



Message from
Gianarrigo Rona,
President, World Bridge Federation

Dear Bridge Friends

This year we see the 25th Anniversary of this event, inaugurated by my predecessor José Damiani back in 1986. It is a significant anniversary of this great event and I am proud, as the new elected President of the World Bridge Federation, to be writing this foreword.

I do hope you all enjoyed the event and found the hands interesting and challenging – my thanks go to Eric Kokish for his excellent and most entertaining commentary. You may not be aware that Eric is the Editor of World Bridge News, in which he writes about the World Championships. You can download copies of this publication from the WBF Website at www.worldbridge.org as well as from the site for the results from this event, at www.ecatsbridge.com

Our technology within bridge continues to develop and this will be apparent at the World Championships to be held in Veldhoven, Netherlands, in October when we will not only have the bulletins and live results on the websites, but also hope to have live transmission of the video from the vu-graph theatre

The 2011 World Championships include the World Transnational Open Teams Championships, where anyone who is a bona fide member of his or her NBO can participate – it is a really exciting event, giving players the opportunity of enjoying an event where they can play against or watch some of the greatest names in bridge today. Do give consideration to joining us there – the WBF would welcome your presence.

Once again, thank you for taking part in the World Wide Bridge Contest – and please continue to enjoy your bridge.

With warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gianarrigo Rona'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Gianarrigo Rona
President, World Bridge Federation

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Where the bidding begins: 1♣-Pass-1♦-1♠, North will either pass or volunteer 1NT, an action that will simplify matters considerably for his side. East will raise to 2♠ in either case, and that free rebid of 1NT would leave South with an easy raise to 3NT. Where North has passed, however, South will have to choose from among 3♦ (conservative, somewhat wide-ranging), 3♠ (aggressive, as it commits to game opposite a possible misfit for diamonds), 3♣ (a unilateral commitment to North having a fifth club and short diamonds), and a competitive double (about right on strength, and more desirable if “competitive” means “cooperative takeout”).

3♦ (+130) and the obscure 3♣ (+110) will usually end the auction; 3♠ will lead to 3NT; double, probably the popular choice, will leave North to choose between 2NT and a penalty pass, with the latter destined to work very badly for NS, as West can take seven tricks in 2♠ doubled for -100 and an excellent EW score.

There are 10 tricks available to NS in 3NT for +430 and a solid score, but EW will need to avoid establishing a second spade trick for declarer (+460) in order to salvage their average-minus in the scoring. If East leads a low spade and declarer ducks West’s queen at Trick One, it will not be so clear to West that he should not continue the suit. Having raised spades, East probably should not lead the six, but as the nine could be an important card, the seven might be the best that East can do to clarify the position without putting a natural trick at risk.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

At favorable vulnerability, few tournament players will pass as dealer with the East hand. Neither 2♠ nor 3♠ is perfect, but the former will be a popular choice.

Over 2♠, South might reasonably feel that he has too much to pass. Though 3♥, 2NT and double will not have much aesthetic appeal, each action will receive some support from the field. West might just jump to 4♣ rather than get involved in seeking a penalty, but there might still be an opportunity for a big score at the tables where South doubled 2♠ or overcalled 2NT as North might compete with 4NT, aiming for five of a minor: 5♦ doubled is two down, -500. Whether EW extract a penalty at a lower level depends on too many intangibles, but the bottom line is that 3♥ doubled might go -800, 3♣ doubled -500, 2NT doubled (North is unlikely to let that happen) -1400.

Where East opens 3♠, West might be more inclined to go after his opponents if South enters the auction, but again, it is probably unproductive to make any confident predictions.

If East passes as dealer, South will open 1♥ and in most cases get past West. Though North might pass 1♥, most will not, and after a 1NT response, some Easts will overcall 2♠, but more will pass. The overcallers have a good chance to reach game, but if East passes and South rebids 2♦, North might raise to 3♦ and silence everyone. If North passes the 2♦ rebid to try to secure a plus, East will reopen with 2♠, but West might not drive to game; indeed West might pass 2♠ and reopen 3♦ with 3♠, expecting East to have even less than what he has for his first two passes. West players not too concerned with the integrity of a two-

level overall might venture 2♣ over 1♥, and find themselves left to play there for a rare EW minus score. Some Easts will advance 2♣ with 2♠, while others will wriggle out to 2♠ if South reopens 2♣ with a double and North passes, or volunteer 2♠ if North takes out the reopening double to 2♦. As long as East mentions spades, West will usually compete to at least 3♠, but whether EW +170 scores reasonably well will turn on how many reach 4♠ or collect a penalty, and we may need an exit poll to get that one right.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

West has no aces or kings and faces unfavorable vulnerability, but many, if not most, will enter the auction over South's 1♣ opening. Whether West chooses 1♠ or a two-suited action, East will most often jump to 4♠ after North introduces diamonds or shows support for clubs. NS can negotiate a three-trick set and +800 by securing a heart ruff to go with five top tricks, but even if the defense slips against 4♠ doubled, the 500-point penalty will be enough to beat all the NS pairs who do not reach their roughly even-money slam.

It will not be obvious to NS to double 4♠, of course, but they may elect to defend because they might find it difficult to sort out their strength and distribution in jammed auctions, such as 1♣-1♠-2♦-4♠, or 1♣-2♣ (5+♥/5+♠)-2♦ (nonforcing)-4♠. A preliminary issue for South in those scenarios is whether North's 2♦ creates a force for NS over 4♠. If not, South can't afford to pass, but whether he can bid 4NT to suggest a good hand with long clubs and two-card diamond support will turn on partnership agreement. Lacking that arrangement, or even with that type of 4NT bid available, South might prefer a simple 5♣

or a double that says "our hand, good two-way values, no clear direction at this level." It's not easy to see how NS will reach 6♣ or an inferior (but equally successful) 6♦ when the bidding gets so high so quickly.

If North's initial action is a cue raise of clubs or a fit-showing jump in diamonds, South might drive to slam, but both those actions are more likely where West shows his two-suiter wholesale (via 2♣ or 2♦) and this West hand might not be so keen to do more than overall 1♠.

NS +920 will be superb, and any penalty of +500 or more will not be far behind in the scoring. As there will inevitably be some of those, NS will be poorly compensated in the scoring for their sensible +420, staying out of a marginal slam.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

It might not be so obvious, even looking at the full deal, that the money contract for NS is 4♠, which is cold for four, and for five on any lead but a trump. Declarer crossruffs as many trumps as possible taking the side-suit winners en route.

That is all very nice, but how will the bidding proceed, uncontested? 1♥-2♣ or 1♥-1♠? If South starts with 2♣ it will usually be with the intention of bidding spades twice and committing to game. 1♥-2♣; 2♦-2♠; 3♦-3♠ will be straightforward. Now North's primes and potentially valuable ♣Q point to raising spades, perhaps with a sniff at slam, but it's those same assets that suggest notrump might produce lots of tricks while a spade contract has several trump losers – just imagine South with strong internal clubs, for example.

There will be many votes for a 1♠ response, intending to treat the South hand as if it were

five-five because of the weak club intermediates. 1♥-1♠; 2♦-3♣; 3♦-3NT, is a possible sequence.

The play in notrump is bound to be difficult for both sides, though West will find it less uncomfortable on opening lead than East. In practice, declarer will come to eight tricks one way or another, although a low diamond lead from West has the potential to hold South to seven: best defense involves a series of defensive switches that depend on declarer's chosen line of play. I won't go into detail because there are so many variations, but I will say that in most of them East will shift to the ♣K, the ♠J or the ♦J. . . or more than one of these cards; each of these plays will stand up to logical reasoning.

