



The 2021 Charity Challenge Pairs Friday 19th March

This year we are raising funds for two different, but closely related Charities – Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie. And we have extended the event to run all week, with different hands each day.

It's been what can only be described as an extraordinary year – one year ago you joined us to raise money for RNLI, with a final cheque at the end for £5,595.88 and a total for RNLI over the past three years of £17,349.05 for which they were more than grateful.

The past year has seen charities receiving less and less as the pandemic has taken hold – many people of course have less disposable income and the charities themselves have found that many of their traditional avenues, such as the Charity Shops, Street Collections etc, are unavailable to them. Which is why we ask you to donate, through our website, so that we can send as much as possible to them. If you haven't already done so, please [click here to go to the page](#) that gives you all the information.

The future year for Simultaneous Pairs has other Charity events to enjoy - there will be one in July to raise funds for Kidney Research and of course there will be the Children in Need Pairs in November – well we couldn't NOT run that could we ! We are also looking at the possibility of taking on the Bill Hughes event in June ...

... and who knows, we may be able to run a WorldWide event again, and maybe one or two events to raise funds for Youth Bridge. Our website will let you know what and when – I will put things onto the front page at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/> and our calendar at <https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/info/calendar.asp> will be kept up to date.

Do join us for some of these events if you can – whether virtually or actually joining in “round the table”. We love to have your company.

We do hope you have enjoyed yourselves, and you will know by know whether the commentator has got it right! Probably most of you are still playing online but there may be one or two clubs getting back to face-to-face bridge. And let's hope that by next year or better still later this year we will all be back at the green baize table!



Be well – stay safe – and thank you so much for joining us. And because some of you wonder why on earth we moved to Orkney, well it's just a beautiful place to be, and this is the view from our office window – who can argue with that ! There's even a rainbow to enjoy – we get a lot of rainbows here, something to do with the rain I guess, and the lovely light we have from being so far north.

Anna & Mark

The ECatsBridgeTeam
Email : anna@ecats.co.uk
Mill Cottage Voy
Stromness
Orkney KW16 3HX

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Deep Finesse fancies 3NT by either North or South on any lead. A diamond lead by East would be most uncomfortable for declarer, but as long as he sets about his spade trick for the ninth he will still get home.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Most likely a part-score in spades by West making 10 tricks. Deep Finesse points out that played by East the limit is nine tricks because of the club lead. Superficially, played by West doesn't look much different. North tries a diamond and let's say declarer wins and exits a diamond which lets South win for the club shift: low, low, ace. Now a spade to the jack and ace. North can't do better than play another trump to stop the diamond ruff. But now declarer simply runs trumps forcing 3 discards by North. Hearts must be kept, so that means one diamond and two clubs. Now declarer can simply exit with a low club dropping the king.

There is a small variation needed if declarer ducks the opening diamond lead. South wins and the club shift goes low, low, ace as before. Again, a trump shift to the ace. Now North must exit a diamond. If the ace is not knocked out there are two entries to the hearts which will be set up. But exiting a diamond is fine. Declarer is stuck on dummy and still cannot take both the diamond ruff and the heart finesse.

Of course all this does North no good as he will go in the same ending as we looked at earlier. North could try to spoil this ending by shifting to a heart, but this has given declarer the timing to take both the heart finesse and the diamond ruff, so that fails too.

Unless North was foolish enough to make a value-showing entry into the auction after 1♥ Pass 1♠, this is all pretty much double dummy...I fancy declarer will rise queen of clubs when South shifts and that will be the end of that.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

E/W will be in 4♥ making 10 or 11 depending on the club guess. Any North who makes a light take-out double of a light 1♥ opening will regret it as it'll force declarer to get clubs right.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Anybody who passes the West hand to begin with will think virtue is rewarded when North opens 1♠. In practice one can imagine West opening 1, 2 or 3 spades depending on system. A smooth pass by North and now is South going to make North's day? He has a difficult decision and 2♠ passed out may well be a common result.

Certainly passed it out makes sure that E/W are trapped in 2♠ failing when, if given the opportunity to run, they may get to their club fit which, double-dummy makes game! Two

diamond ruffs while finessing against the king and jack of trumps and the ♥J drops. Easy peasy.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Technically E/W hold N/S's 4♥ to 10 tricks by engineering a diamond ruff. In practice that isn't going to happen. +650 N/S will be scored just about across the field.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

E/W have a pedestrian 10 tricks in spades, but there will be some reward for bidding it, given the thin values held.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

With only two entries to the West hand there is no way to pick up the trumps which is necessary to make 4♥. Meanwhile N/S have enough to be in the auction and can make nine tricks in clubs....assuming that the defence manages to organise their diamond ruff.

