



Commentary for the World Wide Bridge Contest

Set 5 – Monday 7th May 2018, Session # 5449

Thank you for participating in the 2018 WWBC – we hope that, win or lose, you enjoyed the hands and had fun. All the results can be found at www.ecatsbridge.com/sims as normal - just look for the results for the day you played. **Mark Horton** from England wrote the commentary for this interesting set of boards.

Full details of the Contest itself and the prizes offered can be found by going to the website at <http://www.worldbridge.org/competitions/the-wbf-simultaneous-event/wwbc/>

Board No 1 - None Vul. Dealer North

<p>♠ Q 6 ♥ Q 9 5 4 3 ♦ Q 8 5 2 ♣ 7 6</p> <p>♠ A 5 2 ♥ A 10 ♦ K 7 ♣ K Q 10 5 3 2</p> <p>♠ J 4 ♥ K J 2 ♦ A 9 4 3 ♣ A J 9 8</p>	<p>♠ K 10 9 8 7 3 ♥ 8 7 6 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ 4</p>
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If East opens 2♠ and South doubles West is likely to raise to 4♠, ending the auction. If East starts with a Multi 2♦ and South doubles West can use the forcing 2NT inquiry before settling for 4♠.

If East passes and South opens 1♣ West will be stuck (unless playing 2♣ as a natural overcall) and North will respond 1♥. Unless East bids at this point it's hard to see EW reaching 4♠.

If South starts with 1♦ West can bid 2♣. Now East might bid 2♠ when West will consider bidding game.

If South begins with INT (12-14/13-15) and West doubles for penalties North bids 2♥ and East comes in with 2♠ when again West must consider bidding game.

If EW play in spades declarer will only need to get the diamonds right to record ten tricks - and might not be put to the test by South, who may realise that a winning guess will lead to eleven tricks.

Board No 2 - N/S Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ A 7 4 ♥ 8 4 ♦ 10 9 8 6 5 ♣ Q 9 5</p> <p>♠ 5 3 ♥ K J 2 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ A J 10 8 4</p> <p>♠ J 9 8 ♥ A Q 10 7 6 ♦ K ♣ K 7 6 3</p>	<p>♠ K Q 10 6 2 ♥ 9 5 3 ♦ A 7 4 2 ♣ 2</p>
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If East is able to open 2♠ to show that suit and a minor South might be tempted to bid 3♥. Even if West does not double that will lead to a very poor result.

Where East passes South opens 1♥ and rebids 2♣ over North's INT. If North then bids 2♥ East might risk 2♠, probably ending the auction.

As the cards lie EW may do well in spades - it will depend on how declarer tackles the trump suit and the diamonds - in some variations declarer will end up laying down the ♦A with gratifying results. For example, after a club lead declarer wins with dummy's ace and plays a spade to the king followed by a heart. If South wins and exits with a club declarer ruffs, plays a heart to the jack and a spade and will score very well by rising with the queen and exiting with a spade, subsequently refusing the diamond finesse.

Board No 3 - E/W Vul. Dealer South

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

If South opens INT (14-16/15-17) West might come in with a conventional bid when North will be able to bid 2♠. If South raises North I suppose it is just about possible that North will decide to go on to game.

Were West to pass over INT North transfers to spades. If South now breaks the transfer North will have to decide if it is right to bid game.

Suppose you play in a spade contract and the defenders lead a heart? You need to keep in mind the possibility that East might have the ♠J and a doubleton heart, in which case it would be a mistake to continue with the ♠Q at trick two.

Board No 4 - All Vul. Dealer West

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

If North opens INT (13-15/14-16/15-17) and East bids 2♣ to show the majors West bids 2♠ ending the auction.

As the cards lie it's hard to see declarer taking less than nine tricks in a spade contract.

Board No 5 - N/S Vul. Dealer North

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

If North opens INT South looks for a heart fit with 2♣ and West bids 2♠. North has enough to bid 3♥ and South goes on to game over East's 3♠. Now there is a fair case for West to sacrifice in 4♠.

There are ten tricks in hearts and eight in spades.

Board No 6 - E/W Vul. Dealer East

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

If East opens 1♠ West responds INT and then passes East's 2♠ rebid. There is no obvious way for NS to get involved, but with this spade layout declarer will be -200 unless there is a miraculous play in the trump suit.

Board No 7 - All Vul. Dealer South

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

Even by today's standards the South hand is not really an opening bid although playing Precision you might try 1♦ when West would double. If North then bids 2♦ and East bids 2♠ West can raise to 3♠, ending the auction.

