

ACBL-wide Senior Pairs—Monday Afternoon, March 3, 2014—Set 106055

Bd: 1 ♠ A 10 4 3 2
 Dlr: North ♥ A
 Vul: None ♦ A K J 6
 ♣ 8 7 5
 ♠ 9 6 ♠ K Q J 7 5
 ♥ 10 8 5 4 2 ♥ Q 9 7
 ♦ Q 8 ♦ 10 9 3
 ♣ Q 9 4 2 ♣ J 6
 ♠ 8
 ♥ K J 6 3
 ♦ 7 5 4 2
 ♣ A K 10 3

Most E/W pairs will stay silent while North bids spades and diamonds, after which South will either drive to 3NT or invite the no-trump game, with North accepting. Few Easts will risk a lead-directing double here, so West rates to lead a heart against 3NT. When South wins in dummy and tries a club to the 10 and queen, West must avoid continuing with a second heart. If he does not, declarer should take no more than nine tricks. 6♦ by North is respectable on a trump lead, but the 5-2 spade break requires double-dummy play to bring it home.

Bd: 5 ♠ J 10 9 6 4 2
 Dlr: North ♥ 6 3
 Vul: N/S ♦ A 10
 ♣ 8 6 5
 ♠ A Q 5 3 ♠ K 7
 ♥ K J 9 8 4 ♥ A Q 7
 ♦ J 4 ♦ 9 8 7 3 2
 ♣ A 4 ♣ K 9 7
 ♠ 8
 ♥ 10 5 2
 ♦ K Q 6 5
 ♣ Q J 10 3 2

For those of us happy as opener to support partner's major with three trumps, the East cards look like a 1♦ opening followed by a raise of 1♥ to 2♥ — assuming North won't overcall 1♠, when many Easts would be able to use a support double. Whether East produces direct or delayed support, West rates to declare 4♥. After North's lead of ♠J, declarer appears to have two diamonds and a spade to lose, either via a ruff or in the endgame. Thus any pair who bid to 3NT and collect 10 tricks will score extremely well — even if they don't deserve to.

Bd: 2 ♠ A 8 7 6 5 4
 Dlr: East ♥ Q 10 8 2
 Vul: N/S ♦ 7 2
 ♣ K
 ♠ J 10 ♠ K 9 3
 ♥ 7 4 ♥ K J 9
 ♦ K 8 6 5 4 3 ♦ Q J
 ♣ 10 5 3 ♣ Q J 8 7 2
 ♠ Q 2
 ♥ A 6 5 3
 ♦ A 10 9
 ♣ A 9 6 4

Most Easts will get Ely Culbertson spinning in his grave by opening 1♣, and if West can produce a weak jump response of 2♦, N/S may find it hard to get into the auction at all or to stop in a safe partscore if they do come in. Though N/S appear to have 10 tricks in their 4-4 fit, an initial diamond lead disrupts communications, and declarer will be unable both to take his discard and set up spades. Equally, E/W might well buy the hand in diamonds, making anywhere from six to eight tricks.

Bd: 6 ♠ A K 6 5 2
 Dlr: East ♥ Q 5 3
 Vul: E/W ♦ K 10 4
 ♣ Q 9
 ♠ Q 3 ♠ J 9 7
 ♥ K J 7 6 2 ♥ 8 4
 ♦ Q 9 2 ♦ 8 7 6 5
 ♣ K 4 2 ♣ J 10 5 3
 ♠ 10 8 4
 ♥ A 10 9
 ♦ A J 3
 ♣ A 8 7 6

If N/S start out: 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT, North may raise to 3NT without checking for a 5-3 spade fit. This gives away far less, plus if his side belonged in spades, partner might not have responded 1NT. That decision works nicely here; 4♠ struggles to +420, while in 3NT South can win West's heart lead cheaply and set up spades. (Best is to lead to the ♠A and duck the next spade, endingplay West — so West would do well to fly with the ♠Q on the first round). Even then, declarer could still come home with 11 tricks on some accurate guesswork, but +430 will score N/S just fine.

