



Commentary for the SBU Autumn Simultaneous Pairs for the Lord Thomson Trophy

Thursday 16th October 2025

Dear Bridge player

Thank you for your support of this SBU Simultaneous Pairs 2025. Some of you will have played face to face at a club, others online, but whichever it was, we do hope you enjoyed the hands, found them interesting, challenging and fun whatever result you ended up with!

So now you can relax and enjoy the commentary - I wonder if you agree with what they wrote!

Do have a look on the SBU website at <https://www.sbu.org.uk/> for all the SBU news and also for information about forthcoming tournaments and join us for other events before too long. And don't forget our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/scottishbridgeunion>.

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

N/S should bid 1♠-1NT-2♦-2♠-3♥-4♠. The 3♥ bid shows North's pattern with real extras. After East's ♣K lead the 4-1 break is not that inconvenient, as East can't play a second club when in with the ♠A, so will probably exit with a small trump. After drawing trumps North may lead a low diamond towards dummy's ♦J. If he subsequently reads the position he will make 11 tricks, 10 if he does not – an important overtrick!

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Facing a passed partner, West will want to make a preemptive jump to 3♣ when South opens 1♥. But North will drive to 4♥, either via a cue-bid raise or jump to game, and buy the hand there. On the ♠J lead, whether East overtakes or not, declarer can establish at least one spade discard for his club loser. Then he can survive the 4-0 trump break and badly located diamond honours to make ten tricks on careful play, whatever East does.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ Q 6 2 ♥ 7 5 ♦ A 10 7 5 3 ♣ Q 5 2 ♠ K J 9 8 7 3 ♥ A K 4 2 ♦ 6 4 ♣ 9	♠ A 10 ♥ Q J 8 3 ♦ K Q J 9 ♣ K 7 6 ♠ 5 4 ♥ 10 9 6 ♦ 8 2 ♣ A J 10 8 4 3
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South might open 3♣ here, allowing N/S to bounce to 5♣, which costs only 500 unless the defence lead and continue trumps. By contrast, E/W can wrap up ten or eleven tricks in the major suit of their choice. Spades is safer, since it can survive bad trump splits, hearts more rewarding since with both major suits 3-2, 11 tricks can be made (though not without some risk). +650 should score E/W very nicely here.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

♠ J 9 4 ♥ A ♦ Q 8 7 4 ♣ J 5 4 3 2 ♠ K Q 6 2 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ A J ♣ A 10 9 6 ♠ A 8 7 5 3 ♥ K Q 3 2 ♦ 10 9 6 ♣ 7	♠ 10 ♥ J 10 9 6 4 ♦ K 5 3 2 ♣ K Q 8
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West will open a weak no-trump, letting East transfer to hearts, and giving South a tough matchpoint problem. Should he balance with 2♠ – the vulnerability is not in favour of that action? Well, South can (maybe) get a club ruff against 2♥ and hold it to eight tricks for -110. But if he bids 2♠ he may survive undoubled, losing 100 for a good board, or get doubled and set 200 for a terrible one. Lots of matchpoints ride on such decisions!

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ K 7 4 2 ♥ — ♦ Q 9 5 4 2 ♣ A 9 7 5 ♠ A Q 10 5 ♥ K J 10 7 6 ♦ K 3 ♣ 10 2 ♠ J 9 8 6 3 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 10 6 ♣ K J 8 6	♠ — ♥ A Q 9 8 5 3 ♦ A J 8 7 ♣ Q 4 3
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This hand comes down to a lead problem for South. E/W will doubtless have a power auction to a heart game or slam, and South will have to decide whether to go active or passive. The active club lead cashes two winners and holds E/W to +450 (for a good board for N/S). A diamond lead (or a spade lead if East guesses the hand moderately well) lets East collect 12 tricks and a fine matchpoint score – particularly if he is in slam!