To hold declarer to nine tricks the defenders need to lead a diamond. Declarer wins with the ace and plays a spade to the jack and queen followed by a club. North must win and return a diamond, declarer ruffing and playing a second club. Once again North must win and play a third diamond, which promotes the ♠9.

Board No 8 - None Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ J 9 7 2 ♥ 10 9 4 ♦ 10 9 6 5 2 ♣ K</p> <p>♠ A 6 5 ♥ A K 6 5 3 2 ♦ K 8 ♣ Q 5</p>	<p>♠ Q 4 ♥ Q J ♦ Q J ♣ A J 10 9 7 3 2</p> <p>♠ K 10 8 3 ♥ 8 7 ♦ A 7 4 3 ♣ 8 6 4</p>
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If West opens 1♥ East responds 2♣ and must then decide what to do when West rebids 3♥. Doubleton honours are not usually assets, but the club suit is potentially powerful. If East settles for 4♥ that will end the auction. If East rebids 4♣ the auction might continue 4♦-4♥-4♠-5♥ when West will have to make the final decision.

A Strong Club auction might start 1♣-2♣-2♥-3♣-3♥-4♥. With both side suits under control West might bid on.

Those who bid a slam will be pleased to see North's ♣K appear.

Board No 9 - E/W Vul. Dealer North

<p>♠ Q 8 ♥ K Q J 9 6 5 ♦ A K Q 5 ♣ K</p> <p>♠ A K J 9 2 ♥ 8 7 ♦ 8 2 ♣ 9 7 5 2</p>	<p>♠ 7 6 5 4 ♥ 10 4 ♦ 10 9 4 3 ♣ 10 4 3</p> <p>♠ 10 3 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ J 7 6 ♣ A Q J 8 6</p>
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If North opens 1♥ South responds 2♣. For the moment suppose West passes. If North rebids 2♦ South might continue with 2♠. Were the bidding to continue 3♥-4♣-4♦-4♥ it would be clear that NS are missing a spade control.

If West decides to bid 2♠ it will not prevent NS from reaching 4♥, but it will make absolutely certain that East leads a spade.

If the bidding starts with a Strong 1♣, South responding 2♣, then West is perhaps more likely to bid 2♠, despite the vulnerability.

Board No 10 - All Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ K 4 3 ♥ K ♦ A 7 4 2 ♣ A K 10 6 5</p> <p>♠ Q 9 7 6 5 ♥ Q 10 4 2 ♦ J 5 3 ♣ 8</p>	<p>♠ A J 8 ♥ J 8 6 3 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ Q 7 3</p> <p>♠ 10 2 ♥ A 9 7 5 ♦ K 10 9 ♣ J 9 4 2</p>
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If North opens 1♣ South responds 1♥. If North decides to rebid 2NT South will raise to game. If North rebids 2♦ South will probably bid 2♠* and then raise North's 2NT to game.

If North starts with a Strong 1♣ the partnerships reversing the responses of 1♠ and 1NT will have a slight advantage in so far as 3NT will be played by North.

On the surface, 3NT looks destined to fail, but there are circumstances in which it might succeed. Firstly East must avoid a diamond lead. Secondly a heart looks killing but there is still a trap the defenders must avoid. When

East gets in with the ♣Q it is best to continue with the ♥J. Returning a low heart sees West win, but it is then necessary to switch to the ♠Q to be sure of defeating the contract.

Even when South is declarer things might not be straightforward.

On a spade lead declarer plays low from dummy and East wins with the jack and returns a heart. Declarer wins and plays three rounds of clubs, unblocking the ♣J9. If East returns the ♥J declarer wins and cashes two more clubs pitching a heart from hand. West will be down to ♠Q9 ♥10 ♦J52 and cannot throw the ♥10. Pitching a spade allows declarer to play a spade from dummy while parting with a diamond allows declarer to play three rounds of the suit, either for three tricks or endplaying East depending on the discards.

Board No 11 - None Vul. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1NT and West overcalls in spades East will be doing well to only invite a game.

If South starts with 1♦ and West bids 1♠ North might scrape up a double when East can bid 2♦ to show a good raise in spades.

On this layout there are only nine tricks in spades, but if you reverse the location of the ♥K and ♥J the defenders would have no winning option.

Board No 12 - N/S Vul. Dealer West

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

If West opens 1♣ North overcalls 1♠, and East doubles. Now South has a tough call - great support for spades but a ♣K that might be dead in the water. Bidding 4♠ might work well if West is tempted to bid 5♥. The alternative is to bid 2♣, showing a good raise in spades, but then West has an easy 2♥ bid and the chances of EW going on to 5♥ over a subsequent 4♠ diminish.

