ECatsBridge Simultaneous Pairs for BBC Children in Need

Friday 13th November 2026

Together we can …

… and by competing in this Simultaneous Pairs you have once again certainly shown that **together we can indeed do something to help make a difference** to children who really need our help. Over the past years we (well you) have helped raise an amazing **£1,474,766.47 …** we are so close to one and half million -will we make it this year ? We are keeping our fingers crossed!

Thank you so so much for coming along and joining in, playing and donating – please don't forget the donating bit though, will you – just go to :

https://www.ecatsbridge.com/sims/currentdonations.asp

and you will see how you can do it – if you haven't already done so of course!

Our thanks, as always, go to our commentators: Brian Senior for his words of wisdom on Tuesday and Thursday, Julian Pottage did the analysis for the Monday session, Mark Horton for the Wednesday session and Rob Miller completes the crew, writing up Friday event. It's always interesting to see if they got it right but you will have discovered that by now of course !

With very best wishes

Anna & Mark – the ECatsBridge Team

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Board 1

	♠ A832 ♥ 1072 ♦ Q76 ♣ A76	Dealer N Vul: None
♠ K10965 ♥ AK ♦ AJ109 ♣ Q8		♠ 74 ♥ 864 ♦ K32 ♣ K9532
	♠ QJ ♥ QJ953 ♦ 854 ♣ J104	

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

First board and it may well start with three passes, a rather mundane start to the evening 😊.

West will open 1♠ and East will respond one no trump as the hand isn't good enough for 2♣. West also isn't quite good enough for a three diamond jump which should be played as game forcing (although some may not) so will probably just bid two no trumps which is where they will play.

A passive heart lead is best and from there the best declarer can do is to concede a club and guess diamonds correctly for down one. Trying to sneak a spade through this time would be bad news.

On the other hand some may choose on the 5-2-4-2 shape to open a strong no trump and play there, and this will turn out well if they find the ♦Q.

Staying low and getting a plus score should score well for East West.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 2 ♠ KQ987643 Dealer E
♥ 2 Vul: N-S
♦ 94
♣ 85

♠ A ♠ J5
♥ Q9865 ♥ AJ107
♦ Q83 ♦ A62
♣ KJ42 ♣ AQ93

♠ 102
♥ K43
♦ KJ1075
♣ 1076

North	East	South	West
	1♣	Pass	1♥
3♠	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Some borderline decisions here. If East opens 1♣ some Souths may bid 1♦ although with the flat hand and the vulnerability it is not advised.

West will bid 1♥ whatever and now how many spades does North bid?

With an eight card suit it is very tempting to bid 4♠ but the vulnerability and poor spades suggest three is more prudent. East is now pushed into bidding 4♥. North South need to avoid bidding 4♠ or they could be doubled for minus 500 against a non vul game.

East West need to avoid getting overboard as eleven tricks are their limit. West should recognise that partner may have bid here when not entirely full value due to North's pre-empt and should stay low but I wouldn't be surprised if both sides overbid this one!

If East opens a strong no trump, after a transfer from West, North has the same problem but knowing there is a strong balanced hand over them makes three spades even clearer.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 3	♠ KJ105 ♥ 94 ♦ 832 ♣ A965	Dealer S Vul: E-W
♠ 832 ♥ KJ2 ♦ K95 ♣ 8432		♠ 64 ♥ Q1073 ♦ AJ10764 ♣ 7
	♠ AQ97 ♥ A865 ♦ Q ♣ KQJ10	

North	East	South	West
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

* spade support and short diamond

South can open 1♣, my preference on 4/4 hands (some will open 1♥ though), either way North will bid 1♠. The vulnerability should put East off bidding but I suspect some will. South will then show a good raise to 4♠, here showing a singleton along the way. North has a good hand but no red suit controls so can only bid 4♠.

