



The 2024 Welsh Bridge Union Autumn Simultaneous Pairs

Thursday 18th September

Thank you for supporting the WBU Simultaneous Pairs. This year we are donating to two very worthy causes – The Air Ambulance (something I hope none of us will ever need) and our own WBU Juniors.

We all know the fantastic work of the Air Ambulance, but we would like to take this opportunity to talk a bit about our juniors. The WBU is committed to supporting our juniors as they are the future of Welsh Bridge. For the first time in many years, this year we were able to enter both a Junior Camrose (U26) and Peggy Bayer (U21) team in the Home Internationals following the Freshers Fair at Cardiff University where we persuaded / bribed these young people to try out bridge. It has been a pleasure to see so many of them playing at our local clubs as well as in some of our area and national events. They are all absolutely delightful - I hope you will stumble across them one day when you are playing and make them very welcome at your table.

This year, we are running another Freshers Fair at Cardiff University with follow up lessons and we would like very much to extend this to other Universities (and schools) in Wales – if you are interested in participating, please do get in touch. None of this comes cheap of course, so your support for this worthy cause and our investment into the future of bridge is very much appreciated.

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.

Best wishes,
The Welsh Bridge Union

1

♠ KJ2
♥ 932
♦ Q542
♣ J104

♠ Q54
♥ AK105
♦ J63
♣ Q82

♠ A96
♥ J6
♦ AK1098
♣ A95

♠ 10873
♥ Q874
♦ 7
♣ K763

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

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

East will declare 3NT after either his strong NT or Acol 1NT rebid. South presumably leads a black suit. There are eight red suit tricks with the finesses, plus two aces. A black suit queen is needed for an eleventh.

On a spade lead, with north holding the king, declarer must run the lead to the 9, freezing the suit, neither side able to lead it without loss. This allows a later club to the queen for the eleventh trick.

On a club lead the percentages suggest playing south for one of the two lower honours by running the lead to the 9 then finessing the 8. Thus declarer may fail to score the club queen, which he would otherwise make.

So interesting choices, and not all will guess well, scoring the 460 possible in theory.

2

♠ Q653
♥ Q103
♦ K108
♣ 1072

♠ K7
♥ 9862
♦ A643
♣ A64

♠ A1094
♥ KJ54
♦ 5
♣ KQ95

♠ J82
♥ A7
♦ QJ972
♣ J83

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	2	6	3	2
W	5	2	6	3	2

After east's 1♣ opener the partnership should get to 4♥, though either polarity could declare. South will plonk the diamond queen on the table, north probably a club.

It is possible to make twelve tricks by ruffing two spades in west, then running the trump 9, pinning south's 7. Some could find this, since south was unable to ruff in ahead of west's spots (except with the ace).

In practice, many will be happy enough to make eleven tricks in this nice play hand.

3

♠ AQJ
♥ A765
♦ Q82
♣ 1065

♠ 5
♥ 3
♦ K10754
♣ KQ8732

♠ 1098763
♥ KQ9
♦ A6
♣ A9

♠ K42
♥ J10842
♦ J93
♣ J4

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	5	4	-	2	3
W	5	4	-	2	3

Even vulnerable east may try to play 2♣ over north's weak NT, and he will make an overtrick unless south can get a club ruff to take a fourth defensive trump trick.

East also overcalls spades where north opens a 5 card major 1♣, likely passed to north who re-opens with a double, finding the heart fit, and maybe stealing E/W's contract, unless west belatedly comes to life with 3♣.

In fact E/W can make a lot of tricks in either minor or 3NT, but west may well never bid, holding a misfit for partner's suit, and far from assured of any fit.

And all this because north is the opener, not east. Had east dealt west would have had to bid over 1♠, and may well have been able to play in one of his minors, or even get to the thin 3NT.

4

♠ Q632
♥ Q6
♦ AK73
♣ A108

♠ J8
♥ 74
♦ Q10952
♣ Q763

♠ 1075
♥ 852
♦ J84
♣ J942

♠ AK94
♥ AKJ1093
♦ 6
♣ K5

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4	4	7	7	7
S	4	4	7	7	7
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

An Acol 1♠ by north could see south using RKCB, and finding north with two Key Cards plus the trump queen, essay the Grand Slam in spades.