NS plus scores should score well, with +650 topping the list and +620 inches behind.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

If NS have the bidding to themselves they will reach 3NT via: Pass-1♣; 1♥-2NT; 3NT/, or Pass-1NT; 2♣-2♠; 2NT-3NT/, or Pass-1♣; 1♥-1♠; 2♣-2NT; 3NT/ or, more obscurely: Pass-1♣; 1♥-1♠; 2♣-2♦*; 3♣-3NT/. Where South rebids 1♠, he will have a difficult bid over North's 2♣ preference, as he has both substantial values and strong heart support in a balanced hand. As a jump to 3♥ would normally suggest 4=3=1=5 or 4=3=0=6, and 2NT would normally deny three hearts, there is no ideal solution open to South. This is part of the rationale behind jumping to 2NT over 1♥, suppressing spades; that action would not matter unless North also had four spades but was too weak to bid over two notrump. Some would try to solve the problem by continuing with a fourth-suit 2♦ over 2♣, expecting North to rebid a five-card heart suit, show a diamond stopper, return to three clubs, show something useful in spades,

or with extra values and no descriptive call, raise the fourth suit. The main downside in 2♦ is that it forces opener to judge whether to bid on over 3♣ with a hand like this one. At most of these tables, West will lead a spade honor and declarer should win, lest West switch to diamonds. When East comes in with the ♥K, it will not matter whether declarer ducks a spade continuation, as he can still come to 10 tricks if he drops the ♥10 and takes a trick with the ♦K. Switching to diamonds will not help East either. Where South shows spade length and NS appear concerned about a diamond stopper, West might lead a diamond, which should defeat 3NT. In some variations, West will need to keep the ♦10 to take East off an impending endplay after an inspired declarer strips the black suits ending in dummy to exit with the ♦8 – if East wins, he will have to lead from the ♥K at Trick 12.

However, East will usually open 1♦ in third seat and South will choose between a takeout double and 1NT. If West passes, North will bid 1♥ or 2♥; South will bid 1NT over 1♥, 2NT over 2♥, and North will raise to game. If West volunteers 1♠, North will bid 2♥ with the same developments, but a few enterprising Wests will jump to 2♠, weak, trading on the vulnerability. Not every North will take action over 2♠, and on the way out, South might elect to settle for as many 50-point tricks as possible on defense; that number turns out to be eight, and NS +150 might be quite good if the more common NS 3NT contracts fail more than half the time. Though NS can make both 4♥ and 5♣, very few pairs will shun 3NT to reach one of those games, and even fewer will stop in a partial with their combined 26 HCP.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

Although the East hand doesn't look anything like a textbook weak 2♣ at unfavorable vulnerability, there will be carefree souls who can't resist temptation, and find themselves left to declare a low partscore on a deal on which their opponents can make 4♥ or 3NT. And 2♣ might even be made if South does not get around to diamonds at Trick One or Trick Two: EW +110 or -100. West might raise to 3♣ obstructively, or try for game via 2NT, ending in 3♣, -100 or -200. Where West passes 2♣, North might reopen with a light natural 2NT, and South will decide whether to pass 2NT, raise to 3NT, settle for a heart partial, drive to 4♥, or offer a choice between 3NT and 4♥ via a transfer sequence. Add NS +150, +170, +400 and +420 to the frequency charts.

Much more often, East will pass as dealer, South will usually open 2♥, and West will overcall 3♣. At IMPs, North should be thinking seriously about 3NT, facing a fairly disciplined weak two-bid, but at Matchpoints, hearts might produce an extra trick (as here, thanks to the perfect lie in diamonds) or 3♥ might be the NS limit. If North is not going to bid game, he might consider a penalty double of 3♣, an action that nets a two-trick penalty with accurate defense, +500, and a huge score. Plus 200 (no double or a slopped diamond trick) will lose to the NS game contracts and beat all the NS partials, but we won't try to guess the game-to-partscore ratio.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Will the vulnerable West come in with 1♠ or a bold two-suited action over South's 1♥? If so, East will usually bid 4♣ when NS reach 4♥, and the best NS can do in that scenario is double, defend accurately (which boils down to South not leading away from the ♣Q), and

collect +200. North's catalog of initial actions after West intervenes will include 2♦, 4♥, 2♠/2NT limit-plus heart raises, 3♦/4♦ fit jumps, 3♣ splinter raises. At least some of those bids will create a force for the partnership over 4♣. South, with a balanced minimum and (where relevant) no fitting diamond honor, might double in front of his partner, but another way to look at the South hand is "good trumps, good spade holding opposite a singleton, possibly useful doubleton, uncertain ♣Q," and Souths with that perspective might well pass, deferring to North's opinion regarding defending/declaring. In that scenario, North might well bid on over 4♣ once South did not double. We can expect to see plenty of unsuccessful 5♥ contracts, some of them doubled by East. Though West has very little defense, he should not bid 5♣ out of fear if East doubles 5♥.

If West does not enter the auction over 1♥, North will respond 2♦, use a conventional forcing raise where shortness is not precluded, or try a splinter raise. It may not be easy for East to get involved, and if NS buy the contract at 4♥ they will score very well.

If you would not compete with the West hand you might want to stash this deal away in your evidence locker for future consideration.

A few Souths might pass as dealer and EW will get together in spades in most cases, but at other tables South's system opening will be a weak notrump, and that might keep EW out of the auction.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Both 6♣ and 6NT are good contracts for EW, cold unless declarer loses two spade tricks, which in practice he will do when North has not only KJ9, but also KJ7, and when either

opponent has KJ97.

EW might bid:

- (1) 1♠-2♦; 2♥-2NT (where forcing); 3♣-4♣ (agreeing spades); 4NT-5♥; 6♠/
- (2) 1♠-2♦; 2♥-3♣; 3♣-5♠; 6♣-6♦; 6♥-6♠ (or 6NT)/
- (3) 1♠-2♦; 2♣-3♣; 3♥-3♠; 4♣-4♦; 4♥-5♣; 5♥-5NT(waiting); 6♥-6NT/

It's not easy to reach 6NT with confidence, but some will do so just the same.

For some partnerships, East's systemic rebid after 1♠-2♦; 2♥, will be 3NT. Just how EW are supposed to sort out their fits and values after this "no fit" jump to game I cannot predict, but if East could have a small singleton spade for his bidding, West can't get too aggressive. If he converts to 4♣ and shows extra values in the process (else 1♠-2♦; 2♣, finding four-four hearts through different means), East should drive to 6♠, but I suspect that some pairs will have trouble with this combination. Though 6NT is the maximum EW result, I think 6♠ will be average-plus because there will be a significant number of missed slams.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

EW have another slam here, back-to-back, and again their best result is 6NT, ideally played from the East side to protect the ♣K ... if NS allow them to declare a vulnerable slam. Again, most EW pairs will bid their slam in hearts, with no reason to finish in the lower-scoring, shorter-trumps 6♦.

Over East's 1♥, South will have no qualms about getting involved at favorable vulnerability, choosing either a weak jump overcall of 2♣, a two-suited action (most often 2♥), or perhaps a macho 3♣. Any of those actions

should convince North to bid 4♠ over West's counter-move indicating a forcing heart raise. The NS obstruction will deprive East of the opportunity to use Exclusion Blackwood (where part of the partnership repertoire) at a secure level, but some will force to slam and try for seven by cue-bidding 5♠, either showing a spade void or as Exclusion (perhaps only by inference). Others will trust their opponents to hold the ♠A and risk "regular" Blackwood despite their spade void. They will not know what to do when West shows three aces, but those willing to back their judgment about the ♠A being in the North or South hand will shoot out 7♥ and will not enjoy the sight of dummy.

If South could see his partner's hand, he would save at 6♣ over 6♥. North has a double fit and terrific spades, sacrifice-oriented features to be sure, but he also has some defense, and with EW probably forced to guess in a jammed auction, he might be reluctant to deprive his side of the opportunity to go plus.

There won't be many EW minus scores or many 6NT contracts, and EW +1430 figures to be a good score, because there will be EW pairs defending 5♠, 6♠ and 7♠ doubled, -300, 500 and 800, respectively.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

The central issue on this deal is whether EW can reach their excellent 27-point 6♠, a contract that would fail only on a ruff or with trumps three-zero and declarer misguessing the position.

