



**Commentary
for the
World Wide Bridge Contest**

Set 8 – Saturday 2nd June 2018

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.

Full details of the Contest itself can be found at <http://www.worldbridge.org/competitions/the-wbf-simultaneous-event/wwbc/>

We hope you have enjoyed this last set of the WWBC heats – there are no more in 2018 but don't forget to join us again in 2019!

You could also consider playing in one of the **Simultaneous events to raise funds to support Youth Bridge** – these are held on the following dates in 2018:

- Monday 13th August
- Wednesday 15th August
- Monday 15th October
- Wednesday 17th October
- Monday 10th December
- Wednesday 12th December

These events in support of Youth Bridge are simply fund raising so the entry fee is kept very low- just US\$ 3.00, € 2.50, or £ 1.90 per pair (note ... per PAIR). WBF Year Points will be awarded to the leading pairs from each heat. Please [click here](#) to read more about how the WBF works to support Youth Bridge.

Finally - the **World Championships are in Orlando** this year, from 21st September - 6th October.

All the events are transnational, and there are Teams and Pairs events in all categories – Open, Women's Senior and Mixed. There is also a Junior Triathlon and a number of side games.

And you ... yes you ... could take a team and enter this fantastic, challenging event! www.worldbridge.org will give you all the information you need including the schedule of play, details of the hotel and other details. So give it some thought and consider coming to join us in Orlando.

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

After 1♠-(2♣) South will raise spades - and my guess is that there will be supporters for 2♠, 3♠ and 4♠. In these days of super-light opening bids perhaps 3♠ is the down the middle approach.

West has an easy raise in clubs - there is a case for bidding 5♣ hoping to provoke an indiscretion, but West's hand is defensive in nature so a raise to 4♣ looks right.

North, following *Meckstroth's Law* - 'when your six-card major is freely raised bid game' - is likely to bid 4♠, which should end the auction.

However, it may not and you are sure to see contracts of 5♣ and 5♠, the former certainly doubled, the latter maybe.

5♣ doubled is a dangerous place to be, but the defenders, South in particular, have to be attentive. After a spade lead, declarer wins, crosses to the king of clubs, probably ruffs a spade, draws the outstanding trump and plays a diamond. Now South must put in the jack or ten to be sure of collecting +500.

If EW allow NS to play in 4♠ the fate of the contract will depend on how declarer tackles the heart suit - unless the defenders offer a helping hand. The best they can do is for East to cash a top club, then take the ace of spades and exit with a club, leaving declarer to do his own work.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

If South opens 1♣/1♦ West will probably overcall INT. Although it's not a perfect action facing a passed partner, the reality is that you have to take risks playing pairs. If North ventures a double EW will be booked for a bad score, but eight points is a little thin.

If South is able to open a 10-12/12-14 INT West may double, but it is likely to turn out badly. The best EW can do is for East to run to 2♣ - but I doubt that will happen very often.

If West plays in INT (doubled) North is likely to lead a heart and that is very bad news for declarer, who is unlikely to collect more than four tricks.

After winning the first heart declarer will probably play a top diamond. South wins and switches to a club, North winning and playing a second heart (if North has led the ♥10 or ♥9 then a low heart next is best, retaining a potential entry). After three hearts are cashed North switches to a spade and declarer can do nothing good.

If South plays in INT doubled and West leads a top diamond declarer wins and will want to get to dummy to play the ten of hearts. When a club to the queen works declarer runs the ten of hearts and now the best West can do is win and return a club, holding declarer to eight tricks.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 1♣ North will either (depending on system) jump to 3♣ or respond INT. Both bids will see South rebid 3NT.

If South's 1♣ is Strong (Precision style) North will respond according to system and once again 3NT is sure to be reached.

A few pairs will be using an opening 2NT to show 19-20 and after North discovers they don't have a 5-3 spade fit they too will alight in 3NT.

If South is declarer in 3NT after an unrevealing auction and West leads the jack of hearts declarer wins with dummy's queen and plays three rounds of clubs, West winning and exiting with a heart. East, who has to look after both hearts and spades is in deep trouble when declarer cashes the last two clubs and if declarer draws the right inference from East's discard of four diamonds then the ace of diamonds followed by three rounds of spades will throw East in to lead into the heart tenace for a whopping eleven tricks.