Bd: 3 ♠ Q 10 6 4
 Dlr: South ♥ 3
 Vul: E/W ♦ K Q 8 5
 ♣ A 7 6 2
 ♠ A K J 9 ♠ ---
 ♥ A 9 5 4 ♥ K Q J 7
 ♦ J 2 ♦ 10 6 4 3
 ♣ Q 9 4 ♣ K J 10 5 3
 ♠ 8 7 5 3 2
 ♥ 10 8 6 2
 ♦ A 9 7
 ♣ 8

A strong no-trump by West will silence most Norths, but if that player produces a DONT 2♣, East can double for Stayman. The E/W heart fit ought to come to light now, after which some Easts will simply jump to game. Others might make a splinter jump to 3♠, ambitiously looking for 6♥. West may want to settle in 3NT now — his side's best spot today. But many would treat that call as artificial, and East would never sit for it, would he? The defenders may not take their club ruff immediately against 4♥, but the 4-1 trump break will still prove too much for most declarers.

Bd: 7 ♠ Q 5 2
 Dlr: South ♥ 5
 Vul: Both ♦ 9 8 6 5 2
 ♣ K 9 7 3
 ♠ A K 6 ♠ J 10 9 8 7 4
 ♥ Q 3 ♥ J 9
 ♦ K Q 7 4 3 ♦ A J
 ♣ J 8 5 ♣ 6 4 2
 ♠ 3
 ♥ A K 10 8 7 6 4 2
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A Q 10

When South opens 1♥ (this is not a 4♥ opening bid, given the excellent controls and real slam potential), West should double rather than overcall 2♦. East will jump to 2♠, South will retaliate by leaping to 4♥, and now might E/W sacrifice in 4♠? Note that if the defenders can work out to cash their clubs, 4♠x goes for 800. Meanwhile, 4♥ makes +650, so a lot of matchpoints might ride on East's final decision.

Bd: 4 ♠ J 10 3
 Dlr: West ♥ 10 6
 Vul: Both ♦ Q 10 9 6 3 2
 ♣ A 8
 ♠ A 9 ♠ 8 7 4 2
 ♥ A K 8 5 3 2 ♥ Q J 9 4
 ♦ K 8 7 ♦ A
 ♣ K 7 ♣ 10 9 4 3
 ♠ K Q 6 5
 ♥ 7
 ♦ J 5 4
 ♣ Q J 6 5 2

When West opens 1♥ East is too good to raise preemptively but not good enough for a limit raise. You have no problem if you play Bergen raises, but if not, a simple raise to 2♥, planning to compete again if necessary, looks the least lie. Whichever route East takes, West will bid 4♥, giving North an awkward lead. A spade is the most attractive combination of aggression and safety, while the ♣A is just as likely to set the game or let through overtricks. Indeed, declarer has 10 tricks on a spade or diamond lead, but 11 on the lead of the ♣A.

Bd: 8 ♠ A K Q 10 9 3
 Dlr: North ♥ A 9 5
 Vul: E/W ♦ K 10
 ♣ A 8 6
 ♠ J 8 4 ♠ 2
 ♥ Q J 7 2 ♥ K 6 4
 ♦ A 3 2 ♦ J 7 6 5 4
 ♣ 9 7 3 ♣ Q J 10 4
 ♠ 7 6 5
 ♥ A 10 8 3
 ♦ Q 9 8
 ♣ K 5 2

When North hears his partner raise 1♠ to 2♠, it looks easy to bid 4♠. But maybe he should keep open 3NT as a possible contract by making a game-try of 3♣? Now if South bids 3NT, North should pass, assuming that no-trump will play as well as spades. 3NT has 10 tricks on top after a heart lead by dislodging the ♦A. In 4♠, after a top club lead to the ♣A, declarer needs to find the ♦J to make 11 tricks. Anyone who draws trump in 4♠ then fails to run the ♦10 may find the difference at pairs between +420, +430 and +450 illuminating.