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

♠ A Q J 8 5 4 ♥ A J 2 ♦ 10 2 ♣ 6 2 ♠ K 9 7 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ 5 3 ♣ A J 7 4 3 ♠ 10 6 3 ♥ K 9 6 5 3 ♦ A K 8 ♣ 9 8	♠ — ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ Q J 9 7 6 4 ♣ K Q 10 5
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North will generally be allowed to open 1♠ in fourth chair, allowing East to bid 2♦ rather than to double. South can bid 2♥, double, or raise spades, and at most tables N/S will finish up in a major-suit partscore. If South plays hearts he will make between eight and ten tricks, depending on how well he guesses the hand. But if North plays spades, ten tricks are easy and eleven just

about possible, I suppose. Anyone reaching 4♠ will scoop up all the matchpoints.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

♠ 8 3 ♥ Q ♦ A J 9 5 4 2 ♣ K 10 9 3 ♠ K J 10 7 4 2 ♥ 8 7 3 ♦ — ♣ 7 6 5 4 ♠ — ♥ A K J 9 2 ♦ K 10 8 7 6 ♣ Q J 8	♠ A Q 9 6 5 ♥ 10 6 5 4 ♦ Q 3 ♣ A 2
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When South opens 1♥ West might be tempted to bid spades at the one-, two- or three-level. The more the better today, since his side can make nine tricks in spades, while N/S are cold for 6♦ on their limited values. If North bids diamonds South is unlikely to stop much below slam, so it is up to E/W to put up a barrage – or to guess to sacrifice over 6♦. Mind you, –800 may not be great matchpoint score, but it is better than –1370.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

♠ A 8 2 ♥ A K 7 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ Q J 4 2 ♠ K 7 6 4 3 ♥ 9 8 ♦ J 8 3 2 ♣ 10 5 ♠ 10 ♥ 10 5 3 2 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ A K 9 7 3	♠ Q J 9 5 ♥ Q J 6 4 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ 8 6
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After a predictable auction, 2NT-3NT, and a predictable lead of the ♠Q (will there be any swinging Easts out there leading a heart – I think not) declarer will probably duck two spades and win the next to cash the ♥AK and then run five rounds of clubs. What three cards will East keep? Probably one heart winner and two diamonds – if so

he can be endplayed in hearts. And if he bares the ♦K, declarer can lead to his ♦A to make the tenth trick that way.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

♠ A 10 8 2 ♥ 7 5 ♦ 9 ♣ A Q 10 9 8 6 ♠ 5 ♥ A J 10 8 6 4 ♦ 8 3 ♣ J 7 5 3 ♠ Q J 9 7 4 ♥ 9 3 ♦ K 10 7 2 ♣ K 4	♠ K 6 3 ♥ K Q 2 ♦ A Q J 6 5 4 ♣ 2
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North might start the ball rolling with 1♣, over which East may bid 1♦ (hoping to catch up later). Now South will bid spades, West may stretch to introduce hearts, and a bidding war will ensue. The bottom line is that in spades South can only make eight tricks if East correctly plays for his club ruff. But best play by West in hearts can see him make ten tricks (two diamonds, one spade, and seven trumps) one way or another, so the sacrifice in 4♠ figures to be worthwhile.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

♠ A K J 7 2 ♥ 7 ♦ 10 9 4 ♣ 9 5 4 2 ♠ 10 9 3 ♥ Q J 10 3 ♦ A K 6 2 ♣ 8 7 ♠ Q 6 5 ♥ K 5 4 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A K J 6 3	♠ 8 4 ♥ A 9 8 6 2 ♦ J 8 5 3 ♣ Q 10
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N/S will start: 1♣-1♠-1NT. What now for North? The club fit suggests an invitation in spades, but will South accept? As it happens, his red-suit honours are waste paper, but the good clubs and doubleton diamond work overtime, and ten tricks are easy in spades when clubs split. Mind you,

might a fair percentage of the field reach no-trump partscores by South, making eleven tricks on the lead of the ♥Q? Anyone making game here will score very nicely.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

When West opens 1♥ and hears his partner respond INT there is a temptation to jump to 3NT (the solid hearts will be just as useful in no-trumps and you are a level lower). With spades 4-4 declarer can wrap up nine tricks comfortably enough; but what about 4♥? On the ♦Q lead declarer has to play clubs before hearts (else the defence have three spades to cash). If you guess clubs right, you have ten tricks (maybe more if the defence go wrong) and a fine score.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

