



Commentary
for the
IBU Autumn Simultaneous Pairs
Friday 8th November 2024

Dear Bridge Player,

Thank you very much for playing in the IBU Simultaneous Pairs 2024, and for supporting the Irish Bridge Union (IBU).

As you probably know, the IBU is the confederation of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Bridge Union, and has responsibility, on an all-Ireland basis, for sending teams to represent Ireland at World and European competitions. Within the past twelve months there have been two such competitions, and the IBU sent four teams to the European Championships in Denmark, and three to the World Bridge Games in Argentina. The costs of such competitions, like most costs these days, are increasing significantly, so your support for this Simultaneous Pairs, and for the various live competitions run during the season by the IBU, is greatly appreciated.

We hope that you enjoyed the chance to test yourself against your fellow players across Ireland (and for those still playing online, maybe overseas as well). As always, the hands (which are randomly generated by computer with no manual intervention whatsoever) provided plenty of difficult decisions. Many thanks to our expert commentators Randal Milne (Monday), Thomas MacCormac (Tuesday), Paul Delaney (Wednesday), Brian Senior (Thursday), and Enda Murphy (Friday) for their guidance through the maze. I hope that you have picked up some useful tips from their advice. For Tuesday night, Thomas has done his commentary in a series of videos rather than as a written commentary, which is a new departure for us; we hope you'll like it, and would welcome your feedback.

Don't forget to check your standing in the national results at www.ecatsbridge.com/sims. You'll find the daily commentaries there too.

Heather Hill

President, Irish Bridge Union

Board 1	♠ 104	Dealer N	
	♥ 9874	Vul: None	
	♦ 92		
	♣ Q10763		
♠ 852		♠ AQ63	
♥ 6		♥ KQ32	
♦ J1076		♦ A543	
♣ AKJ42		♣ 9	
	♠ KJ97		
	♥ AJ105		
	♦ KQ8		
	♣ 85		
North	East	South	West
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

You've got to be kidding me. Is it that time of year again? Where does the time go?

Welcome along to our little soirée. We're playing Weak and 5, with Weak 2's in 3 suits. Our signals are smiles, snarls and v-signs ♠ the naughty ones♥. Marquis of Queensbury rules.

The CBAI dealing machine has stitched you up good and proper on this first board. Most will surely declare 3NT and every suit lies badly. 2 down in most cases. Still, never mind. Onwards and upwards!

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	1	3	-	2	1
W	1	2	-	2	1

=====

Board 2		♠ J109832	Dealer E
		♥ 98	Vul: N-S
		♦ Q8	
		♣ K84	

♠ A54	♠ K76
♥ AK1064	♥ QJ2
♦ 103	♦ AJ9
♣ AJ7	♣ 10963

♠ Q
♥ 753
♦ K76542
♣ Q52

North	East	South	West
	INT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You should have a partnership agreement about opening balanced 11-counts. East's suits have decent texture, so upgrades to 12 and opens INT. West transfers to hearts and bids 3NT to offer a choice of games. Although East has 3 hearts, his flat 4333 shape indicates playing the NT game. *(Not all Easts will open the 11-count, but East/West should reach 3NT either way. Editor)*

There are 11 easy tricks.

On a more important note, our wine of choice for this evening is a positively impish Chilean Chardonnay. I'm nosing it enthusiastically right now. Cheers!

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	2	5	1	5
W	4	2	5	1	5

=====

Board 3		♠ 8765	Dealer S
		♥ 5	Vul: E-W
		♦ Q42	
		♣ AKJ72	

♠ A104	♠ K
♥ J862	♥ K10743
♦ A1065	♦ KJ873
♣ Q6	♣ 94

♠ QJ932
♥ AQ9
♦ 9
♣ 10853

North	East	South	West
		2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

As we go through the hands, I'll offer some tips which I think will improve your game.

TIP! ♠ To quote a leading expert♥, "The only excuse for not pre-empting is that it is not your turn to bid".