There are nine tricks in spades.

In theory you can make 4♥ - declarer ruffs the spade lead and must play a heart to the queen - not exactly easy.

Board No 13 - All Vul. Dealer North

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

It is easy to see the auction going 1♣-1♦-1♥-1NT. A Precision pair might bid 1♦-1NT, while opening the North hand with a 12-14 INT should end the auction.

There is nothing special to the play, declarer taking exactly seven tricks.

Board No 14 - None Vul. Dealer East

<p>♠ A 9 8 3 ♥ A 9 7 6 ♦ — ♣ A Q 10 6 4</p> <p>♠ Q J 10 4 2 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ K J 7 3 ♣ 5</p>	<p>♠ 6 5 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ A Q 8 6 4 2 ♣ 9 7</p> <p>♠ K 7 ♥ Q 10 5 ♦ 10 9 5 ♣ K J 8 3 2</p>
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Some players holding the East hand will be able to start with a weak 2♦. What happens after that will depend on West's reaction. There will be those who raise diamonds to whatever level they consider appropriate, which could be anywhere between 3♦ and 5♦. Others might attempt something more esoteric, perhaps responding 2♥!

North will be able to double after any diamond raise - after 3♦ South will probably bid 4♣ and then go on to game if North continues with 4♦. After a raise to 4♦ South bids 5♣ over North's double and if West raises to 5♦ South will probably pass North's double.

Where East does not open West might try something third in hand (some will be able to open 2♠ to show spades and a minor). Then it will be up to NS to find a route to 5♣.

If North is allowed to open 1♣ East is sure to overcall in diamonds and then the final contract will, to some extent, depend on how high West decides to compete.

If EW play in diamonds NS must attack hearts before the spades are established in order to get the maximum - very important if the contract is 5♦ doubled.

If NS play in clubs declarer's decision in the heart suit will determine the number of tricks - critical if the contract is 6♣.

Board No 15 - N/S Vul. Dealer South

<p>♠ Q 8 6 3 2 ♥ K Q 10 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ A 8</p> <p>♠ K J 9 ♥ A 5 4 ♦ K 10 8 5 4 3 ♣ J</p>	<p>♠ A 5 ♥ 8 7 6 2 ♦ Q J 6 ♣ K 7 5 2</p> <p>♠ 10 7 4 ♥ J 9 3 ♦ 7 ♣ Q 10 9 6 4 3</p>
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If West opens 1♦ and North overcalls 1♠ East will double and West will rebid 2♦. If East now tries 2NT I doubt West will be tempted to advance to game.

If North overcalls 1NT East has enough to double and South bids 2♣. Now EW need to avoid defending 2♣ doubled - simplest is for West to bid 2♦. That might be enough for East, who will not be thinking of game, even though the fitting cards in diamonds are an asset.

Any pairs who reach 3NT should make it, but I suspect the majority will be in diamonds.

Board No 16 - E/W Vul. Dealer West

<p>♠ 10 9 4 ♥ K Q ♦ A Q 5 3 ♣ J 9 7 6</p> <p>♠ K ♥ J 6 5 ♦ K 9 8 4 ♣ Q 8 5 4 3</p>	<p>♠ J 6 5 3 2 ♥ 9 4 3 2 ♦ 10 6 ♣ K 2</p> <p>♠ A Q 8 7 ♥ A 10 8 7 ♦ J 7 2 ♣ A 10</p>
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If North opens 1♣ South responds 1♥ and then raises North's 1NT rebid to game. Opening 1♦ with the North hand has the same effect as does a 10-12/12-14 INT opening by North, South checking for a major before bidding game.

The cards lie well for declarer who is likely to record eleven tricks. For example, after a spade lead East wins with the king and is already awkwardly placed. On a club return declarer has three tricks in that suit and a diamond return also gives up a trick. If West exits with a heart, declarer wins and plays a

spade to the eight (having unblocked the nine or ten on the previous round) followed by a diamond to the queen. Declarer can then afford to play a club to the ten and should emerge with the rest of the tricks.

Board No 17 - None Vul. Dealer North

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

If East opens 1♣ West responds 1♠. If East rebids 3♣ the obvious bid for West is 3NT. If East starts with a Strong 1♣ West responds 1♦ and then bids 2♠ over East's 2♣. If East then bids 3♣ West might try 3♥. It's possible that East might raise to 4♥ but 3NT looks more likely.