After 1♠, some Souths will risk an unsound 2♥ overcall but more of them will pass. West, with a balanced eight-loser hand, might well settle for a limit raise despite his 12 HCP, but in these

days of limit-or-better cue raises and artificial 2NT raises, West might not have to decide at his first how far he will commit the partnership. Although North would probably get away with a bold raise to 4♥ over West's 3♥, please note that 4♥ doubled costs 1100 points, lovely if more than half the EW pairs are going +1430 in 6♠, but a poor result otherwise.

If West can place his partner with short hearts, thanks to the opponents' bidding or perhaps via a conventional shortness response to an artificial forcing raise without competition, he will love his hand. Otherwise, East will probably have to make two slam tries or take charge himself if EW are to reach six. One strategy likely to work is that after West shows a limit raise in spades, East bids clubs and diamonds, "bidding around his shortness." Short suit slam tries over limit raises would work too, but this is not a popular treatment.

If EW use a cue-bidding approach, East might bid slam when West makes it clear that he has no heart control and so will have most of his strength outside hearts, but that will not be as comfortable as auctions where West can appreciate the perfect fit knowing that his three low hearts face a singleton or void.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Where South opens 1♣, West will overcall 2♦ unless system forces him to settle for 1♦. North, with both a good hand and a club fit, and with a four-card major that might be trumps, has a lot to do in the bidding.

Over 2♦, he can buy some time with a negative double, but he suspects he will still have some important decisions later in the auction. What should South bid in response to that double? Pass is the winner (2♦ doubled can be held to

five tricks for -500), but that will seem like a big position to South, and I suspect he will try a hopeful 2♥ instead. North will have to choose between 3NT and a stall of 3♦, which might bring a club slam into the mix. As 3♦ could make it extremely to land in notrump short of slam when South lacks a diamond stopper, I believe nearly every North will bid 3NT in this scenario.

After 1♣-1♦, North will bid 1♠ and will almost certainly raise South's INT rebid to 3NT, just as he would where South opens 1♦ and West passes.

Where South opens a weak notrump, some Wests will show their diamonds, and although North might double for penalty where that option is available, he will more often bid a direct 3NT or use a form of lebensohl, or check for a spade fit via a negative double or some variation of Stayman.

The play will be more interesting. At double dummy, declarer can take his best play for four spade tricks by leading low to the ten, and concede a club to East. With the EW hands disconnected thanks to the six-one diamond layout, declarer can take 11 tricks if he plays all out. More often, however, he will try to keep West off play (where the bidding has revealed that he has diamond winners to run), and so will play spades the other way to secure three tricks in that suit. But what will West lead against 3NT by South? An unfortunate spade, perhaps, where North has not suggested spade length. And if West has not shown his suit, East might lead a passive heart . . . or an aggressive spade. Apart from the handful of NS +500s, virtually every NS score will be +430 or +460. That extra trick will make a world of difference in the scoring.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

In some parts of the world, most partnerships have an opening bid that shows a weak hand with both majors, and West will be pleased to unsheathe that sword of terror where available. A 2♦ or 2♥ opening will convince North that he has no future in spades, and he might not be so keen to overcall 3♣. If East bounces to 4♥, he might buy the contract with NS on for 5♣. It might seem that declarer has only four losers in a heart contract, but he doesn't have nine winners and in practice should be held to eight tricks, but -100 should be an excellent result.

Where West passes as dealer, North will open 1♠ or 1♣, a style matter. To 1♠, South will respond 2♣, 2♦, or a natural game-forcing 2NT. After 2♣, North will be thinking of slam and use a splinter raise where that option is open to him. All South's cards are working now, but he can't very well drive to slam with no help in spades and only four clubs. Where North was able to splinter to 3♥, the partnership will have a bit of room to maneuver, but there is still some danger they will reach 6♣, and if the splinter bid was 4♥, the danger will be greater. Although the defense must cash its heart trick to be sure of setting 6♣, no other lead has much appeal, and even if hearts are not led, declarer will need to finesse the ♦10 to come to 12 tricks.

Where North opens 1♣, South might respond 1♦, giving West the opportunity to show both his suits wholesale via an appropriate minor-suit cue-bid, INT or 2NT. After North passes, East should bid at least 3♥. As the EW heart bidding will mark North with heart shortage and therefore usually at least five clubs, South should not worry about getting his side to 5♣, but if he cue-bids en route where there is room to do so, North might bid six.

Might NS end in 3NT? Perhaps, via: 1♠-2♣; 3♣-3NT/, but that will not happen often. The most common result will be NS, 5♣, +600, but you can count on several -100s and a few +1370s in 6♣, some +300s, +100s, +50s and -110s and -140s for EW heart contracts.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

The popular contract will be 4♥ EW. Although it is possible for declarer to lose a trick in each suit, in practice he will lose to the ♠A and the ♦A, with success or failure in the scoring turning on finding the ♣Q.

After 1♦-1♥; East will most often rebid 2NT; and West will get his side to 4♥. Variations might occur where East opens a conventional 1♣ and systemic vagaries lead to East becoming declarer. That might matter in a big way when South, with an uncomfortable lead, chooses a club and declarer chalks up an easy +650 by playing hearts the normal way – ace, and low to the ten. Even if declarer fears that clubs might be five-one, he can't afford to play ace-king of trumps for safety at Matchpoints if most will take the finesse through South.

With West declaring, it is much more likely that the opening lead will be a spade, and South will continue the suit. Declarer will normally get trumps right and start on diamonds, but with the ♦A in South will still have to find the ♣Q. He might come down to K8 of clubs and Q9 of diamonds in dummy, with A1043 of clubs in hand, hoping that someone has been squeezed in the minors or that South has the ♣Q, but that won't work: +620.

Another possible line after two rounds of spades is to lead the ♥7 to the ten for a diamond play. That line risks losing to North's singleton queen of trumps, but offers better chances to establish diamonds. Say that South takes a diamond honor with the ace to exit with a trump; declarer can cash the other high diamond and ruff a diamond, preparing to claim five if diamonds are three-three, and he is no worse off if the suit is four-two. A somewhat serendipitous effect of that approach is that

North will be known to hold only four red cards, and so will normally have at least three clubs; accordingly, declarer might well play North for the ♣Q and earn that valuable overtrick.

It's not out of the question that a few EW pairs will reach 5♥ on their own power, and a number of those pairs will get the ♣Q wrong (or perhaps the ♥Q) to go minus.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

EW have only 21 HCP between them, but their hands fit very well and they can make 4♠ if they get that high, declarer playing ♠A, spade when he gains the lead.

If East opens his seven-loser hand, he will not often accept a game invitation from West. However, if NS compete early to 4♦ (1♠-2♦-3♦/3♠/2NT*-4♦) East might value his diamond singleton highly enough to bid 4♠ as a multi-way shot – a possible make on a great mesh, a one-down save (-50 or -100) against NS's +130, or the bluff that nudges NS beyond their depth at 5♦ when 4♠ would be going down.

Where East passes as dealer, West will double South's opening 1♦ bid for takeout unless his standards require an extra queen or jack. North will introduce hearts or bid some number of diamonds, and East might well bid 4♠ as all his cards are working and West might not accept an invitation when he has two fast losers in diamonds and a minimum that would prove suitable to East. If East does not bid game directly, he might change his mind when NS compete to 4♦, though his main hope in an undisciplined two-step approach is that 4♠ will go one down when 4♦ would have made. Where West does not double 1♦, East will come in with 1♠ over 1♥, and South will compete with 2♣ or 2♦. Facing a passed

partner, West will not be thinking seriously about game, and he will try to buy the contract at 2♠ or 3♠ without getting East involved. At these tables, NS will often play in 4♦, perhaps doubled, -50 or -100, and EW will considerably less often play in 3♠, +170.

At first glance it might seem that EW won't take 11 tricks in spades unless South finds the spectacularly unsuccessful lead of the ♣Q, but in order to hold declarer to ten tricks, South must lead his singleton heart or a spade honor, neither very attractive. On a diamond lead, declarer has the timing to ruff West's second diamond in hand, cash the ♠A, and start (or continue) hearts. If South ruffs in, he is endplayed, but if he does not, declarer can soon throw him in with his high trump for the same endplay: he must concede a ruff and discard or break clubs. Sure, declarer might play for split club honors if South exits with a club honor; but when South turns up with only three major-suit cards, declarer will stand a better chance of guessing the club position. That overtrick will make a big difference in the scoring.

