

Canada Olympiad Fund Game—Monday evening, October 22nd, 2012—Set 89199

Analysis by Barry Rigal

Board: 1

Dealer: N
Vul: None

♠ Q 8 5
♥ Q 7
♦ Q 10 6 4
♣ A K 7 3

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

♠ J 10 9 6
♥ 9
♦ A K 5 2
♣ Q 10 8 5

When North opens a minor suit South will consider the chances of a minor-suit game for his side. Game IS on — but for E/W in 4♥, a contract they are unlikely to attempt under their own steam, except as an advance sacrifice. In practice N/S may declare a partscore in a minor, and register anywhere between +110 and -100 for so doing. Even a small minus would probably matchpoint respectably for N/S, since many E/W pairs will buy the hand in heart partscores while some will be doubled. If North opens a weak no-trump, might some Wests sell out altogether? I suppose so.

Board: 2

Dealer: E
Vul: N-S

♠ Q 10
♥ Q J 10 9
♦ 5 4 2
♣ K Q 10 4

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

♠ 8 6 5
♥ 5
♦ A K 10 7 6
♣ A J 8 6

When South opens 1♦ aggressive Wests will double (you'd be happier to make that call on a balanced hand without that slow defensive trick in diamonds — switch the minors for example). That might persuade E/W to compete to at least 2♠. The defenders must arrange to lead and continue the attack on hearts to hold East to seven tricks there — not so hard to do. If West passes initially, you'd expect N/S to finish in a club partscore, where +110 should be the absolutely normal result, one way or another.

Board: 3

Dealer: S
Vul: E-W

♠ Q J 7 6
♥ A K Q
♦ K 10 7
♣ J 10 9

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

♠ A 5 4
♥ J 9
♦ 8 5 2
♣ A K 6 4 3

If South opens a weak no-trump, he will play 3NT, perhaps via Stayman. The same result comes from a 1♣ opening bid and 1♠ response, though here South may well produce a three-card spade raise. North should find the play easier than South, since on a heart lead declarer finesses first clubs then spades painlessly. If 3NT is played by South on a diamond lead the defenders are in position to cash out the suit, and now some declarers will not risk the spade finesse and take only 10 tricks. Of course, some Wests will pitch spades prematurely and concede 12 tricks.

Board: 4

Dealer: W
Vul: Both

♠ K 9 7 5 2
♥ K 9 7
♦ K 10 7 6
♣ 8

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

♠ 8
♥ A J 8 3 2
♦ Q 8
♣ K J 7 3 2

N/S will generally reach hearts; but in game or partscore — and can they make game if they get there? After a weak no-trump by East, South rates to show hearts or a two-suiter but will reject any invitation from North. If East opens 1♦ then maybe South will overcall 2NT to show hearts and clubs; now surely North will jump to 4♥. Best defense to 4♥ is a trump lead. It looks natural for North to win, for a club play, but when East wins the ♣A to put a second trump on the table, the contract must fail. To bring home ten tricks declarer needs to play on diamonds not clubs.

Board: 5

Dealer: N
Vul: N-S

♠ 9 5 4 3 2
♥ A Q 10 7 4
♦ J 10
♣ 8

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

♠ K Q 10 6
♥ 8
♦ 5 2
♣ Q J 10 9 7 3

When North passes and East opens a strong no-trump it feels too dangerous for South to come in at unfavourable vulnerability. Accordingly West will get to drive his hand to game (maybe with a jump to 3♠ to show both minors and short spades, letting East bid 3NT). On a top spade lead East ducks, and wins the club shift to set up a heart trick for his ninth winner. With diamonds 2-2 there are also 11 tricks available in 5♦ — though care may be necessary on a heart lead. If East opens 1♦ South might overcall 2♣, but 3NT still looks to be the likely final destination.

Board: 6

Dealer: E
Vul: E-W

♠ J
♥ K 10 9
♦ K Q 8 3 2
♣ K 10 8 6

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

♠ 5
♥ A Q 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A 6
♣ 9 4

Some will open the East cards 3♠, some 4♠ — disciplined passers are becoming a dying breed. Whatever number of spades East selects, South will overcall in hearts, West must raise the ante, and North gets the tough decision. Over 4♠ he can hardly do anything but bid 5♥, over 5♠ he might double and try for a penalty of 500 — which he will surely collect. Against South's heart contract, after West leads a top spade he should surely shift to the ♣Q to allow the defenders to take their three winners.