If EW play in 3NT the contract will depend on what South does when in with the ♣K. Note that if South ducks a club there is a slight danger that declarer will get home with four hearts, three diamonds and two clubs. In practice South is likely to switch to spades, but it's not 100% certain.

If EW play in hearts declarer has good chances - taking the ruffing club finesse may well lead to eleven tricks, but even losing a trick to the ♣K is not fatal, although then declarer will probably play safe for ten tricks.

Board No 18 - N/S Vul. Dealer East

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

If East opens 1♠ South overcalls 2♥. If West bids 3♦ North will raise to 3♥. If South passes will West be tempted to compete with 3♠? You can ask a similar question if South goes on to 4♥.

If East starts with 1♣ and South overcalls 1♥ West can bid 2♦ and then when North raises to 2♥ East can bid 2♠. Here when South raises to 3♥ West has no reason to raise spades.

If NS play in hearts West will lead a top diamond, but unless playing reverse signals will then be unsure about the location of the missing diamond. To restrict declarer to eight tricks, West has to underlead on the second round of diamonds, East ruffing and switching to clubs.

If EW play in spades the defenders have five tricks.

Board No 19 - E/W Vul. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1NT it would be brave player who ventures an overcall, especially at this vulnerability, as starting with 2NT commits EW to the three-level. After a Pass by West North transfers to hearts and will probably invite facing 15-17. Although South has 16 points they are not especially powerful (the hand is worth only 15.55 on the Kaplan-Rubens Hand Evaluator) and South will do well to settle for 3♥.

The obvious lead for West is a spade, after which declarer will probably win in dummy and play a heart to the queen, getting the bad news. As the cards lie, the only way to get up to eight tricks will be by rejecting the diamond finesse.

Board No 20 - All Vul. Dealer West

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

If West opens 1♦ East responds 1♥. Now we have an old chestnut - should West rebid INT (ignoring the singleton heart) or prefer 2♣. Those who choose the latter might have the better of the argument this time, East's raise to 3♣ ending the auction.

INT has little chance - North's natural lead is a spade and that is good enough to ensure the defeat of the contract, North switching to the ♥10 when in with the ♦A.

The fate of 3♣ will rest on how declarer tackles the trump suit. After a spade lead for the king and ace, one winning line is to play a club to the jack followed by a diamond to the king. If that holds declarer crosses to the ace of clubs to play a second diamond for the queen and ace. North switches to the ten of hearts and South wins and plays a spade. That gets the defenders up to four tricks, but declarer will take the rest.

Board No 21 - N/S Vul. Dealer North

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

If East opens 1♣ South must choose between a simple or a two suited overcall. If South opts for 1♠ and North responds INT South might jump to 3♦ or perhaps bid 2♣ and then introduce the diamonds when North bids 2♥.

If North supports diamonds then South will almost certainly drive to 6♦.

If South starts with 3♣, showing spades and diamonds, it is more than likely that North will bid 3NT. Now the winning view is for South to continue with 4♦, but remember I can see all four hands!

With such a powerful hand (this one rates 22.60 on the K & R evaluator) either approach will work (provided South goes on over 3NT).

6♦ is a great contract once East has opened the bidding - there is no way declarer can fail to take 12 tricks.

Board No 22 - E/W Vul. Dealer East

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

If West opens INT (14-16/15-17) and North is able to double for penalties that will end the auction, as will a Pass by North.

The same situation arises after a Strong Club auction that starts 1♣-1♦-INT.

Suppose North leads a top spade? For many partnerships the ace asks for an attitude signal, the king for an unblock. After South discourages on the ♠A the natural switch for North is a club, which goes to the queen and king. Declarer exits with a spade and North wins and now needs to find a way to get South in to play a club. The best chance lies in the diamond suit and North can choose between cashing the ace or leading a low diamond, intending to cash the ace on the next round. These plays rely on declarer holding a doubleton diamond, but once you start trying to construct possible hands for West you quickly realise that if that is not the case it will be virtually impossible to defeat INT.

Board No 23 - All Vul. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1♣ and North responds 1♦/1♥ the old fashioned rebid (certainly for Acoll players) for South is 3NT, but many players now like to use that to show a hand with a long running suit, rebidding 2NT with 18-19 points. Still, I expect all roads to lead to 3NT.

A Strong Club pair might bid 1♣-1♦-2NT-3♣*-3♦*-3♠*-3NT.

