

## Aid 4 Ukraine Simultaneous Pairs

Thursday 14 April 2022

Thank you for joining us – we felt so helpless and wanted to do something to help so hence this Simultaneous Pairs which we hope you have enjoyed.

It's been a simple affair – there are no overall master points, no prizes – just the hands to play and score to give you an overall result.

But more important it is to try and raise some money to send to UNICEF. If you haven't already donated, please please do so – if you go to :

<https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/donations.asp> there are various ways to send in your donation.

Again – thank you so much for your support. We really appreciate it !

All the best

*Anna & Mark - the ECatsBridge Team*

### Board 1. None. Dealer North

<p>♠ 10 7 ♥ K 2 ♦ J 7 6 5 4 3 ♣ 10 4 3</p> <p>♠ Q 6 3 2 ♥ J 10 7 6 4 ♦ K 9 8 ♣ Q</p>	<p>♠ J 8 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A Q 10 2 ♣ A K 5 2</p> <p>♠ A K 9 4 ♥ A Q 9 5 ♦ — ♣ J 9 8 7 6</p>
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This is one of those deals where even Nostradamus might struggle to make an accurate prediction. If East opens INT (12-14, 13-15, 14-16) South is likely to bid something, 2♣ being a popular choice. Another possibility is to make a bid that shows a major and a minor – that might work reasonably well, as if NS end up declaring they do best to play in clubs.

Were the bidding to start INT-(2♣)-Pass-(2♦)-Pass-(2♥)-Dble then South would do well to run to 3♣.

If East opens 1♣ the smart move for South is to pass. West responds 1♥ and then passes East's INT rebid.

If East starts with 1♦ South has a textbook double but after West bids 1♥ and East INT we are on familiar ground.

In the situations where East plays in INT and South leads a club declarer wins in dummy and plays a diamond to hand.

If South has shown values East might now try for an overtrick by leading a spade. Otherwise East should collect seven tricks.

How will NS fare in clubs? If West leads a heart declarer wins in dummy, plays three rounds of spades, ruffing, returns to hand with a heart and ruffs a spade with the ♣10. East overruffs and plays a diamond, but declarer ruffs and ruffs a heart. East can overruff, but the defenders will only score two more tricks, leaving declarer with nine.

To be sure of defeating 3♣ West must lead a diamond (or the ♣Q) when the defenders are one step ahead.

### Board 2. N/S. Dealer East

<p>♠ 10 2 ♥ K 8 7 6 5 ♦ 7 3 ♣ J 9 7 3</p> <p>♠ A K Q 6 ♥ A 2 ♦ A 9 4 ♣ A K Q 2</p>	<p>♠ J 3 ♥ 10 9 3 ♦ J 10 5 2 ♣ 10 8 6 5</p> <p>♠ 9 8 7 5 4 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ K Q 8 6 ♣ 4</p>
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The vulnerability argues against any action by South, so West opens 2♣ after which a

popular sequence will see East respond 2♦, West rebidding 2♥ in the style of Kokish and then bidding 2NT over East's forced rebid of 2♠. Whatever happens next West will end up in 3NT.

The critical moment for the defence comes at trick one (how often have I written that!). If North leads a heart declarer can do no more than cash winners for a total of nine tricks.

If North leads a club (a dubious choice) then declarer can win with any of dummy's cards and play the ♦J, hoping to find South with a doubleton honour or the ♦KQ – which in this case will result in 11 tricks.

After a spade lead declarer can win in dummy and play the ♦J – this time that should mean ten tricks.

If North starts with a diamond and declarer plays low from dummy South must resist the temptation to play an honour, otherwise declarer will again be on track for 11 tricks.

#### Board 3. E/W. Dealer South

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

First things first, is the South hand an opening bid? In the modern era I suspect a lot of people will venture 1♦ (routine if you play Precision) and some weak no trumpers might start with 1NT. Opening 1♣ with five diamonds on the side is also a possibility for some partnerships.

After 1♦-1♥-1NT-2♣\*-2♥-4♥ NS will have reached the top spot (no doubt a few pairs will play in 3NT and do well if the defenders fail to attack clubs quickly enough).