South is non-vul and has a standout 2♠ opening. Yes, it should promise 6 cards, but a good 5-card suit is commonly opened these days when non-vul. 3♠ from North is a barrage, increasing the pre-empt. North has a singleton heart and doesn't want East to bid them. ♠ If North had interest in game, he'd bid 2NT, a forcing enquiry.♥

You're booked for 10 tricks thanks to the second fit in clubs. You need to start trumps with a low one from North, limiting you to 2 trump losers. If you start with ♠Q from hand you lose 3 trump tricks.

One last thing. When S opens 2♠, North should alert it as "Showing 6 but he's allowed to have 5 non-vul".

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	-	-	4	-
S	3	-	-	4	-
E	-	2	2	-	-
W	-	2	2	-	-

=====

Board 4	♠ Q843	Dealer W	
	♥ 63	Vul: Both	
	♦ AJ97		
	♣ K82		
♠ AK109		♠ J76	
♥ J85		♥ K1042	
♦ Q65		♦ 832	
♣ Q109		♣ 643	
	♠ 52		
	♥ AQ97		
	♦ K104		
	♣ AJ75		
North	East	South	West
			INT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This hand highlights the pre-emptive value of the weak NT opening. Put yourself in South's position, sitting under the INT opener. He's got 14 points and West has shown 12-14. That leaves between 12 and 14 for North and East combined. Give North half of them, and you can see that South is going to Pass.

A spade lead would help, but East/West cannot be prevented from scoring 4 tricks. Minus 300 compared to minus 600 ♠North/South make 3NT♥. In 3NT by North/South, West will start spades, and has opened the bidding. So you play ♦K and run ♦10. You score a spade, 2 hearts, 4 diamonds and 2 clubs = 9 tricks.

The worry is that North/South may not get to 3NT with their combined 24 points.

Makeable Contracts	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	4	4	3	3	3
S	4	4	3	3	3
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-
	=====				

Board 5	♠ A843	Dealer N	
	♥ 83	Vul: N-S	
	♦ A74		
	♣ K1083		
♠ K52		♠ 6	
♥ KJ7654		♥ AQ9	
♦ 86		♦ J10532	
♣ A4		♣ J752	
	♠ QJ1097		
	♥ 102		
	♦ KQ9		
	♣ Q96		
North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	2♠	3♥
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Although I've suggested a possible bidding sequence, in reality the players have close calls to make on this deal. As per TIPI on Board 3, South has to pre-empt here, opposite a passed hand and with a decent suit. He knows after 2 passes that West must be getting ready to open. Spades are the boss suit, so let's deny East/West space and maybe talk them out of their contract. West has an easy 3♥ overcall ♠he thinks ♠K is inside♥. North competes to 3♠. Perhaps East should venture 4♥ now, but it's far from clear. ♠If 2♣ is too rich for your blood, then open 1♠, also mildly pre-emptive.♥

There are 10 tricks if declarer finds the ♣J and thus loses just one club trick. West shows up with 6 hearts and 3 spades, so he's got 4 minor suit cards whereas East has 9. Thus there are more spaces in East's hand to hold ♣J, and the odds favour playing him for it.

If East/West play in hearts, 9 tricks is the most likely outcome. It can be held to 8 by leading a trump and then playing another trump when North/South come in with a spade.

Well done to any North/South who got to 4♠.

Makeable Contracts	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	1	-	4	-
S	2	1	-	4	-
E	-	-	2	-	-
W	-	-	2	-	-
	=====				

Board 6	♠ J632 ♥ 75 ♦ AQJ6 ♣ J85	Dealer E Vul: E-W	
	♠ AK754 ♥ A102 ♦ K7 ♣ 432	♠ Q108 ♥ KJ9 ♦ 10542 ♣ KQ6	
	♠ 9 ♥ Q8643 ♦ 983 ♣ A1097		
North	East	South	West
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

A frequent question asked by intermediates and improvers is “What do I do if I’ve got a 5-card major, but I’m balanced and in our weak INT opening range?”

TIP2: If the suit is rebiddable (ie good), then open and rebid it. If it’s a bad suit, open INT.