West's best lead is a spade. If declarer is tempted to play low from dummy East wins and switches to a diamond which should see the defenders score five tricks.

If North is the declarer and East leads a diamond declarer will probably duck, win the second diamond and then cash the top clubs. Although the suit fails to break, the second club squeezes East in three suits, so declarer should emerge with nine tricks.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

If West opens INT (14-16/15-17) North might decide to overcall (very risky). However, it will not stop EW reaching 3NT.

If West starts with 1♦ North overcalls 1♠ but EW should still find a route to 3NT.

If West begins with a Strong 1♣ North is sure to do something (some will be able to bid 1♦ to show a reasonable hand with spades) but again it should not affect the outcome.

There is nothing special to the play - assuming declarer takes the club finesse there will be ten tricks.

Board 5. NIS Vul. Dealer North.

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

When South opens 1♠ North raises - take your pick between 2♠ and 3♠ or a Bergen raise - and South will either make a try over 2♠, accepted by North, mainly because of the very good trump support, or go to game.

4♠ is not a great contract, but it can be made.

Suppose West, with an awkward lead, opts for a trump. Declarer wins in dummy and might decide his best chance is to try and make something of the clubs, leading the two. If West wins that and plays a second trump declarer wins in dummy and can establish the clubs by cross-ruffing.

If East wins the first club and plays a second spade declarer wins in dummy, ruffs a club, cashes the ace of hearts, ruffs a heart and must then play the queen

of clubs, discarding a diamond from hand, a neat loser-on-loser play.

Board 6. EIW Vul. Dealer East.

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

If East starts with 2♠ that is likely to end the auction. If the opening bid is 2♦ then West will bid 2♠ (Pass or correct) once again ending the bidding.

If East is declarer South will probably lead the queen of diamonds. North takes the ace and must switch to a low spade. Declarer wins in dummy and might now try a low heart. It is essential that North plays the ten. When it holds a low diamond is the best exit. If declarer wins and decides to play a club to the queen followed by the ace and then the ten of clubs South ruffs and puts North in with a heart after which another club promotes a trump trick for the defence.

If North does not put in the ♥10 South wins and plays a club, but declarer can now dispose of a heart on a club and the trump promotion vanishes.

If West is declarer after a Multi 2♦ opening North has an awkward hand to lead from, but most things should work although some care may be needed. After a safe looking club lead declarer takes South's king with the ace, cashes the queen pitching a heart and then parks another heart on the ♣9. South ruffs and must now find a trump return. North wins and must play a fourth club which produces the trump promotion I mentioned earlier.

It's a tough hand for the defenders.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

When South opens 1♠ should West overcall? The suit is poor, but in a Pairs game one should try to bid where possible so although I would be inclined to Pass I expect many will risk 2♥. North passes and the spotlight is on East. 3♦ is the obvious bid, but is generally played as non-forcing. East would like to bid 2♠, but that is generally played as promising a heart fit. 2NT is another possibility, hoping that the diamonds will be useful.

If West does not overcall and North passes East can bid 2♦ which should lead to 3NT by West (the singleton diamond is a minus, but West does have a decent hand with trick potential).

If West passes and North responds INT East overcalls 2♦ and again West can take a shot at 3NT. If South bids 2♠ then West might elect to double, hoping for a substantial penalty.

If West plays in 3NT and North leads a spade, declarer puts in dummy's ten and takes South's jack with the ace to play a diamond for the ten and ace. If South exits with a spade declarer wins with dummy's king, cashes the king of diamonds and clears the suit, pitching a heart from hand. At this point whatever North plays will give declarer an entry to dummy and its four diamond winners (naturally if North exits with a club declarer will put in dummy's nine).

A club lead looks more testing, but say declarer wins the second round in dummy and plays the jack of hearts. South does best to cover, otherwise declarer plays on hearts, eventually establishing a ninth trick by playing a diamond to the ten. Declarer wins, goes back to dummy with a heart, plays a spade to the ace and clears the hearts. As before North will have no good move when in with the fourth heart.