Board: 7

Dealer: S
Vul: Both

♠ 8 2
♥ A K J 10 6 3
♦ 7 6 3
♣ 9 8

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

♠ J 10 9 5
♥ 5
♦ A 10 4 2
♣ A J 10 5

Leaping Michaels, what sins have been committed in your name! In olden days after North opens 2♥, East would overcall 2♠, and that would end the bidding. The defenders have the upper hand, since declarer cannot successfully ruff clubs in dummy, though South must duck the ♦A once. But nowadays some Easts will overbid by a trick or two, jumping to 4♣ to show their black two-suiter, and finish up in 4♠ — possibly doubled — and down at least two tricks. Life in so many respects is three steps forward and two back ...

Board: 8

Dealer: W
Vul: None

♠ K 9 7 6 2
♥ 9 7 3
♦ 8 7
♣ A 7 2

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

♠ Q
♥ Q 4 2
♦ A J 6
♣ K J 10 9 8 4

When West opens 1♠ and East responds 1NT, South will overcall 2♣. That lets West rebid 2♥ and North raise to 3♣. West now can pass, re-open with a double, rebid hearts, or find an intellectual 3♦ call. This last is the winner, in theory; with the hearts lying so well, declarer cannot be prevented from coming to nine tricks — if he wins the trump lead and finesses the ♥J or if he plays a crossruff. 3♥ will also come home on the ♣A lead, so long as West uses his diamond entry to take a trump finesse. Eventually South gets endplayed to concede a club trick to dummy.

Board: 9Dealer: N
Vul: E-W

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

The vulnerability could affect East's actions here. After a 1♦ opening from North, East should content himself with a 1♠ overcall, planning to come again. When South doubles and North rebids 1NT, that will let East take it gently with a 2♠ call. That gives South a real problem, but passing is probably the most sensible option. The defenders can score five plain-suit winners and a trump trick for +100; a good result for N/S in abstract, but some E/W pairs will get higher and do worse.

Board: 13Dealer: N
Vul: Both

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

Very few Norths will open here, so South will open 1♠ in third seat, letting West decide whether to pass, double, or even to overcall 1NT without a proper stopper. If he stays silent, N/S rate to play a partscore; 2NT can be defeated on a heart lead, diamonds makes a painless +130, and top score goes to a spade contract, where the 3-3 trump break lets South bring home +170. If West comes into his opponents' auction, E/W can take seven tricks in hearts; you'd expect to see quite a few N/S pairs collecting +200 one way or another.

Board: 10Dealer: E
Vul: Both

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

If ever there was a deal that demonstrated why not to open 2NT on off-center hands, this is it. At many tables West will get to open 2NT and be transferred into 4♥ for +680. If East opens 2♥ he can make 6♥ on a spade lead, (fly with the ♠A, draw two rounds of trump, then play on clubs to pitch the spade loser) but might well not do so. However if West opens 1♣ and reverses into diamonds, could E/W find their way to 7♣? This needs a normal heart break and nothing too unpleasant in trumps, but it comes home today – as does 6NT or 6♥ by West.

Board: 14Dealer: E
Vul: None

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

Whether South opens a weak no-trump or 1♣ West will overcall in hearts, and N/S rate to find a way to compete to 3♣. The cards lie badly for them, and if the defenders can find the unlikely spade ruff, E/W can take six tricks on defense. However, the cards lie exceptionally well for West in hearts. If declarer uses one of his dummy entries to play a diamond to the king, he can collect ten tricks. While virtually no one will bid game on these cards, quite a few pairs may be doubled in heart partscores.

Board: 11Dealer: S
Vul: None

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

Predicting near unanimous auctions is a mug's game, but unless South opens 1NT and plays there (for +150 on a spade lead?) the standard sequence will see South open 1♠ and be raised to 2♠, to end the bidding. On the defense of two top diamonds followed by a heart shift, South will arrange to play a spade to the queen then ruff a diamond in dummy, losing two diamonds and two spades. Some Souths may lose an extra trump trick by playing East for the doubleton ♠K, but they rate to be the exception not the rule.

Board: 15Dealer: S
Vul: N-S

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

After South opens 1♥ in third seat West must double and now North should bid 1NT, suggesting 7-10 or so, to end the bidding. While the defenders can lead diamonds, allowing West to overtake to shift to spades to set up two more winners for his side, only psychic defenders will manage that! Far more probable is for West to overtake his partner's lead of ♦Q and continue the suit, holding his side to just four tricks on defense. Overtricks always seem to matter at pairs, but they are going to be especially valuable on this deal.