Over a north strong NT, a transfer to hearts then a trial bit of 2♠ sees the suit raised, and the same scenario arises.

There is nothing to the play of the Grands in either major, or no trumps when north turns up with the heart queen and spades divide evenly.

Will any get to the top spot of 7NT?

5

♠ 1098
♥ 10
♦ A542
♣ AK1073

♠ KQ72
♥ AQ84
♦ Q1063
♣ 9

♠ A6
♥ K9652
♦ 87
♣ Q642

♠ J543
♥ J73
♦ KJ9
♣ J85

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

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

When east overcalls north's 1♣ with 1♥ west may well drive to game, unless he has seen east's overcalls before. At the vulnerability I suppose he could just about have less.

The defence have three minor suit tricks to cash, holding it, but if they miss these and fail to lead trumps at every opportunity, declarer can pitch a diamond on west's spade winners, then cross-ruff for eleven tricks.

Will any miss game here, and will many defenders fall from grace, allowing the overtrick?

6

♠ J742
♥ QJ84
♦ A96
♣ 108

♠ AK1095
♥ AK1092
♦ 7
♣ 43

♠ Q3
♥ 7
♦ KQJ532
♣ 9762

♠ 86
♥ 653
♦ 1084
♣ AKQJ5

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

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

West opens 1♠ and rebids 2♥ over east's 1NT or thin 2♦ response. After spade preference some could easily get overboard by advancing to 3♥. There could also be those easts insisting on 3♦ over 2♥, rather than giving preference.

3♣ can slip through, north needing to improbably lead a trump at the start to ensure defeat, it being possible otherwise to eliminate north's clubs, guess trumps, then force north to cede extra heart or diamond tricks.

Likewise, 3♦ gets home on three rounds of clubs, over-ruffed by north, the last club pitched on a heart. South needs to switch to a trump at trick 2. North now retains a club to play back to south.

A variety of scores expected.

7

♠ J75
♥ Q97
♦ 8753
♣ A63

♠ AKQ63
♥ AJ5
♦ KQ6
♣ Q10

♠ 10842
♥ K10643
♦ 4
♣ J42

♠ 9
♥ 82
♦ AJ1092
♣ K9875

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

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

West is best to open 2NT, despite his 5 card major, as no other bid fits. East can now transfer to hearts, then show his spades, rather surprising west. He would be wise not to get too excited as 4♠ has three top losers.

There could be those in 4♥, east transferring to the suit, then simply bidding 3NT, converted to 4♥.

Declaring spades east has a third round club winner for a heart pitch, obviating the need to find the queen. However, in 4♥ the trump queen must be found, and some may fail to guess correctly.

Any in 3NT also need to find the heart queen on a diamond lead and continuation, as there is not enough time to set up a club trick. If they guess wrong they can be held to their contract, getting a very poor board.

8

♠ K105
♥ A
♦ A9753
♣ J872

♠ AQ9843
♥ 105
♦ J102
♣ 93

♠ KQJ974
♥ KQ864
♣ Q10

♠ J762
♥ 8632
♦
♣ AK654

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

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

West's weak 2♠ could well be passed out, and is some distance from being a success. A Multi gives east a problem. Since north hasn't bid it looks as if west's suit has to be spades, unless he has a strong version. Should east guess to pass 2♦ he could buy it, and might even sneak home.

Where west passes north opens 1♦, east overcalling hearts. South's Sputnik double should get N/S into the correct strain of clubs, where there are eleven tricks available, so long as east does not get a spade ruff.

I can see few N/Ss in game so it looks like those getting a decent penalty from 2♠ will top the traveller N/S. Those managing to play a red suit E/W should lose less than N/S's part-score, and certainly less than 2♠.

9

♠ 4
♥ AJ6
♦ A105
♣ AQ10532

♠ A1092
♥ KQ107
♦ K43
♣ 96

♠ K65
♥ 9542
♦ J82
♣ J74

♠ QJ873
♥ 83
♦ Q976
♣ K8

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

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

I would imagine most will get to 3NT, north opening 1♣ and rebidding 3♣ over the 1♠ response. South has enough to show his stop with 3♦, and north will end matters with 3NT. There are only eight tricks on a heart lead to the queen and ace.