Defending a doubled spade contract should work well for EW. The best lead is a club, which will give the defenders every chance of taking nine tricks for +1100.

If West starts with a diamond declarer has a chance for five tricks, but -800 will not trouble the scorers much.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

When West opens 1♠ should North overcall 3♦? If your philosophy about weak jump overcalls is 'as weak as you dare' then it is not a problem. If East then bids 4♦ South can raise the ante by bidding 5♦. Say West then bids 5♥ - will East construe that as a 'Last Train' slam try and venture 6♠?

If North does not overcall EW will get a free run, but the auction might develop in a number of ways. East might respond 2♣, 2NT or even splinter with 4♦ (although some players don't like to do this with a singleton ace).

I like the idea of responding 2♣, especially where it is game-forcing, as it helps partner to evaluate their hand. The bidding might go 1♠-2♣-2♥-3♠-4♣*-4♦* after which West will not stop short of 6♠.

If West opens a Strong 1♣ then East will already be alive to the possibility of a slam. After 1♣-1♠-2♣-3♣ I don't see the auction stopping below 6♠. However, I doubt it will go like that. After 1♣ suppose North overcalls 3♦? East bids 3♠ and South bids 5♦. West might try 6♠ hoping to find East with the ♠A and at least one useful king, but not everyone will be willing to gamble. If West bids 5♠ in tempo then East might venture 6♦.

This deal is all about the bidding, as everyone should take twelve tricks in spades.

Board 9. EW Vul. Dealer North.

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

After two passes South is sure to open - with both 1♠ and a 'heavy' 2♠ attracting support (or even a Multi 2♦). Let's say West doubles. After

1♠-(Dble)-Pass East responds INT and West raises to 2NT, ending the auction.

After 2♠-(Dble)-East will respond according to agreements - many pairs use Lebensohl in this situation to distinguish between weak hands and those with some values. Let's say that East bids 3♣, ending the auction. (It would be a terrific view to convert the double by passing.)

West might overcall in hearts - after 1♠-(2♥) if South bids 2♠ when West can double to show a good hand. In that scenario East might elect to play for penalties.

After 2♠-(3♥) East does not have enough to venture 3NT.

If South starts with 2♦ West can overcall 2♥. If South then tries 2♠ West can double for take-out, a situation we have seen before.

If EW defend a spade contract West has an awkward lead. Starting with the ace of hearts to get a sight of dummy might be enough for West to realise that a club switch is in order.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

If South starts with 1♣/1♦ North responds 1♠ and then raises South's INT rebid to game.

If South starts with INT (12-14/14-16) North's simplest action is to raise directly to game.

If West starts with a top heart - many play the ace asks for encouragement while the king asks partner to unblock - the defenders will take the first four tricks, but then declarer secures the rest thanks to the fall of the jack of clubs.

If West cashes a top heart and then switches to a spade in theory declarer has a shot at ten tricks, but as this involves running the ten of diamonds at some point it is not going to happen.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 1♣ and North responds 1♠ East comes in with 2♥. At this point some players will be able to make a support double, while others will raise to 2♠. There will also be those who pass for lack of a fourth spade.

After 1♣-(Pass)-1♠-(2♥)-Dble we are probably in uncharted territory for many partnerships. With two aces West might feel some action is required - perhaps a redouble should this type of hand with high card values but not primary trump support (with that West can always bid 2♠).

If South rebids 2♠ West might double, suggesting values in diamonds with tolerance for hearts.

If South starts with a 12-14 INT North might try 2♣, intending to pass the response. East bids 2♥ probably ending the auction.

Whatever happens it is not going to be easy for EW to reach the making 3NT, although it is just about possible that they might get there - for example after 1♣-(Pass)-1♠-(2♥)-Dble*(Rdbl)-Pass East might try 2♠ and then raise West's 2NT to game.

Board 12. NIS Vul. Dealer West.

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

Is the North hand worth opening? I would be quite happy to Pass (unless playing Precision) after which South might start with INT - 14-16/15-17, quickly reaching the notrump game.