South can make eleven tricks if given the chance to ruff dummy's two diamonds; a club lead, however, stops this as the defence can now get a ruff when in with their diamond. Holding it to ten should score well for East West as I'm sure some will make eleven.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 4	♠ J10 ♥ A9865 ♦ Q ♣ AK974	Dealer W Vul: Both
♠ K8 ♥ QJ72 ♦ K974 ♣ Q65		♠ Q9654 ♥ K103 ♦ 106 ♣ J108
	♠ A732 ♥ 4 ♦ AJ8532 ♣ 32	

North	East	South	West
			Pass
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West has a flat eleven count which I suspect some will open but really shouldn't at this vulnerability.

If allowed North will open 1♥ and South has a choice of ignoring the diamonds and just bidding the major or starting with 2♦. Playing Acol I prefer 2♦ but some will be forced into bidding 1♠ if they play a two over one system. Here 1♠ works slightly better as it allows North to bid 2♣. North is simply forced to bid a horrible 2♥ over 2♦ 😔.

However, even over 2♣ South may well show false preference back to 2♥ and the same horrible contract. Pass if their system allows at first appears to work much better or 2♦ if weak.

As it happens, double dummy hearts can make eight and clubs and diamonds nine scoring the same 110.

Interestingly both sides need to play clubs depending on the contract - East West do if they are defending clubs to restrict the ruffs in dummy and this hold it to nine, and declarer does playing hearts to set up their side suit before getting forced in trumps.

Any Wests that do open and end up playing the contract should go enough minus to regret it for a long time!

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 5 ♠ AKQ1052 Dealer N
♥ K Vul: N-S
♦ KQ109
♣ A7

♠ J876 ♠ 4
♥ AJ84 ♥ 753
♦ 8432 ♦ AJ6
♣ 8 ♣ K106542

♠ 93
♥ Q10962
♦ 75
♣ QJ93

North	East	South	West
2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass

*2♣ Strong hand
*2♦ Relay

North should open 2♣ and I personally think you should have better suits than South to bid 2♥ as a positive straight away in response to a strong two, so a 2♦ relay is best.

North South will then eventually land in 4♠. East shouldn't lead a club from this holding into such a strong hand, the singleton trump and an unsupported ace are no better, so a heart through dummy looks the least unattractive.

West needs to win and switch to a club now as, although declarer's heart is set up in the dummy they can't get there quickly enough to throw the club loser. In fact declarer needs to take an incredible view in trumps by blasting a way to dummy (via a diamond ruff) then finessing the ten just to make!

A passive heart lead and a singleton switch doesn't look so farfetched so four spades going down will happen quite a lot I suspect, anyone making it scoring well. It's pairs so some may even play it in 3NT but this has no communication to dummy at all and should fail with careful defence.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 6

	♠ 92 ♥ AJ73 ♦ K763 ♣ A109	Dealer E Vul: E-W
♠ KJ3 ♥ Q64 ♦ AJ8 ♣ Q654		♠ A1085 ♥ 10985 ♦ Q1054 ♣ 2
	♠ Q764 ♥ K2 ♦ 92 ♣ KJ873	

North	East	South	West
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West has a weak no trump which may well get passed out.

North would like to bid but is too flat, so although some East's may be tempted to look for a major fit with West but should resist and those who do will regret doing so here!

South may wish to bid also but a lot may play two clubs as some sort of major bid and be unable to enter the auction.

As a passed hand double showing five of a minor and four of a major is a very useful tool to have and perfect for this hand, North with an opening hand may be tempted then to turn that into a penalty double. This will work out well here as 1NT should go at least one down on careful defence, heart lead and club switch.

A N/S club contract making whilst ok may lose out to those going more than one off in one no trump.

Strong no trumpers should avoid the nasty one no trump as North South will almost certainly compete to some level of clubs or even no trump themselves.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 7

♠ Q1092
♥ AJ
♦ AQ53
♣ A86

Dealer S
Vul: Both

♠ 854
♥ 8543
♦ 1096
♣ 942

♠ J76
♥ Q1096
♦ J72
♣ QJ10

♠ AK3
♥ K72
♦ K84
♣ K753

North	East	South	West
		1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2s**	Pass
6NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

* checkback

** three spades

With big hands I prefer a 1♦ response but some may just respond 1♠, after a 15-17 no trump rebid and when no spade fit is found North, with good controls, has just about enough for six.