How will NS do in the scoring for 5♦ doubled, -300? As they will be entirely dependent on the NS line reaching 4♠, they may have to be satisfied with the knowledge that their judgment was accurate.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

With a good view in trumps, NS can take 12 tricks in diamonds, while EW, with their big fit in spades, can take nine tricks (and are mildly unlucky not to be able to take ten against sound defense).

South will pass and West will open 1♠, a weak 2♠, or pass if neither opening bid fits his view of the world. Over 1♠, North will double, overcall 2♦, or show a minor two-suiter, usually with

a systemic 2NT. East will raise spades to the three or four level, and if South does not bid 5♦, he will do so when North volunteers a second bid (double, 4NT, 4♣, or 5♣, as appropriate). Over a 2♠ opening, double will have more support than a “minors” 4NT, but those who use 3♣ or 4♣ to introduce strong minor two-suiters, might choose that action. After 2♣-Double-3♣ (a gentle effort), South might try a responsive double or a very aggressive 4♥, but if South passes, North will bid again, and the partnership will do well not to finish in 4♥, which can't quite be made. Most Easts will jump to 4♣ in that scenario, however, and if NS do not settle for a penalty against 4♣ and find their way to 5♦, the big issue for East will be whether to compete to 5♣. Theoretically, that would be very right, offering NS 300 points as compensation for their 600/620, and EV should do all right with that strategy unless they nudge NS into 6♦ and declarer makes it, or unless there are too many NS pairs settling for +100 or going minus in 4♥ or 6♦.

Where West passes in second seat, NS will start: 1♦-Pass-1♥. West should overcall 2♠ rather than 1♠, as getting the sixth spade into the mix will often be important. North will bid 3♣, 4♣ or double (good hand) according to partnership practice, and here East should bid 4♠. NS might do the wrong thing in this scenario, but if they do not, East can consider bidding 5♠.

Might East reasonably bid a direct 5♠ or even 6♣ after 2♠ and any action by North? Well, sure, although that sort of action is more common at IMPs, where small total-point differences don't swing many IMPs. The big bounce might work well on this layout, but it could backfire when NS bid 6♦ and declarer guesses trumps correctly.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

The West hand is not suitable for a 3♦ or 4♦ opening at unfavorable vulnerability, and it's not a weak 2♦ opening either. Suitable or not, there will be some Wests who do not pass as dealer. Good luck to them in turning off their partners below game. East might take a shot at 3NT over 2♦ or 3♦, or perhaps 5♦ over any opening by West.

Where West stifles the urge to open, East will choose from among 2♣, double, 1NT and pass over North's second-seat 1♥. South will raise to 2♥, and where East has doubled or risked 1NT with no heart stopper, West will compete to 3♦, ideally without overstating his values (perhaps via a conventional 2NT). At these tables, no one should bid again, and West will generally take 10 tricks with the aid of the diamond finesse, +130. If East's initial action is a 2♣ overall, West might not be so keen to introduce diamonds at the three level, though he will probably risk it if there is no implication of at least moderate strength or club tolerance in his partnership. Where West does bid 3♦, East might probe for 3NT with a 3♥ cue bid, but West's retreat to 4♦ should end the auction. If West passes over 2♥, East might not reopen despite his reserve of strength, as he has neither a sixth club nor the expected support for diamonds implied by a takeout double. If East sells out to 2♠, accurate defense will lead to two down, -100. Whether that turns out well for EW will depend on the number of their counterparts who find their way to a diamond partial.

Although a cavalier 3♦ opening by West should not lure North into the auction with an unsound 3♥ overall, that will happen a few times, handing East an opportunity to double and collect a nice penalty (-500 would be normal).

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

These days, many will open the East hand with 1♦, 1♣* or a weak notrump at Matchpoint scoring. That will present a problem to West, who must choose between an invitational bid or sequence for clubs, a hopeful 1♠ (possible continuations might be unpleasant) or a game-forcing auction that involves bidding clubs first and spades later. With N/S silent, EW might bid: 1♦-1♠; INT-3NT; or 1♦-1♠; INT-3♣ (or the equivalent, whether a signoff or descriptively invitational); or 1♦-2♣; 2NT-3♣/; or 1♦-3♣/.

If South leads a heart against 3NT and the defense takes four rounds ending in North for a diamond shift, declarer will need to choose one finesse or the other, and might go three down by rising with the ♦A to take the spade finesse immediately, or after two or three rounds of clubs. If East does not open his balanced 11-count, South will open 1♦, 1♥, a conventional 1♣ or a weak notrump in third seat. West will make a natural overcall in clubs when he can do so, and North will support a red suit, compete with a negative double or pass. East will raise clubs, cue-bid, or bid two or three notrump. NS don't have the goods to compete to the three level, so EW will usually buy the contract at 2NT or 3♣, though they might reach 3NT or 4♣.

Thanks to the three-three spade break, EW can make 4♠, even with the ♠K offside (declarer makes sure to lose the first or second round of trumps to North, and can handle a ruff and discard with his communications intact). However, after East passes in second position, the auction will rarely develop in a way that focuses on the realistic possibility of making spades the trump suit.

In clubs, declarer will take ten tricks unless he misguesses the ♣Q, and EW +130 will be the most common result. Where East takes a shot at 3NT (usually where NS are bidding diamonds), South might well lead a diamond and hand declarer his ninth winner. When declarer tests clubs and neutralizes the queen, he might think of taking the spade finesse for overtricks, but that would jeopardize a certain average-plus result in search of a top.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

West might not derive much pleasure from his 26-point hand if he lands in 3NT and North defends accurately to defeat the contract. Whether West opens a natural 3NT, a strong, artificial 2♣, or a forcing 1♣, he will shortly describe his strength and the general character of his hand.

Some imaginative Wests might go out of their way to suggest hearts as trumps, and a few of them will reach 4♥, a good spot without a timely trump lead, even with trumps five-two. Given the opportunity, declarer will ruff one spade low, the other high and take six trumps and two ace-kings (cashing both high clubs early enough).

North, with a relatively blind lead, will lead a spade more often than a club where East had a chance to use Stayman and rejected it, and this time, spades is the best start for the defense. If declarer wins the first or second spade and leads the ♦Q, North will not duck, as he can always duck the second diamond if South's count card in diamonds suggests declarer will have three of those. If declarer leads the ♦2 very early, however, North might convince himself he couldn't bear to crash South's singleton queen, and if North plays low, declarer has nine tricks, and must defend accurately on the run of the hearts – discarding one club and the ace or king of diamonds – to stop declarer from taking a tenth.

If West cashes his hearts before broaching diamonds, North must discard specifically the ♦8 and a low club. Although this defense might not look very difficult, a significant number of defenders will do the wrong thing.

Where North leads a club, dummy will win

a cheap trick and again, North will need to defend accurately to hold declarer to nine tricks, in this case hanging on to all his spades at the risk of finding declarer with his black suits reversed. Say that South follows to the club lead with the eight under dummy's ten. If NS use Smith signals, perhaps South with his known Yarborough, can play his hearts in the order that says "I like your lead as well as you have a right to expect."