If South starts with a Strong 1♣, 3NT will be reached, sometimes with North as declarer.

If North opens 1♣ South responds 1♠ and raises North's INT rebid to game.

The play in 3NT should be interesting. Let's say that a heart is led (easy for East, a little tougher for West, but certainly a possibility). Declarer wins and needing to find a ninth trick, plays a spade to the king and a spade. Say West wins and returns a heart. Declarer ducks, wins the next heart and now plays on clubs, cashing the king and then taking four club tricks via the marked finesse against West. The last of these clubs will find East down to ♠Q ♥Q ♦Q J 9. Discarding a major suit queen allows declarer to set up a tenth trick in spades, while pitching a diamond gives up a trick in that suit.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

If North starts with 2♠ West will have to consider the merits of an overcall of 3♥. Maybe one should bid on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and Pass on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. (On Sundays you toss a coin.)

If North begins with a Multi 2♦ and South responds with a 'Pass or correct' 2♠ West will have the same problem.

If North is in 2♠ East will lead a top club. There is no need to switch to the ♥K as after three rounds of clubs West is bound to try the ace of hearts, so one way or another the defenders will secure six tricks.

If South is the declarer (after a Multi) and West leads a diamond declarer can get home with two diamonds and six spades.

If West plays in 3♥ and North leads the ♦Q South will probably overtake and switch to a spade, North playing three rounds of the suit allowing South to pitch a club. After that start the defenders are sure to take five tricks.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

If East opens 1♣ West responds 1♠ which, one way or another, leads to the spade game, even after North overcalls 2♥. If East starts with a Strong 1♣ and West responds 1♠ (inverting the responses of 1♠ and INT is very common) then again 4♠ will be reached.

There is nothing to the play, declarer losing two diamonds.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

If North opens 1♠ East overcalls 2♥. South might double (although the lack of high cards in the suits and the vulnerability are concerns) and West will probably bid 2♠ to show a good raise in hearts, which should be enough to see East jump to game.

If North starts with 2♠ East overcalls 3♥ (contrast this overcall with that on Board 13) and West raises to game.

The defenders should collect three tricks - unless South leads a club, which will be expensive in terms of matchpoints.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

If North opens 1NT - 14/16 or 15/17 - 3NT will be reached in short order and the same thing will happen if North starts with a Strong 1♣.

With North as declarer East will lead a spade and there will be nine tricks.

If South is declarer and East has not bid spades West must avoid a low heart lead and must find a spade switch when in with a heart in order to hold declarer to nine tricks.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

If North opens 1♦ South responds 1♥ and North raises to 2♥. If East now competes with a double it will give rise to a scenario where North will have a decision after West bids 2♠.

A double at this point ought to show the type of hand North has and with good defensive cards South has no reason to bid 3♥.

If North starts with 1♣ (nowadays it is very common for this to promise 2+♣) South responds 1♥ as before.

If North opens 1NT - 12/14 or 13/15 - that is likely to end the auction.

If NS play in hearts declarer can take nine tricks. For example, if the defenders start with three rounds of clubs declarer ruffs in dummy, cashes a top heart and plays either a spade or a low diamond, securing an entry to hand in order to take a heart finesse.

If EW play in spades declarer cannot hope for more than seven tricks.

If North plays in 1NT East has an awkward lead. The modern approach of starting with a passive lead - in this case a heart - will be ineffective as declarer will win and play a low diamond, easily arriving at six tricks. However, even if East finds a club lead the defenders may struggle. Suppose West wins and returns a club? East must cash no more than two tricks in the suit and then switch to the nine or ten of spades. Later on East will be able to cross to partner's hand with a club for a spade return.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

If East opens 1♥ - marginal but the current fashion - West responds 1♠. If East rebids 1NT West can use some form of checkback to discover that East has three-card spade support before bidding 4♠.

Were East to start with a mini notrump West would transfer and then jump to 4♠.

If East passes West opens 1♠ and game is reached, perhaps via 1♠-2♥-2♠-3♠-4♠.

