of poor vulnerable overcalls, even undoubled in the final resting place.

3

♠ A87
 ♥ AJ1063
 ♦ AQ1074
 ♣ AKQ62
 ♥ Q10932
 ♦ 963
 ♠ J854
 ♥ J
 ♦ KQ9542
 ♣ J2
 ♠ 10973
 ♥ K654
 ♦ 87
 ♣ K85

 Dealer: South
 E-W Vulnerable

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

West's 1♠ opener could be overcalled 2NT for the minors, though north is very good for this, double perhaps better, despite the absence of a 4th heart.

E/W are likely to bid up to 3♠ if necessary. South will bid clubs if he has to over 2NT, will bid hearts if north has doubled.

E/W's 3♠ can get home for the loss of two clubs and two hearts, but is uncomfortable with the trump break if south can lead diamonds, shortening west.

N/S should lose less declaring clubs, rather than defending spades, there being effectively eight top tricks and a diamond ruff in dummy, though care is needed not to get red winners ruffed.

4

♠ A94
 ♥ A10982
 ♦ A
 ♣ KJ86
 ♠ KQ872
 ♥ 3
 ♦ Q
 ♣ Q107542
 ♠ 63
 ♥ KJ75
 ♦ J1095432
 ♣ A93

 Dealer: West
 Both Vulnerable

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

Despite his distributional hand west is a bit shy of an opener, leaving north to open 1♥. South may well make a pre-emptive jump to 4♥ now, shutting west out of the auction, which he is well out of anyway.

North has a decent hand, and it is important that N/S are on the same wavelength. They should have different ways of showing a high card raise as opposed to a hand like south's, where he has no defensive values, simply shape.

Here, even 4♥ is no picnic on a spade lead, best being to simply return a spade, then crossruff. It is actually possible to make eleven tricks by establishing diamonds after guessing trumps, but I would be happy with ten, and certainly wouldn't want to be at the 5 level after a slam try.

5

♠ AKJ42
 ♥ A42
 ♦ AKQ95
 ♣ AKQ95

♠ Q97
 ♥ AKJ972
 ♦ J108
 ♣ 8

♠ 654
 ♥ K963
 ♦ J107642
 ♣ 108653

♥ Q1083
 ♦ Q75
 ♣ 3

 Dealer: North
 N-S Vulnerable

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

North is worth 2♣, almost any working card opposite allowing game. West may well bounce in hearts over south's 2♦ response. However, this will not stop N/S playing in spades, though holding five trumps and a singleton south could get matters too high.

6♠ is there on a non-club lead, south accessed with the diamond queen when trumps prove to be 3:0 and the queen needs picked up. However, it is much more natural for declarer to ruff the 2nd round of clubs in dummy, which west overruffs.

There is a theoretically profitable E/W save in hearts against N/S's spades, but making nine tricks could prove a challenge faced with the bad trump split. Sacrificing won't get E/W a good board anyway as many will go plus defending slam, or lose too big a penalty.

6

♠ K102
 ♥ 854
 ♦ A843
 ♣ AQ6

♠ Q64
 ♥ AK972
 ♦ KJ75
 ♣ 10

♠ 8
 ♥ Q1063
 ♦ 102
 ♣ 985432

♠ AJ9753
 ♥ J
 ♦ Q96
 ♣ KJ7

 Dealer: East
 E-W Vulnerable

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

Again we have a spade game, south opening 1♠ and north surely driving to game with his support and high card values. West is a bit thin for a vulnerable heart overcall, but some will bid it. It won't affect the final contract, just makes sure N/S don't alight in no trumps.

In practice, 4♠ could easily go light, though Deep Finesse has no problem picking up trumps, and also plays a diamond to the 9, later pinning the 10 when the queen is run. This intra-finesse play looks improbable when west has long trumps, it being unlikely he has four diamonds as well, certainly if he has also bid hearts.

So there could be a fair few minuses N/S.

7

♠ AQJ9
 ♥ A84
 ♦ 762
 ♣ J104

♠ K5
 ♥ KJ5
 ♦ Q98
 ♣ Q9853

♠ 107632
 ♥ 1073
 ♦ 53
 ♣ 762

♠ 84
 ♥ Q962
 ♦ AKJ104
 ♣ AK

 Dealer: South
 Both Vulnerable

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

I would expect most to be in 3NT by south here with 29HCP between the two hands, and no huge fit, south opening 1♦ and rebidding 2NT over north's 1♠, better than a 2♥ reverse. West leads a club.