Though we might feel that 3NT should fail, the reality is that it will be made quite often and the overtrick will not be as rare as we might expect.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

After two passes, North will open 1♥ or a prepared 1♠. East might double 1♠, but INT would be reasonable over either opening bid. South might raise 1♠ to 2♠, but West will bid 3NT where East has overcalled INT, and after 1♠-Double-2♠, West will usually try a responsive double, even where his partnership agreement is that double suggests at least two places to play. The danger in doubling is that West can neither convert 3♣ to 3♦ without showing four hearts, nor pass 3♣ comfortably. Wests who see this as too high a price to pay for doubling will introduce diamonds instead, and as it happens, 3♦ locates EW's best fit. North will bid again (3♣, 3♥, or 4♣) after learning of spade support. East will not be so keen to raise diamonds to the four or five level (+110 is maximum for EW in diamonds); however, he might take a shot at 3NT, or perhaps double again to show extra values (though with half his hand in diamonds, he doesn't really have the defense for this type of double). West will pass 3NT but North might not, introducing or rebidding hearts, and

EW will double the ensuing 4♠. West is likely to pass a double of 3♠, and East will have to be particularly inspired to find the defense to beat that. To hold a spade contract to eight tricks, East must lead specifically a club; high or low works fine, as long as West switches to a trump. Declarer can give up on heart ruffs to cash three club winners after drawing trumps, or he can settle for one club trick and take two heart ruffs in dummy, but neither line gets him up to nine winners.

Where North opens 1♥, EW will often be in 3NT before it gets back to him. At the prevailing vulnerability, North would like to do something, but has no clear way to show his spades without bidding them and going past 4♥. Whether that convinces North to pass 3NT or risk 4♥ is too difficult to predict, but on normal defense, North will come to only six tricks in heart contracts, -800 at the four level.

This time, North will do best to quit when EW reach 3NT, as that contract can be defeated on any lead as long as North does not discard too many hearts in certain variations. There are plenty of ways for each side to go wrong on this complex deal, but EW will probably need to avoid going minus to score reasonably well.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

The optimum contract at IMPs for NS is 6♣, but at Matchpoint scoring, 6♠ will be a popular spot for the slam bidders even with the risk of a trump loser.

The North hand is a bit too strong and spades-suitable for a nonforcing jump rebid of 3♣. However, unless the partnership has

a conventional call to describe a game force based on clubs or on long clubs with three-card spade support (3♦ or 3♥, for example), North will have to invent a reverse to 2♥, a one-round force. This is not especially dangerous as South will have at least five spades if he has four-card heart support, but North's main concern is that he will not always be able to convince his partner that the main feature of his hand is that imposing club suit.

The bidding might proceed: 1♣-1♠; 2♥-3♥ (forcing); 3♠ (support), or 1♣-1♠; 2♥-4♥ (strong hearts, no diamond control). In the first of these scenarios, South should bid 4♣ over 3♠, as an honor in opener's first suit (at least five cards) will usually be welcome news. Over 4♣, North could unsheathe his favorite version of Blackwood, and learn that South has both black queens (North can assume South has the ♣Q for his 4♣ bid), but not whether South has the ♠J; 6♣ will be fine this time and few will think pessimistically enough to choose 6♣ instead.

In the second auction, North will have to do some guessing, as 4NT over 4♥ would be Blackwood agreeing hearts in Key Card variations, and even where 4NT is just about aces, locating the black queens won't be on the agenda. It would be convenient for 4♣ over 4♥ to be natural and forcing, but without that agreement, North will be reluctant to risk ending in 4♣. The ensuing auction will not be pleasing to the eye but will usually lead to a successful 6♠.

This is a comfortable combination for pairs playing a strong club system. 1♣*-1♠ sets up a game force, so North can show his clubs and spade support with minimum bids, or can employ a series of asking bids to discover that South has queen-fifth of spades (some methods deal with the jack as well), the ♣Q and one ace. Few will miss slam, and not everyone will come to grips with the black honors and reach 6♣ somewhat randomly, so the best slam (6♣) will probably yield a poor score.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

In second seat, East will open 1♣, 1♦ or INT (range might not be a factor). NS's best fit is in clubs, but the bad club break and reasonable layout in the majors should lead to +110 in clubs, spades or hearts (though hearts might produce an overtrick from the North side and spades an extra trick if West tries for ruffs). South will overcall one of a minor with 1♠. After 1♦-1♠, West will raise to 2♦ or 3♦ (weak). Over 2♦, North will usually pass, but some will risk a very thin responsive double or an eccentric 2♠. Where North passes 2♦, South will protect with a takeout double, and where West does not volunteer 3♦ over the double, North will choose between 2♥, 2♠ and (less often) 3♣. I believe East or West will bid 3♦ rather than sell out cheaply, and at a few of these tables, NS will take the push to three of a major or double 3♦ in case EW are speeding and in line for a two-trick set.

Where East opens 1♣, North will advance South's 1♠ overcall to INT, or settle for a mildly conservative pass. Although INT might well end the auction (with +90 the likely result), South might raise to 2NT and go minus, or continue with a natural 2♣ where that agreement is in place and record +110 in 2♠ or 2♣/3♣. Hyper-aggressive Wests might reopen INT with 2♦ and buy very well for their enterprise, but NS might wriggle into 2♣ and push East to 3♦, -50 or -100.

A INT opening by East might silence everyone, with -50 the most likely outcome. However, these days, nearly everyone employs a reasonably comprehensive defense to an opponent's INT opening. Most Souths will enter the auction, with a high-card double (where INT is weak), a conventional bid

showing spades and a minor, clubs and a major, or a non-specific minor/major two suiter, or perhaps a natural or conventional bid showing only spades. While a strength-showing double might lead to EW declaring 2♦ doubled for +180, most NS pairs will find a route to 2♠ or 3♣ and EW will not often compete to 3♦ at these tables.

Against 2♠, West will do well to lead diamonds, as clubs, the main alternative, will concede a tempo and permit declarer to develop a third club trick with accurate play (West must duck hearts twice to shut out the long card, and declarer can use the second heart entry to lead a second club through East).

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

As NS have a 12-card spade fit at favorable vulnerability, EW may not buy the contract very often. EW can take 11 tricks in hearts, diamonds or clubs, so +650 is their maximum on offense, but NS can sacrifice profitably at 5♠ doubled (-300) . . . or unprofitably at 6♠ (-500 with no slam available to EW).

Where South opens a weak notrump in second seat, few EW pairs will have a systemic bid to describe a three-suiter short in spades, so some will pass, some will double (high cards), and some will show a two-suiter, planning to admit to hearts and clubs. North will bid 4♣ or transfer to 4♠, and often buy the contract for his side, perhaps doubled. Some Easts will have enough respect for West's unfavorable-vulnerability intervention to commit to a five-level contract, and though they will rarely win the declaration, the extra 200-point undertrick against 5♠ doubled will earn them some matchpoints.

Where South's opening bid is 1♣ or 1♦, West will not have an easy way into the auction, but if it continues 1♣-Pass-2♠, most Wests will double for takeout, but it's far from clear whether East will bid over North's jump to 4♠. Many Norths will respond 4♠ after 1♣/1♦-Pass, and at these tables, West might not reopen with a double, and even if he does, East might not take it out.

At the few tables where EW are permitted to buy the contract, the play might require a bit of care, but most declarers will find a route to 11 tricks. Apart from those rare 600s and 650s and a few +500s vs 6♠ doubled, the best EW scores will be +300 and +100 and we can expect to see a large number of +50s for 4♠ not doubled, down one.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Whether East forces to game with his initial response to 1♠ or settles for an invitational sequence, EW will virtually always find a route to 4♠, and finish +650 on any reasonable line of play.

Exceptions may occur when West describes his 5=4=2=2 distribution after learning of spade support, offering a choice between 4♣ and 3NT, and East chooses notrump, a strain that will produce only nine or 10 tricks for a poor EW score.

While there is some danger that EW might overextend themselves and drive to slam, that will not happen often, and EW +650 will probably turn out to be the flattest result of the session.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

Whether West opens 1♥ or a heavy 2♥, North will double for takeout. After 1♥-Double, East will most often bid 1♠, and South should compete freely to 2♦. North will raise to 3♦ in any case, but where West volunteered 2♥ over 3♦, East might well compete to 3♥, which North will consider doubling.

After a weak 2♥-Double, East might raise obstructively to 3♥, which could silence everyone, but if North reopens 3♥ with an unsound second double, South will not know enough to pass: he will bid 3NT, 4♦ or 5♦, all of which figure to produce significant minus scores for his side.