On this layout declarer rates to take ten tricks - but if North (or South) fails to lead a heart then eleven will be available.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

There will be some players who open 1♣ with the South hand - North responds 1♠ and then rebids 3NT.

Where South passes if North opens a 15-17 1NT South will look for a heart fit before settling for 3NT.

If North opens 1♣ (not the best Strong 1♣ you will see) and East overcalls 1♦ South will normally bid 1♥ and the partnership should finish up in 3NT.

If East leads a diamond against 3NT declarer wins with the king. Playing a spade at this point allows East to win with the ace and play a second diamond when it is clear declarer cannot take more than nine tricks.

There is a route to ten tricks, declarer crossing to dummy with a club and playing a heart. This is not

without risk, just reverse the location of the major suit aces and you will see that East would win and play a second diamond, setting up five tricks for the defenders.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

If West starts with a 13-15 INT East will look for a major suit fit using whatever methods are to hand and 4♥ will be reached.

If West opens 1♣/1♦ East responds 1♥ with the same outcome.

It's easy to see how declarer can arrive at ten tricks, but if South happens to lead the queen of spades declarer has a shot at an overtrick, although after winning the opening lead and playing a heart for the king and ace North's spade return will give declarer pause for thought.

Board 21. NIS Vul. Dealer North.

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

If North opens 1♣ promising real clubs and East overcalls 1♥ then South might scrape up a raise to 2♣. Otherwise South will pass and West will at the very least bid 2♣ and then raise 2♥ to 3♥ - a very strong invitation that East will decline. (Were South to bid 2♣ West could bid 3♣ but would then need to pass 3♥ - not easy.)

If East does not overcall and South passes, West bids 1♦ and North 1♠. If East is able to double that to show hearts and diamond tolerance then there is a chance EW might be left to play in 2♥. West might also consider overcalling INT, despite the lack of a certain stopper in clubs. That could work very well

as if East asks for a major (or transfers) 2♥ will probably be the final contract.

If North's 1♣ is strong, then East is likely to overcall, one possibility being to bid 1♠ to show two suits of the same rank. West then bids 2♥, promising a good fit there if partner has the majors, but a better one if partner has the minors. If North can double that for take-out South bids 3♣, when West might compete with 3♦, East converting to 3♥.

If EW play in hearts NS have five top tricks that are unlikely to disappear.

NS can take nine tricks in clubs, but how many pairs will play there is hard to say.

Board 22. EIW Vul. Dealer East.

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

If West opens 1♥ and North overcalls 2♣ East will probably raise to 2♥. If South then bids 3♣ West will once again follow *Meckstroth's Law* - 'when partner freely supports your six-card major bid game' - or make a try with 3♦, East converting to 4♥. However, once South has raised clubs North might be willing to risk sacrificing in 5♣. If West goes on to 5♥ competing with 6♣ might still be good depending on how many pairs are allowed to play in 4♥.

Were South to open a 10-12 INT West would overcall according to system. It's hard to predict how things will develop after that, but perhaps it makes it more likely that EW would be left in peace in a heart contract.

There should be ten tricks in a club contract. Playing in hearts the number of tricks will depend on how declarer tackles the diamonds.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

If South starts with INT - 14/16 or 15/17 - then West will want to be able to show the majors, 2♣ being the common way to do that. North will want to get involved - probably via a Lebensohl 2NT or by bidding 2NT (Rubensohl) to show a club suit with at least invitational values.

If East expects partner to have a reasonable hand at this vulnerability then a competitive 3♠ is a possibility.

It's also possible that North might take a view and jump to 3NT, hoping the clubs will run.

Were West to lead a heart against 3NT declarer has nine tricks on top. If West leads a spade declarer takes East's jack with the king and plays six rounds of clubs, coming down to ♠A10 ♥K9 ♦Q8. If West has reduced to ♠Q5 ♥AQ ♦K2 then declarer can play a diamond to the eight after which the best West can do is win and return a diamond, East winning with the ace. Returning a heart gives the defenders two tricks in the suit, but West then has to lead into the spade tenace, while retuning a spade allows declarer to go up with the ace and exit with a spade forcing West to surrender a trick to the ♥K.