That’s why West opens 1♠ and rebids 2♠. East invites with 2NT ♠3NT is too much – don’t punish partner for opening with 11 or 12♥. West has a good hand for his bidding so far, and is happy to accept.

Similar to Board 2, note that East has 3-card support for partner’s 5-card major, but is flat 4333, so opts for NT over spades.

South will lead a heart, which helps. Put in the ten, which wins. Now try spades, playing 4 rounds when they don’t break. North wins ♠J and must now switch to a club. In with ♣A, South must play a diamond. The defence get 3 diamonds, a spade and a club. One down.

4♠ is worse, though. You’re going to lose 2 clubs, 2 diamonds and a spade. And you still have to guess hearts to avoid going down 3!

Makeable Contracts	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	-	-	-	3	3
W	-	-	-	3	3

=====

Board 7	♠ Q9876 ♥ K3 ♦ J103 ♣ 1073	Dealer S Vul: Both	
	♠ AKJ103 ♥ 10975 ♦ ♣ KQ85	♠ 54 ♥ AJ82 ♦ K982 ♣ AJ9	
	♠ 2 ♥ Q64 ♦ AQ7654 ♣ 642		
North	East	South	West
		3♦	x
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

TIP1 (board 3) crops up again. See how an aggressive 3♦ from South creates real headaches for East/West ... much more so that the “textbook” opening of 2♦. West’s takeout double does not guarantee 4 hearts, so 3NT is the practical shot for East. It should go down on a diamond lead, though some pairs may make it in practice by holding up.

If West bids 4♦ rather than X, it asks East to pick a major. That would get them to 4♥, which has 11 tricks.

If South fails to pre-empt, East/West will sail untroubled into 4♥.

Makeable Contracts	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	1	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	4	-	5	3	2
W	4	-	5	3	2

=====

Board 8	♠ AK764 ♥ AK10 ♦ 1095 ♣ 63	Dealer W Vul: None	
	♠ 9 ♥ 83 ♦ K87432 ♣ AK75	♠ 8532 ♥ J6 ♦ A6 ♣ J10842	
	♠ QJ10 ♥ Q97542 ♦ QJ ♣ Q9		

North	East	South	West
			1♦
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West has 10 points but they're well grouped and he's got a 6-card suit, so he adds 2 points for the diamond length.

It's very easy to get too high here. 2♥ is natural and forcing. Perhaps South should exercise restraint, not having any Aces or Kings. Easy for East/West to cash their 4 winners. Sic transit gloria mundi.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	3	3	-
S	-	-	3	3	-
E	4	3	-	-	-
W	4	3	-	-	-

Board 9 ♠ A63 Dealer N
 ♥ K94 Vul: E-W
 ♦ A109
 ♣ Q832

♠ K2	♠ J97
♥ J10865	♥ 732
♦ Q64	♦ J753
♣ 654	♣ 1097

♠ Q10854
 ♥ AQ
 ♦ K82
 ♣ AKJ

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South transfers to spades. He needs to know if North has 3 spades, so bids 3♣. ♠NB a new suit at the 3 level is always forcing. ♥ North shows his spades and South rolls out Keycard Blackwood. 5♥ shows 2 of the 5 keycards without the trump Queen.

6♠ is a good contract, you just need to get trumps right. After you play Ace and another

it's a guess, but the odds favour putting in the 10 in case East has KJ97.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	6	5	4	6	6
S	6	5	4	6	6
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 10 ♠ AJ8654 Dealer E
 ♥ Q10 Vul: Both
 ♦ A75
 ♣ Q10

♠ Q109	♠ K32
♥ AJ753	♥ 62
♦ Q104	♦ 9632
♣ K9	♣ A653

♠ 7
 ♥ K984
 ♦ KJ8
 ♣ J8742

North	East	South	West
			1♥
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Pass	Pass	

1♥: See TIP2 (board 6)

2♠: See TIP1 (board 3)

I'm a 2♠ bidder as North. South has passed so he's not going to get excited. As I said on board 3, modern bidding features aggressive but intelligent pre-empting. On this hand I expect a lot of failing contracts. 2♠ should go one down, but in practice I think 8 tricks in spades will be made a few times.