Strong no trumpers will open it so and should get to the same contract, just slightly quicker. 😊

The play is only slightly interesting. On, say, a passive club lead if everything works (diamonds three-three spades for four tricks and heart fineness) declarer has an overtrick,

However, the best line to make is to give up on the overtrick and duck a club, this allows for a 3/3 club break too and has ducked a trick early to rectify the count for some squeeze chances when things don't break. In a slam I prefer to play the best line to make as they normally score well when making anyway. Here with diamonds three-three, from the start and the heart fineness wrong it should always be making twelve. Those that bid it will score well.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 8 ♠ QJ9 Dealer W
♥ Q1065 Vul: None
♦ 10
♣ 65432

♠ K65 ♠ A1082
♥ 97 ♥ K83
♦ J96532 ♦ K8
♣ J7 ♣ AK109

♠ 743
♥ AJ42
♦ AQ74
♣ Q8

North	East	South	West
			2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦

* weak

This could depend on style and system!

If East West play a weak two diamonds East will inquire and West will show a minimum and there it should play, going down played by West, although this needs a heart lead then a spade switch to knock out dummy's entry to the late club winner. Thus I suspect a lot will make three diamonds.

If West passes East will open 1♣, South may double but after a heart response from North, East will double and East West should compete to the same contract. Pressing on to 3♥ at this vulnerability does well here as it is only down one but seems too aggressive.

Diamonds making will score well for East West, small minus scoring well for North South.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 9	♠ AQJ96 ♥ 7 ♦ J762 ♣ AQ8	Dealer N Vul: E-W
♠ 74 ♥ J104 ♦ A1098 ♣ K732		♠ 832 ♥ AK983 ♦ 5 ♣ J964
	♠ K105 ♥ Q652 ♦ KQ43 ♣ 105	

North	East	South	West
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

North will open 1♠ and despite the reasonable heart suit is East worth a vulnerable overcall? No but I suspect some will; either way South will make a limit raise to game in spades, (maybe cue bidding hearts if East does bid), showing some sort of limit raise if 1♠ shows five. Here playing four card majors South bids diamonds first then supports spades.

Most routes should end in four spades losing three tricks as long as East/West find their diamond ruff, on this occasion not too difficult.

Flat board? Should be but they never are 😊

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 10

♠ AKQ63
♥ A63
♦ 92
♣ 842

Dealer E
Vul: Both

♠ 10754
♥ 102
♦ K763
♣ K73

♠ 98
♥ KQ854
♦ AJ4
♣ 1095

♠ J2
♥ J97
♦ Q1085
♣ AQJ6

North	East	South	West
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Few auctions start with three passes at pairs these days but this is the second this set! (board1). Even 1 (yes really) wouldn't open the South hand second seat vulnerable, so it is left to North to open.

With this hand the trick is to get no trumps played by North, If playing a weak no trump despite the points all in the majors one no trump still seems best. East for the second hand in a row has reasonable heart suit but the wrong vulnerability to act (although passing two in a row maybe too much for some). South has a borderline invite, though downgrading Jx Jxx and passing is not unreasonable.

Whether in one two or a ludicrous three North can make nine by playing on clubs, three clubs five spades and a heart.

Anyone who opens the South hand or opens the North one spade, due to preferring that option or forced to by playing a strong no trump, may play no trumps by the wrong hand (although finding a heart lead from West is not easy). Even played by North on a small heart lead the percentage line is to play the nine at trick one not the jack – that just needs the ten right while playing the jack requires both king and queen onside), but this will be wrong today though and will hold declarer to eight.

Did anyone lead the king of hearts? Wrong if you are going to lead the suit in my opinion but I'm sure the computer disagrees and just makes declarer's guess easy on this hand. 150 for North South should score well, 120 being normal.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 11	♠ KJ62 ♥ AQ ♦ J107 ♣ 10532	Dealer S Vul: None
♠ 43 ♥ J985 ♦ 96543 ♣ J8		♠ AQ1087 ♥ K62 ♦ K8 ♣ K94
	♠ 95 ♥ 10743 ♦ AQ2 ♣ AQ76	

North	East	South	West
		1NT	Pass
2♣*	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Will two no trump really play two hands running? Well that would be as rare as a Spurs win but with a minimum weak no trump opposite an invite it may do here!