Board: 12Dealer: W
Vul: N-S

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

If N/S have an unopposed auction (improbable, these days) South will show the minors, North figures to give weak preference to diamonds, and South will make one try for game. That should result in his side reaching 4♥ rather than 3NT or 5♦ – though you never know If East either opens or overcalls in spades, as will surely happen at more tables than not, N/S ought to be warned off playing 3NT. While 4♥ looks easy, imagine the defenders lead three rounds of spades. If declarer ruffs in hand to take a heart finesse, then a fourth spade promotes a second trump for E/W.

Board: 16Dealer: W
Vul: E-W

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

If North overcalls 1♠ over 1♦ then West will reach 3NT after a negative double by East, and North might look for another opening lead. Whatever he selects, the defenders are heavy favourites to collect just their two heart winners. By contrast, if North does not bid he is more likely to lead an unfortunate spade. Now declarer could simply run clubs from the top or try something more devious, by playing the ♦A then ♦Q, and next running the ♥Q. If North ducks, or wins and does not continue hearts, South falls victim to a heart-club squeeze.

Board: 17

Dealer: N
Vul: None

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

Two balanced hands with 29 HCP are not normally in the slam zone but there are quite a lot of quick tricks available to N/S here when the club suit behaves so favourably. Having said that, it is still necessary to find the ♦Q to take 12 tricks in clubs or no-trump, emphasizing what a poor slam 6♣ or 6NT would be. And here N/S rate to have a strong no-trump raised to game, with North not looking for slam. +460 or +490 for N/S may be one of the quieter results of the day.

Board: 21

Dealer: N
Vul: N-S

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

Vulnerable, few will open that North hand, unless playing Acol or a strong club. When North passes, one would expect East to open 1♣ and West to respond 1♥. If North overcalls in spades might East simply jump in clubs and bypass diamonds? Either way, West rates to declare 3NT, with overtricks the sole concern. A spade lead holds West to 400, but on a heart lead West can win in hand and let the ♣10 run when North discards; a heart return still holds declarer to nine tricks, a spade shift gives West a precious overtrick.

Board: 18

Dealer: E
Vul: N-S

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

West must open 1♥ in third seat, and then East is on the cusp of a Drury inquiry to show a maximum pass and trump support. In favour of aggression is the side suit, against it is the bad trump holding. West might go directly to game opposite Drury, but may not even invite game facing a simple raise. 4♥ is quite playable, but with both red-suits failing to behave E/W would do well to stay low; in fact, nine tricks could be a struggle if declarer misguesses trumps. There will be some N/S pairs who get into trouble; equally, the odd E/W pairs will reach 3NT.

Board: 22

Dealer: E
Vul: E-W

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

When West opens 1♥ in third seat North will bounce to 4♠, and West must re-open with 5♣. That will come back to South, who has a choice between passing, bidding 5♠, or introducing a lead-directing 5♦ call. That would be a bright idea today: North must start with a diamond rather than a spade if East bids on to 6♣ — as well he might, if he trusts his partner's 5♣ call to be based on a powerhouse. With 6♠ a 300 sacrifice (less than the opponents' game) it is very hard to predict the normal result here.

Board: 19

Dealer: S
Vul: E-W

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

When East doubles North's 1♠, South should bid only 3♠ not 4♠ because of his flat side-suit shape and soft potential tricks outside trumps. 3♠ rates to become the final contract, and the defenders have to be very careful to insure their five winners. The easiest way to get the fifth trick is to play three rounds of diamonds at once; then East can get in with the ♣A and lead a fourth diamond. Since E/W can make 4♠, but not 5♣, the travelers rate to be all over the place, with any plus score likely to matchpoint respectably.

Board: 23

Dealer: S
Vul: Both

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

Would you bid the unusual no-trump as West over 1♥, or would you overcall 2♦ then bid clubs next? Either approach makes sense, but here E/W's target will be to buy the hand in clubs as cheaply as possible, rather than falling into the trap of doubling N/S on their combined 18 HCP. The fact remains that if North jumps pre-emptively to 4♠ and South raises him in competition, they cannot be stopped from taking 11 tricks. Absolute par is for E/W to save in 6♣ for -500; yet again, scores will be all over the map.

Board: 20

Dealer: W
Vul: Both

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

The auction here could feature a couple of unusual calls: after East opens 1♣ in third seat South will overcall 1♥. Now West can produce a fit-jump to 2♠, showing five spades and real club support, and North can retaliate by jumping to 4♣, a splinter in support of hearts (4♦ would also be a fit-jump but need a better suit than this). If East bids 4♠ he will put his partner in a makeable contract, but N/S may well bid on to 5♥, which can be beaten two tricks on the diamond ruff. 5♣ can only be set by the spade ruff — which nobody will find ... will they?