West will open 1♣, and brave Norths will overcall 1♠, despite the vulnerability. When East similarly stretches to double, West will drive the hand to 4♥. Best

defence is a top spade (ducked) and a diamond shift for a spade return. Declarer can take the ♠A, draw trumps and take two club finesses, then cash the ♣A, pitching a spade from dummy, and give up one club for ten tricks. +420 will surely score well above average here; some will miss game, some will misplay it.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

E/W will bid unopposed 2♣-2♦-2♠-2NT-3♥-3♠-4♠, though East has a problem at his second and third turns as to whether to bid no-trumps, or to raise partner. On a top club lead 4♠ can be made (by playing on hearts before trumps) but few will do so. 3NT may be easier to make, even on a low club lead by North (since if South takes the first spade declarer may have time to test spades and fall back on the heart finesse). But anyone making game here deserves a fine score.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

East's 2♠ or Multi opening gives South a headache; some play a jump to 4♦ as the red-suits, but this hand is far too weak. If South overcalls in diamonds his side will probably end up defending 4♠ doubled, down 300 or so. If South bids hearts, things may work out worse; since 5♥ goes down when the heart finesse loses, +300 is actually par for N/S – and will be achieved at a large number of tables I expect.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

After North opens 1♦ and East overcalls 1♠, will South raise to 2♦? I would; that will allow E/W to compete to 3♠ or higher, while N/S should sell out quietly if they know what is good for them. That is because even though E/W have only 18HCP between them, and the heart finesse is wrong for them, they can take ten tricks in spades, against any defence, either by ruffing clubs in West, or by setting up the hearts.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Whether North opens 1♠ or not, you would expect a lot of N/S pairs to reach a major-suit game, with three quick losers and a diamond ruff off the top (not to mention at least one more loser in hearts if that is the trump suit). So Kudos to any N/S pair who stay low and avoid trouble despite their 25HCP, or who play no-trumps, where even on best defence of a club led and ducked +120 is straightforward enough, and in fact nine tricks can be made by a squeezing East on the run of the spades.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

West will show his 4-5 major pattern after a INT opening, and should probably will trust his partner's decision to head for 3NT. On a diamond lead East should put up the ♦J and drive out the ♣A. South can no better than win and return the suit, but the fall of the ♦109 means declarer can come to at least ten tricks (and might just manage more at double-dummy via a black-suit squeeze on North). +430 will be a fair score, since anomalous results (in spades, hearts, or slam) will fare far worse.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Sometimes virtue is unrewarded and vice flourishes. Look at the E/W cards; if the club finesse is wrong then 4♥ is quite high enough for them, and they will doubtless collect a quiet +450. Now consider 3NT – which E/W might well reach if East opens 1NT. On a spade lead and continuation East can hop up with the ♠K, cross his fingers, and take a club finesse, for a spectacular +490. N/S may well not see the funny side of this result.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Whether South opens 2NT or gets to that contract via a 2♣ sequence, 2NT by South will be the final contract here – only a desperate top-shooter will try Stayman with the North cards. On the ♦Q lead South will duck and win the next diamond to drive out the ♣AK. Best defence eventually has to give South a trick in one of the majors for his contract – in fact E/W

must be careful not to concede a trick in both

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

Some Wests will open 2♥, or a Multi, more discreet ones will pass, but the final contract will be either 3NT or 4♥. East might well opt to play 3NT if his partner shows poor hearts in the auction, and his judgement would be rewarded today. That is because 3NT makes eleven tricks via a major-suit squeeze on South on any defence but repeated spade leads, which set up a third trick for N/S. Most of the field will record 620 or 630, so anyone managing +660 will scoop the pool.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

Will East double a weak no-trump? His hand looks more like an overcall in clubs to me; in fact E/W can make +110 in clubs, but N/S have two major-suit eight-card fits and may well compete themselves to the three-level. Obviously 3♥ figures to lose two trump tricks and go down a trick or so; but

might 3♠ struggle home one way or another? It has some practical chances – but this looks the sort of deal where anyone recording +110 will do very well, and +140 will be huge for N/S.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