Bd: 9 ♠ K 7 2
 Dlr: North ♥ A K
 Vul: E/W ♦ 7 5 4 3
 ♣ A J 9 7
 ♠ J 8 6 5 4 ♠ A Q 9
 ♥ 9 3 2 ♥ 10 5 4
 ♦ K Q 9 ♦ J 10 8 2
 ♣ K 2 ♣ 8 6 3
 ♠ 10 3
 ♥ Q J 8 7 6
 ♦ A 6
 ♣ Q 10 5 4

Not all nine-counts are worth a drive to game facing a strong no-trump, but South's honors in his long suits suggest that he should transfer to hearts then drive to 3NT, offering his partner the choice of games. North will pass 3NT, then does best to win the diamond lead (for fear of an admittedly unlikely spade shift from West) and must not unblock hearts. Instead, he must advance the ♣Q from dummy. Now, whether West covers, declarer can unblock the top hearts, then cross back to dummy with the fourth club to take the first 10 tricks.

Bd: 13 ♠ J
 Dlr: North ♥ 8 6 2
 Vul: Both ♦ 10 8 7 4
 ♣ Q 9 8 6 4
 ♠ K Q 10 9 5 ♠ A 8 7 6 3 2
 ♥ Q 4 ♥ K 9
 ♦ Q 9 5 2 ♦ K 6
 ♣ A K ♣ J 7 2
 ♠ 4
 ♥ A J 10 7 5 3
 ♦ A J 3
 ♣ 10 5 3

This is my prediction for the quietest board of the day (though it never quite works out that way, does it?). E/W have 11 cast-iron, rock-ribbed and guaranteed winners in spades with two aces to lose and nowhere to park the losers in those suits. I have heard it said that there is no such thing as a truly flat board, but unless N/S play a doubled heart contract, it is very hard to see how E/W +650 will be anything but the universal result.

Bd: 10 ♠ 8 6
 Dlr: East ♥ 5 4 3
 Vul: Both ♦ 10 9 6 5 4
 ♣ J 5 2
 ♠ A K J 7 5 ♠ Q 4 3
 ♥ J 10 ♥ K Q 6 2
 ♦ A J 7 ♦ Q 2
 ♣ K 6 4 ♣ Q 9 8 3
 ♠ 10 9 2
 ♥ A 9 8 7
 ♦ K 8 3
 ♣ A 10 7

When West opens 1♠ in third seat, most Easts will have some form of Drury available to them and will use it. Now what should West do? One possibility is to jump to 3NT, another is to temporize with 2♦ and hope to find out more from partner. On this occasion, no-trump plays better from the East seat with the vulnerable diamond honor protected from an initial lead. Because spades makes 11 tricks for E/W and no-trump either 10 or 11, depending on the lead and who is declarer, all the matchpoints will hinge — yet again — on that 'irrelevant' overtrick.

Bd: 14 ♠ J 2
 Dlr: East ♥ K Q 6 4
 Vul: None ♦ J 6 5
 ♣ A 8 6 2
 ♠ 7 5 ♠ Q 10 9 8 3
 ♥ 7 3 2 ♥ A J 9
 ♦ 8 7 4 2 ♦ K 3
 ♣ Q 9 7 3 ♣ J 5 4
 ♠ A K 6 4
 ♥ 10 8 5
 ♦ A Q 10 9
 ♣ K 10

South will find the play for 10 tricks in 3NT much easier if he has an unopposed sequence to game and receives a minor-suit lead, than if East opens 1♠ and directs the spade lead. In the first instance, declarer simply knocks out the defense's heart winners. But on a spade lead, South must try a heart to dummy early, and can subsequently use dummy's club entry to take the diamond finesse. Finally, by running the diamond and club winners, he strip-squeezes East into pitching a spade winner. Now East can be endplayed with a spade to play away from the ♥J.

Bd: 11 ♠ 9 5
 Dlr: South ♥ 8 4 2
 Vul: None ♦ K Q 10 4 2
 ♣ 7 3 2
 ♠ K J 7 ♠ A Q 4 2
 ♥ A K Q 5 ♥ 9 3
 ♦ A 8 7 ♦ J 9 6 3
 ♣ K 9 5 ♣ Q J 6
 ♠ 10 8 6 3
 ♥ J 10 7 6
 ♦ 5
 ♣ K 10 8 4

When West opens a textbook 2NT, East should only look for slam if he can find a spade fit via Stayman. When West shows hearts, East must shut up shop in 3NT. It would take a psychic North to find a reason not to lead a top diamond at pairs (though one could make the case for a low diamond lead if playing teams). As it is, after North puts the ♦K on the table, West can take three finesses in the minors and bring home 12 tricks for a shared top — though this result will probably be duplicated quite frequently around the room.