Some could play and mis-guess diamonds, possibly going light in a contract cold as the cards sit, with the heart knave worth a trick.

The best option is to run clubs, then play a spade up. The defence have to keep the diamonds guarded and are near bound to be forced to cede the ninth trick in one of the red suits, possibly even where the other top heart honour lies in east.

11

♠ J1083
♥ 874
♦ KJ53
♣ 106

♠ AQ952
♥ AQ5
♦ 82
♣ KQ4

♠ 7
♥ K103
♦ Q10964
♣ AJ82

♠ K64
♥ J962
♦ A7
♣ 9753

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

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

Again it looks like west in 3NT after either his strong NT or Acol 1♠ opener. If west has bid spades and east diamonds as per the Acol sequence north is unlikely to hit on the winning spade lead.

On a spade lead the defence are ahead, able to get two spade tricks to add to their top diamonds. On any other lead declarer can get a diamond trick by twice finessing dummy's 10, and win a spade finesse, recording ten tricks.

Looks like a good one for Acol, the defence rarely kicking off with the winning lead of west's known suit.

10

♠ AKJ95
♥ A8
♦ Q53
♣ K83

♠ 6
♥ K76
♦ AJ84
♣ QJ1076

♠ Q10732
♥ 95
♦ K972
♣ A9

♠ 84
♥ QJ10432
♦ 106
♣ 542

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

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

West is sure to open a third seat 1♣, north either overcalling 1♠ or 1NT. The former could see north in 1♠x should west protect with a double in the pass-out seat - maybe not wise opposite a passed partner. 1♠x is a ticklish affair, only beaten if east gives up a trump trick to prevent a dummy ruff. An east 1NT bid looks wiser.

Where north overcalls 1NT, south is able to get to the relative sanctuary of 2♥. Again, this is beatable, but can make on the understandable lead of the club ace.

E/W's no trump spot is comfortable where the queen of hearts is ducked twice, less so if not. East can make eight tricks if he gets diamonds right, pinning the 10, but should manage at least seven. Diamonds are perhaps better, the defence only able to get two hearts and a spade, plus or minus the trump queen.

12

♠ 109875
♥ Q93
♦ 9642
♣ 2

♠ KQ6
♥ K8
♦ 10853
♣ A1074

♠ AJ1062
♥ AKQJ7
♦ QJ3
♣ QJ3

♠ AJ432
♥ 754
♦
♣ K9865

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	1	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	5	7	7	-	6
W	4	7	6	-	6

Whether west opens a weak NT or a 5 card major 1♦, east will be interested in a slam. However, with west's wasted spade values and diamonds 4:0 none of the possible strains are totally straightforward.

The best spot is 6♦, makeable if either hearts come in or the club finesse wins. Today both work, so 7♦ is there. Note that playing playing for hearts 3:3 is better than taking a ruffing finesse, since even if the finesse were to win, north would be ruffing. Also, some might let a spade lead ride to the KQ, obviating the club finesse, but costing themselves a trick as the cards lie.

Slams are also available in both hearts and no trumps, offering a better score albeit at worse odds. Some will no doubt be in one or other. In practice, most will make, with the clubs and hearts coming in with normal play.

13

♠ 8654
♥ 92
♦ 1075
♣ AKQ8

♠ 1073
♥ AK73
♦ J8
♣ J1093

♠ AKJ92
♥ Q6
♦ AQ3
♣ 652

♠ Q
♥ J10854
♦ K9642
♣ 74

Dealer: North
Both Vulnerable

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

Acoul could languish in 1NT here, west responding same to 1♠ and east not advancing. It is close, but he should probably raise to 2NT. West will show secondary spade support and the normally best 5:3 fit 4♠ be reached.

5 card majors will play 3NT unless playing 5 card Stayman, east's strong NT raised to the no trump game after he proves to have the wrong major.

In practice 3NT will rarely go light, the best the defence can do being to get three clubs and a diamond. By contrast 4♠ is in jeopardy on four rounds of clubs. Few easts will ruff high, fell the stiff trump queen, then squeeze south in the red suits. Two light is more likely.

Sometimes the orthodox contract isn't the winner.