East will probably open 1♦ here, not an off-shape INT, given the vulnerability. If so, he will defend to 3NT by North after that player balances with 2NT (19-21 not unusual!). Best defence is repeated diamond leads to hold declarer to +400, while heart leads or switches would let through +430. Meanwhile, if E/W wander into 2♠, repeated early trump leads could collect 300 (or 800) but declarer might well scramble an extra trick in a number of ways.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

North will open 1♦ in third chair, and now might East double? Many will, in which case E/W may well compete to 3♥, a contract that can be made by guessing spades, or

achieving some sort of unlikely endplay. By contrast, N/S can make nine tricks in diamonds – but might well attempt ten in competition. Given the vulnerability, there will be plenty of penalties of 100 or 200 here, with making contracts possibly the exception rather than the rule.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

When West opens 1♦ many Norths will have a preemptive 2♥ call available, and will use it. Still, one way or another you would expect East to end up declaring 3NT on a heart lead. There is no genuine pressure for a twelfth trick, though some Souths may discard a spade prematurely. Conversely, even an initial club lead only gives the defence two tricks; declarer ducks the first club and wins the second, and South has no entry to the clubs.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

E/W have a big spade fit, but 12 tricks their way are far from laydown. Left to their own devices they may well reach slam (that

♠J is hard to locate) but N/S might preempt in either red suit and make life tough for their opponents. N/S might well go for 800 in 4♥ or so, but their sacrifice will be in vain if the majority of E/W fail to record 1430. My guess though, is that the field will be split between those in game and those in slam.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

Is that East hand a 3♦ preempt? Some Easts will act, but I suspect more N/S pairs will be given a relatively clear run to play 4♥ – an easy enough spot to reach even in the face of pre-emption, unless E/W start 3♦ – 5♦! The entries to the South hand make 11 tricks the limit in 4♥ except on very helpful defence (and some will make only ten tricks). Meanwhile E/W can be held to eight tricks in 5♦, not such a great sacrifice...

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Another unclassical preempt in diamonds for South. This time N/S want to play spades, and curiously, given the foul trump

break, there is no defence to stop 4♠. Best is for East to lead a heart for the trump shift, but the heart play destroys the defence's second trick in that suit. Meanwhile E/W want to buy the hand cheaply in clubs if they can (nine tricks are available to West except on the lead of the ♠A or a low club).

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

That West hand is a weak no-trump to some (me included) – but West may regret that action if North doubles and both he and East forget to run! However, in a strange way the no-trump may work well, since the defence have only nine tricks against INT, while N/S can make 4♠ and will surely bid it if West opens 1♥. All things considered, maybe this is a good hand not a bad one for the weak no-trump?

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

When North opens 1♦ East must pass (both double and INT look unacceptable), and South will surely dredge up a 1♠

response. Now when West bids 2♣ E/W have to try to reach 3NT from the West seat. On a spade lead West will take his ♠A and run the clubs, then take the heart finesse confidently. In fact with the ♥K dropping in two rounds there are ten easy tricks available for West – and South might easily discard a fatal heart and concede an eleventh trick.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

Whether East preempts (ugh!) or passes, one would expect E/W to play 2♠. Best is for East to declare that contract, but at double-dummy the defence can underlead the heart ace and shift immediately to diamonds, arranging to make their trumps separately and set the hand. In practice, normal defence will surely allow East to scramble home with eight tricks one way or another. +110 figures to be an average-plus result (since some N/S pairs may buy the hand in hearts for -100 or so).

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

Another weak no-trump for West, and again N/S have the balance of high-cards. North is likely to bid hearts though, where he can make +110; the question is therefore whether E/W can scramble out for a smaller penalty in either 2♠ or 3♦. The answer is yes; 2♠ has only five top losers, but will probably go down, while 3♦ is destined for down two, but only -100, unless North or South can find a double.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

East will open 1♣ in third seat, letting South overcall 1♠ or 2♠, to taste. Either way, South is likely to finish up declaring 2♠, and find a very hostile lie of the cards. With all the hearts lying wrongly for him, and a 4-1 trump break offside to boot, even one down looks hard to manage – I'd expect six tricks to be the norm for South in spades. So -50 might well turn out to be decent for N/S (particularly since E/W might be allowed to make +110 in 3♣ one way or another)