Since the clubs are a danger whichever defender gets in the best line is to combine chances. With nine tricks if the diamond finesse works, best is a top diamond, heart to dummy, then finesse diamonds. When this loses, the spade finesse is necessary, which happily works, the result 630.

Deep Finesse gets a top with eleven tricks, knocking out the diamond queen, running diamonds, finessing spades, then end-playing west with the club queen to lead hearts, but few will emulate this.

8

♠ A8
 ♥ A85
 ♦ AK93
 ♣ J873

♠ KJ42
 ♥ KQ103
 ♦ 64
 ♣ KQ4

♠ 109765
 ♥ 9762
 ♦ 10872
 ♣

♠ Q3
 ♥ J4
 ♦ QJ5
 ♣ A109652

 Dealer: West
 Neither Vulnerable

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

North doubtless doubles west's weak NT, and east removes to spades. South has sound values, and would welcome a double from north. Best is to pass, inviting a double. With less than 5HCP he bids something, warning north off.

N/S actually have a problem they are likely to get wrong, north bidding 3♣, maybe 3♦. Either way south could well venture game in 3NT, beaten on a spade lead, even though it gives away a trick. N/S are unlucky that clubs are 3:0, otherwise game would be a breeze. I reckon few will rest in part-score, where they at least go plus.

It is even worse for N/S where west opens 1♣, since north overcalls 1NT and now surely declares game. East's spade lead sees it beaten two tricks.

9

♠ J7543
♥ QJ6
♦ Q7
♣ 853

♠ K6
♥ 1072
♦ AJ10864
♣ Q9

♠ AQ109
♥ K9853
♦ 52
♣ 74

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

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

South is likely to intervene at favourable vulnerability, doubling when east responds 1♦ to west's 4th seat 1♣, or they may have opened 1♥ in 3rd seat, overcalled in clubs.

The interference or opener could make it awkward for E/W to establish that they have a game on, 3NT by east or the eleven trick game in either minor straightforward with a winning diamond view. Indeed, with two running 6 card suits twelve tricks are there in diamonds or no trumps when east declares.

N/S have a great save in either major, only 500 light at the 5 level, but I wonder how many E/Ws will actually be in game.

10

♠ 83
♥ 852
♦ QJ4
♣ KQJ102

♠ J7542
♥ J3
♦ 10
♣ A9763

♠ AK106
♥ KQ764
♦ 975
♣ 8

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

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

South has a very similar hand to #9, but this time definitely worth a 1♥ opener, west overcalling in diamonds. North has decent values, but an awkward bid, unless playing 5 card majors, where he can raise hearts. A Sputnik double is perhaps best, removing 2♠ to 3♥. A 3♣ bid will get the partnership seriously overboard.

In fact, the hand provides few tricks for either side, east getting a diamond ruff defending hearts, and north's club tricks inaccessible, west having bigger trumps than north where declarer tries to ruff spades.

So despite the HCP majority and an 8 card fit few plus scores look likely for N/S.

11

♠ 432
♥ 65
♦ K10532
♣ K52

♠ Q1096
♥ AJ8
♦ AJ96
♣ A10

♠ A5
♥ K10972
♦ 87
♣ Q843

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

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

East should find himself piloting 4♠ after either an Acol 1♠ or strong NT and Stayman. Occasionally, methods will have west declaring.

With south on lead all but a trump is helpful, so most should make, conceivably with an overtake on a club lead. Where west declares north could find the doubleton heart lead, subsequently getting a ruff, and defeating the contract one trick.

The vagaries of system are at work again. Will many wests declare and survive?

12

♠ Q5
♥ 54
♦ 63
♣ AQJ10652

♠ J63
♥ A1098
♦ A1095
♣ 94

♠ A108
♥ QJ62
♦ KQJ4
♣ K3

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

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

Most red-blooded norths will start with 3♣, though with west an already passed hand there is an even chance that it is partner pre-empted, this being the case today.

An adverse vulnerability pre-emptor should have a decent suit, and maybe a card outside, so south should be able to put the 3NT card on the table with some confidence.

Indeed, 3NT is unbeatable. West needs to find a major suit lead to hold it, a minor allowing at least 630 on the card.

Will most bid it, and will many record overtricks?

13

♠ A872
♥ 98
♦ J8
♣ K10986

♠ 5
♥ K76
♦ KQ543
♣ QJ53

♠ KJ43
♥ AJ42
♦ 92
♣ 742

♠ Q1096
♥ Q1053
♦ A1076
♣ A

Dealer: North
Both Vulnerable

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

South opens 1♦ or an Acol 1♥, west usually passing but conceivably overcalling 1♥ with 2♦, though I would not recommend this. North either bids 1♠ and is raised, or doubles 2♦, south ending matters with 2♠.