North will usually lead a high club against a heart contract. If declarer ducks, North must shift to a trump (he can cash one round of spades first) to hold declarer to eight tricks legitimately. If North continues clubs, declarer ruffs two diamonds in dummy, using a club ruff as the entry for the second ruff; then a club winner from dummy -- if South ruffs high or discards, declarer discards a spade loser, and if South ruffs low declarer can discard a spade or over-ruff, succeeding in either variation. If the defense instead cashes two spades before switching to a trump, declarer takes a diamond ruff, ruffs spades good, cashes the other high trump, crosses to the ♣A, and discards his last diamond on a high spade as North ruffs with the master trump.

In diamonds, South can come to eight tricks, losing two hearts, two trumps and the ♣A. However, if North happens to declare a diamond contract, the defense can arrange a sixth trick: East leads a heart and the defense plays three rounds, East scoring the ♦Q on a ruff in front of dummy; now declarer can't reach dummy twice to hold West to one more trump trick.

Although NS have more high cards than their opponents' eight, it will not be straightforward for NS to go plus. As they will rarely declare a gentle 2♦ from the South side, their main hope will be to push EW to 3♥ and beat it a trick, for +50 or +100. Meanwhile, EW plus scores will include 110, 140 and 530 on offense, 50, 100, 150, 300, and 500 on defense.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

With open cards, EW can take 12 tricks in hearts by leading a low club to the jack and cashing the ace, felling the king, discarding a spade on a club winner, and later guessing diamonds accurately. However, in real life, South's ♣K will usually cover one of East's honors, and declarer will need to guess diamonds for 11 tricks.

Where East opens 1♣, South might overcall 1♦, and at these tables declarer will be in no danger of misguessing the diamonds, and if North perversely leads his partner's suit rather than a spade honor, declarer can play low from dummy and build a second diamond trick for a spade discard. After 1♣-1♦-1♥, North will raise to 2♦, bid his spades, or show four of those with a Snapdragon Double. Where North gets his spades into the game, NS must be careful not to save at 4♣, as the defenders can take seven tricks; -800 will be a NS disaster. A more subtle consequence of moderately busy NS competition is that declarer in 4♥ will soon place South with 4=2=5=2 distribution, just enough information to direct him to the winning play in clubs: low to the jack, then cash the ace. Arrrrggghhh! After 1♣-Pass-1♥, North might risk a bold 1♠ overcall, hoping not to buy the contract and that directing the right lead is the key to the deal. A Support Double or free INT by East will ensure that

West drives to game, but if East passes, South might give West a problem by jumping to 3♠. Sure, 4♥ would be fine here, but West might prefer a competitive double as East could be short in hearts, and if East leaves in that double, NS have a chance for a huge score for -500.

Uncontested, East will generally rebid 1NT rather than support hearts directly, but whether West forces to game or invites game, 4♥ will be the popular contract. There will be pairs in 3NT, though, where West offers a choice of games and East chooses notrump with his dull pattern and collection of tens. If South leads a diamond declarer can come to 12 tricks by the simple expedient of playing low from dummy: six hearts, three clubs, two diamonds, and a spade. On a spade lead, declarer will need to get the clubs right to arrange 11 winners, and might find this unusual play to avoid losing to the declarers in hearts who will take 11 tricks with the ♠K onside, regardless of length.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

This is an EW heart partial, and NS can't get too active in clubs without risking a penalty of at least 200 points, so the main interest will lie in EW finding their best strain, stopping at a safe level, and taking all the tricks to which they are entitled.

Though East doesn't have much of an opening bid, 1♥ will be a popular choice. Over South's takeout double, West will redouble, introduce spades, or raise hearts (usually via a transfer or some artificial action). North will be happy to bid clubs cheaply and East will dislike his minimum hand even more than he did when he opened; where West redoubled, East might double 2♣ in case West could pass with something in the family of 4=2=4=3 or

4=2=5=2. Here West would normally take out a double, but some will bid more than 2♥, and some EW pairs will finish in 4♥. Where East opens a weak notrump, West will probably sign off in 2♠ or use an invitational sequence ending in 2♠, though some will pass 1NT or use Stayman and pass a 2♥ reply.

South will do well not to lead a diamond or a high spade against a heart contract, as both will give declarer a clear path to ten tricks. On a trump or club lead, the defense has the upper hand: even if declarer gets diamonds right and establishes the long diamond, there are only nine winners. EW will score well for 10 tricks in hearts whether or not they reach game.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Flannery fans will get to strut their stuff here, though West's 2♦ opening (4♠/5♥, about 11-15 HCP) might not silence North, who will know that there is no spade stack behind him. It figures to end at 3♥ at these tables, whether North enters the auction immediately or doubles 2♥ in the reopening position: East will compete to 3♥ if pushed.

Where it starts Pass-1♥-1♠, East has a textbook Mixed Raise, but if the partnership doesn't accommodate that sort of hand with a direct system action (3♥ or 3♦ or 2NT, inter alia), East will settle for 2♥ or risk an inaccurate 3♥ (too strong for a preemptive raise, too weak for a limit raise). In both cases, North figures to reopen with a double. Left alone now, South (at the lower level) will try 2♠ or a scrambling 2NT to try to hit North's four-card minor. Both 2♠ and 3♣ will fail, but would be good results for NS. East will normally bid 3♥ (or perhaps redouble) over North's double or at his next turn. Where North's reopening double came at

the three-level, NS are in -300 territory if they take out the double and are due to go -530 if they defend. Such is the power of getting to the three level in a hurry, but to take advantage of their favorable position, EW must double 3♠ or 4♠. If they do not they will score poorly for +100. It's a jungle out there.

A not-so-minor consequence of the Flannery 2♦ opening on this deal is that East will usually be declarer in a heart contract, and South can hold the contract to eight tricks by leading through West's ♠Q. North takes the ten and king and continues with a low spade. Declarer must ruff high, but with trumps three-one he must either suffer a fourth-round over-ruff in spades, or draw trumps and lose the ♠Q to North. In this variation, North must duck the first round of diamonds or declarer will have time to finesse the ♦J and cash the king to discard his club loser.

NS plus scores will be golden, and minus 50 or 100 will also be respectable.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

NS have plenty of cards here but no eight-card fit. With 29 HCP between them, they will normally not attempt a slam, but if they happen to stumble into 6NT or an even less likely 6♠, they should succeed.

Some Norths will open 2NT rather than face 1♣-1♦/1♥-2♠ with a balanced hand and poor honor dispersion for that sequence. At these tables, South might try for slam with a quantitative raise to 4NT or by showing diamonds on the way. North will love his aces but his sub-minimum point count, poor diamond fit (where that is a factor) and dearth of intermediate spot cards should convince him to decline an invitation.

After 1♣-Pass-1♦, West might come in with a takeout double for the majors. EW are not in any trouble, and NS will find a route to 3NT and should get no higher. At these tables, East will lead a heart. Declarer will have reason to believe that one minor or the other will not behave, but to come to 12 tricks he must avoid clearing South's second club honor prematurely, and get around to diamonds while he has an entry to cash the long cards there. If declarer misjudges the play, he may hold himself to just 10 tricks and will have to hope that many of his counterparts are going down in five or six.

After winning the heart lead economically, declarer might cross to the ♣K and pass the ♠10, continuing with the ♠Q. If West covers to block the suit, declarer has an extra entry to dummy with the ♠9, but say that West does not cover. Now declarer has choices. He could pass the ♦Q, playing for the king to be with West, the intervenor, then cash the ♣Q, repeat the spade finesse, and clear clubs if they are four-two and the jack hasn't dropped: that line fails miserably. Finishing spades forces East to make two discards, both of which figure to be revealing to declarer. If East throws two hearts, declarer will place him with guards in both minors and will probably play ♦A, diamond. If East parts with a club and a heart declarer should play him for five clubs, and therefore diamonds will be three-three. If East discards a heart and a diamond, declarer is likely to read the position accurately. That's one reason West should probably cover the ♠Q, but declarer can go to the ♠9, come to the ♦A and cash the ♠J, reserving his options in the minors. If he does that and reaches the same conclusions from East's discards, he will come to 12 tricks.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

NS will usually reach 5♦, but some will try 4♣ or 3NT or overbid to an undistinguished 6D, which will not make.

