



The 2023 Celtic Simultaneous Pairs

Wednesday 6th December

We are so pleased to welcome you once again to the Celtic Simultaneous Pairs, supporting the Celtic Nations. Funds raised will be used to support bridge within your own Bridge Union, whether that is the Scottish, Welsh, Northern Ireland or Irish Bridge Union.

We really hope you enjoyed the event and found the hands fun and challenging. Hopefully the commentators managed to get it right but by now you will be able to judge that for yourself!

We hope you will all take care, stay safe and well and – since we are now in December – we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Anna Gudge,
Simultaneous Pairs Organiser
on behalf of the SBU, WBU, NIBU and IBU

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

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

When North opens one spade, South has a borderline raise to three spades, which North ought to pass (though there are those who regard any invitation as acceptable). With the cards lying poorly for declarer, eight tricks are the limit of the hand on careful defence. Those who treat all 5-3-3-2 shapes as balanced and open a weak no trump will get a plus score in that contract – indeed, on the normal diamond lead they may well take eight tricks for a very fine score indeed.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Whether South opens INT or 1♥, his side should reach four hearts one way or another. There are no problems of any kind in the play – the defence can't fail to come to two diamonds and a heart – and I am tempted to predict that the Board will be flat across the entire country at 620 for North-South. Of course, it never works out like that in practice.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

South's weak no trump opening will set a problem for East-West, who will do well to discover their heart fit (perhaps West can use a convention that shows hearts and another suit). If East-West do reach four hearts, where they can take eleven tricks on best play and defence, North-South may sacrifice in four spades, where the play will be convoluted. East-West can in fact obtain a penalty of 800, but only if North is declarer and only if East leads a trump other than the jack.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

South has an awkward call if North's one spade opening is overcalled by East with two diamonds. Passing and hoping for a reopening double will bring in 500 if North produces one. Bidding 2NT, or passing and removing North's reopening 2♥ to 2NT may lead to a final contract of four spades, in which North can score 620 if he plays double dummy (and if East does not lead a club other than the ace to trick one). But a North-South pair who obtains a plus score of any kind will do well on this complicated hand.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

If East opens a weak no trump, West will need to decide whether to close proceedings in 4♥ (perhaps via a transfer) or to look for a 4-4 spade fit. At pairs, it is probably best to follow the latter course – indeed, eleven tricks in spades can be made with careful play, but only ten in hearts. If you do arrive in hearts, it is important here to make the correct technical play in the suit, which is low to the ten on the first round.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

South's four aces (undervalued by the traditional 4-3-2-1 point count) suggest upgrading his hand to a 2NT opening, which North will raise to game. But the hands fit miserably for North-South, who cannot even make one no trump on best defence. Even those cautious Souths who open 1♥ will obtain a minus one way or another if North raises, a reasonable action. A small minus will score well for North-South in any case; a plus score will be close to a top.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

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

A final contract of four spades by North is the likely outcome, though if East risks a 2♥ overcall and is doubled for penalty, he will not enjoy the play. North can come to eleven tricks in spades by straightforward means – he may make a twelfth if East does not lead the ace of hearts or his trump, for what will be a very fine score indeed.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

West's weak no trump will be raised to game by East, and North will face a familiar dilemma – whether to lead a high spade or a low one. Most players will lead low, and provided that West remembers to put up dummy's jack, will regret their choice as declarer takes eleven easy tricks. Those who lead high will beat the contract unless West wins the second round of the suit, creating a blockage, but will score very well for holding declarer to ten tricks in any case.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

There are some Easts who will open the bidding with a weak no trump, and the immunity of such persons from swift and awful death is a striking proof of God's mercy to them that hate Him. West will raise to 3NT via a Stayman sequence, and South will not usually lead a spade, so declarer will make a couple of overtricks. When East opens with a civilised 1♣, West will bid a red suit, North will bid 1♠ and East-West had better head for 5♣, where they will score poorly, rather than 3NT where they will score dreadfully. Crime, as your grandmother probably omitted to tell you, pays.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

If East is tempted to open three diamonds, he will learn the error of his ways, for South will double and North will pass and the play will be unedifying. After a more orthodox one diamond, a furious auction will ensue in which everyone will at some stage overbid, but the upshot is likely to be a contract of four hearts by North-South. That will make comfortably enough, and 620 will be perhaps a little over average for the pairs who obtain it.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