2♠ is far from laydown, but declarer can succeed on cross-ruff lines, losing no more than two trumps, two hearts and a diamond, but needs to be careful not to get over-ruffed cheaply.

I suppose some could open an off-shape weak NT with south's cards, playing there. There are multiple variations, but even without a helpful diamond lead seven tricks are possible.

There could well be some N/S minuses on this one.

14

♠ 8
♥ 973
♦ AQ973
♣ A863

♠ 752
♥ KJ10
♦ KJ8
♣ QJ102

♠ AQJ6
♥ A542
♦ 654
♣ K7

♠ K10943
♥ Q86
♦ 102
♣ 954

Dealer: East
Neither Vulnerable

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

Most wests will invite game in no trumps over east's weak NT, his flat shape offset by good intermediates, game ensuing when east proves to be maximum. 5 card majors should also get to the NT game after east opens a minor.

South's spade lead proves a disaster, allowing at least nine tricks, more where the heart queen is guessed and north end-played in diamonds. Should the entry-less south elect for a passive lead 3NT may well go light, certainly if it is the diamond 10, though north must clear the suit, not wait in vain for south to get in again.

Where west declares a diamond lead from north puts declarer under pressure, but he can succeed by knocking out the club ace, spurning the spade finesse, then finessing south for the heart queen.

15

♠ J10
♥ 98
♦ AK107643
♣ J9

♠ KQ9532
♥ AK106
♦ 5
♣ 32

♠ 8
♥ 42
♦ J982
♣ A108754

♠ A764
♥ QJ753
♦ Q
♣ KQ6

Dealer: South
N-S Vulnerable

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

Weakish single-suiters like north's are best handled by doubling when west overcalls south's 1♥ with 1♠. Then north can bid diamonds over south's 1NT or 2♣ rebid (north has ostensibly shown the minors with his double).

The corollary is that 2♦ is natural and forcing. Some reverse these arrangements, 2♦ not being forcing, all forcing hands starting with a double. This risks being pre-empted before a fit is found.

2♦ must lose a trump, spade, club and two hearts, unless a club is set up early and isn't ruffed away by west. So those at the 3 level after a forcing response may well go minus.

Will many N/Ss get overboard on this one?

16

♠ 95
♥ A65
♦ AJ1095
♣ J98

♠ Q874
♥ 87432
♦ 4
♣ K105

♠ A1062
♥ K109
♦ 72
♣ AQ76

♠ KJ3
♥ QJ
♦ KQ863
♣ 432

Dealer: West
E-W Vulnerable

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

West could try Garbage Stayman, if played, when east opens a weak NT, alternatively transfer to hearts, east thus declaring 2 of one or other major.

Nine tricks are possible in either strain, here the 4:4 fit no advantage. Perhaps fortunately, declarer may feel he lacks the entries to take the percentage play in hearts, twice finessing the 10/9 and so losing three tricks in the suit. He shouldn't lose more than one spade, the correct play being to lead to the queen, and if that loses finesse the 10.

N/S just might get together in diamonds where east opens 1NT and west transfers, north doubling 2♦. They can make eight tricks should spades be correctly guessed, a decent save against the part-score.

17

♠ 10752
♥ AJ10
♦ AJ65
♣ A2

♠ K943
♥ 752
♦ K7
♣ K765

♠ J
♥ Q984
♦ 10842
♣ Q983

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

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

North is likely to play in his weak NT, and will do well to make six tricks after E/W have run four spades. Where north opens 1♦ south could raise, possibly to the 3 level, if pre-emptive, or might try 1♥. Now N/S could declare either red suit contract, much more likely to go plus than in no trumps.

As many as ten tricks are possible in diamonds, where at least south has ruffing entries to pick up hearts. Declarer must play trumps for one loser, low to the 10 working today, the queen now finessable or king falling.

Few E/Ws will get into the auction, but if they do they can get close to making 2♠, possibly holding losers to two clubs, two hearts and a diamond, though the 4:1 trump break is unhelpful.

18

♠ 9
♥ AQ43
♦ K103
♣ Q8762

♠ K842
♥ 10762
♦ Q
♣ K953

♠ AJ763
♥ 5
♦ AJ9742
♣ A

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

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

With such a strong, shapely hand south is best to open 1♦ and reverse into spades, if necessary rebidding the suit, getting the 6:5 shape across.

Here north responds 2♣, but gives diamond preference over the reverse, which is game forcing after the 2 level response. I would hope some could reach the diamond slam. Indeed, with the trump queen single it needs a trump lead to defeat 7♦, south's spades otherwise established with three ruffs.