Makeable Contracts					
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	-	-	1	1
S	2	-	1	1	1
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 11 ♠ 1032 Dealer S
 ♥ 5 Vul: None
 ♦ A8542
 ♣ 9832

♠ 4 ♠ A65
 ♥ K10732 ♥ AQJ94
 ♦ 763 ♦ Q9
 ♣ AQ75 ♣ J64

♠ KQJ987
 ♥ 86
 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ K10

North	East	South	West
		1♠	Pass
2♠	3♥	3♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

TIP3: Always compete for the partscore, especially when non-vul.

North's hand looks very nice opposite a 1♠ opener. East must decide whether to compete over 2♠. 3♥ is not without risk, but it pays off handsomely here.

NB if East passes, and 2♠ comes back to West, **HE MUST DOUBLE**, as per TIP3 above. The double is clearly takeout saying "Partner I don't want to defend 2♠. Please bid one of the other suits". East of course bids 4♥.

There are 11 tricks in hearts, and East/West really should be getting to game. North/South make 3♠ assuming they play East for ♦Q. That makes 4♠ a good sacrifice, well done if you found it.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	1	-	3	-
S	-	2	-	3	-
E	3	-	5	-	3
W	3	-	5	-	2

Board 12 ♠ A987 Dealer W
 ♥ AK8 Vul: N-S
 ♦ 84
 ♣ 10843

♠ KQ6 ♠ J1043
 ♥ QJ72 ♥ 10965
 ♦ AK63 ♦ 7
 ♣ 92 ♣ AKJ5

♠ 52

♥ 43
 ♦ QJ10952
 ♣ Q76

North	East	South	West
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4♥ should be the norm, making for the loss of two trumps and a spade. You make 3 spades, 2 hearts, the minor AKs and a diamond ruff. If NS can find their spade ruff, it goes down one.

As this was a momma-poppa deal, allow me to interject a shameless plug. The Irish Bridge Journal is published quarterly on cbai.ie. It's got something for players at all levels. If you would like any event of note at your club to be featured, send details to editor@cbai.ie. The editor is a very fine fellow indeed, I'll have you know.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	1	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	2	-	4	3	3
W	2	-	4	3	3

=====

Board 13 ♠ KQ9 Dealer N
 ♥ KQ983 Vul: Both
 ♦ 5
 ♣ QJ102

♠ 864 ♠ AJ73
 ♥ 104 ♥ 7
 ♦ QJ1094 ♦ A8732
 ♣ K98 ♣ A53

♠ 1052
 ♥ AJ652
 ♦ K6
 ♣ 764

North	East	South	West
1♥	X	2♦	Pass
2♥	X	Pass	3♦
3♥	4♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

This hand again illustrates TIP3 from the previous board – always compete for the partscore if you can, especially non-vul.

TIP4: after partner opens 1♥ or 1♠ and RHO doubles for takeout. raising the major to 2♠ie

bidding 2♥ as South here♥ shows a bad raise, whereas bidding 2 of the suit underneath ♠2♦ by South here♥ shows a good 2♥ raise. It comes up a lot.

As per TIP3, East comes in with another takeout double. North's 2♥ confirms no game ambition, so West must have a smattering of values.

North makes 3♥ – he plays a diamond to the King in order to get a spade away on ♦K. East/West are one down in 4♦, which ought to be an above average result.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	2	-	3	-	-
S	2	-	2	-	-
E	-	3	-	1	-
W	-	3	-	1	-

Board 14 Dealer E Vul: None

♠ AQ108753	♠ A87
♥ J103	♥ K94
♦ J74	♦ K9
♣ Q10962	♣ A10865
♥ Q87654	
♣ Q9	
♠ KJ543	
♥ J62	
♦ A2	
♣ K32	

North	East	South	West
	INT	Pass	2♥
X	2♠	3♥	3♠
Pass	Pass	X	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North's double of the transfer suit ♠hearts♥ shows that suit. When East voluntarily bids 2♠, he's showing 3-card support.