There is not much to the play in 4♥ – declarer looks likely to lose three tricks, the red aces and a club, but were East to lead a spade declarer would have a shot at 11 tricks – he can put in dummy's nine (not essential), win and play the ♦Q, setting up two club discards. A low trump lead also puts declarer one step ahead – a little unlucky for East.

#### Board 4. All. Dealer West

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

If the bidding starts 1♣-Pass-1♠ South has an awkward hand – add a heart and it would be an easy double. Even so, I suspect most players will try that and if West raises to 2♠ North might bid 2NT which will see South advance to game.

If East leads a spade and West wins and returns the suit declarer wins and can see eight tricks by forcing out the ♥A. As the cards lie it is possible to develop a ninth trick by playing on clubs and declarer might decide he can afford to try that, as it is quite likely that East will not have an entry. It requires East to have a suitable holding in clubs (other distributional factors also come into play) and here declarer's luck is in.

As it happens a heart lead gives declarer too much to do. If West allows dummy to take the trick and declarer plays a spade to the king followed by a club for the queen, king and ace West can play two rounds of hearts and the defenders are in control.

### Board 5. N/S. Dealer North

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

Although the vulnerability is annoying there may be those who open the North hand with a weak 2♦. When East overcalls 2NT South can either pass, hoping that declarer will be short of tricks, or raise to 3♦. That might see West bid 4♦ after which East's 4♥ will leave South to find a lead.

Where North does not open the bidding and East starts with INT South might decide to overcall (not clear-cut opposite a passed partner) one option being 2♦ to show spades and another suit. If West now bids 2♥ then North will end up on lead against a heart contract.

When South does not overcall West will use whatever methods are to hand (Stayman for example) to locate the heart fit. Then to a certain extent West is guessing about how high to go, trusting that partner will not have too many possibly wasted values in diamonds.

The reality is that if EW end up in four of a major, the defenders need to lead clubs on the go. South must start with the ♣A and continue the suit, while if North leads a top club South must overtake it and return the suit to secure a ruff, the ♠K being the fourth trick for the defence.

### Board 6. E/W. Dealer East

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

If East opens 1♥ West will raise according to agreements – which means either 2♥ or 3♥. After 1♥-2♥ South might consider re-opening with a double, leaving EW to decide if they should compete with 3♥.

Where East opens INT (12-14, 13-15, 14-16) West has no obvious reason to bid.

If EW play in hearts and South leads a spade, declarer wins, discards a club on a spade, ruffs a spade and then plays on clubs, setting up the ruff that will ensure nine tricks.

If INT is the contract and South leads a spade declarer will have to play on hearts to be sure of seven tricks.

### Board 7. All. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1♠ North will either raise directly or go via INT, depending on system and agreements. There is no reason for EW to get involved at any point.

Playing in spades is not straightforward as declarer has numerous options and it is unclear which route to follow. Let's say that West leads a heart for the queen, king

and ace. If Declarer now ruffs a heart and East overruffs and exits with a spade declarer does best to win with dummy's queen and then take the marked finesse so as to draw trumps. Then playing the ♦K works well as the cards lie, as even if East ducks a second diamond to the ten will be awkward. Winning and exiting with a diamond allows declarer to discard the losing club and then the situation in the heart suit is such that declarer must come to nine tricks.

#### Board 8. None. Dealer West

<p>♠ K 7 5 ♥ J 8 7 2 ♦ A J 3 2 ♣ 6 2</p> <p>♠ Q J 9 6 ♥ Q 9 ♦ 5 ♣ A J 10 9 5 3</p>	<p>♠ 10 4 3 ♥ A 10 6 ♦ K Q 9 7 ♣ K 8 7</p> <p>♠ A 8 2 ♥ K 5 4 3 ♦ 10 8 6 4 ♣ Q 4</p>
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If West opens 1♣ East responds 1♦ and then has to find a rebid over West's 1♠. If you follow the simple rule that with an opening bid facing an opening bid you always bid game then a jump to 3NT will be the obvious choice. A cautious 2NT will leave West to make the final decision – a good suit, but not much in the way of high cards and at matchpoints you are not supposed to press for thin games.

Starting with a Precision style 2♣ will see East relay with 2♦ and then bid 3NT on the next round.