Diamonds is actually one trick worse. Basically E/W get their ruff, this time in clubs, but are then able to tap South in hearts so that it will not be possible to pick up the ♦K.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

The values aren't quite there for 3NT N/S, but it is close. In fact to beat 3NT E/W have to start the heart suit before East takes his spade ace so that this entry can be used to finish off finessing South's hearts. There isn't any great rush to finish off this defence as declarer also needs to play spades since it is his source of a ninth trick.

Some Souths will have to be content to pass throughout...I'm thinking of the tables where West, for example, opens 2♥ showing hearts and a minor which East will raise to 3♥. That would seem to leave South well and truly fixed. An undisciplined 3♣ opening by West, however, might well fetch 3NT by South in pass-out. Will West really begin with a heart or the safe looking club suit? Surely the latter, especially at Pairs scoring.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

4♥ E/W is on the club guess for the overtrick...but I wonder if there will be any declarer who tries for the partial elimination: taking only one trump while eliminating spades and diamonds. You should do this by discarding a diamond on the ♠Q – there is no value in discarding a club and this caters for South

having only 2 diamonds. In fact, however, though we can construct the relevant ending, there aren't really the entries to carry out this plan.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ Q 4 ♥ 9 3 ♦ 9 8 7 6 ♣ J 8 6 4 2</p> <p>♠ K ♥ K Q J 10 5 ♦ Q 10 4 3 ♣ A K 5</p>	<p>♠ A 10 5 3 ♥ 8 6 2 ♦ A K J 5 2 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ J 9 8 7 6 2 ♥ A 7 4 ♦ — ♣ Q 10 9 7</p>
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Although 6♥ by West is undone by the diamond ruff it is hard to see that opening lead being made...and if South is able to lightner double for it then he may suffer the terrible fate of watching E/W run to the making 6NT. I would imagine after a start to the auction 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠, West will have the no-trump slam firmly in his sights.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

<p>♠ K 10 6 4 3 2 ♥ J 7 ♦ A K 8 ♣ K 2</p> <p>♠ J 8 ♥ Q 10 6 5 2 ♦ 4 2 ♣ Q 8 7 3</p>	<p>♠ A 9 7 5 ♥ 9 4 ♦ Q 10 9 7 6 3 ♣ 4</p> <p>♠ Q ♥ A K 8 3 ♦ J 5 ♣ A J 10 9 6 5</p>
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The natural auctions N/S will begin 1♣ 1♠ and now South does not have enough to reverse I would have thought...over the 2♣ rebid North might temporise with 2♦ and this will get 3NT from South...there is no particular reason for West to avoid the heart lead. North will eventually lose a couple of tricks, making five.

Best for the defence is if West begins with a diamond. Double-dummy declarer can win, play a spade to the queen, cross to the king of clubs and play the ♠K. That'll make 11 tricks! But in reality he will play on clubs and just make nine tricks.

Nor is a diamond lead so unlikely. Given that one way or another South will announce a good heart holding and given that East will have

diamonds sitting over diamonds (when North does decide to make that suit his rebid) it is an attractive option from the West collection.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

<p>♠ 10 8 ♥ 7 6 ♦ A 10 9 8 5 ♣ A J 6 5</p> <p>♠ K Q 9 6 5 ♥ A K Q 5 ♦ 6 3 ♣ 9 4</p>	<p>♠ J 2 ♥ 9 8 4 2 ♦ K Q J 7 4 ♣ 10 8</p> <p>♠ A 7 4 3 ♥ J 10 3 ♦ 2 ♣ K Q 7 3 2</p>
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E/W's 3♥ contract will be defeated by the diamond ruff, but it is likely to be missed:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	INT	Pass
2♥	?		

I guess after this start either North or South might balance, with 3♣ making. Still, supposing that East pushes on to 3♥ then is North going to find the aggressive lead to beat 3♥ or will he go with the passive trump lead? If the latter then 3♥ makes comfortably.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

<p>♠ Q J 6 ♥ A 7 5 3 ♦ J 4 2 ♣ Q 10 7</p> <p>♠ 10 9 7 3 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ K 9 7 5 ♣ 9 8</p>	<p>♠ A 5 ♥ J 10 9 ♦ Q 10 6 ♣ J 6 5 3 2</p> <p>♠ K 8 4 2 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ A 8 3 ♣ A K 4</p>
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The values are there for 3NT North-South, but not the tricks. Anybody who does manage to bring this one home has done well!

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

Strangely, although E/W have the same number of HCP and a better fit, they make less tricks in clubs than do N/S in hearts. Presumably N/S will stop short of 4♥, but +420 N/S is not impossible...East will be opening the bidding and with West on lead beginning with clubs it will not be difficult for declarer to divine the diamond layout. The club taps from trick one are threatening...but not sufficient to hold declarer to 9 tricks.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

E/W make an abundance of games: in every strain but clubs...although if diamonds East must be the declarer to protect against a spade opening lead by North. That lead would permit South to trouble declarer with the spade suit, while drawing trumps immediately before the club is set up would mean going down another way.