West has a nasty hand to lead from. Starting with a club sees declarer win with the queen. Ideally declarer would like to take two finesses in spades, but the shortage of entries to dummy makes that unrealistic. If declarer plays three rounds of spades and West wins and plays a second club declarer must decide whether to duck or win. If declarer wins, cashes a spade (pitching a heart from dummy and advances the jack of hearts West will cover and declarer wins with dummy's ace and plays the ♦Q for the king and ace. If declarer now cashes the jack of diamonds and the plays the ♥9 he will secure an overtrick.

If declarer ducks an extra round of clubs it will cost a trick.

If West leads a diamond declarer must put up dummy's queen if it is the nine. After taking the king with the ace declarer can play three rounds of spades pitching a heart from dummy. If West wins and exits with a diamond declarer wins in hand and can play the ♥J. If West unblock the ♠Q allowing East to win with the ♠J and play a club declarer can even afford to finesse, winning the club return and again playing the ♥J.

If West leads a heart declarer must drop the jack under East's queen. On a club return declarer plays low from hand and West wins and might switch to the ♦9. Declarer covers

with dummy's queen, setting up a finesse position in the suit and after taking East's king with the ace plays three rounds of spades, eventually emerging with nine tricks.

If West leads a spade declarer wins and plays two more rounds of the suit putting West on lead. At this point West has no good move as declarer can always follow one of the lines indicated earlier.

Only the Rueful Rabbit would defeat 3NT by accidently leading the ♥K! It's not all that is required (later West will have to lead into declarer's club tenace) but you can have some fun working out how the play develops.

Board No 24 - None Vul. Dealer West

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

If West opens 1♠ North overcalls - the question is at what level? If North selects 2♥ East will raise to 2♠ and now North will have a new decision - anyone for 4♥? In this sequence it is likely that South has some values, but there is no way of knowing if they are of any use. Still, it is tempting to bid 4♥, which is what North might elect to do in the first place.

4♥ is very easy and if EW goon to 4♠ it will be up to South to double when it should be easy enough to collect 500.

Board No 25 - E/W Vul. Dealer North

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

If North opens INT (12-14/13-15/14-16) South's initial move will be to look for a spade fit. Once that has been located South is sure to drive to slam opposite 14-16 and might do the same facing 13-15. Opposite 12-14 the situation is not quite so clear.

Some Acol partnerships still play Marx-Sharples transfers. They would approach the deal like this:

INT-2♦*-2♥-2♠*-3♣*-3♦*-3♠*-4NT*-5♠* after which South will settle for 6♠.

This is what the bids mean:

- 2♦ Transfer to hearts or balanced game invite or slam interest
- 2♠ Balanced game invite or slam interest
- 3♣ Maximum, lowest four-card suit
- 3♦ Slam try, four-card suit
- 3♠ Four spades
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 key cards +♠Q

If the defenders don't lead a heart declarer has a safety play available in clubs, cashing the king, crossing to the ace and then playing a third club to the jack, but with everyone likely to reach a slam it would be unwise to adopt it.

You will find full details of Marx-Sharples at: <http://www.bridge-wiese.de/konvent/MarxShp.htm>

Board No 26 - All Vul. Dealer East

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

NS have a very easy slam on this deal, but how often will it be reached? If South opens INT North might look for a heart fit and then settle for 3NT. An alternative approach is to transfer to diamonds and then bid 3♥. That should be enough to excite South, with five-card trump support and every suit controlled. One possible sequence: INT-2NT*-3♦*-3♥-3♠*-3NT-4♣*-4♦-4♥*-5♣*-6♦.

Here 3♦ shows a fit after which a number of cue bids do the rest.

An Acol pair might start 1♦-1♥-INT-2♣*-3♥ when North can bid 4♦. If South now bids 4♥ North can continue with 5♣ and South has enough to bid 6♦.

If South plays in 3NT West scores a goal by leading a club, restricting declarer to nine tricks. It follows the principle of not leading the suit in which you might have an entry - and here it saves two tricks.

6♦ is unbeatable.

Board No 27 - None Vul. Dealer South

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

If South opens 1♣ West is sure to overcall - 2♥ will be the popular choice. If North doubles South rebids 3♦ when North's simplest course

is to raise to 4♦ (the alternative is to bid 3♥ and then continue with 4♦ over South's 3NT). Deals where one player has all the first round controls are never easy so it will be interesting to see how many pairs bid a Grand Slam. Suppose South asks for key cards and discovers that North has one (the ♦K). Now South can ask for kings with 5NT, North bidding 5♥ to show two. It is unlikely that one of them is the ♥K but South might bid 5♠ as a grand slam try, which North can easily accept by jumping to 7♦ (or perhaps 7♣ or even 7NT).