A great pairs tussle. I've got East/West arriving in 3♠X – which makes. If North/South bid to 4♥, East may apply a sharp Pairs double, netting +100. Any pair scoring +140 will do very well.

By the way, the Chardonnay ish going down exshremely well, thanksh for ashking.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	3	-	1
S	-	-	3	-	1
E	1	3	-	3	-
W	1	3	-	3	-

Board 15 Dealer S Vul: N-S

♠ 74	♠ J98653
♥ A982	♥ 1053
♦ K1083	♦ J5
♣ 764	♣ J10
♠ Q102	♠ AK
♥ QJ7	♥ K64
♦ A976	♦ Q42
♣ K92	♣ AQ853

North	East	South	West
		1♣	Pass
1♥	2♠	X	3♠
Pass	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

For East's 2♠ pre-empt – see TIPI ♠board 3♥.

South's X is a Support Double – promising 3-card support for partner's hearts. When 3♠ comes back to South, 3NT is the practical shot.

3NT is one down on a spade lead. But note that if East HASN'T bid spades, West may lead a diamond, and now 3NT makes – another argument for pre-empting. The best way to tackle clubs is to cash the Ace, then cross to dummy's ♥A and lead a club towards the Queen.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	3	3	3	-	2
S	3	3	3	-	2
E	-	-	-	1	-
W	-	-	-	1	-

Board 16 ♠ Q102 Dealer W
 ♥ QJ7 Vul: E-W
 ♦ 9652
 ♣ 1085

♠ J87 ♠ 65
 ♥ 3 ♥ A10964
 ♦ KQ103 ♦ AJ74
 ♣ AQ963 ♣ 74

♠ AK943
 ♥ K852
 ♦ 8
 ♣ KJ2

North	East	South	West
			1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

I expect a diamond partscore to be the norm. 10 tricks. Clubs are set up via a finesse and one ruff.

If North/South get to play in spades undoubled, they'll concede 50 or 100 and score well. Best defence holds them to 6 tricks – East/West must collect their club ruff to do that.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	3	4	1	-	1
W	3	4	1	-	1

=====

Board 17 ♠ J1032 Dealer N
 ♥ K10 Vul: None
 ♦ A8642
 ♣ 108

♠ Q74 ♠ 96
 ♥ 542 ♥ 983
 ♦ K ♦ 10975
 ♣ KQJ653 ♣ 9742

♠ AK85
 ♥ AQJ76
 ♦ QJ3
 ♣ A

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1♥	3♣
X	4♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

For 3♣ (West) and 4♣ (♠East) – see TIPI ♠board 3♥. Pre-empt is designed to make life difficult for opponents, and that's certainly the case here. Over 4♣, 4♠ is all South can do, and it is not without risk. If East doesn't bid 4♣, South can bid 3♠. North raises to 4♠ and now South can roll out Blackwood, leading to 6♠.

6♠ is a good contract, needing one of two finesses to work ♠trumps or diamonds♥. Here, declarer wins ♣A, cashes ♠A, crosses to ♥K and finesses trumps, losing to ♠Q. Ruff the club return, cash ♠K and run the hearts, discarding 3 diamonds from dummy. Now you lead a diamond and up pops the King – but you didn't need West to have it singleton, he just needed to have it.

Well done if you bid and made 6♠.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	1	6	6	6	5
S	1	6	6	6	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 18 ♠ Q6 Dealer E
 ♥ K754 Vul: N-S
 ♦ KQ953
 ♣ 73

♠ K1083 ♠ 9752
 ♥ J93 ♥ A862
 ♦ A1062 ♦ J7
 ♣ J9 ♣ 542

♠ AJ4
 ♥ Q10
 ♦ 84
 ♣ AKQ1086

North	East	South	West
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

South should upgrade his hand for the great club suit, hence 2NT is the rebid. 3♣ is less good because partner may be stuck for a bid, and might have to bid 3NT – resulting in the strong hand being dummy.