14

♠ KJ876
♥ KQ864
♦ A6
♣ 4

♠ A54
♥ 105
♦ 104
♣ K98765

♠ Q102
♥ J73
♦ 8532
♣ J32

♠ 93
♥ A92
♦ KQJ97
♣ AQ10

Dealer: East
Neither Vulnerable

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

This should finish in 4♥ whether south opens a strong NT or an Acoul 1♦. However, Acoul could finish 3NT - north responds 1♠ to 1♦, then jumps to 3♥ over the 1NT rebid. North should show his fifth heart by advancing to 4♥, but some may pass south's 3NT.

With hearts dividing there are eleven tricks. Those guessing well in spades clock up the overtrick.

Where south declares 3NT he can also make twelve tricks, on top on a club lead, there with a correct spade guess otherwise.

Care is needed, especially on a diamond lead, the ace needed as an entry where hearts are 4:1, though today not necessary.

15

♠ KJ95
♥ 83
♦ 10752
♣ 1062

♠ 106
♥ Q1042
♦ KQ4
♣ A983

♠ Q832
♥ J5
♦ A963
♣ QJ7

♠ A74
♥ AK976
♦ J8
♣ K54

Dealer: South
N-S Vulnerable

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

A south strong NT should be passed out, and might scramble five tricks on a good day. On a low heart lead to the knave declarer might try ducking, hoping for a continuation, though if east is watching the pips he shouldn't, as south is marked with five hearts. Losing 200-300 will not be good.

Where south's Acoul 1♥ is passed to east he doubles. West should only bid 1NT, using the principle of the "transferred king", when responding to a protective double. He subtracts 3HCP and bids accordingly.

Declaring or defending E/W can make eight tricks in no trump, but may need to play the odds in diamonds. When south's knave falls, he is assumed not to have the 10, north then finessed for it. Looks a poor one for the strong NT.

16

♠ AKJ85
♥ 8754
♦ K5
♣ 43

♠ 763
♥ J9
♦ J10
♣ AJ9872

♠ 10942
♥ 1032
♦ AQ64
♣ K6

♠ Q
♥ AKQ6
♦ 98732
♣ Q105

Dealer: West
E-W Vulnerable

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

North could easily finish in 4♥ here after opening a light 1♠, then rebidding 2♥ over the 2♦ response. This does not play well with the side suit blocked, and no trump communication.

East will normally lead trumps, south pulling same, unblocking spades and trying a diamond to the king, the result being one light.

Inspired defence sees east leading king and another club. West plays diamonds, east collecting the ace and queen. Now west twice ruffs diamonds above north and east over-ruffs a club, the end result a remarkable four trick defeat.

Will anyone do it?

17

♠ K87
♥ 862
♦ 982
♣ Q543

♠ 1063
♥ AJ73
♦ 10
♣ KJ1097

♠ 952
♥ K9
♦ AJ64
♣ A862

♠ AQJ4
♥ Q1054
♦ KQ753
♣

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

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

At love all south may well bid over an east weak NT, possibly 2♦, if natural, maybe his toy for the majors. West hasn't quite enough for a double, so will usually elect to play 3♣, which should make, possibly with an overtrick.

Where east's opener is a 5 card major 1♦, south has no sound bid, lest a double attract a club bid from partner. East now rebids 1NT over west's 1♥ response, again leaving south nowhere to go.

In 1NT east should manage eight tricks, maybe even nine should he get clubs right.

18

♠ A3
♥ AJ3
♦ Q1065
♣ A1082

♠ QJ9754
♥ Q8765
♦ 4
♣ Q

♠ K62
♥ 42
♦ KJ9
♣ J9764

♠ 108
♥ K109
♦ A8732
♣ K53

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

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

West just might open an off-shape Weak Two or Multi, but more likely north will start proceedings with a strong NT or 1♦. The former could be raised directly to game. This should rarely succeed, since east has several chances to find the winning spade lead or switch, being on lead twice later in diamonds.

The 1♦ opener could see 2NT bid by south, alternatively a 2♦ or inverted 1♦ raise. 3NT will often still result, few stopping in the diamond part-score with 25HCP.

It looks an unlucky hand for most, unless west gets involved, losing a penalty if higher than 2♠, and he only making as many as eight tricks because hearts are 3:3.

