

E-W Vul
Dealer North ♠ AQ765
♥ J765
♦ 104
♣ 104

♠ K3
♥ Q2
♦ J987
♣ 98762

♠ 84
♥ AK983
♦ AQ5
♣ KJ3

♠ J1092
♥ 104
♦ K632
♣ AQ5

25

East-West are likely to bid 1H-1NT-2NT. On the normal spade lead West can get out for 'only' two down. If North finds the inspired lead of a minor, the K♠ becomes a dead duck and West is three down. They do better playing in a suit, with both 1H and 1C makeable. With the K♣, A♦ and K♠ all onside from a North-South viewpoint, 3S makes. Given the vulnerability, 140 would be a poor score.

Love All
Dealer South ♠ 105
♥ 1086
♦ KQJ1098
♣ A8

♠ KJ9764
♥ 954
♦ 62
♣ J3

♠ 832
♥ Q72
♦ A74
♣ KQ64

♠ AQ
♥ AKJ3
♦ 53
♣ 109752

27

The opening lead may be crucial on this deal too - even more so as it affects the possible defeat of the contract rather than just overtricks. Suppose South opens 1C and West bids 2S (weak). North then bids 3D. If East bids 3S, South tries 3NT. South might bid 3NT anyway. Can West really find the club lead, which kills the side entry to dummy's diamonds? This defeats 3NT by two. South might make as many as twelve tricks on a spade lead.

Game All
Dealer East ♠ KJ1083
♥ K76
♦ Q2
♣ KJ4

♠ Q4
♥ J1043
♦ K10973
♣ Q9

♠ A9
♥ 952
♦ J865
♣ 10862

♠ 7652
♥ AQ8
♦ A4
♣ A753

26

Using a weak no-trump and transfers, 1NT-2H-2S-3NT-4S is a likely auction. So long as West does not lead a diamond, eleven tricks result - finesses neutralise the Q♣ and Q♠. The position of the K♦ and the black queens mean that eleven tricks are also there in 3NT - rather lucky. Moreover, as in the spade game, a diamond lead from West would allow twelve tricks to be made.

N-S Vul
Dealer West ♠ J654
♥ Q75
♦ J94
♣ KJ5

♠ AKQ102
♥ AK10
♦ A105
♣ 108

♠ 983
♥ 43
♦ 876
♣ Q9732

♠ 7
♥ J9862
♦ KQ32
♣ A64

28

A weak doubleton and a strong 5-card major will deter few players these days from opening 2NT. If 2NT is the final contract, West will need to keep a straight face if North makes the unfortunate lead of a spade. 2S and 2C make without any help from the lead, while the best North-South can make is 2H. If the bidding starts 1S-pass-pass-double-redouble then, North-South need to have the same idea of what a pass by North would now mean.

SIMULTANEOUS PAIRS COMPETITION

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Love All
Dealer North

♠ 5
♥ AJ10964
♦ Q2
♣ Q752

♠ K1092
♥ 8
♦ J54
♣ KJ1043

♠ AJ4
♥ K7
♦ AK986
♣ 986

1

♠ Q8763
♥ Q532
♦ 1073
♣ A

If North opens a weak 2H, East is just about worth 2NT. South then bounces to 4H, giving West a problem. The fortunate layout of the diamond suit means 4NT is makeable (declarer would play for the drop rather than finesse twice in view of North's known length in hearts). More likely West doubles 4H, which goes one down with three top tricks and the K♥ to lose. If South should play in hearts (maybe North opens a Multi), 4H could go two down on a trump lead.

E-W Vul
Dealer South

♠ AK873
♥ A82
♦ 97
♣ K85

♠ 5
♥ QJ965
♦ AK8
♣ J1076

♠ QJ6
♥ 73
♦ Q5432
♣ Q43

3

♠ 10942
♥ K104
♦ J106
♣ A92

Neither side can make very much. More or less regardless of what East-West do, North-South are likely to bid 1S-2S. Given the vulnerability, South's raise is likely to buy the contract. East is likely to lead a heart, getting the defenders off to a good start at saving the overtrick. On other leads, there is a danger that East ends up giving a ruff and discard, letting declarer avoid a heart loser.

N-S Vul
Dealer East

♠ 973
♥ Q1082
♦ K842
♣ Q10

♠ J62
♥ KJ
♦ AJ106
♣ 9532

♠ KQ104
♥ A75
♦ Q973
♣ A8

2

♠ A85
♥ 9643
♦ 5
♣ KJ764

Most auctions lead to 3NT played by East. On a club lead, declarer must play with care. Win the first club, blocking the suit, and drive out the A♠; take the diamond finesse later. Try as they might, the defenders cannot get more than two clubs, a spade and the K♦. If West bids clubs, South may lead a heart, in which case the timing is less crucial. 4S ought to go down.