West leads a spade. Win in hand and lead a diamond, winning $\heartsuit K$. Now lead a heart to $\heartsuit Q$. Run your clubs. 10 tricks.

Makeable Contracts

	\clubsuit	\heartsuit	\spadesuit	NT	
	=	=	=	==	
N	4	3	2	1	3
S	4	3	2	1	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 19

\spadesuit 5
 \heartsuit J754
 \diamondsuit K1095
 \clubsuit Q954

Dealer S
 Vul: E-W

\spadesuit J873
 \heartsuit KQ106
 \diamondsuit J874
 \clubsuit A

\spadesuit K942
 \heartsuit A932
 \diamondsuit 2
 \clubsuit K1063

\spadesuit AQ106
 \heartsuit 8
 \diamondsuit AQ63
 \clubsuit J872

North	East	South	West
$1\diamond$	$2\diamond$	$1\clubsuit$	X
Pass	Pass	Pass	$3\heartsuit$

Another good competitive pairs deal. East's $2\diamond$ clearly shows the majors.

$3\heartsuit$ is one down – singleton spade lead, South cashes $\spadesuit Q$ and $\spadesuit A$, and then returns $\spadesuit 10$ \spadesuit suit preference for diamonds \heartsuit . North ruffs and returns a diamond. South takes $\diamondsuit A$ and gives North a second spade ruff.

8 tricks seem to be the limit in diamonds.

Makeable Contracts

	\clubsuit	\heartsuit	\spadesuit	NT	
	=	=	=	==	
N	2	2	-	-	-
S	2	2	-	-	-
E	-	-	2	2	-
W	-	-	2	2	-

=====

Board 20

\spadesuit AQ86
 \heartsuit 9543
 \diamondsuit J8
 \clubsuit 532

Dealer W
 Vul: Both

\spadesuit 10973
 \heartsuit QJ108
 \diamondsuit 6432
 \clubsuit 10

\spadesuit K
 \heartsuit AK
 \diamondsuit AKQ1095
 \clubsuit J874

\spadesuit J542
 \heartsuit 762
 \diamondsuit 7
 \clubsuit AKQ96

North	East	South	West
Pass	$1\diamond$	$2\clubsuit$	Pass
$3\clubsuit$	$5\diamond$	Pass	$2\diamond$
P			Pass

Once North supports South's clubs, East realises West has at most one club, and his values lie in the major suits. $5\diamond$ becomes very attractive. $6\diamond$ could even be on, and you could bid $4NT$ to see if partner has $\spadesuit A$.

On this deal, 11 tricks are the limit. Mind you, if South fails to switch to a spade after cashing $\clubsuit A$ at trick one, you make 12. North can help by playing his highest club at trick 1, suit preference for spades, but that isn't an easy card to read.

On the basis that "there's always one", I wouldn't be surprised if some Easts tried $3NT$. This is a roaring success – after you lose the first 8 tricks!!

Makeable Contracts

	\clubsuit	\heartsuit	\spadesuit	NT	
	=	=	=	==	
N	2	-	1	2	-
S	2	-	1	2	-
E	-	5	-	-	-
W	-	5	-	-	-

=====

Board 21 ♠ 93 Dealer N
 ♥ K104 Vul: N-S
 ♦ Q10542
 ♣ Q83

♠ Q107 ♠ A862
 ♥ Q752 ♥ 9863
 ♦ J96 ♦ AK87
 ♣ J109 ♣ 5

♠ KJ54
 ♥ Aj
 ♦ 3
 ♣ AK7642

North	East	South	West
Pass	1♦	2♣	Pass
Pass	X	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

East has good shape, so opens 1♦. When 2♣ comes back to him, he re-opens with a double – partner may be waiting to pass for penalties, and East can stand a bid in any suit. See TIP3 ♠board 11♥ re competing for the partscore.