East won't want to go quietly but has little choice on this auction (If they passed the last two heart hands they will be getting really fed up by now!).

Those playing a strong no trump will open one of a minor and a one spade from North will make East even more irritated than before! 😊 The contract should end up being similar though.

Declarer has three clubs in some fashion, three diamonds thanks to the finesse and a heart, the inevitable spade lead will give declarer the eighth. A heart lead from West and continuation with a late spade through will hold declarer to seven. Making eight I suspect normal making less good for East West.

Makeable Contracts

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

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Board 12 ♠ KQ1053 Dealer W
♥ K Vul: N-S
♦ Q1093
♣ J74

♠ 86 ♠ AJ42
♥ AQJ9 ♥ 108763
♦ A72 ♦ 654
♣ K853 ♣ 2

♠ 97
♥ 542
♦ KJ8
♣ AQ1096

North	East	South	West
			1NT
2♠	Pass	Pass	x*
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* take out

Another weak no trump this time for West to open if that's what they play.

North will probably bid two spades whatever it means in their system after two passes what from West?

Normally having opened a no trump you would not bid again unless forced by partner but here with a maximum, two small in opponents suit and favourable vulnerability double looks perfect. With good spades does partner pass or bid three hearts?

Passing works best here as long as they lead their club and negotiate two ruffs for down one or lead hearts and keep leading them to force declarer.

Three hearts needs to drop the king offside, unlikely, so may well go down. Strong no trumpers may upgrade and open the same thing! If they open a minor North South will come in and should rest in a spade or club part score.

Any plus scores either way should score well ☺

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 13

	♠ KJ32 ♥ Q1076 ♦ Q43 ♣ K7	Dealer N Vul: Both
♠ Q104 ♥ 4 ♦ J1086 ♣ A9863		♠ 876 ♥ A952 ♦ A97 ♣ J54
	♠ A95 ♥ KJ83 ♦ K52 ♣ Q102	

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South is very flat and having shown hearts does best to show their flat hand with three no trumps, North has no reason with a flattish hand to go back to hearts.

With spades onside and breaking and diamonds breaking too if the defence attack them three no trumps is easy for once, four hearts can make but a diamond lead from West will defeat it if played by South. If you manage to make four hearts you will score well, I suspect three no trumps making will score well too.

Any Norths that open should just lead to similar contracts but maybe playing hearts the safer way up on this hand.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 14

♠ KQ
♥ J1052
♦ KJ63
♣ J84

Dealer E
Vul: None

♠ AJ62
♥ KQ
♦ A987
♣ 762

♠ 1087
♥ 9763
♦ Q5
♣ AQ53

♠ 9543
♥ A84
♦ 1042
♣ K109

North	East	South	West
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

…and another weak no trump, It feels a crime to let it play love all at pairs but even with my style of bidding should get passed out here!!

North does best to lead a heart (small), as a diamond is far too aggressive with this holding at pairs where it's a race for tricks. Declarer can get to seven tricks via three spades (taking a very good view in the suit) one heart, two diamonds and a club.

North South however can get to seven first via three hearts (on a small heart lead), one spade, one diamond and two clubs (by playing the jack through - most unlikely to find though).

Of course declarer may well play on clubs rather than spades and simply go down by themselves.

Those playing a stronger no trump will open one of a minor and a heart response may put North off the best lead and pick a disastrous diamond, although I still prefer a heart even if they have been bid to this diamond holding. Any plus score for East West should score very well.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 15

	♠ 4 ♥ KJ10 ♦ QJ10532 ♣ K73	Dealer S Vul: N-S
♠ AK75 ♥ Q9762 ♦ 984 ♣ A		♠ QJ10 ♥ A853 ♦ AK76 ♣ Q5
	♠ 98632 ♥ 4 ♦ ♣ J1098642	

North	East	South	West
		Pass	1♥
2♦	2NT*	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* good raise

Seven five is very tempting and I'm sure some will open something silly on the South hand but they shouldn't.