Game All
Dealer West

♠ J
♥ J2
♦ 107432
♣ KQJ98

♠ 10862
♥ 105
♦ Q965
♣ A74

♠ 974
♥ AK9874
♦ KJ
♣ 105

4

♠ AKQ53
♥ Q63
♦ A8
♣ 632

Nobody can make much here either. One making contract is 2C by North-South. I wish I could tell you how to get there! East surely opens 1H and South overcalls 1S. If North bids 2C, it will be very hard for South to pass. 15 HCP is far from the minimum for an overcall. 2NT fails on a heart lead ducked by East. 2S makes despite the violation of Burn's rule. Indeed the defenders must lead diamonds early to stop the overtrick.

N-S Vul
Dealer North

♠ 5
♥ KQJ964
♦ A1065
♣ Q10

♠ AK87
♥ 10
♦ KQJ8
♣ 9742

♠ J962
♥ A753
♦ 97
♣ J83

21

♠ Q1043
♥ 82
♦ 432
♣ AK65

In theory, this should be a competitive part-score deal. In practice, South is very likely to bid 1S in response to 1H, making it hard for East-West to find their spade fit. In any case, North can make 3H while eight tricks are the limit with spades as trumps. I would rebid 2H as North over 1S. If your style is to rebid 2D, your style also needs to be for South to give false preference. 2D fails on a spade lead and a switch to the K♦.

E-W Vul
Dealer East

♠ AJ73
♥ J
♦ J96
♣ 109654

♠ 2
♥ A5432
♦ 107
♣ KJ732

♠ 1096
♥ Q106
♦ AK54
♣ AQ8

22

♠ KQ854
♥ K987
♦ Q832
♣ ===

As on the previous deal, practice may differ from theory. 4S doubled is the par spot, down one on most leads. However, for West to make 4H it may well be necessary to lead the Q♥ on the first round of trumps to pin the J♥. If South bids 1S over 1D, West is just about worth 2H, allowing East to bid 4H over North's preemptive 3S raise.

Game All
Dealer South

♠ 7543
♥ 854
♦ KQ5
♣ K84

♠ 962
♥ AK93
♦ J3
♣ AQ52

♠ K108
♥ Q2
♦ A94
♣ J9763

23

♠ AQJ
♥ J1076
♦ 108762
♣ 10

The bidding may well begin and end with 1NT from West. With the K♣ and the A♠ both offside, 1NT may be an unhappy spot. Although double-dummy declarer can get out for one down, many will fail by two, losing perhaps three spades, four diamonds and the K♣. 3C is a safer spot, with just two spades, a club and a diamond to lose. North-South cannot make anything higher than 1D.

Love All
Dealer West

♠ AJ1085
♥ 102
♦ QJ109
♣ K7

♠ 764
♥ Q986
♦ 8
♣ Q10842

♠ Q2
♥ AJ
♦ AK743
♣ J953

24

♠ K93
♥ K7543
♦ 652
♣ A6

After a pass from West, North opens 1S, East overcalls 2D and South bids 2H. North rebids 2S and South is just about worth a raise to 3S. North has a very easy decision to decline the invitation. East starts with three rounds of diamonds. West ruffs the third round and puts East back in with the A♥. When a fourth diamond comes next, declarer has to guess which defender holds the Q♠. I am not sure that I would get this right!

Love All
Dealer North

♠ 32
♥ J1085
♦ QJ62
♣ A65

♠ 9764
♥ AK432
♦ 3
♣ 942

17

♠ AKJ108
♥ 96
♦ K984
♣ QJ

♠ Q5
♥ Q7
♦ A1075
♣ K10873

Most tables will see East open 1S and West raise to 3S. Since the Q♣-J♠ may be (and are) waste paper, East is quite likely to pass 3S. Assuming a club lead and trump switch, declarer needs to play well to make ten tricks. The winning line is to reject the finesse, take a second top trump and start on the hearts. Although the A♦ is offside and only two diamond ruffs are possible, the fifth heart becomes a winner.

E-W Vul
Dealer South

♠ KQJ1094
♥ A
♦ Q9
♣ K1084

♠ 8763
♥ Q953
♦ 1075
♣ J7

19

♠ ===
♥ 10764
♦ AJ842
♣ Q952

♠ A52
♥ KJ82
♦ K63
♣ A63

South should get to show a flat 15-17, either with a 1NT rebid or with a strong NT opening. After this, North is unlikely to stay out of 6S. You can make 6S even on the tricky lead of a spade (if a transfer makes South declarer). You take the K♠ and lead a low diamond. If East grabs the A♦, one club goes on the K♦ and another on the K♥. If not, the Q♦ goes on the K♥ while the A♠ ruffs the fourth club.