There could be those in 3NT, making ten tricks when diamonds behave, perhaps rather unjustly beating those in 5♦ - unless of course they make the two overtricks possible on a non-trump lead.

19

♠ 95
♥ AK8643
♦ K3
♣ 953

♠ AQ76
♥ QJ
♦ AQ1065
♣ Q8

♠ KJ842
♥ 95
♦ 98
♣ AK64

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

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

We could have N/S in 2♠ or 3♥ here after north bids 2♥ in reply to south's 1♠. North has a choice of passing the 2♠ rebid or rebidding his own suit, south passing out 3♥.

South may only make seven tricks in spades, losing two tricks in every suit but hearts, though without a diamond lead, east can be endplayed in trumps to lead diamonds.

By contrast, 3♥ is better, having an extra long trump trick, and the diamond king protected. The defence cannot do better than take a spade, trump, and two minor suit tricks, assuming spades are played to advantage.

East, with 17 HCP, may not get into the auction, he losing 200 or more if he does, despite a 9 card diamond fit. So discipline will be rewarded, E/W sometimes plus.

20

♠ Q432
♥ QJ3
♦ 873
♣ QJ9

♠ AK109
♥ A762
♦ QJ6
♣ K10

♠ 865
♥ K109
♦ K9542
♣ 74

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

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

Where east opens a strong NT he will rapidly find himself in the no trump game. A diamond lead can allow twelve tricks, clubs being cleared, and a later spade finesse taken. However, north makes diamonds wide open by returning the suit after winning his club trick. Many will now not risk the spade finesse - unless north errs by covering the knave.

Acol opens east 1♥ and west may well respond 1NT and now declare 3NT. East will be at the helm where west responds a thin 2♣. North just might find the best lead of a heart against west's contract, though is more likely to try a spade, eleven or twelve tricks resulting.

West can actually make 6♣ when everything in sight works, but it is hard to see any in that spot, the hand looking like a contest to score the max in 3NT.

21

♠ J1083
♥ 10
♦ 1087632
♣ Q4

♠ KQ65 ♠ A742
♥ KQ754 ♥ AJ32
♦ 54 ♦ AKJ
♣ A6 ♣ K2

♠ 9
♥ 986
♦ Q9
♣ J1098753

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

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

It could prove a challenge to bid to the top spot of 7NT. East has a 2NT opener, and adding HCP west can see that the partnership is slightly short of the 37 required for the Grand.

Having a 5 card suit helps, and many wests will transfer, then get to the heart Grand when east proves to have proper heart support over a west 3♠ trial bid, and all key cards are held. Some might declare spades on the 4:4 fit, the trump break meaning twelve tricks are the limit.

The play in heart or NT slams is the same. It looks like the diamond finesse is required for thirteen tricks when spades are 4:1. However, there is a "show-up" squeeze on north. When he fails to produce the diamond queen, and it is known his last card is a spade, the queen can be dropped off-side for a great board.

22

♠ K987532
♥ 7
♦ 3
♣ J653

♠ AJ104 ♠ Q6
♥ 63 ♥ AJ54
♦ AJ104 ♦ 9875
♣ K87 ♣ Q42

♠
♥ KQ10982
♦ KQ62
♣ A109

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

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

East presumably bids 1NT after west doubles south's 1♥, whether or not north shows his spades, since west's double promises the suit.

East should have little trouble wrapping up eight tricks in no trumps, and could do better should south switch to a club or continue hearts when the heart king is ducked.

This looks a low-scoring part-score hand, few making more than 150 as E/W, and N/S pluses a serious rarity unless south tries 2♥ and the defence let him home, which they shouldn't.

23

♠ A108765
♥ A73
♦ 107
♣ 75

♠ KQ9 ♠ 43
♥ J6 ♥ KQ842
♦ KQ965 ♦ 42
♣ K109 ♣ Q862

♠ J2
♥ 1095
♦ AJ83
♣ AJ43

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

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

Should south open a thin 5 card major 1♦ west must pass, north responding 1♠. He is best to retreat to the sanctuary of his 6 card suit when south rebids 1NT. He can make eight tricks, the trumps playing for one loser.

Most souths will pass, west opening 1♦ or a weak NT. With a passed partner opposite north should pass. The weak NT should see west playing 2♥ after a transfer. Where west opens 1♦ and rebids 1NT east could pass or could try 2♣, finishing in 2♥.