Bd: 15 ♠ Q J 8 5
 Dlr: South ♥ 10 8 5 2
 Vul: N/S ♦ 10 8 4
 ♣ J 6
 ♠ 7 6 3 ♠ A K 10 9 4
 ♥ A K 9 7 4 3 ♥ J
 ♦ K 5 2 ♦ J 3
 ♣ 8 ♣ A Q 10 7 2
 ♠ 2
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ A Q 9 7 6
 ♣ K 9 5 4 3

You'd expect South to open 1♦ (and possibly even to bid clubs at his second turn, despite the vulnerability). But one way or another, E/W should find a way to reach game in their eight-card spade fit not their seven-card heart fit. Against 4♠ South's most challenging defense is to lead ♦A and another diamond (the play is far simpler on a black-suit lead). Now declarer must not touch trumps, instead ruffing clubs in dummy and neutralizing North's trump tricks. +420 rates to score decently for E/W.

Bd: 12 ♠ 9 5 2
 Dlr: West ♥ K 9 5 4
 Vul: N/S ♦ A K 10 7 2
 ♣ J
 ♠ A 10 6 ♠ K Q 4 3
 ♥ 10 6 ♥ A Q 8 7 3 2
 ♦ Q J 3 ♦ 5
 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 ♣ 5 2
 ♠ J 8 7
 ♥ J
 ♦ 9 8 6 4
 ♣ A 9 7 6 3

When West opens 1♣, some Norths will overcall in diamonds, getting their best suit in; others will double to get all the suits into play. Either way, East rates to be able to drag heart support out of West. Most E/W pairs are likely to play the heart game rather than stop in 3♥. The club ruff ought to provide the setting trick against 4♥ — though some defenses may let it slip away. Equally, some declarers might find a way to misguess trumps and hold themselves to eight tricks. Anyone who bids and makes 4♠ will have somewhat fortuitously achieved a notable coup.

Bd: 16 ♠ K 6 3
 Dlr: West ♥ A J 6 2
 Vul: E/W ♦ 10 7 4 2
 ♣ K 3
 ♠ Q 7 5 ♠ J 9 8 4
 ♥ 10 8 3 ♥ 9 7 5
 ♦ K 9 6 5 3 ♦ Q J
 ♣ 7 4 ♣ J 9 6 2
 ♠ A 10 2
 ♥ K Q 4
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ A Q 10 8 5

With 30 combined HCP and no real fit, you'd imagine slam for N/S would be touch and go, and indeed it is. To make 12 tricks in 6NT or 6♣, South needs to finesse in clubs on the second round against East — not the indicated play, in abstract. But I suppose N/S might reach slam if North opens the bidding (we've all done worse, haven't we?). Alternatively, South might quite reasonably deem his hand worth a 20-22 2NT call. As is so often the case, taking 12 tricks rates to get you all the matchpoints, whether you are in slam or not.

Bd: 17 ♠ A Q 9 3
 Dlr: North ♥ 10 5
 Vul: None ♦ Q 8 4 2
 ♣ J 7 5

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

♠ 10 8 7 6 5 4
 ♥ Q 7
 ♦ 5 3
 ♣ K 10 4

In third seat, some Souths will let sleeping dogs lie, and some will open 2♠ and damn the torpedoes. If South passes, then E/W should bid unopposed to 4♥ (with East perhaps getting diamonds into play) against which North has a blind lead. A club or trump will hold declarer to at most 450, even if he guesses diamonds, but the lead of the ♠A allows West to make 480. By contrast, if South preempts to 2♠ then N/S might take the sacrifice in 4♠. That would cost declarer 500, and earn him the near zero you could say he deserved.