South has an awkward lead against any contract – although a heart is dangerous, it is the unbid suit. If declarer puts in dummy's nine to ensure two tricks in the suit North plays the jack and forces out the ace. Now declarer must be careful about entries.

The winning line is to cross to dummy with a club and play a diamond. If North ducks, declarer wins and can now establish a second heart trick.

#### Board 9. E/W. Dealer North

<p>♠ A J 5 2 ♥ A K 6 3 ♦ Q 8 7 ♣ 3 2</p> <p>♠ Q 8 ♥ J 10 7 5 2 ♦ A K 4 ♣ K 9 5</p>	<p>♠ K 3 ♥ Q 4 ♦ 10 6 ♣ Q J 10 8 7 6 4</p> <p>♠ 10 9 7 6 4 ♥ 9 8 ♦ J 9 5 3 2 ♣ A</p>
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If North is in range for INT (12-14, 13-15, 14-16) South will bid 2♥ which gives West an opportunity to double. When North bids 2♠ East might speculate with a bid of 3♣. Then North will have to decide if it is right to 'follow the Law' and continue to 3♠. Another option is for North to break the transfer by rebidding 3♠.

If North opens 1♣/1♦ overcalling with the East hand is a matter for the individual conscience. The vulnerability and the poor 2-2-2-7 shape argue against any preemptive action over 1♦, but 1♦-(3♣) does take up a lot of space. After 1♦-(2♣)-2♦ West has numerous possibilities, including 2♥, 2NT and even 3NT. North will strain to support spades – it will be reasonable to bid up to 3♠ if necessary.

The 2-2 spade break and the friendly position in diamonds give you nine tricks in spades.

If EW play in notrumps a spade lead is best for the defence, setting up seven tricks, while even a diamond lead will prevent declarer from scoring more than eight tricks.

### Board 10. All. Dealer East

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

After 1♦-1♥ North overcalls 1♠ leaving East to ponder the merits of Pass, 1NT and 2♣. If East opts for 2♣ South bids 2♠ and West has enough to compete with 3♦.

Were North unwise enough to go on to 3♠ East's double will ensure a significant penalty.

If South leads a trump against 3♦ declarer wins in hand and plays a heart, South winning and exiting with a diamond. Say declarer wins in dummy and plays a spade. North takes the ace and exits with a spade, declarer winning and ducking a club. North wins and plays a third spade and declarer wins, and can now cash the club ace, which fortuitously establishes dummy's jack. That leaves declarer in a position to take all the remaining tricks via a cross-ruff.

### Board 11. None. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1♠ North responds 2♦ and then raises a spade rebid to game.

If West leads a heart declarer wins in hand and plays a spade. He wins the heart return in dummy and draws trumps. With nine top tricks Declarer needs to find one

more. It costs nothing to play off two more spades, discarding a heart and a diamond from dummy. At this point declarer can cash dummy's top diamonds discarding a club from hand. Then declarer must choose between playing for East to hold the ♣A or ruff a third diamond and then exit with a heart. East will be forced to exit with a club when playing low will land the contract.

Declarer can also get home by cashing all the spades, trusting that he will be able to read the ending.

### Board 12. N/S. Dealer West

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

Some players holding West's cards will be able to open 2♥, promising a weak hand with hearts and a minor. That will leave East having to determine if it is best to play in five of a minor or take a shot at 3NT. 5♣ is easy enough, but 3NT is the matchpoint winner.

Where West passes initially (and North does not try anything tactical) East opens 1♣ and West responds 1♥. If East rebids 2♦ West may have some methods available (the Blackout convention, which uses 2NT as a relay to 3♣ is one possibility) but it is unclear which contract will be reached. After 1♣-1♥-2♦-3♣ East might bid 3♠ when West will be happy to bid 3NT.

Played by West there should be 11 tricks in 3NT if North leads a diamond. If North somehow finds the lead of a spade honour declarer needs to win in hand and guess to play a diamond before attacking hearts. If East is the declarer and South finds a spade lead declarer should be held to ten tricks.

### Board 13. All. Dealer North

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

Assuming the first three players pass West opens 1♥ and must then choose a rebid over East's 1♠, either INT or 2♣. The former ends the auction, the latter sees East give preference to 2♥.