19

♠ 10
♥ AK852
♦ 108
♣ K9743

♠ K8753
♥ 6
♦ Q976
♣ J102

♠ Q92
♥ J43
♦ A542
♣ A85

♠ AJ64
♥ Q1097
♦ KJ3
♣ Q6

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

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

Either north or south could declare 4♥, depending on system, the nine card fit easily found. The defence are best to lead a major.

With clubs 3:3 the suit is easily established with one dummy ruff before or after pulling trumps. Declarer makes either ten or eleven tricks depending on his diamond guess.

Will there really only be two differing scores on the traveller?

20

♠ 84
♥ J742
♦ 6
♣ AKJ653

♠ Q3
♥ K85
♦ KQ1032
♣ 1098

♠ KJ1072
♥ AQ6
♦ A98
♣ 42

♠ A965
♥ 1093
♦ J754
♣ Q7

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

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

East may open a weak no trump. Vulnerable, north is probably wisest to pass this out when it comes around. Sadly, partners never lead your suit in these situations, and declarer can score nine tricks on a spade lead, eight on a diamond or heart.

After a 1♠ opener west could respond a heavy 1NT. This will surely go down with north on lead. A 2♦ response puts E/W at risk of minus 200, as east rebids his weak 2NT. Luckily, he may survive, south putting a red card on the table, rarely trying the club queen.

As the cards lie east is better rebidding 2♠ rather than 2NT. This can rack up nine tricks however the defence play, but could be held to 110 in practice.

21

♠ KJ85
♥ 8
♦ K54
♣ J10952

♠ A74
♥ AQJ962
♦ 87
♣ Q3

♠ Q9
♥ K4
♦ QJ10932
♣ AK7

♠ 10632
♥ 10753
♦ A6
♣ 864

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

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

East could start with a strong NT, and end up declaring 4♥. Acoll opens 1♦ and rebids either 1NT (15-16) or 3♦. Now west is at the helm of the heart game.

The defence are a bit stuck. If they cash diamonds declarer easily makes the rest. If they don't a diamond is pitched on the clubs, then a spade ceded to the king. Had south had the spade king the third round could have been ruffed in east.

In practice north could lead a spade, allowing twelve tricks, whereas with south on lead a spade could emerge, which declarer might let run to north, who could find the diamond switch for three defensive tricks.

Looks like a possible good one for Acoll.

22

♠ Q109
♥ Q8
♦ AQ872
♣ 763

♠ J762
♥ 97
♦ J94
♣ KQ98

♠ K8543
♥ K532
♦ 3
♣ J102

♠ A
♥ AJ1064
♦ K1065
♣ A54

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	6	4	1	5
S	2	6	4	1	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

South can jump to 4♦ when north responds 2♦ to his 1♥. This is not credibly passable, and indeed many use it as RKCB. South should be able to establish that there are no missing key cards. He might inquire regarding the trump queen.

In 6♦ the hearts can be established with a ruff, plus a spade ruffed in dummy after trumps are pulled. There aren't quite the entries to manage two spade ruffs in south before trumps are drawn. Could any east cover the heart queen, letting the heart 6 grow up, and ceding the lot?

Some could be seduced by the major suit or no trumps. The latter can make eleven tricks, though this is improbable on a club lead. Hearts do a trick worse. Looks a good one for minor suit, if they bid the slam.

23

♠ J
♥ K976
♦ AQ8754
♣ QJ

♠ 109
♥ Q1043
♦ K1063
♣ A53

♠ A8542
♥ J2
♦ J9
♣ K1084

♠ KQ763
♥ A85
♦ 2
♣ 9762

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

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

This on the face of it seems a pretty ordinary part-score, with north opening 1♦ and rebidding his suit over south's 1♠. Any advance will prove costly, a minus near certain.

The defence can get two clubs, a spade, two trumps and a heart. There being only one dummy entry declarer can either take his second spade winner for a second heart pitch as west ruffs, or take the trump diamond finesse, but he cannot do both.

However, doubtless someone will find a way home, in what could be a pretty flat board. That is unless east decides to bid his spade suit, where he is likely to lose a penalty, even if undoubled.

It seems bizarre that double dummy N/S can make one of every suit yet E/W can make 1NT.