After a one heart from West it is useful to play two no trumps as a good raise and keep other raises as weak. West is not as bad as they could be and is worth four what of East?

This is a close call, but slam is terrible - the poor club holding should put them off.

In fact a diamond lead, quite likely, and South ruffing with their only trump beats even game! Any stopping and making will score very well.

If South does get involved anything could happen as they have a good club fit. Given the vulnerability East West do best to double and lead a trump, but South may instead push East West to a minus score.

Finally if South does bid clubs and therefore receives a club lead instead of their diamond ruff forgive me for having no sympathy!

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 16 ♠ 1054 Dealer W
♥ A10852 Vul: E-W
♦ 8
♣ J532

♠ KJ98763 ♠ Q
♥ KJ96 ♥ Q3
♦ ♦ AKJ9542
♣ K6 ♣ AQ8

♠ A2
♥ 74
♦ Q10763
♣ 10974

North	East	South	West
			1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣*	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT**	Pass	5♣***
Pass	5♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

* fourth suit forcing
** roman keycard blackwood
*** one or four

Some may just rebid spades with seven but I like to show the hearts first.

East needs to be careful with a misfit not to get too overboard, however using good old fashioned Blackwood or more exotic ones should stop them short of slam as they have at least two aces to lose.

Please don't show an extra ace because of a void when the void is in partner's suit!!!

With partner having such good clubs themselves no trumps works well on this occasion, but that seems very lucky with such a shapely hand. If East does look for slam and stop missing two, this bizarrely even with West themselves void is beaten by a diamond ruff!! Diamond lead - win ace of trumps - second diamond promotes a trump. I suspect though, making eleven will be normal.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 17 ♠ 1087 Dealer N
♥ Vul: None
♦ AKQJ1063
♣ 842

♠ KQJ9 ♠ 42
♥ KJ7 ♥ Q432
♦ 87 ♦ 92
♣ 10753 ♣ AKQJ6

♠ A653
♥ A109865
♦ 54
♣ 9

North	East	South	West
3NT*	Pass	4♣**	Pass
4♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

* solid minor

** bid your minor

I'm sure quite a few these days play three no trumps as a solid minor opener and will bid that here.

If they play it as showing nothing outside, South does best today with nothing in both minors to run to four of partners suit. There will be some who will chance three no trumps for sure and lose five clubs very quickly.

In four diamonds East will need to lead trumps at some point to stop declarer ruffing their club losers, trick one (inspired) holds diamonds to nine, trick two more likely to ten. Never playing diamonds allows declarer to make eleven and leads to a hefty East West post mortem!

Those not playing the above will open three or four diamonds and play there, East West really don't have enough to get involved at this level. Any plus score North South way should score ok.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 18

♠ J105
♥ K4
♦ AK6
♣ K7653

Dealer E
Vul: N-S

♠ 9872
♥ AQ7
♦ J975
♣ J4

♠ A64
♥ J863
♦ 3
♣ AQ982

♠ KQ3
♥ 10952
♦ Q10842
♣ 10

North	East	South	West
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pas	1NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

An eleven count that is definitely worth opening this time. East responds 1♦ and after a 1♥ rebid East has a choice of 1NT (balanced minimum) or preference to clubs, its pairs and four to the nine maybe good enough so I prefer one no trump.

With the lovely singleton ten of clubs dropping one no trump should make but two clubs should fail.

Those who like to respond the major will see one of the downsides here as it may force partner to rebid two clubs or two spades and miss the chance of playing a no trump.

North South do make two diamonds but North has the points and East has taken their bid so it seems difficult to see how they ever get in the auction unless South bids immediately. As is often the case, plus scores will do very well.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 19

	♠ AQ76 ♥ AK64 ♦ 85 ♣ 632	Dealer S Vul: E-W
♠ 4 ♥ 7 ♦ KJ10742 ♣ AQJ95		♠ J98532 ♥ J532 ♦ A3 ♣ 4
	♠ K10 ♥ Q1098 ♦ Q96 ♣ K1087	

North	East	South	West
		Pass	1♦*
x	1♠	2♥	3♣
3♥	Pass	Pass	4♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Wow this could get very competitive with both sides bidding too much and lots going down, both ways, not being uncommon.