West might overcall 3♥. If North doubles and South bids 4♦ it might not be so easy to reach 7♦.

If South starts with a Strong 1♣ West is going to overcall but after 1♣-(2♥)-3♦ South might simply ask for key cards followed by kings as described earlier.

After 1♣-(3♥) if North bids 4♦ South can bid 4NT as before. If North doubles South bids 4♣ and when North continues with 4♦ it is time to ask for keycards.

Board No 28 - N/S Vul. Dealer West

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

If North opens 1♥ and East overcalls 1♠ South will want to be able to bid a forcing 2♣. If West raises to 2♠ and North rebids 3♥ South might try 4♦ which ought to be construed as a cue bid in support of hearts. That gives NS an excellent chance of reaching 6♥.

If East does not overcall the auction might go 1♥-2♣-3♥-4♦*-4♠*-5♣*-5♥-6♥.

If North prefers to rebid 2♥ the auction might branch off in several ways. If South continues with 2♠ North can bid 3♣. If the next two bids are 3♥ and 3♠ then again a slam will be in the picture.

If the defenders don't lead spades then 13 tricks can be taken in hearts, clubs and notrumps.

Board No 29 - All Vul. Dealer North

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

If North opens 1NT (12-14/13-15) South transfers to spades and then subsides.

If North starts with 1♦ South responds 1♠ and then rebids 2♠ over North's 1NT. Now there is a slight chance that East might re-open with a double and hit the jackpot as West is bound to try for the 'magic 200'.

2♠ should fail by a trick - unless West leads spade or a diamond - in the latter case declarer wins in hand and plays a spade, covering West's card (much easier to do after a double) and then cashes the diamonds to dispose of a losing club.

Board No 30 - None Vul. Dealer East

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

East might be able to open 2♥ - weak with that suit and a minor and South could open 3♣, but these are both marginal actions and won't feature too often.

If West starts with 1♦ North overcalls 1♠ and East will probably dredge up a double. When West rebids 2♦ that might well end the auction unless North feels inclined to repeat those

spades when West might decide to go for a penalty.

There are nine tricks in either red suit (but no obvious way to get to hearts unless East opens).

If EW defend a spade contract East will need to score a ruff with the ♠10 for two down.

Board No 31 - N/S Vul. Dealer South

♠ K Q 8 3 ♥ A 5 3 2 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A 8 4 ♠ J 10 2 ♥ K 10 9 4 ♦ J 8 ♣ Q J 5 3	♠ 9 6 4 ♥ 8 7 ♦ K 7 6 5 ♣ 10 9 7 6 ♠ A 7 5 ♥ Q J 6 ♦ A Q 9 4 2 ♣ K 2
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If South opens 1NT North will look for a major suit fit before bidding 3NT.

West has an awkward lead. Starting with the jack of spades looks reasonable, but declarer can win in dummy and play a diamond to the nine (the best chance for four tricks at 39.72%) West winning with the jack and exiting with a spade. Declarer wins in hand and plays the ♥Q covered by the king and ace runs the ♦10. When it holds declarer comes to hand with a club and plays two rounds of diamonds, finishing with eleven tricks.

It is clear that leading either red suit is no better, but if West starts with a club declarer should not manage more than ten tricks. Very tough, I'm sure you will agree.

Board No 32 - E/W Vul. Dealer West

♠ K Q J 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 2 ♣ A K 8 7 6 3 ♠ A 9 5 ♥ A 10 9 6 5 ♦ 10 7 ♣ Q 10 9	♠ 8 7 ♥ K J 7 2 ♦ A 9 8 6 4 ♣ J 5 ♠ 10 6 4 3 ♥ Q 8 ♦ K Q J 5 3 ♣ 4 2
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If West decides to open 1♥ North will overcall 2♣ and East will raise to 3♥. If South now competes with a double (not obvious, but it's my last deal so I can afford to be optimistic) promising the unbid suits and club tolerance, North can bid 3♠.

If West does not open (the majority view) and North starts with 1♣ East might chip in with 1♦ when South will either pass, hoping for a reopening double, or bid 1♠. If East does not overcall South responds 1♦ and West bids 1♥. If North bids 1♠, East can either raise hearts directly or bid 2♣ to show a good raise and South will support spades.

Both majors should yield nine tricks, so the winners of this particular bidding battle should collect the matchpoints.