Bd: 21 ♠ Q 7 4 3
 Dlr: North ♥ A 8
 Vul: N/S ♦ K 2
 ♣ Q 8 6 3 2

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

♠ J
 ♥ K Q J 10 7
 ♦ Q 8 3
 ♣ K 10 5 4

Three of the four players have marginal opening bids. While some Norths may open 1♣, most will pass, after which East can open 1♦ and South will overcall 1♥. After a light negative double from West, the E/W spade fit rates to come to light. Still, you'd expect N/S to be able to find clubs and compete to the three level in either clubs or hearts. Par on the board is for N/S to play 3♥ for +140, but club partscores for +130 should also produce a reasonable matchpoint result. Meanwhile, E/W may be clipped for 300 if they try for nine tricks in spades or diamonds.

Bd: 18 ♠ A J 10 7
 Dlr: East ♥ A K Q 8 4
 Vul: N/S ♦ 4 2
 ♣ J 8

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

♠ Q 9 6 2
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ 10 6
 ♣ A K Q 9 4

In second seat, South has a 1♣ opening bid because of the comfortable rebid. Now some hyper-aggressive Wests will overcall, and even if West passes, then when North responds 1♥ some Easts might double. This action is dangerous — it is more likely to help the opponents in the play than produce a contract for your side. But bidding works remarkably well here, because if left alone, N/S will make +620 in 4♠. If E/W can sacrifice in 5♦, then even after repeated trump leads, N/S cannot stop their opponents from scoring seven trump tricks and one spade to escape for -500.

Bd: 22 ♠ Q 10 9 5 3
 Dlr: East ♥ A 6
 Vul: E/W ♦ 10 5
 ♣ A Q 9 4

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

♠ A 7
 ♥ J 10 9 8 4
 ♦ Q 7 4
 ♣ K 8 5

In third seat, many Wests will pass, as they really don't have a satisfactory opening bid, though one could imagine an opening call being found in any of the four suits. Best for West is to open 1♠; then East might buy the hand in 1NT and come to seven tricks after negotiating the heart suit. But if West opens 1♦, he may finish in 3♦ and regret it. And a 1♥ opening by West could result in South playing 1NT — which would be no fun at all for declarer on a low diamond opening lead from West. The most rewarding strain on the deal is for North to play 2♠.

Bd: 19 ♠ Q 9 3
 Dlr: South ♥ J 7 3
 Vul: E/W ♦ A 7 3 2
 ♣ A J 4

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

♠ K 2
 ♥ K Q 10 9 6 4
 ♦ K
 ♣ K Q 9 8

After South opens 1♥, some Norths will make a game-forcing 2♦ call. Others will use the forcing no-trump, following up with a call of 3♥ or 4♥. Either way, South should finish in 4♥ on a diamond lead. To try for six, declarer wins the diamond in hand and innocently advances a small spade; might West duck his ace (if he had it)? Of course he might — but today is not South's lucky day. Note: 3NT by South is a splendid contract (and though the unfortunate major-suit lies could sink declarer, it is heavily odds on to take the same 11 tricks as hearts).

Bd: 23 ♠ 10 2
 Dlr: South ♥ 8
 Vul: Both ♦ A Q J 5
 ♣ A 10 8 7 5 3

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

♠ J 7 5 3
 ♥ A K 6 4
 ♦ 9 4
 ♣ J 6 2

When North opens 1♣ in third seat, East is going to double, letting South redouble. West should probably bid 1♥ now, planning to come again if given the chance. You'd expect N/S to finish up in 3♣, where North has to use his dummy entry to finesse diamonds and ruff out the suit. Even so, declarer is unlikely to guess trumps, so rates to score +110. Best for N/S is to double West if he gets his side to 3♥; while some aggressive Souths might even double 2♥ and collect the magic 200.

Bd: 20 ♠ K 10 9
 Dlr: West ♥ 9 6 2
 Vul: Both ♦ A 6 5
 ♣ Q 10 8 6

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

♠ ---
 ♥ K J 10 8 5 3
 ♦ Q J 3
 ♣ J 9 5 2

Though some consider any hand with two aces and two kings worth a strong no-trump, it is more sensible to treat a 14-count with no intermediates but with spades and diamond length as a 1♦ opening. East will respond 1♠, and it looks normal for South to risk a 3♥ preempt now. When West takes the bait and competes to 3♠, East can hardly do less than bid 4♠. Unless South's opening lead is a heart, the defenders should find a way to set up their heart trick and beat the game before declarer establishes the 13th diamond for the critical discard.