With spades 3-3 INT is a comfortable spot and declarer should find a route to eight tricks. However, playing in hearts should prove to be more rewarding. If North leads a diamond and South wins and switches to a heart North wins but then has no good move. For example a club switch allows declarer to win in dummy, unblock the spades, play a diamond to the king, ruff a diamond, cash the ♣K, ruff a club, pitch a club on the queen of spades and then ruff a spade, ensuring a trick for the ♥K and nine in all.

### Board 14. None. Dealer East

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

When East opens 1♥ South overcalls in spades – 1♠ is the obvious move, but no doubt alternatives will be found at some tables. If West doubles East rebids 2♥ and now South can choose between 2♠ and 3♠. Over the latter, if you can convince yourself (and partner) that bidding 3NT at

this point must be offering a choice of minor suits then that is a possible bid for West, although it might appear to be a bit of a stretch with a useless king on the side. Nevertheless, it will work well on the actual deal, East bidding 4♦.

If South plays in spades the lack of an entry to dummy will be a blessing.

If EW play in diamonds declarer should lose only three tricks.

### Board 15. N/S. Dealer South

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

I suspect many players will open the West hand, with 1♣, a Precision style 2♣ and a pre-emptive 3♣ all getting an outing. I wouldn't be inclined to bid with the North hand but there will be those who double 1♣ (or maybe even 2♣) which should lead to a good result when partner bids spades.

If North passes over 1♣ East will be bidding a modern 1♦ as a transfer to hearts, an old fashioned 1♥ to show hearts or even 2♥ to advertise a weak hand with hearts.

If South plays in spades and West leads the ♣K East wins and switches to a diamond. If West wins with the king he cashes two clubs and should then realise that the strongest defence is to play a fourth round of the suit. Now the only route to nine tricks is to ruff in hand and then get the spades right. Not easy, but not impossible.

### Board 16. E/W. Dealer West

<p>♠ Q 10 3 2 ♥ J 5 2 ♦ 9 6 ♣ Q 8 7 5</p>	<p>♠ 7 5 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ K 7 3 ♣ 10 9 4 3 2</p> <p>♠ 9 8 6 4 ♥ K 10 9 6 4 ♦ Q 5 ♣ A J</p> <p>♠ A K J ♥ 8 3 ♦ A J 10 8 4 2 ♣ K 6</p>
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If East opens 1♥ third-in-hand South overcalls 2♦. If North raises to 3♦ South has enough to try 2♥ which leads to 3NT.

If East does not open and South starts with 1NT North is sure to follow an invitational sequence with South going on to game on the strength of the diamond suit.

If South opens 1♦ North responds 1NT and there is every chance that 3NT will be reached.

The best lead for the defence is a spade. If declarer wins in dummy and plays two rounds of diamonds followed by a club East must rise with the ace and play a second spade, otherwise there is a risk of being employed for 11 tricks.

### Board 17. None. Dealer North

<p>♠ J 7 5 3 ♥ K J 9 3 ♦ Q 9 ♣ Q 9 8</p>	<p>♠ K 10 9 8 6 ♥ 7 ♦ J ♣ A K 7 6 3 2</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ A 10 5 ♦ A 10 6 5 3 2 ♣ J 10 4</p> <p>♠ A Q 4 ♥ Q 8 6 4 2 ♦ K 8 7 4 ♣ 5</p>
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If North opens 1♣ and East overcalls 1♦ South bids 1♥. When North rebids 1♠ South might opt for 2NT and then raise North's 3♠ to game.

Were North to start with a Precision style 2♣ and East overcall 2♦, then South bids

2♥ rebids 2NT over North's 2♠ and then goes on to game over 3♠.

East has an awkward lead – starting with the ♦A is okay as long as East next cashes the ♥A and then switches to a black suit which will hold declarer to ten tricks.

### Board 18. N/S. Dealer East

<p>♠ K 8 5 ♥ A 9 5 ♦ A K J 8 5 ♣ K 6</p>	<p>♠ J 7 4 2 ♥ K ♦ 10 6 4 ♣ Q 9 5 4 3</p> <p>♠ Q 9 ♥ J 8 7 4 2 ♦ 7 3 2 ♣ J 10 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 6 3 ♥ Q 10 6 3 ♦ Q 9 ♣ A 8 7</p>
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If South opens 1♣/1♦ West will double and then rebid 1NT over East's 1♥, ending the auction unless East rebids 2♥.