One reason to overcall is to direct a favorable lead. This East hand is clearly not of that ilk, but it is a sound idea for East to intervene with 1♥ after 1♦ on his right. With an opening bid of his own, competing for the partscore is desirable, and East can hope to outbid his opponents, who have not yet mentioned spades. Sure, the lead might be critical, especially at Matchpoints, but a 2♣ overcall would be taking a good idea too far, and passing will too often lead to scenarios in which delayed action will be impossible, or non-descriptive. South will bid 1♠, North 2♦. South will force with 2♥ or 3♣. Over 2♥ North will rebid 2NT or perhaps 3♦, while 3♣ will more or less commit North to continuing with 3NT. Though we can see that passing 3NT is the winning action this time (probably +630 or +660), South has not really started to describe his hand yet, so passing 3NT might not seem like an option. The danger in continuing with 4♦ is that when 6♦ is not playable it may be difficult to stop at 4♠, a higher-scoring game than 5♦ (if it happens to make). As against that, converting 3NT to 4♣ gives up on 6♦ and on 5♦ when that is a superior strain. Although there is a case for treating 4♣ as nonforcing after: 3NT-4♦; 4♥-4♠, this is the sort of sequence that even the most practiced partnerships might not address until confronted with it at the table.

Where NS elect to shoot out 6♦ once past 3NT and 4♠, East has an easy high-club lead. West should give count, so it should be straightforward for East to cash the other high club for one down, -100. East will also cash out against 5♦.

Against North's 3NT, East will lead a high club, and his sad spade holding will usually convince him to clear clubs. In the two-card ending, West will be down to the high heart and one spade, East to K9 of spades. Forced to guess whether to take the spade finesse or to play to the ♠A, West having been squeezed in the majors, declarer figures to do the right thing. Though West started with four spades to East's two, West might have raised to 2♥ with the ♠K and QJx of hearts, while East might have discarded a spade to try to protect hearts in case West had QJ10.

In 4♠, declarer must finesse in trumps to hold

his losers to one trump and two clubs, and +620 will beat the 600s in 5♦ and -100s in 6♦, but will lose to the 630s/660s.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East

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

Many Souths will open a weak 2♥ with a hand that would not meet the requirements in anyone's text on the subject. If that gets past West, North might well raise to 4♥, but where South could have as little as this, North will settle for an invitational sequence and buy the contract at 3♥.

Where West comes in bravely with 2♠, the bidding will end in 3♠, 4♥, or 4♠ doubled, depending on North's strategy and East's willingness to sell out without supporting spades.

Where South passes in second position, West will usually open 1♠ and North will double (but some, who believe that a double of 1♠ should deliver four hearts, will prefer 1NT). East will raise spades to the two or three level, often via an artificial bid; South will certainly bid at least 3♥. Either West or East will compete to 3♠, but it is not clear whether West will bid 4♠ over 4♥, while East will not do so if he has already shown his fourth trump and approximate strength.

West can come to nine tricks in spades by playing diamonds from the top after drawing trumps, the seven-ten equals against North's jack to build a third diamond trick to discard a club from dummy. Even if North has the wit to underlead his hearts for South to lead a club, South lacks a second entry to develop a second club winner for the defense. EV +140 will be a fine score, but -50 or -100 figure to be bad, as 3♠ is the last plus on offense for either side.

Where West has overcalled in spades, declarers in hearts might well pick up East's ♥Q and come to nine tricks for -50, or far less likely,

+140 or -100. If West opens 1♠ or if EW are never in the auction, declarers in hearts will much more often misguess the trump queen and come to only eight tricks.

If the defense does not lead spades, West should switch to spades after one round of diamonds before establishing the ♠J for a spade discard.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

Some will perceive the South hand a virtually automatic weak 2♠ opening; others will not consider it a viable option; still others (the moderates) will recognize it for what it is – a marginal case. Some in the last two groups might open 1♠ rather than pass, despite the adverse vulnerability. That's bridge in the 21st century.

West will double a 1♠ opening and many would risk a double of 2♠ too, their ideal shape being a more important consideration for them than their modest strength. North with lots of fast losers, might settle for a gentle 3♣ rather than bounce to four. East would have to double 4♠, but over 3♠, as an alternative to a responsive double (leading to 4♦ by West-4♥ by East/), East might take a stab at 4♥ or even 3NT (surely down one). If North's raise to 3♣ involves South in a decision over 4♥, South will bid, but whether he chooses 4♣ or double in that context is less clear. This time it's better – at least in theory - for NS to defend 4♥, which can be defeated with a club ruff, while 4♠ is booked for at least one down, two if West leads a diamond and East switches to ace and another trump (South has no fast re-entry to arrange a second club ruff). EW +500 will be superb and +200 should be fine too, as 4♥ can't be made. However, if the defense does not take its club ruff on the go against 4♥, declarer can get home for +420 or

+590. Say that South leads a spade with East on play. Declarer discards a club from dummy, wins the ♠A, ruffs a spade, and starts trumps, North splitting his honors on the second round. Declarer wins, ruffs his last spade, and plays on diamonds. North can ruff high, low or not at all, but declarer can play on clubs when he has to and North will not be able to take a trick with his ♥8.

Where West does not come in over 2♠, North's raise to 3♣ might end the auction, but those who believe that West needs more to double 2♠ directly will usually treat a protective double as light takeout rather than penalty, and West will reopen, getting his side to 4♥.

Where South passes as dealer, West will pass or open 1♦, the latter leading EW to 4♥ and to some NS pairs going on to 4♣ at unfavorable vulnerability after South overcalls 1♠ at his next turn. If West passes in second seat, East will open 1♠, 1♦*, 1♥ or a weak notrump in fourth seat, When the heart fit comes to light (sometimes via negative double of a spade overcall), EW will reach game, with 4♣ possible if somewhat less likely.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

These days it is much more likely that East will respond INT to 1♠ than pass. If South passes over INT, West will rebid 2♦, and East will pass or convert to 2♣. South might well protect with 2♥ over 2♦ and buy the contract for NS. However, South will not be keen to volunteer 3♥ over East's preference to 2♠, with no clear eight-card fit for EW and no evidence that either or both opponents do not have maximum values for their bidding. 2♠ will probably buy the contract for EW, and figures to go down, probably two (-200) on a heart lead for a superb NS score. Some South

players will step in remorselessly with 2♥ over 1NT, and will be able to stop at 3♥ only if North settles for an invitational sequence with an opening bid of his own, prime values, and a fair fit. You could argue that if your partner is going to overcall in dangerous auctions with as little as South has here you ought to give him plenty of leeway, and you would be right. NS pairs who defend a diamond partial can come to six tricks with perfect defense, but might manage only five or even four.

Where East passes West's 1♠ opening, South will generally reopen with 2♥, and North should not force to game in this scenario, as South's potential minimum is a bit lower than it would be for an overcall after a 1NT response. NS will finish in 2NT, 3♥, 3NT or 4♥, depending on North's approach and South's evaluation.

We can see that declarer can take 10 tricks in hearts with a good view in clubs and a great view in trumps, but is likely to get at least one of those positions wrong and the most common result in hearts figures to be nine tricks. When East turns up with the ♠A, guessing clubs accurately becomes much more likely, but if the play starts with declarer ducking the lead of the ♠K, an imaginative West might switch to the ♣7 and South might play low from dummy. In notrump, North on the lead of the ♠10, can come to seven tricks by turning to clubs when West shows out on the second high heart, but if West follows low and declarer puts in the nine he will finish with only six tricks.

Many possibilities on this deal, and with most scores on both sides falling in the 50 to 140 range, pluses should be respectable, and results of 150 or more will yield extreme scores.

Board 33. Love All. Dealer North.

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

For many North players, 3♠ will be a routine opening choice. South will raise to 4♣ and conclude the auction. Unless East leads from the ♥Q, declarer should lose two hearts and two clubs for -50.