When 2♥ comes back to South, he bids 2♠, which clearly shows 4 spades but longer clubs, which is why North corrects to 3♣. A heart lead would simplify matters, but even on a diamond lead, South can enter dummy via ♥K and lead a spade to K. He then concedes a spade and when he later ruffs one in dummy, down comes the Queen. That's 11 tricks and will score well.

If South bids 3NT over 3♣ he hits the jackpot. Very well done if you got there, but I expect 3NT to be as rare as a factual/truthful utterance from Donald Trump. Very bigly!

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	5	2	-	2	3
S	5	2	-	1	3
E	-	-	1	-	-
W	-	-	1	-	-

=====

Board 22 ♠ 10965 Dealer E
 ♥ A6 Vul: E-W
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ 98765

♠ 732 ♠ KQ4
 ♥ 42 ♥ J853
 ♦ K108762 ♦ A5
 ♣ AQ ♣ K432

♠ Aj8
 ♥ KQ1097
 ♦ J43
 ♣ J10

North	East	South	West
Pass	INT	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass

I play 4-suit transfers over a INT opener, so here 2NT is a transfer to diamonds ♠2♠ would be a transfer to clubs♥. I'm swayed by West's good diamonds and ultra-weak majors. West may feel North/South have a making partscore in a major.

If North leads a club, West wins ♣Q and cashes ♣A. Next come ♦K and ♦A. Now ♣K is led and South would be ruffing with his trump winner while a heart is pitched from West. You lose 2 spades, a trump and a heart – 3♦ made. If North leads ♠10, South wins ♠A and must switch to ♥K. North overtakes and returns the suit, South winning ♥9. Now South must play ♥Q, and that is one down. If South plays a low heart rather than the Queen, declarer can discard a spade, obliging North to ruff. If declarer now guesses trumps correctly, which he should, 3♦ makes.

Meantime, INT has no play.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	1	1	1
S	-	-	1	1	1
E	-	2	-	-	-
W	-	2	-	-	-

=====

Board 23 ♠ 863 Dealer S
 ♥ Q964 Vul: Both
 ♦ 87
 ♣ J962

♠ 94 ♠ AKQJ
 ♥ J1032 ♥ K875
 ♦ J65 ♦ 432
 ♣ K853 ♣ Q4

♠ 10752
 ♥ A
 ♦ AKQ109
 ♣ A107

North	East	South	West
		1♦	Pass
Pass	X	XX	1♥
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Yet another intriguing pairs deal. South bids 1♠ at his third turn, showing what he has – a good hand with longer diamonds than spades. He’s even happy to play in clubs if North has say, 2425.

1♠ makes but 2♦ is down – after a spade lead, East plays a trump, and the defence play trumps at every opportunity. Declarer loses 4 spades and 2 clubs. Top spot is INT for North/South, and kudos if you got there.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N			-		
S			-		
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 24 ♠ K Dealer W
 ♥ AK852 Vul: None
 ♦ KQ2
 ♣ J1082

♠ 3 ♠ AJ9874
 ♥ Q1073 ♥ J6
 ♦ A98753 ♦ 64
 ♣ 64 ♣ Q97

♠ Q10652
 ♥ 94
 ♦ J10
 ♣ AK53

North	East	South	West
			2♦
2♥	2♠	X	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Live by the sword, die by the sword. We’re playing weak 2s in 3 suits, so I’m a 2♦ opener. It isn’t ideal holding a 4-card major, but we live in an imperfect world. Even if West passes, North opens 1♥ and East bids 2♠, weak jump overcall. South passes and North re-opens with a double. So I expect to see quite a few 2♠X. It gets mullered. Three down for sure. North/South have 3NT but that’s a lower score.