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

The problem for East-West here is to diagnose (a) that there will be as many tricks in no trumps as in spades and (b) that a grand slam is not a good bet. With only eleven top tricks, even a friendly minor-suit lead will leave declarer guessing where to find a thirteenth winner, though a heart lead will give the show away at once. Those who play in 6NT and make it will score well enough; those who bid a grand slam and make it are going to be frightfully unlucky in love.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

East-West should enjoy an uninterrupted auction to four spades here. They won't, because despite the vulnerability and despite North's original pass, some Souths will charge into the auction with 2NT after East's opening bid. Nothing terrible will happen to them on this occasion, which is a pity, because they will only do it again next time. Four spades will make ten tricks pretty much everywhere, though at double-dummy East can make an eleventh on any lead but a spade.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

North may open a weak no trump and East may overcall two spades, setting something of a problem for West. Without any kind of spade fit, prudence dictates a pass, and 140 will be a decent score for East-West. A good idea when partner overcalls 1NT with two of a major is to use 2NT as a game try; if West does that, East's signoff in 3♠ will come just in time. If West blasts 3NT, as players will, a club lead will defeat that contract.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

East has a borderline opening bid, but whether he opens or not, North-South are likely to drive their cards to four spades. This is a poor contract in any case, and on this lie of cards it will suffer a horrible fate – ace of diamonds, diamond ruff, club, diamond ruff, and two more clubs will give South cause to wish he had stayed in bed. If North becomes declarer, he may escape relatively unscathed. Despite their 25 high-card points, most North-Souths will go minus, and those who don't concede 300 will not score badly.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

North-South may bid unopposed to two diamonds via 1♦-INT-2♦, but perhaps West will enter the auction at his first or second turn (the latter being safer once the opponents have conducted a limited sequence). East-West can't make much of anything and North-South can make nine tricks in diamonds easily enough – the difficulty may come if West's enterprise encourages East to double three diamonds should his opponents be pushed there. If you do score -670 as East-West, don't worry – you are playing good aggressive pairs bridge, which will win in the long run.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

An awkward combination for East-West here – West will open 1♥ and North, if playing weak jump overcalls, has a comfortable 3♦. That will more or less foist 3♠ on East, and West will doubtless raise to four, but this contract will not play particularly well. If East-West can stop below game, or if they can go plus defending against diamonds, they will reap a large number of matchpoints for their efforts.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

After North opens 1♦ and South responds 1♠. North's most practical rebid is INT, which South should simply raise to game rather than looking for a 5-3 spade fit. That will make a comfortable ten tricks on a club lead, and outscore the pairs who do reach game in spades. If after winning the ace of clubs, West heroically switches to a spade, North can still make ten tricks by playing on that suit rather than diamonds. 430 will be an average – more or less will score very well or very badly.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

A disciple of Harrison-Gray might open a weak no trump on the South cards – “all those tens, partner”. That will be doubled, passed out, and go for 200, tens being no real substitute for aces and kings. Otherwise, West will open 1♦ and have an awkward decision should East respond INT, with pass being the clear winner here. If 1♦ is passed round to South, his reopening double will lead to INT by North, likely down one. Any plus score will be worth plenty of matchpoints to the side that obtains it.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Some Norths will overcall 2♥ when West opens 1♠ – that may have the effect of pushing East-West too high if East chooses to compete with a negative double. Otherwise, West is likely to come to rest in 2♠, which ought to be his rebid at pairs after East responds INT to the opening bid. Even that is too high on the normal heart lead – with no quick entry to dummy, West will be compelled to start spades from his hand, and more rounds of hearts will promote three spade tricks for the defenders to go with two clubs and a heart. Those who do rebid 2♣ will on this occasion, but not many others, have much the best of it.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

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

West has a borderline raise to 3♠ after East opens 1♠, but there is less of a case for aggressive invitational actions at pairs, especially facing a third-seat opening bid. No great harm will come to those who do arrive at the three level, though – declarer can win South's club lead, cash a second club and play two rounds of trumps. Now the defenders cannot come to the two diamond tricks they superficially appear to have, and a relieved declarer will struggle home. Much more comfortable, though, to stay at the two level.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

North-South are likely to reach four spades one way or another here, and East-West have the opportunity for some fancy footwork in defence. East can overtake his partner's lead of ♥K with the ace, give West a club ruff (choosing the highest spot in his hand for the purpose) and will his partner to have the courage to underlead in hearts for a second ruff. At teams, this defence would be close to automatic – at pairs, though, one is reluctant to risk looking very foolish. If East-West do emerge with plus 100, though, they will have earned their top.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