A west 1NT is well and truly scuppered on north's spade lead when south helpfully furnishes the knave, likely finishing 200+ light. The more credible E/W heart spot should fare better, but could also easily go at two or more down, south getting an over-ruff in spades. Often defending is best at both vulnerable, this an example.

24

♠ Q7632
♥ Q
♦ J106
♣ Q1093

♠ 984 ♠ 5
♥ K74 ♥ AJ10962
♦ A854 ♦ K
♣ J54 ♣ AK862

♠ AKJ10
♥ 853
♦ Q9732
♣ 7

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

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

Most should get to 4♥ here, west supporting or giving preference to east's hearts whether or not south intervenes.

Unless south cashes a top spade at trick 1 east's loser goes on dummy's ace and eleven tricks are easy, ceding two clubs. Double dummy, after a top spade, clubs can be played for one loser, but declarer needs to play the heart ace first, then enter dummy with the heart 8 to run the club knave, subsequently repeating the play.

I suppose occasionally south will start off with his singleton, in which case twelve tricks can be made on this line, as the spade trick disappears. Will anyone manage it?

25

♠ AQJ5
♥ 5
♦ KJ8653
♣ 32

♠ K872
♥ 108
♦ 7
♣ KJ10865

♠ 943
♥ KQJ942
♦ 104
♣ AQ

♠ 106
♥ A763
♦ AQ92
♣ 974

 Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

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

There is game in diamonds for N/S here, but few will reach it, south likely simply cue bidding then supporting north's diamonds to the 3 level after east has overcalled in hearts.

Some could reach 3NT, south cue bidding then trying 2NT over north's 2♠. This will make with an overtrick on a dutiful heart lead, loses the first six tricks where west leads his own suit.

So we could have a few E/W pluses, and questions asked by north as to why south is bidding no trumps without a stop in the unbid suit.

26

♠ 65
♥ K1084
♦ AJ
♣ KJ762

♠ Q1032
♥ 532
♦ K975
♣ Q9

♠ 874
♥ J6
♦ Q10642
♣ A43

♠ AKJ9
♥ AQ97
♦ 83
♣ 1085

 Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

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

N/S should surely reach 4♥ whether south opens an Acoll 1NT or a minor playing 5 card majors. Either north or south could declare.

West may be reluctant to lead from his diamond king, most likely selecting a trump, whereas east just might hit on the only lead to take two tricks, a diamond.

Without the diamond lead declarer quickly wraps up a dozen when trumps prove to be 3:2 and west holds the doubleton Q9 of clubs. A losing diamond and spade are pitched on clubs and the last spade is ruffed in north.

Will many find the lead?

27

♠ A7
♥ K10943
♦ 92
♣ 9542

♠ Q98
♥ 6
♦ AQ10764
♣ AK6

♠ KJ65432
♥ J5
♦ 83
♣ Q3

♠ 10
♥ AQ872
♦ KJ5
♣ J1087

 Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	2	-	-
S	2	-	2	-	-
E	-	4	-	5	1
W	-	4	-	5	1

Where south opens 1♥, west overcalls 2♦ and north bounces to 4♥ it will take a brave east to try 4♠. Today is his day, west having decent support, shortage, and several top winners, the result an overtrick.

Where east passes north's 4♥ I suppose west might find the double when this comes round, allowing east to bid the winning 4♠ - though even an east pass now gets a respectable penalty.

Where N/S do get to play in 4♥ this is never in danger of making, drifting a couple light. Will many E/Ws will get a decent score here in spades or by penalising N/S to the tune of 300?

28

♠ 982
♥ KQ10975
♦ J32
♣ 9

♠ Q75
♥ AJ
♦ 1096
♣ AQ1084

♠ AK43
♥ 3
♦ AQ875
♣ K72

♠ J106
♥ 8642
♦ K4
♣ J653

 Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

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

East has a strong hand with club support and a singleton where west opens 1♣. Trouble is, this suit could be short in some methods, so he is better trying 1♦ and reversing into 2♠ over the weak NT rebid. Some just might get to one of the the minor suit slams now. However, in clubs west could ruff a heart in dummy then find he cannot pick up south's trumps.

6♦ looks easier when one of two trump finesses succeed, though can be beaten on a club lead, north getting a ruff.

In real life most will be in 3NT on a heart lead, and will be pleased to pick up clubs and record eleven tricks. So we have yet another interesting high level hand with multiple possibilities, something of a theme in what it is hoped was an enjoyable set.

Ave HCP	N 9.96	S 10.11	E 9.79	W 10.14	Balanced	N 10	S 10	E 14	W 15
Voids/singletons	N 2/10	S 2/12	E 2/8	W 1/9	7+ suit	N 3	S 2	E 1	W 0