Leading a club should leave the defenders one step ahead as West will be able to come down to ♠Q5 ♥AQJ ♦K2 and will always be able to put East in with a diamond. If declarer has kept three hearts then the second diamond will bring about a major suit squeeze on declarer's hand.

If NS play in clubs and South is declarer West has to find the movie-star lead of the ♦K. After ruffing the third round of diamonds West exits with a trump and the defenders must score two more tricks.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

When West opens 1♠ East responds INT and South bids 2♣. If West rebids 2♠ that is likely to end the auction.

The fortunate position in both spades and diamonds should lead to eleven tricks, unless declarer decides to play North for four diamond to the ten!

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

After 1♥ South responds according to system. Game is sure to be reached, but if North takes a rosy view then bidding 6♥ is likely to happen a few times.

If North's opening bid is a Strong 1♣ then a possible sequence is 1♣-1♠*-2♥-3♥-3♠*-4♥, One Spade promising a balanced positive and 3♠ being a cue bid. Once South cannot cue bid in either minor North has little reason to go beyond 4♥.

With the ♦K inside it makes, thereby fulfilling one of Bob Hamman's rules.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

If East opens 1♣/♦ and South overcalls 1♥ West can bid 1♠. If East raises to 2♠ (probably best even if it should show four-card support) West has an easy 4♠ bid.

If South overcalls 2♥ West bids 2♠ and again 4♠ should be reached.

If East starts with a 10-12 or 12-14 INT and South does not overcall then West will transfer to spades and then bid 3♣ on route to 4♠.

If South does overcall, perhaps with a Multi Landy 2♦ West will use whatever methods are to hand (some partnerships use a double as Stayman) eventually landing in 4♠.

Say North leads a club against 4♠?

Declarer wins in hand and plays the ten of diamonds, North winning and switching to a heart. South wins and returns a club and declarer wins in dummy, pitches two clubs on diamonds and then plays a spade, when the appearance of the king speeds up the play.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

If South opens 1♣ West overcalls 1♦. Opposite real clubs North might jump to 3♣ but facing what might be a doubleton or three-card suit North will probably bid INT.

If South starts with 1♦, Precision style, West will be stymied and North will probably bid INT, although some partnerships play a response of 2♣ as simply

promising 4+♣ and 10+ an agreement that would work well here.

Some partnerships might have a three-suited opening available. In *The Mysterious Multi* Jan Van Cleeff and I explain the use of 2♥ to show a limited hand of that type. Here North would respond with 3♣, to play opposite clubs.

If NS find a way to play in clubs, nine tricks are assured, but declarer may do better. For example if West starts with two rounds of diamonds declarer ruffs and has more than one way to secure ten tricks. Playing three rounds of hearts, aiming for a cross ruff will work, as at some point West will be endplayed - either in spades or both spades and trumps depending on how West elects to defend. Another winning line is to play a trump to dummy at trick three and then take the heart finesse, declarer continuing with hearts, cross-ruffing s and eventually endplaying West. Alternatively declarer can ruff a diamond after crossing to dummy and then play hearts, planning to ruff dummy's last diamond.

To prevent this from happening West needs to find a low trump lead, which is virtually impossible.

If East is on lead and happens to start with a spade West wins with the king and plays two rounds of diamonds. Declarer ruffs, crosses to dummy with a trump and at some point will need to take the heart finesse to be in a position to take ten tricks.

If North plays in INT a diamond lead from East (assuming West has overcalled) allows the defenders to take the first six tricks - East switches to a spade at trick four - and West will then exit with a club. Declarer wins, plays a spade to the queen and spade to the ace. At this point dummy should have ♠6 ♥AKJ and cashing the second top club will squeeze East.

Were East to lead a heart declarer could win with dummy's ten and perhaps play a low spade, but as long as West goes in with the king and switches to a low diamond the defenders will still collect six tricks.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

When West opens 1♠ East responds INT. I would say the West hand is awkward to describe via natural methods - 2♥ starts to get the shape across, but is not forcing while 3♠ conveys the playing strength, but probably loses the heart suit.