24

♠ A85
♥ KQ986
♦ J92
♣ 105

♠ Q109
♥ 1053
♦ A5
♣ 97642

♠ K763
♥ AJ72
♦ 10873
♣ 8

♠ J42
♥ 4
♦ KQ64
♣ AKQJ3

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

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

This looks like another misfit. South could ensure a plus by rebidding 2♣ over north's 1♥ response rather than reversing into diamonds. The 2♣ rebid may well end it, and it should squeak home for the loss of a heart, two spades, a diamond and a trump.

Where south rebids an off-shape Acoll 1NT or reverses 3NT will surely be reached. Although beatable, this could well make. It takes a major suit, and if necessary a spade switch to defeat it. The defence get a diamond, a heart, two spades and either an extra heart or spade.

This looks a good one for the aggressive route, unless the defence are up to the challenge.

25

♠ A95
♥ KJ1085
♦ 64
♣ J95

♠ K10
♥ Q943
♦ Q9
♣ AKQ63

♠ J843
♥ A72
♦ AJ52
♣ 74

♠ Q762
♥ 6
♦ K10873
♣ 1082

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

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

East has a classic Sputnik double when north overcalls west's 1♣ with 1♥. West wants to bid no trumps now, but after the intervention a 1NT rebid could be made on other than the normal 15-16 if no other bid appeals.

Thus game could be missed should east fail to raise. Perhaps west should rebid 2NT with his good clubs and heart stop. Some wests will have opened a strong NT, making life easier.

The play is not straightforward in 3NT, even with the present of a heart trick. Running clubs rather squeezes dummy, so running the diamond queen at trick two looks best, to set up extra winners before the clubs are run. South may well help now by playing a spade, allowing an easy tenth trick.

26

♠ AQ7
♥ K1072
♦ 965
♣ QJ5

♠ 862
♥ Q985
♦ AJ8
♣ 842

♠ 1054
♥ 43
♦ KQ742
♣ AK7

♠ KJ93
♥ AJ6
♦ 103
♣ 10963

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

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

East will play his weak NT. The opponents can cash four spades and three hearts, but could easily err by leading clubs at the start, or switching to same, allowing east to gratefully claim his contract.

Where east opens 1♦ he also plays 1NT after west's 1♥ response, and the same issues arise.

N/S are actually better declaring 2♠, if they can get there, this scoring 110, rather than the 100 penalty available from 1NT, but it is hard to see them bidding at all.

27

♠ KJ9762
♥ K4
♦ AQ875
♣

♠ A54
♥ A973
♦ J6
♣ 8732

♠ 3
♥ QJ852
♦ K109
♣ 10654

♠ Q108
♥ 106
♦ 432
♣ AKQJ9

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

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

Where south opens a weak NT south presumably plays 4♠ after a transfer. A 1♣ opener sees north at the wheel.

West may hit on the diamond knave lead. Declarer has to finesse, not pop up with the ace, or west gets on lead in trumps to make his aces plus two diamonds.

With east on lead the defence has a trickier time. It needs a heart lead and diamond switch to test declarer, but it is harder for west to read the situation, and he may simply return a heart.

A club lead allows declarer to set about trumps, the best the defence able to do being to cash their two aces.

28

♠ Q
♥ K87542
♦ J104
♣ A97

♠ K743
♥ J96
♦ 65
♣ 8653

♠ 10986
♥ Q10
♦ AK732
♣ 102

♠ AJ52
♥ A3
♦ Q98
♣ KQJ4

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

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

Whether north opens a heavy heart Weak Two, opens 1♥ or passes should not affect the final contract of 4♥, since south has a maximum strong NT opposite.

Eleven tricks can be made where south declares and west leads a spade. Now two diamonds go in north on black winners as west ruffs with his master trump.

Most will make ten tricks, west ruffing the third round of diamonds with what proves to be a trump winner. This is near certain where north declares, a fair possibility where south does, west selecting his doubleton.

As often, the no trump brigade could have the last laugh, something of a theme on the set. It takes a diamond lead, ducked all round, to prevent ten tricks in the strain. It is hoped the boards proved enjoyable.

Ave HCP	N 10.00	S 10.00	E 10.00	W 10.00	Balanced	N 16	S 14	E 13	W 15
Voids/singletons	N 1/10	S 3/9	E 2/7	W 0/9	7+ suit	N 0	S 0	E 0	W 0