Presumably E/W will be in NT, but one could understand playing 4♠. South would be pretty happy with that contract having four tricks...well, not quite. You can see that declarer has 3 diamonds, 2 hearts and a club to begin with and needs only 4 trump tricks. A couple of club ruffs and now it will be possible to force another trump trick playing German Whist with South.

By the way, West will have an awkward decision over natural 1♣ openings: the off-

shape double? The off-beat NT overcall? The over-weight 1♥ overcall? At least the first two of these actions will get E/W to 4♠. And if South begins with INT and West counters with a penalty double, again, it is on the cards (so to speak) that East will end up driving to 4♠. Either way it will not be so hard for declarer to get the play right when it is known that most if not all of N/S's assets belonging to South.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

4♠ N/S is the place to be. Left to his own devices declarer might well set about diamonds and then it is natural to pick spades as well, making 11 tricks. The defence, however, is likely to begin with 3 rounds of hearts. Does that change declarer's plan? He could decide instead to set about a dummy reversal, ruffing two clubs in hand...but that is no way to make 11 tricks. The auction will probably have indicated a likeliness of spades being held by East...after all, West may well begin with a weak 2♥ or even 3♥ opening. In that case declarer can stick to the same plan and set up diamonds before drawing East's trumps.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Yes, 3NT only has 8 tricks N/S. BUT I fancy it to make.

- Played by North, East has to cash exactly 2 hearts and then exit at tricks 1-3. Otherwise, supposing 1 heart, for

example and then exit, declarer can duck a spade, strip East of non-heart cards and then throw him in.

- b) Played by South, West has to not lead a spade at trick one....then when declarer leads a heart from North East has to, as before, cash two and exit.

Given that East will have made a descriptive bid during the auction none of this will be impossible for N/S to get right.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Another 3NT N/S which is beatable in theory but what about practice? If played by South West has to begin with a low spade for the heart through...well, let's just write that one up to N/S. If played by North, East is quite likely to begin with the attractive heart holding, especially, of course, when the auction begins 1♦ 1♠ by South...It won't be so easy for East if North begins with INT and South staymans. Now it could well be the case that it is necessary to start the spade suit, while starting with a heart might just ruin the holding if South does have four.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

I have to admit I'm a sucker for overbidding these E/W cards to a slam. In fact it is not even the bad heart break that beats 6♦. The situation is more ignominious than that. A simple club lead, no entry to the ace and king

of spades, one down! Mind you, that may not be a totally tragic score. There are bound to be E/W pairs in 4♥ (yes, it's Matchpoint scoring, so what's the choice?) and that goes down to the same lead.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Assuming a diamond lead to E/W's 3NT, the trick tally will depend upon how many finesses West is willing to take. Of course, everybody is starting with the club finesse but then what?

- a) Settle for nine tricks. Cowardly!
- b) Hold your breathe, take one finesse, it works!
- c) Fancy your card reading skills and take the lot?

In fact, with North having to find 5 discards and South 4, they will do well not to let declarer make 12 tricks. They both have to keep 3 spades or the spades come home for 3 tricks. That means North has to pitch 2 hearts and 3 diamonds. South can pitch 1 heart, 2 diamonds and - ? Well, declarer, of course, has had to take one pitch by then. So, on the first four clubs let's say South and North pitch all their diamonds. On the fifth club South can pitch a heart and West can pitch a heart while North has a free spade to release. On the sixth club South has to pitch a heart and now West is in difficulty before North. If a heart then North can pitch a heart. If a spade North pitches a spade...

In practise I think that declarer is a huge chance to make 12 tricks...it requires very passive defence for N/S to take that second trick...it is easy to imagine, for example, North pitching a heart early.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

One can imagine these hands being overbid to a slam...and it won't take much for it to make from South's hand. West is likely to begin with a spade and that is the end of that...13 tricks! 3NT will surely be a common spot and will be beating 4♥ handsomely...not only because NT beats hearts but because if West does get off to a non-spade lead it is more likely to be vs. hearts.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

A dull 4♠ E/W.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Presumably N/S will get to at least a part-score in hearts, if not game. Either way it looks like a straight-forward cross-ruff for 10 tricks.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Neither side makes past the 2 level, but it is not likely to stop there. I fancy North to bid 3♠ over West's opening bid...one hopes that South would recognise his collection as a bad lot and pass. West then has an awkward bid, but surely it has to be pass? It is not difficult to hold declarer to 8 tricks: either a trump lead or a diamond followed by a trump shift will do it.