Methods have been devised to try and solve this type of problem - one is for the opener to use transfer rebids - here West would bid 2♦ to show hearts and could then jump in spades to show the 6-4.

Another convention that is rapidly gaining in popularity is Gazzilli, where opener rebids 2♣ with all strong hands.

If West is using natural methods, then rebidding 3♠ invites game - whether or not East will raise is hard to say.

If West is able to start with a Strong 1♣ East responds 1♦ and West rebids 1♠. If East now bids INT West will have the same problem I have already outlined.

Obviously with these cards you want to reach 4♠ as everyone will take eleven tricks.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

If North opens 1♣ South responds 1♥. In old fashioned Acol North could now jump to 3NT to show 19-20 and a balanced hand (perhaps the best description despite the four-card spade suit). However, that consumes a lot of space and may mean that South has to rely on a degree of guesswork. Another approach is use a rebid of 2NT to promise 18-19 points, reserving 3NT for hands with a running suit.

(Of course, most Acol players would open the North hand 1♠ and then be able to rebid a forcing 2NT over 2♥.)

There are some partnerships that play an opening bid of 2NT promises 19-20 points - that would probably work well here.

If North is able to start with a Strong 1♣ South responds 1♥ and will already be thinking in terms of possible slam.

The key to bidding a grand slam on these cards is the heart fit, specifically North's ♥AQ.

Is it possible for South to discover the position?

After 1♣-1♥-2NT-3♥-4♥ South can ask for key cards and discover that North has 2 aces and the ♥Q. That will probably be enough for most players to bid 7♥ or 7NT.

A strong club pair might have a similar sequence.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

After East opens 1♠ West will raise according to system, perhaps going via a Forcing or Semi-forcing INT. Were the bidding to start 1♠-INT-3♠ West might bid 4♦ (a cue bid for spades) but I'm not sure that would be enough for East to bid a slam.

An Acol pair would be much better placed as West could respond 2♦ and after 1♠-2♦-3♠ it is possible to bid 4♥, a cue bid in support of spades, which should ensure that 6♠ (or even 6NT) is reached.

If East is able to open a Strong 1♣ the auction might proceed 2♦-2♠-3♠ after which East can ask for key cards.

Board 31. NIS Vul. Dealer South.

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

If West opens 1♠ North will probably overcall 2♣, despite the lack of a sixth club and the vulnerability. I don't think the East hand is good enough for a negative double, but if East makes one West will either rebid 3♠ (when East will be doing very well to bid 3NT) or make a very aggressive call of 3♣ when East is sure to bid 3NT.

Where East passes West might rebid 3♠ - now East might be more inclined to try for the nine-trick game.

If West starts with a Strong 1♣ North is likely to overcall - perhaps 1♠ to show two suits of the same rank and when East doubles South can bid 2♦, saying I prefer diamonds to clubs but have a better fit in a major. West bids 2♠ and if East bids 2NT (that might be a big 'if') West will go on to game.

It looks as if 3NT will make easily, but suppose South leads a club and North wins with the king and continues with the ♦K, followed by the eight? Declarer should not go wrong, but you never know.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

If West opens 1♣ East responds 1♦ and rebids 2♦ when West will bid 3NT.

A pair playing a Strong 1♣ might bid 1♣-2♦-2NT-3NT.

What should North lead against 3NT?

After a 'fourth best of your longest and strongest' club, declarer wins with the queen and runs the jack of diamonds. South ducks and now declarer can play the ten of spades. North wins (it would be brave to duck when declarer would be doing well to continue with the ace of spades) and switches to a heart. Declarer wins in hand and now plays the jack of spades, noting North's nine, and overtaking it with dummy's queen. Declarer now plays two rounds of diamonds, disposing of the ace of spades and a heart and comes to ten tricks.

The best lead (the one that should restrict declarer to nine tricks) is a heart - not easy if West has rebid 1♥ - when declarer wins, runs the jack of diamonds and then plays the ten of spades. North wins, plays a second heart and South wins and plays a club which should ensure four tricks for the defence.