For some, however, the North hand will be a bit too strong for 3♠ and they will open 2♠, 1♠ or pass, risking some later complexity. South might not raise 2♠ all the way to game, and might achieve a coup when their obstructive raise to 3♠ is passed out: +140. After a 1♠ opening, South will probably use a forcing-raise sequence to reach the normal unsuccessful 4♣. If North passes as dealer, South will open 1♦, 1♣*, 1♠ or a weak notrump in third seat. West will overcall one of a minor with 1♥, but even if East shows support and values, EW are likely to sell out to 4♣ without doubling.

As both East and West are short in spades and have support for the other suits, there will be EW pairs competing aggressively at some tables. While their theoretical maximum is only nine tricks in hearts (the defense can take two diamond ruffs against a heart contract but declarer can smother the ♥J later) or diamonds, they might well fare a trick better. Still, they must be careful not to save against 4♣, which is due to fail, and if somehow they buy the contract at the four level, they will have to make what they bid to avoid a poor score.

Board 34. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

This should be everyone's 3NT, EW, whether East opens 1NT or rebids 1NT after opening in a minor.

South has a normal heart lead and declarer has some options, but hopes to lose only to the two black aces. He can cash the ♠A early and drive out the ♠A. If North persists with hearts

rather than switch to clubs, declarer passes the $\diamond J$ with the hope of running that suit, but when North shows out, declarer must lose two more tricks.

The hand is actually not so easy to play as there are communication problems, but on this layout, all normal lines of play lead to 10 tricks. Or maybe not: South might spurn the safe heart lead in favor of an aggressive club lead, and if he thinks East or West might hold four clubs, it might be essential not to burn the ten or jack. If South gets that far in his reasoning, he might put his fingers on the $\clubsuit 5$, and an unsuspecting declarer will usually call for a card other than he nine from dummy. North's eight will knock out an honor, and now when declarer plays on spades, North wins and returns his remaining club for South to take three tricks in the suit to hold declarer to 400, a NS top.

Board 35. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

\spadesuit 6 2	\spadesuit A Q 7 3
\heartsuit 7 6 3	\heartsuit Q J
\diamond J 8 6 4 3 2	\diamond Q 7 5
\clubsuit 6 2	\clubsuit K Q J 3
\spadesuit J 10 9 5	
\heartsuit A 5	
\diamond A 10 9	
\clubsuit 10 9 8 4	
\spadesuit K 8 4	
\heartsuit K 10 9 8 4 2	
\diamond K	
\clubsuit A 7 5	

At favorable vulnerability, North might not pass South's $1\heartsuit$ opening. In strong club systems, North knows that EW have the values for game and that South isn't strong enough to punish North for responding, so North can respond INT or $2\heartsuit$ without much to fear, and some enterprising souls might even try a psychic $1\spadesuit$. In other five-card major systems, North will consider a forcing or semi-forcing INT response, planning to show a weak hand with heart support or tolerance. It will be interesting to see how these light responses will affect EW's ability to reach any game, and the optimum $4\clubsuit$ in particular. There are 11 tricks in spades with normal play, while 3NT can be held to nine tricks legitimately on a heart lead, and then only if declarer knocks out the $\clubsuit A$ and plays diamonds for three tricks without playing on spades.

If North passes $1\heartsuit$, East will double, and where South passes West will choose from among $1\spadesuit$, $2\spadesuit$ and INT. East might devalue his heart holding and downgrade his slow hand enough to pass $1\spadesuit$, but more often will raise to $2\spadesuit$ and West should drive to game. East will raise $2\spadesuit$ to $4\spadesuit$ and a INT response to 3NT, and it will be expensive to finish in the wrong strain.

Some South players will volunteer $2\heartsuit$, hoping to avoid a double and steal some bidding space. While on this layout South is in no trouble, his aggressive action will simplify the auction for EW because West will bid $2\spadesuit$ over $2\heartsuit$ and East will drive to $4\spadesuit$ whether or not North competes to $3\heartsuit$.

The only realistic way that NS might come to three tricks in a spade contract is for North to lead club and for declarer to take the spade finesse and run into a club ruff, but with South marked with the $\spadesuit K$ for his opening bid that would require inattentive play by declarer.

Board 36. Game All. Dealer West.

\spadesuit J 8 4	\spadesuit A 6 5 3 2
\heartsuit 9 4 3	\heartsuit K 10 8 5
\diamond Q 9 6 5	\diamond A
\clubsuit A 5 4	\clubsuit Q 8 6
\spadesuit K Q 9	
\heartsuit J 7 2	
\diamond K J 8 7 2	
\clubsuit J 9	
\spadesuit 10 7	
\heartsuit A Q 6	
\diamond 10 4 3	
\clubsuit K 10 7 3 2	

If West opens his ugly, aceless 11-count vulnerable, East will not quit short of game, and as neither $4\spadesuit$ nor 3NT should make, purists will feel that justice was served at those tables.

More often, East will open $1\spadesuit$ in third position and West will do what he can within his system to show a good raise in spades; Drury will be popular in many parts of the world, but there will be votes for $3\spadesuit$, $3\diamond$ (fit) and 2NT (good three-card raise). Other Wests will hope to get away with $2\spadesuit$, $2\diamond$, or a natural 2NT. As East would bid game over a limit raise, he might well do the same after an equivalent support-bid, showing hearts en route in case hearts would be a better trump suit than spades. While East might leave the final game vs partial decision

to West after the partnership showed length in hearts and diamonds, West will probably bid 4♠ on the strength of his good trumps and potentially useful ♠J. As 4♠ is a very poor contract, and 3NT only a bit better, perhaps East's poor honor location and West quacky values should be given more consideration, especially at Matchpoints, where pushing for

close vulnerable games is not so important.

With both the popular 4♠ and the less common 3NT sure to fail, and 3NT in jeopardy of going two down on a diamond lead, EW plus scores are sure to yield excellent returns. We hope you enjoyed your session(s) and that we will see you again next year.



Eric Kokish married Beverly Kraft, his childhood sweetheart, in 1986.

Son Matthew, one old dog Jackie Robinson (Black Labrador); Kitten - called Kitten!

Residence: Toronto,

where they moved in 1997 via Jakarta and Montreal.

Eric learned bridge at High School and has been fascinated by the game ever since.

He has made his mark on bridge in several areas:

(1) He has held several local, national, and WBF administrative positions;

(2) A long-time member of IBPA, Eric was editor of "Melange de Bridge," (the Montreal Bridge League newsletter), author of a weekly bridge column in the Montreal Gazette from 1977 to 1997, and a daily column for the Toronto Star Syndicate 1999-2000), has been a principal contributor to most world championship books since 1979, directs the Master Solvers Club and Challenge the Champs for the Bridge World magazine, has been editor of the World Bridge News since 1994 and has contributed to bridge magazines and bulletins around the world;

(3) Has been a VuGraph commentator at many World and International events. Kokish is also the author of several conventions, including "Birthright" (2C - 2D; 2H = BAL 25+ or H/FG), "Reject" Trial Bids; "Flags and Scrambles," and "Montreal Relay."

In 1980, he won a Bols Brilliancy prize and the ROMEX award for the best bid hand of the year. Although he has not played frequently of late, Kokish is still among the top all-time Canadian players. He has won two North American championships - the Vanderbilt Knockout Teams and the Men's Board-a-Match Teams.

He has earned two silver medals in WBF events - in the World Open Pairs in 1978 and the Bermuda Bowl in 1995 and has finished third three times in the Rosenblum Cup.

As a coach, Kokish has earned a reputation as one of the best. In his tenure with the Nick Nickell squad, the team won the 2000, 2003, and 2009 Bermuda Bowls. Eric has worked with teams representing more than 20 different federations, and finds this aspect of his bridge activity the most gratifying.

He and Beverly are grateful to Fred Gitelman, creator of Bridge Base Online for providing a medium that has created a remarkable environment for coaching and effective bridge communication.

Results can be found at:

www.ecatsbridge.com

**Simultaneous Pairs Organiser & WBF
Liaison Officer:**

Anna Gudge
email: anna@ecats.co.uk