N-S Vul
Dealer East

♠ KQ3
♥ K62
♦ KQ953
♣ Q4

♠ J10754
♥ Q74
♦ 108
♣ J103

18

♠ A862
♥ J85
♦ A
♣ K9876

♠ 9
♥ A1093
♦ J7642
♣ A52

If two passes follow East's 1C opening, North might double, bid 1NT or try 1D – all have their flaws. As the cards lie, all contracts play better from the North seat than the South seat. With the K♣ protected, North can make 2NT. Since East will have no safe exit after cashing the A♦ at trick one, North can make ten tricks with a red suit as trumps.

Game All
Dealer West

♠ 72
♥ 1094
♦ Q863
♣ K1062

♠ AKQ5
♥ J6
♦ AKJ4
♣ AJ3

20

♠ 986
♥ Q72
♦ 952
♣ Q754

♠ J1043
♥ AK853
♦ 107
♣ 98

If the bidding goes 2C-2D-2NT-3NT, it will be tough for North to find the killing heart lead which South must duck to maintain communications. Perhaps East's lack of interest in looking for a fit in the majors will be the vital clue. What would help even more is if South has overcalled 2H, risking -500 in doing so. In a suit contract (other than hearts) East-West can make nine tricks.

N-S Vul
Dealer North

♠ A7
♥ AQ96
♦ J82
♣ 7632

♠ 109632
♥ J875
♦ 1054
♣ Q

5

♠ KQ8
♥ 32
♦ AQ
♣ J109854

♠ J54
♥ K104
♦ K9763
♣ AK

After East opens 1C in second seat, South overcalls 1D and North bids 2C to show a sound raise. With clubs well held, South rebids 2NT. North may or may not find the raise to 3NT – perhaps South should have bid 3NT. Assuming East can tell that South has the J♠, a spade lead works best, giving the defenders two spades and the A♦. On other leads, or if East unblocks in spades, the jammy diamond position may allow eleven tricks.

Game All
Dealer South

♠ KJ73
♥ AJ
♦ 10752
♣ Q76

♠ ===
♥ K6
♦ AKQJ83
♣ AKJ103

7

♠ 952
♥ 87543
♦ 94
♣ 952

♠ AQ10864
♥ Q1092
♦ 6
♣ 84

With the K♥ inside, 4S is on, though this is unlikely to be the final contract. West will surely press on. With the A♥ offside and the Q♣ guarded, 5D has to fail. However, with careful play and accurate card reading, 5C is on. Ruff the spade, cash the A♣-K♣ and run diamonds. North cannot afford to ruff or bare the A♥ and so has to come down to one spade. Having ruffed the sixth diamond and ruffed a spade, a club endplays North.

E-W Vul
Dealer East

♠ 104
♥ Q64
♦ K43
♣ AQ753

♠ QJ5
♥ A103
♦ QJ1072
♣ K4

6

♠ K987
♥ J52
♦ 95
♣ J1092

♠ A632
♥ K987
♦ A86
♣ 86

Playing a weak no-trump, the only actual bid is likely to be 1NT by West. Most routes lead to exactly seven tricks for the defenders. If West opens 1D, East responds 1S and West has no need to rebid. 1S is tougher to beat and may well make at quite a few tables. Of course, North could reopen with 2C, which should make.

Love All
Dealer West

♠ Q765
♥ QJ10
♦ A1097
♣ A6

♠ AJ82
♥ 5
♦ KQJ52
♣ 952

8

♠ K104
♥ K962
♦ 4
♣ KQJ104

♠ 93
♥ A8743
♦ 863
♣ 873

If West opens 1D – as is likely – it will be hard to stay out of game. If you do not play a responder's reverse as game forcing, it is just possible: 1D-1C-2D-2H-2NT. Clearly the defenders can take three hearts and two aces to hold declarer to eight tricks. Nine tricks are there if you play in clubs. Indeed South may need to score a spade ruff to prevent the overtrick. If 120 is common, there could be a huge difference between 110 and 130.

E-W Vul
Dealer North

♠ J102
♥ KJ1064
♦ A10
♣ 962

♠ 5
♥ AQ
♦ Q42
♣ AKJ10873

♠ KQ94
♥ 7532
♦ K8653
♣ ==

9

♠ A8763
♥ 98
♦ J97
♣ Q54

After three passes West opens 1C. North overcalls 1H and East makes a negative double. If West blasts 3NT, North needs to find a spade lead to beat it. If West prefers a more cautious 3C, a spade lead works well too, allowing the defenders to take a trick in each suit. In theory the top stop is 4D by West, with ten tricks unstoppable there.