If South starts with a 12-14 INT and West doubles for penalties North will either bid 2♣ or perhaps start with a redouble asking South to bid 2♣. If West doubles 2♣ East will have a decision to make. 2♥ is the 'down the middle' move while passing aims at the 'magic 200'.

If West plays in 1NT and North leads a club declarer wins the second round and cashes the top diamonds. The appearance of the queen ensures eight tricks, declarer knocking out the ♠A.

If EW play in hearts declarer may have to work hard. For example on a diamond lead declarer wins and cashes the ♥A. Playing a second heart will lead to defeat so declarer plays a spade to the queen and ace, wins the diamond return, cashes the ♠K, ruffs a spade and then plays a diamond. South ruffs and exits with a club but declarer puts up the king and emerges with eight tricks.

If EW defend 2♣ they should collect six tricks. If West starts with three rounds of diamonds declarer ruffs and plays a heart. West takes the ace and must now switch to a small spade, setting up a potential ruff for East.

### Board 19. E/W. Dealer South

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

There are ways to open the South hand that indicate a weak major two-suiter. Were that to happen West would probably overcall 2NT. If North is tempted to compete with 3♠ then West can double for penalties. After a diamond lead declarer will have to be very careful – and even then two down is a racing certainty.

If West opens 1♦ East can raise to 3♦, which should end the auction unless West takes a shot at 3NT.

If West starts with a strong 1♣ East responds 1♦ and will probably pass the 1NT rebid. (I should mention that some pairs play that after 1♣\*-1♦\* a double shows a major or minor two-suiter. I'll leave you to consider if it is a good idea!)

If EW play in diamonds they may manage ten tricks – in some variations North gets endplayed to lead away from the ♥K.

If West plays in notrumps then North must avoid a club lead, the best defense being to lead spades at every opportunity which should hold declarer to eight tricks.

### Board 20. All. Dealer West

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

If West opens 1♣ East responds 1♦. If South now bids a natural 1NT that will end the auction. If South doubles North bids 1♥ and locating the fit should ensure a good result.

Seven tricks should be the limit in 1NT, but playing in hearts offers the chance of nine tricks, declarer playing to ruff two spades while taking the diamond finesse along the way.

### Board 21. N/S. Dealer North

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

If North opens 1NT (12-14, 13-15, 14-16) that is likely to end the auction.

East has a nasty lead problem!

After a spade lead for the three, jack and ace declarer plays two rounds of clubs. The strongest defence is for West to duck, win the third round of clubs and then switch to a heart. That should hold declarer to seven tricks, but that is a tough sequence to find and an overtrick may be quite common.

### Board 22. E/W. Dealer East

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

If West opens 1♦ North overcalls 2♣ and East raises diamonds. After a raise to 2♦

South can bid 3♣, but a raise to 3♦ makes life more difficult, South having to bid 4♣.

If EW play in diamonds ten tricks are possible when West is declarer, as long as declarer does not go wrong in spades.

If NS play in clubs East does best to start with a heart, setting up a potential ruff that will restrict declarer to eight tricks. Were East to start with the ♦K, the appearance of dummy should make it easy to find the heart switch.

#### Board 23. All. Dealer South

<p>♠ 10 8 ♥ K 4 ♦ K 10 8 7 5 ♣ 7 6 5 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 7 2 ♥ 3 2 ♦ A Q 6 3 2 ♣ K Q J</p> <p>♠ A J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 8 7 6 5 ♦ J ♣ 9</p> <p>♠ K 5 4 3 ♥ A 9 ♦ 9 4 ♣ A 10 8 4 2</p>
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If South opens 1♣ North responds 1♦ and East bids 1♥. If North continues with 2♥ South bids 2NT and North advances to game.

If South has to start with 1♦ North may be able to make an inverted raise to 2♦ but East will bid 2♥ after which North is likely to try 3♥, again leading to the notrump game.

Alas, after a heart lead there are only eight tricks.