Dear Lord, make me virtuous. But not yet.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	4	1	3	2	4
S	4	1	3	2	4
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 25 ♠ 2 Dealer N
 ♥ AJ986 Vul: E-W
 ♦ AKJ3
 ♣ AK6

♠ A973 ♠ Q8
 ♥ 10432 ♥ 75
 ♦ 764 ♦ Q1098
 ♣ Q4 ♣ J9532

♠ KJ10654
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ 52
 ♣ 1087

North	East	South	West
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

The 3♦ jump rebid is forcing to game, so 3♠ is also forcing. North has a powerful hand, but nothing in support of partner’s spades. South hasn’t raised hearts or diamonds. When I was knee high to a grasshopper, I was larned “If it’s a misfit, play in NT”. Anyway, I’m going to make it TIP45. Jeez Louise folks, I’m giving yiz pearls here!

East leads a club. You duck, win the next one and play a spade to the Jack ♠good guess!♥. You now have 11 tricks when ♠Q falls under the King.

This deal highlights a weakness in the Acoll system. Take away South’s ♥KQ and substitute ♣J. The bidding would go exactly

the same but you're miles too high. Strong club systems handle these deals better. Otherwise you'd need to play Gazzilli. But that, dear friends, is on the Honours paper.

#MAGA ♠Make Acol Great Again♥

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	4	4	5	5	5
S	3	3	5	5	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

=====

Board 26 ♠ A82 Dealer E
 ♥ QJ109763 Vul: Both
 ♦
 ♣ K93

♠ J963	♠ Q75
♥ 82	♥ K4
♦ AQJ1096	♦ K8743
♣ 6	♣ A72

♠ K104
 ♥ A5
 ♦ 52
 ♣ QJ10854

North	East	South	West
3♥	4♦	4♥	2NT
Pass	Pass		Pass

As on Board 22, I recommend 4-suit transfers over a INT opening. So, in addition to 2♦ and 2♥ being transfers, 2♠ and 2NT transfer to clubs and diamonds respectively. Obviously East loves diamonds, but he may feel ♥K is a defensive trick. This may deter him from finding the profitable save in 5♦X-2 ♠thank God for that ♣9!♥. Well done to any pair who bid to 5♦.

Oh, and top of the class if you got to 6♣!!

4♥ is likely to make plus 2. East is not clairvoyant, so cannot know he can give West a club ruff.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	6	-	5	-	-
S	6	-	5	-	-
E	-	3	-	-	1
W	-	3	-	-	-

=====

Board 27 ♠ 85 Dealer S
 ♥ K98 Vul: None
 ♦ AKJ765
 ♣ 86

♠ J63	♠ AQ1042
♥ 4	♥ Q10765
♦ 32	♦ 9
♣ K1075432	♣ AQ

♠ K97
 ♥ AJ32
 ♦ Q1084
 ♣ J9

North	East	South	West
3♦	4♣	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	4♦	Pass

Another testing deal. Regarding 3♣, I refer you to TIPI ♠board 3♥. I wouldn't blame you if you bid 5♦ as South – you certainly don't think partner has a doubleton club!

4♦-I shouldn't be a tragedy. East/West can make 4♠, because North's heart pips don't let North/South conduct a full forcing defence.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	4	2	-	-
S	-	4	1	-	-
E	4	-	-	4	-
W	4	-	-	4	-

=====

Board 28 ♠ AK64 Dealer W
 ♥ QJ986 Vul: N-S
 ♦ Q75
 ♣ 8

♠ QJ97 ♠ 1053
 ♥ AK ♥ 732
 ♦ 963 ♦ AKJ8
 ♣ Q1074 ♣ AK3

♠ 82
 ♥ 1054
 ♦ 1042
 ♣ J9652

North	East	South	West
			INT
2♣	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

2♣ shows the majors. East bids 3NT direct – he’s always going there, so no point letting opponents find out which major to lead.

All roads should lead to 10 tricks. Diamond finesse works. ♣AK mark the finesse of ♣10. North needs to find 4 discards on the run of the minors. He can only score a heart and 2 spades.

That’s your lot. Chardonnay all gone. Sin a bhfuil. Is dona linn an bhriseadh seo. The revolution will not be televised. Elvis has left the building. It’s goodnight from me and it’s goodnight from him.

Makeable Contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
	=	=	=	=	==
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	4	4		4	4
W	4	4		4	4
	=====				