Bd: 24 ♠ J 7 4 3
 Dlr: West ♥ Q 10 7
 Vul: None ♦ 8 2
 ♣ A Q J 2

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

♠ A 6
 ♥ K J 6 5 4 3
 ♦ A Q 9 4
 ♣ 10

South will surely overcall 1♥ over East's 1♣ opening, receive strong support from North and drive to 4♥. After a club opening lead against 4♥, declarer should win in dummy, take a diamond finesse and trump a diamond, then ruff out the ♣K to establish a discard for the spade loser. Now he can trump the fourth diamond in dummy and make +480. Conversely, the defenders can create a second trick for their side by leading and continuing trumps or by setting up their spade winner at once, while they still have trump control.

Bd: 25 ♠ Q 4
 Dlr: North ♥ A K 6
 Vul: E/W ♦ Q J 10 6 2
 ♣ 8 4 3
 ♠ 9 6 2 ♠ A J 10 3
 ♥ J 5 4 2 ♥ Q 10 7
 ♦ A 5 ♦ K 9 7 4
 ♣ J 9 7 2 ♣ 6 5
 ♠ K 8 7 5
 ♥ 9 8 3
 ♦ 8 3
 ♣ A K Q 10

N/S should have an unopposed auction in which North will rebid 1NT over his partner's 1♠ response, allowing Souths to drive to 3NT. Yes, some pairs might only invite game, but if they are playing a light opening style, North would accept the invitation because of his source of tricks. With a blind opening lead against the no-trump game, East can hit a home run by attacking hearts — and the ♥Q or ♥10 lead would represent a grand slam! On any other start, declarer has the entries and timing to play diamonds to best effect and come to nine tricks.

Bd: 29 ♠ K 9 3 2
 Dlr: North ♥ J 9 5
 Vul: Both ♦ 7
 ♣ K 9 8 6 5
 ♠ Q 10 6 ♠ 8 7 5
 ♥ 10 4 2 ♥ A Q 8 7 3
 ♦ 6 4 3 2 ♦ K J 9
 ♣ A 7 4 ♣ 10 3
 ♠ A J 4
 ♥ K 6
 ♦ A Q 10 8 5
 ♣ Q J 2

For the second deal in a row, a 17-count with an attractive five-card diamond suit must choose between 1♦ and 1NT. A 1NT opening bid will probably see South play there (though North might use Stayman, and if he doesn't, East might balance himself into 2♥). If South opens 1♦, he will end up in 3NT. If so, West had better lead a heart. After that start, 3NT has only eight winners, while on any other defense South should come to at least nine tricks. N/S can make game in either black suit, but it is very hard to construct an intelligent sequence to get there.

Bd: 26 ♠ J 10 9 8 6 5
 Dlr: East ♥ ---
 Vul: Both ♦ Q 3
 ♣ K 9 8 6 5
 ♠ A K 7 ♠ ---
 ♥ J 7 ♥ A K Q 10 9 8 5 4 3
 ♦ A 10 8 6 5 ♦ 9 2
 ♣ A Q 10 ♣ 4 3
 ♠ Q 4 3 2
 ♥ 6 2
 ♦ K J 7 4
 ♣ J 7 2

Though it might appear rash to predict that a sizeable percentage of the field will reach 7NT with just 27 HCP between them, East will open 4♥. Now West will use Keycard Blackwood and find solid hearts opposite. After that, is he worth 5NT, looking for the grand slam? If he does make that call, East can jump to 7♥ (in case West has a heart void), and his partner can convert to 7NT. My guess is that even at the strongest clubs, bidding any grand slam will generate a 70% board, and reaching 7NT won't leave N/S any matchpoints.

Bd: 30 ♠ K 9
 Dlr: East ♥ A Q 6
 Vul: None ♦ Q 10 9 7 6
 ♣ K 9 2
 ♠ 10 7 4 ♠ 8 6 3
 ♥ J ♥ 10 5 4 3
 ♦ K 8 4 ♦ J 3 2
 ♣ A Q 7 6 5 4 ♣ J 10 3
 ♠ A Q J 5 2
 ♥ K 9 8 7 2
 ♦ A 5
 ♣ 8

N/S have a decent heart fit and a respectable number of high cards between them, but nothing about their combined hands requires them to climb to the slam zone, does it? And yet, with the heart suit playable for no loser and the ♣A onside, the sole defense that can threaten 6♥ or 6♠ is a diamond lead from West. After that start, declarer will have to guess diamonds to make his slam. If West bids clubs, he may work out to lead diamonds against a major-suit game. Holding South to +450 would score very nicely for the defense.