#### Board 24. None. Dealer West

<p>♠ A 10 8 ♥ K 9 2 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ Q 10 7 4</p>	<p>♠ 9 7 5 4 ♥ J 3 ♦ A J 5 2 ♣ A J 3</p> <p>♠ K 3 2 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ 10 7 6 ♣ K 9 6 5</p> <p>♠ Q J 6 ♥ A Q 10 7 4 ♦ K Q 8 ♣ 8 2</p>
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If North opens 1♣/1♦ South responds 1♥ and will then drive to 3NT.

If North bucks the modern trend and passes initially South opens 1♥ and rebids 1NT over North's 1♠.

If West leads a club against a notrump contract declarer will have no chance of nine tricks as long as East puts in the nine, but if West starts with a diamond declarer can win in dummy and run the ♥J for an easy nine tricks.

#### Board 25. E/W. Dealer North

<p>♠ A 6 4 ♥ A Q ♦ 10 7 5 4 ♣ K 9 8 3</p>	<p>♠ J 10 8 3 2 ♥ 6 4 2 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ Q 10</p> <p>♠ K Q 9 5 ♥ 10 8 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ J 5 4 2</p> <p>♠ 7 ♥ K J 9 7 5 3 ♦ A J 6 ♣ A 7 6</p>
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When South opens 1♥ West is not strong enough to overcall 1NT and North responds 1♠ and then passes South's 2♥ rebid.

Playing in hearts declarer must lose a spade and two hearts and there are also issues in both minor suits. If West leads a diamond declarer can put in dummy's nine and must come to nine tricks. Were declarer to play low East could put in the ♦8 and declarer would win with the jack and play a club. If West plays low, would you put up the queen? If you don't East will win with the ten and that should hold declarer to just eight tricks.

### Board 26. All. Dealer East

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

Unless East has a weak bid to show both majors South is the one to open proceedings. After 1♣ West can overcall 1♦ and North bids 1♥. If South rebids 1♠ North continues with 2♣ which might see West come again with 2♦. In that scenario North can compete with 2♥.

If South starts with 1♦ and West passes North responds 1♥ and South will then choose between 1♠ and INT, according to agreements. Over 1♠ North will probably bid INT.

If South opens INT North transfers to hearts.

If NS play in notrumps you might imagine that a diamond lead would be a good start for the defence. Not quite! If they start by cashing six diamonds East will be in considerable difficulty, being squeezed in three suits! Declarer leaves dummy with four cards in clubs and hearts and then discards a club on the last diamond.

If West leads a club, East wins with the king, but must now find a diamond switch.

If North is in INT and East leads a spade declarer wins in dummy and plays a club to the jack. If East wins a diamond switch is essential. Were East to duck the ♣J an inspired declarer might switch to a diamond (well, in my dreams!).

If NS play in hearts then declarer should find a way to make eight tricks and in certain circumstances might emerge with nine.

Playing in clubs declarer might have to work hard for eight tricks. For example if the defenders start with three rounds of diamonds, ruffed and overruffed by East who exits with a spade declarer wins and plays a club to the jack and king. Declarer wins the spade return and plays a spade. If West discards declarer ruffs, unblock the ♣A and plays a heart. If East plays low declarer must put in the nine. If East plays an honour, declarer wins, cashes the ♣Q and exits with a spade forcing East to lead into dummy's ♥A10.

### Board 27. None. Dealer South

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

Holding four cards in the other major might deter some players from starting with a weak bid, but 2♥ or a Multi 2♦ are sure to attract support. North passes over the former and if East decides to bid 2NT West will raise to game.

After a 2♦ opening North responds 2♥ and again East is in the hot seat.

3NT should fail, but there is one trap to avoid. If South leads a heart declarer wins and plays on clubs. Now North must switch to spades. The same is true if declarer plays on diamonds first.

Board 28. N/S. Dealer West

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

When North opens 1♠ the sensible move is for East to pass, and South will respond according to system. (An Acol practitioner could respond 2♣ and then support spades over North's 2♦. If South jumps to 3♠ North might push on to the thin game.)

If NS play in spades and East cashes a top heart and switched to a diamond the best line is unclear. One possibility is to win in hand, ruff a heart, come to hand with the ♣K, ruff a heart, cash the ♦K and ♣A and ruff a club with the ♠7, hoping East cannot overruff with the jack.