Getting higher than the auction above I wouldn't be surprised to see happen frequently. West gets to open a diamond and with both majors North has a reasonable take out double, then after 1♠ from East, South has enough to compete (some may prefer double if this shows hearts). East can then show their clubs, and I'm sure many Norths will bid three hearts.

Really North South should not compete without the ninth trump between them and if they do East West do best to double this, though East standing a double with their shape highly unlikely and pressing on to a doomed contact not unreasonable for once.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 20

♠ KJ6
♥ AQ107
♦ 74
♣ Q542

Dealer W
Vul: Both

♠ A84
♥ J6
♦ AJ8532
♣ K3

♠ 1032
♥ K42
♦ K10
♣ J10987

♠ Q975
♥ 9853
♦ Q96
♣ A6

North	East	South	West
			1♦
Dbl	Pass	1♥	2♦
2♥	3♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West will open 1♦ and is North worth a double? Just about.

West will rebid diamonds no doubt and now North South have found their heart fit and East West their diamond, how high will they go??

Like the last hand two hearts should probably be enough with only eight trumps each but will that stop everyone?

East having shown nothing the first time will compete to three diamonds, with both aces right and guessing the diamond it can make!

Anything higher both ways should really get the axe at pairs!

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 21 ♠ KJ1052 Dealer N
♥ Q7642 Vul: N-S
♦ A
♣ K7

♠ Q94 ♠ 873
♥ 1083 ♥ A
♦ 876 ♦ QJ9432
♣ A1053 ♣ QJ8

♠ A6
♥ KJ95
♦ K105
♣ 9642

North	East	South	West
1♠	2♦	Dbl*	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

* Take Out

North will open 1♠ and East will overcall 2♦. South should double to show the hearts and with the fifth heart although minimum North is worth three which South will raise to game.

North can win the diamond lead cross on a spade and take the precaution of throwing a club on the diamond in case West wins the heart ace and puts a club through. Here it doesn't matter as the aces are the right way round for once.

Hearts making eleven really should be fairly normal.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 22 ♠ K8 Dealer E
♥ 7532 Vul: E-W
♦
♣ AKQ10762

♠ Q1062 ♠ 954
♥ 6 ♥ A98
♦ K109873 ♦ A654
♣ 93 ♣ J54

♠ AJ73
♥ KQJ104
♦ QJ2
♣ 8

North	East	South	West
	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣**	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT***	Pass	5♠****	Pass
6♥			

* good heart raise
** cue
*** roman keycard blackwood
**** two with the queen of trumps

South will open 1♥ and North has a huge hand opposite this! They may start by showing their clubs or just support hearts immediately as above, either way six hearts should be reached.

The only problem may be checking for aces with a void, here after a club cue from North when South can't cue diamonds, North is safe to use Blackwood knowing that any keycards shown won't be the diamond ace as this has already been denied.

Anyone who doubles with two aces will get what they deserve!

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 23

♠ AKQ5
♥ 9
♦ AQ
♣ A98642

Dealer S
Vul: Both

♠ J973
♥ A7
♦ K76
♣ QJ103

♠ 62
♥ KQ8532
♦ 10942
♣ K

♠ 1084
♥ J1064
♦ J853
♣ 75

North	East	South	West
		Pass	Pass
1♣	2♥*	Pass	Pass
Dbl**	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	pass		

* weak

** take out

Stopping low enough for North South to go plus will be the test here. North has a nice hand and after a weak jump from East, do they double or bid two spades? Double looks better as it keeps more options open. Double and partner passing is actually best, but will South stand with such a weak hand?

Probably not, partner doesn't have to be this good after all, but the trouble is if they bid what to bid? Two spades looks about the best of a horrible choice.

East West must resist bidding to the three level or the axe may well fall now and they will regret it.