Love All
Dealer South

♠ Q97
♥ 52
♦ A1087542
♣ 9

♠ 10864
♥ 763
♦ Q
♣ AKQ43

♠ K32
♥ AKQJ98
♦ ==
♣ 8765

11

♠ AJ5
♥ 104
♦ KJ963
♣ J102

After North opens 3D in third seat, East comes in with 3H. Expecting East-West to get to game, South jumps to 5D. 5H from West closes the auction. To make 5H you draw trumps and cash two clubs; you then overcome the club blockage by giving up a club! The trick will come back via the K♠ or a ruff and discard. 5D would be down two.

Game All
Dealer North

♠ AQ54
♥ ==
♦ 107532
♣ Q986

♠ 10
♥ K9432
♦ 9864
♣ 1043

♠ J87
♥ QJ865
♦ AK
♣ AK2

13

♠ K9632
♥ A107
♦ QJ
♣ J75

A paying sacrifice is on the cards here. 4S doubled is down only one. If North-South can get to 4S quickly, they might stampede their opponents into bidding 5H. East will know West is short in spades and may hope to avoid a third-round club loser somehow. Indeed, unless the defenders force dummy in spades or lead a club at trick one, the 9♦-8♦ create a ruffing finesse possibility.

N-S Vul
Dealer South

♠ J
♥ KQJ106
♦ Q64
♣ KJ76

♠ Q987
♥ 54
♦ 852
♣ A982

♠ K1032
♥ 93
♦ J1073
♣ 1054

15

♠ A654
♥ A872
♦ AK9
♣ Q3

If South opens 1H, North is not quite too good for a 3S splinter. When South makes a 4C cue bid, North takes over, checking on key cards before bidding 6H. Suspecting the K♣ will be in dummy, an aggressive West might underlead the A♣ at trick one. The bad news is that South has the Q♣; the good is that the A♣ is not running away.

Game All
Dealer East

♠ 87
♥ A9753
♦ Q642
♣ 64

♠ Q9
♥ KQJ106
♦ KJ10985
♣ ==

♠ A10542
♥ 4
♦ A3
♣ AKQJ7

10

♠ KJ63
♥ 82
♦ 7
♣ 1098532

Decisions abound. Does the great club suit persuade East to open 1C rather than 1S? Which red suit does West bid first? All ways on, it may be hard to apply the brakes and stay out of a slam. Barring a suicidal opening lead, 6NT goes down one. Suit slams fare no better. North must make two tricks against 6D. 'Stay low on a misfit' rules!

N-S Vul
Dealer West

♠ AQ432
♥ Q6
♦ KQJ108
♣ 5

♠ J10976
♥ J1073
♦ A
♣ 943

♠ ==
♥ 84
♦ 76543
♣ AQJ1086

12

♠ K85
♥ AK952
♦ 92
♣ K72

The foul spade split means that no game is on for North-South. The defenders have two spades and two aces to take. 3NT fails on a club lead so long as East does not play the ace. Given the vulnerability, there is a danger that East-West take out a phantom sacrifice. Having made a weak overcall or unusual 2NT, East needs to trust West to take the final decision.

Love All
Dealer East

♠ 873
♥ A62
♦ 1073
♣ K986

♠ 4
♥ QJ97
♦ AK964
♣ 1054

♠ K1092
♥ K10853
♦ QJ
♣ Q7

14

♠ AQJ65
♥ 4
♦ 852
♣ AJ32

If they have their own way, North-South bid 1S-1NT-2C-2S. As it is love all – the best time to compete part-scores – it may well not go like that. Perhaps West comes in with a double at some stage or East with 2H. North-South can make 3C or 3S with three diamonds and a spade to lose. 3H makes the other way with just four top losers.

E-W Vul
Dealer West

♠ ==
♥ AKQ7
♦ KJ952
♣ J865

♠ AK10963
♥ ==
♦ A76
♣ AK103

♠ QJ84
♥ J62
♦ 104
♣ Q972

16

♠ 752
♥ 1098543
♦ Q83
♣ 4

East-West have their turn for a slam. This is tough to reach as the vulnerability may lead to lively competition. Suppose West opens 1S, West doubles and East bids 3S (bidding one more than without the double). If South makes an advance sacrifice in 5H, this reduces West's options. 7H doubled is down only 500, so North-South should score well if they buy the contract whatever the level.