East may or may not open 1♥, but North-South will come to rest in some number of spades whatever happens. A lot of matchpoints will swing on how many spades – with the favourable position of ♦Q, game can be made easily enough, though not everyone will bid it. After South raises 1♠ to 3♠, North won't really have much idea how well the hands fit, and his decision to pass or bid is not an easy one – especially on this set of deals, where just about every pushy game so far has gone down.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Routine for North-South to bid their cards to 3NT, but the play will be far from straightforward. Declarer can, at double dummy, always come to nine tricks and no more, but a heart lead from East if North is declarer after 1♣-1♦-1♠-INT-3NT will allow a tenth, as will any error by the defence on other leads. Plus 630 will be about a 75% Board for North-South, minus 600 above average for East-West.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

North-South can make game in hearts despite their low point-count, but East-West will bid a lot of spades and may well sacrifice should North-South reach game. If that happens, though, the defenders can take three diamonds and switch to clubs, earning a penalty of 500 and a top score. There's no point moaning that North-South can make ten tricks with nine trumps, so East-West ought to be able to make nine tricks with ten trumps for a good save. The Law of Total Tricks is not yet on the statute books.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

Another deal on which North-South will bid a lot of hearts and East-West a lot of spades. Superficially, East has five losers in a spade contract – but the remarkable club position allows him to set up dummy's ♣Q to discard one of them, so if East-West do bid to four spades despite the vulnerability, North-South need to go on to five hearts, which can be made. Twenty one trumps this time, twenty tricks. Almost legal.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

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

East's weak no trump will be overcalled with 2♥, and West's 2♠ will see South compete with 3♣ and be put back to 3♥ by North, over which South should resist the temptation to do any more bidding. That's in an ideal world – in practice, some Souths may get carried away by their distribution and stray into minus 500 territory, for even three hearts is too high on this layout. Any small minus for North-South should score well, any plus will do very nicely indeed.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Another battle between the hearts and the spades. East-West can make nine tricks with their nine trumps – can North-South do the same with theirs? No, for if East crosses to West's ♦Q for one club ruff and his ♥A for another one, the defenders can come to five tricks. We live in a Lawless society. Bring back flogging, is what I say. No one will actually play this hand at the three level, of course, and those who concede the smallest penalties will receive the largest matchpoint scores.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

If West opens the bidding, it's going to be hard to keep East out of 3NT. The auction may steer South away from a spade lead – if he chooses clubs, the unbid suit, his side can defeat the game if they play attentively thereafter. Even a heart or a high diamond will work. If West passes, and settles for an invitational sequence after East's weak no trump, his partner will score 120 or perhaps 150 in 2NT for a fine matchpoint reward. As often in this set, aggression in the near-game zone does not pay.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

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

East-West have the majors, but the deal belongs to North-South, who can make game in clubs while their opponents can't make more than a partscore in anything. Indeed, even the three level is too high for East-West, who will do well to retire from the fray early. Can North-South bid to five clubs? If North opens the bidding, perhaps they can – if you did, you will be rewarded with a huge score.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

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

East-West have an awful lot of winners, but a couple of losers. North-South don't have very much, but what they do have is enough to assemble ten tricks in spades. I have no idea how the bidding will, or ought to, proceed on this deal – a not unlikely start is 1♣ by East, 3♠ by South, 3NT by West, pass (content for the moment) by North, 4♥ by East, pass, pass, 4♠... after that, you're on your own. If you played in five hearts and lost a couple of club ruffs as well as a couple of diamonds, you have my sympathy (and a bottom).

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

West will double South's 1♦ opening, and North ought just to raise diamonds rather than bid spades. East-West are likely to come to rest in 4♥, and North can save an overtrick if he gives South a spade ruff at trick one, which ought to be worth a lot of matchpoints. If North-South are crazy enough to bid to the five level, vulnerable against not, they will be rewarded with -200 if South does not guess the diamonds and +750 if he does. If you admire justice, bridge is not the game for you.

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Most roads will lead to 3NT by South here – he ought to bid that even if West starts with an attenuated weak 2♥ and East raises to 3♥. The play will be a straightforward enough affair – the defenders will either get their three diamond tricks or (far more likely) they won't. If North-South play in spades, three rounds of diamonds is again the most effective defence, holding declarer to ten tricks rather than eleven. 460 will be good for North-South, anything less won't score all that well.