Spades should make nine and a very good score with clubs making nine too.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 24 ♠ J85432 Dealer W
♥ K104 Vul: None
♦ 4
♣ 952

♠ Q109 ♠ A6
♥ 3 ♥ 9862
♦ Q108732 ♦ AK96
♣ 643 ♣ AK7

♠ K7
♥ AQJ75
♦ J5
♣ QJ108

North	East	South	West
			Pass
Pass	1♦	1♥	3♦*
3♥	Dbl**	Pass	4♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* weak

** good hand

The above is a very conservative view of what may happen!

Love all at pairs is rarely conservative though 😊. East opens one diamond and South has a routine overcall. West (if they have it available) has a perfect weak raise, North will no doubt compete although a bit weak but with a nice singleton.

East has an awkward bid now and double shows a good hand, which West may well reject as their hand is so weak although the sixth trump and a short heart may tempt some to bid five.

Some North Souths may compete to four hearts which sadly for them may just have the effect of pushing East West into an unbeatable game. (Theoretically needing a spade guess for a club pitch but when the king appears no guess is needed).

Finally some Wests and Norths may open weak twos if they play them this aggressive. If West does this it will almost certainly lead to them bidding game, if North does after double and diamonds from West this may lead to them bidding game too.

Anyone who reaches five will score very well I suspect four will score ok too.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 25 ♠ 1098 Dealer N
♥ A10 Vul: E-W
♦ K432
♣ AQ32

♠ A4 ♠ 7632
♥ KQ97632 ♥ J
♦ 10 ♦ QJ9876
♣ 974 ♣ K10

♠ KQJ5
♥ 854
♦ A5
♣ J865

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2♣	3♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North has a weak no trump and South has a standard invite via Stayman until nasty West gets involved!

Despite the adverse vulnerability a weak three heart jump looks tempting and if they do South should compete with a double to show their inviting hand. North has an awkward choice now, three no trumps with their heart stop will not end well, as on a heart lead West will overtake, clear the ace and sit there waiting with the ace of spades entry for it to go many many off!

Bidding spades on the three card suit works provided they manage to stop in three as this makes. Indeed, the defence to four is very tricky (spade lead, second spade, when declarer plays for heart ruff, ruff second heart and play a third spade stopping the ruff. Hard to see!) So those in four may make ten anyway but it's a tough contract to reach.

Another choice however is to pass the double at this vulnerability. Again the defence need to be careful and stop the club ruff which should lead to down one.

Strong no trumpers will open a minor and after one spade from South, East has the same choice with the heart hand and so it is likely to lead to a similar position.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 26 ♠ KJ762 Dealer E
♥ A1083 Vul: Both
♦ KQ
♣ Q8

♠ 984 ♠ 1053
♥ Q542 ♥ J
♦ J ♦ A965432
♣ AJ542 ♣ 106

♠ AQ
♥ K976
♦ 1087
♣ K973

North	East	South	West
	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

East is not worth a three diamond bid with that suit at this vulnerability so South will open, here with a weak no trump leading to four hearts by North. This will probably lose a trump and two aces, as with nothing to go on in the bidding and play, getting trumps right is unlikely.

Those who cash the right top honour and follow the rule of "restricted choice" may just do so though. If East finds the unlikely ♦A lead, after a ruff declarer will have to take the good view in trumps (cash king and finesse through West) to make, not entirely unreasonable now, however, given West's short diamond holding and East having seven. Any who play a strong no trump and open one club or who use Stayman on the North hand may get it played by South where the ruff is much easier to find. Ten tricks should score ok any making the eleven will hit the jackpot! 😊

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 27 ♠ 84 Dealer S
♥ J6 Vul: None
♦ Q109543
♣ 1082

♠ 1063 ♠ AQ95
♥ Q1095 ♥ K72
♦ J87 ♦ 2
♣ J93 ♣ AKQ64

♠ KJ72
♥ A843
♦ AK6
♣ 75

North	East	South	West
		1♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Redbl	Pass
2♦	Dbl	3♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

If South opens one heart round to East, they are too strong to just bid clubs so double looks best especially with the spades as well.

West has a horrid bid, its only suit is hearts but is not strong enough for one no trump so is forced to bid a three card suit (probably spades and East may get too excited!). South however may let East off the hook by re doubling to show a good hand themselves now West can just pass, phew!