Board: 24

Dealer: W
Vul: None

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

Although E/W might pick a good moment to get in their opponents' faces by bidding and raising hearts, most N/S pairs figure to have an unopposed 'reversing' auction starting: 1♣ - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♠, the latter call showing a semi-solid suit or better. North can cuebid 4♥ or use Keycard Blackwood, then find the ♣K and can now count 13 tricks at no-trump. 7NT should fetch N/S a 90% board at all but the very strongest of clubs. It is far harder for South to show these precise values when the opponents come into the bidding.

Board: 25Dealer: N
Vul: E-W

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

In third seat few Souths will pass — although some will preempt to 2♠ and some will open 1♠ (put me in the latter camp, for what it is worth). If South opens 2♠ North rates to raise directly or in competition to 3♠. After a 1♠ opening North will use Drury and may be allowed to steal the hand in 2♠. In a spade contract almost every sensible line results in South emerging with eight tricks. Meanwhile, E/W can make partscores in both minors so small plusses rate to be the order of the day.

Board: 29Dealer: N
Vul: Both

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

In fourth seat even five-card majorities may open 1♥ not 1♦, since the last thing you want is to open a minor and be raised. If West opens a red-suit he will raise 1♠ to 2♠. Now East is not worth another call; with his values in his short suits he has no safety at the three level, even facing a known four-card raise. The final result may not prove anything, because 4♠ is terrible (it needs spades 2-2 with the ace onside, and might still go down on a trump promotion in clubs even if this were so) but it is cold today.

Board: 26Dealer: E
Vul: Both

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

N/S should bid: 1♠ - 1NT - 3♠ - 3NT. South will have no reason not to pass now, and on a diamond lead North will win in dummy, then drive out the ♠K. West can do little now but exit with a third spade, and the fight will then be on to hold declarer to 10 tricks rather than 11. If North reads the position he ought to emerge with 660, and a fine score. In fact, only an opening club lead by East gives the defenders a chance at four tricks. Meanwhile, 4♠ by South is doomed on a diamond lead.

Board: 30Dealer: E
Vul: None

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

After South opens 1♦, West will double and North can either pass, or bid 1♠. East now has a choice of jumping to 3♣ or making a simple bid of 2♣, but either way South rates to compete to 3♦ — an action that works both as semi-preemptive or invitational, since South has a hand that might qualify for either meaning. It will be hard for West to bid on to 4♣ — because that would surely promise a far better hand. So the final contract at many tables is going to be a diamond partscore, making nine tricks. If E/W can collect 130 from 4♣ they will do extremely well.

Board: 27Dealer: S
Vul: None

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

East rates to become declarer in 1NT, either by opening and closing the auction with that call, or after opening 1♦ and hearing a 1♥ response. If however East rebids 1♠ it will be West declaring 1NT. Against 1NT South has a horrible lead problem — he is in essence endplayed at trick one. In contrast, North can at least play from one of his sequences, but the defenders will still find themselves forced to concede at least one trick sooner or later. While at double-dummy E/W can take nine tricks, you'd expect +120 to be as common as +150 here.

Board: 31Dealer: S
Vul: N-S

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

At favourable vulnerability most Wests will steel themselves to overcall 1♠ over 1♦. Now whether North dredges up a double or not, East rates to take a shot at 4♠. After a diamond lead declarer should win and return the suit. South can only exit in hearts — the ♥Q looks best. Declarer wins, draws two rounds of trump and plays a third heart. North must win and shift to a club; if West guesses to put up the ace, he can then ruff out the hearts and endplay South with a trump to give a ruff and discard.

Board: 28Dealer: W
Vul: N-S

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

N/S have a decent play for 4♠ if they can hold their trump losers to one, but on the actual lie of the cards, nine tricks are the limit. If North opens, then N/S will surely end in game, but even if North passes initially, a Drury auction may see South invite game and North accept. With a combined 25 HCP and a nice fit, the reason why game is so poor is the combination of bad trump spots and the wasted values in hearts. Any pair who can collect +140 as N/S rate to have done very well here.

Board: 32Dealer: W
Vul: E-W

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

After two passes East will open 1♣ and South will overcall 1♥. Now West should probably pass — even if you play 2♠ as weak, this is not the right hand on which to make the call. North is worth a cue-bid raise to 2♣ and now South will bid 2♦ as a game-try and maybe North can find the winning move of a natural call of 2NT. South can then raise to 3NT, where declarer can establish two diamonds and a spade if he goes after the minor suit first. 4♥ can be defeated on a spade lead by the two club ruffs, after which the defenders still have a slow diamond trick to come.