North will bid diamonds and East will probably double again, South will compete and when it comes back to East they will think after several boards this evening what do they have to do to play a hand? Will they compete again to four clubs? They shouldn't all by themselves but it can work here, even doubled it's only one off if they find the heart jack…but oops if doubled and they don't!

A diamond contract by North South making nine looks normal though.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 28

	♠ AQJ93 ♥ K5 ♦ AJ9 ♣ A98	Dealer W Vul: N-S
♠ K1074 ♥ A72 ♦ 1053 ♣ Q103		♠ 62 ♥ Q8643 ♦ K72 ♣ K62
	♠ 85 ♥ J109 ♦ Q864 ♣ J754	

North	East	South	West
			Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Yep I like the North hand with such good spades and good controls so I would upgrade to two no trump as I'm sure many others will do too. Shows what I know as this doesn't work today and will lead to three no trumps failing on a heart lead!

With East having a diamond entry for the hearts and spades misbehaving this will lead to down two. I boldly predict a lot of minus scores for North South - anyone who can scrape down one may well score ok, those that go the low route and go plus will be well rewarded on this hand.

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 29 ♠ K5 Dealer N
♥ 10975 Vul: Both
♦ Q95
♣ Q973

♠ AQ743		♠ J986
♥ KQ62		♥ J4
♦ J6		♦ A2
♣ J6		♣ AK852

♠ 102
♥ A83
♦ K108743
♣ 104

North	East	South	West
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 30 ♠ 97 Dealer E
♥ 73 Vul: None
♦ Q842
♣ KQ1097

♠ K103		♠ QJ
♥ J94		♥ AKQ1085
♦ K7		♦ J63
♣ A6542		♣ J8

♠ A86542
♥ 62
♦ A1095
♣ 3

North	East	South	West
	1♥	2♠	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 31 ♠ Q643 Dealer S
♥ A10976 Vul: N-S
♦
♣ QJ54

♠ AKJ1087 ♠
♥ Q ♥ KJ8542
♦ A52 ♦ K10863
♣ K86 ♣ 103

♠ 952
♥ 3
♦ QJ974
♣ A972

North	East	South	West
		Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 32 ♠ A95 Dealer W
♥ J85 Vul: E-W
♦ QJ7
♣ AQJ7

♠ QJ104 ♠ 6
♥ AKQ4 ♥ 962
♦ 2 ♦ AK865
♣ 10984 ♣ K652

♠ K8732
♥ 1073
♦ 10943
♣ 3

North	East	South	West
			1♣
1NT	Dbl	2♠	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 33 ♠ AJ104 Dealer N
♥ 1073 Vul: None
♦ A8632
♣ 6

		♠ K82 ♥ A4 ♦ 97 ♣ A107432
♠ 963 ♥ KQJ98 ♦ J4 ♣ J98		
	♠ Q75 ♥ 652 ♦ KQ105 ♣ KQ5	

North	East	South	West
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♣	2♦	Dbl
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 34 ♠ J9653 Dealer E
♥ 5 Vul: N-S
♦ AJ87
♣ K54

		♠ ♥ AK1076 ♦ Q102 ♣ J10763
♠ 10872 ♥ QJ9432 ♦ 96 ♣ A		
	♠ AKQ4 ♥ 8 ♦ K543 ♣ Q982	

North	East	South	West
	1♥	Dbl	4h
4♠	5♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 35 ♠ AQJ Dealer S
♥ AJ752 Vul: E-W
♦ Q843
♣ 3

♠ 743		♠ 10862
♥ Q104		♥
♦ A1096		♦ KJ7
♣ K87		♣ 1096542
	♠ K95	
	♥ K9863	
	♦ 52	
	♣ AQJ	

North	East	South	West
		1♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Makeable Contracts

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

==========

Board 36 ♠ KQJ953 Dealer W
♥ 986 Vul: Both
♦ 982
♣ Q

♠ 72		♠ A8
♥ AK10532		♥ Q4
♦ K43		♦ Q6
♣ 97		♣ AK108642
	♠ 1064	
	♥ J7	
	♦ AJ1075	
	♣ J53	

North	East	South	West
			1♥
2♠	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Makeable Contracts

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

==========