Bd: 27 ♠ A 6 4
 Dlr: South ♥ 8 6
 Vul: None ♦ K J 9 8 7
 ♣ K J 7
 ♠ 9 8 ♠ K Q 7 5
 ♥ Q 10 7 3 2 ♥ K J
 ♦ 6 2 ♦ A 5 4 3
 ♣ 10 6 4 2 ♣ Q 5 3
 ♠ J 10 3 2
 ♥ A 9 5 4
 ♦ Q 10
 ♣ A 9 8

North has a regulation 1♦ opening bid in third seat, after which the East hand is not ideal for either a 1NT or 1♠ overcall. Few will pass, though, with more players choosing 1NT than finding the suit overcall. South ought to double 1NT, and West can run to hearts. Now N/S may decide to play to penalize their opponents, even though 3NT is a comfortable make their way, because West has no entries to his hearts. Against 2♥x the defenders can lead and continue diamonds to establish a force. If they do, declarer will struggle to come to seven tricks.

Bd: 31 ♠ 9 7
 Dlr: South ♥ 9 7 6 2
 Vul: N/S ♦ A 9 2
 ♣ 8 5 3 2
 ♠ Q 10 8 6 3 2 ♠ A J
 ♥ K ♥ J 8 3
 ♦ K Q 6 5 3 ♦ 7 4
 ♣ Q ♣ A J 10 9 7 4
 ♠ K 5 4
 ♥ A Q 10 5 4
 ♦ J 10 8
 ♣ K 6

After South opens 1♥, some Wests will bid spades, while some will use a Michaels cuebid to get their whole hand off their chest at one go. It looks normal enough for North to produce a weak raise of hearts in competition, after which E/W may well find it hard to achieve par on the deal. They can make nine tricks painlessly in spades, but they might find themselves selling out to 3♥ — a contract that can be made on accurate guesswork by South — or overreaching to 4♠, which goes down when diamonds do not behave.

Bd: 28 ♠ A 5
 Dlr: West ♥ Q 10 9 8 7
 Vul: N/S ♦ 8 7 4
 ♣ 9 8 3
 ♠ Q 10 ♠ J 9 6 3 2
 ♥ K 6 3 ♥ J 5 4
 ♦ A K Q 9 5 ♦ J 10
 ♣ K 10 7 ♣ Q 5 2
 ♠ K 8 7 4
 ♥ A 2
 ♦ 6 3 2
 ♣ A J 6 4

West has to decide between opening 1NT and 1♦. He has a maximum no-trump and a chunky five-card suit, together with some useful intermediates, all of which may tip the balance in favor of aggression. If he opens 1NT, he will end up in 2♠ on a heart lead and should win the second heart, then pitch his heart loser on the diamonds. The defenders can still, however, promote a trump by continuing hearts to hold declarer to eight tricks. If West opens 1♦, he may play there. If he rebids 2NT over a 1♠ response, the opening heart lead will prove lethal. He rates to be held to six tricks.

Bd: 32 ♠ K J 10 3
 Dlr: West ♥ 10 7
 Vul: E/W ♦ J 8 5 4
 ♣ J 7 6
 ♠ 9 7 5 4 2 ♠ A Q
 ♥ K Q 4 ♥ J 9 6 5 3 2
 ♦ 10 9 7 3 ♦ K
 ♣ 10 ♣ A K 5 4
 ♠ 8 6
 ♥ A 8
 ♦ A Q 6 2
 ♣ Q 9 8 3 2

One way or another most E/W pairs will locate their heart fit early, but the field will be split between those playing game and a few laggards stopping in partscore. With trumps behaving and the spade finesse succeeding, declarer has 10 tricks (and the defenders may have to be careful to prevent East from making an overtrick by ruffing two clubs in dummy). After a spade lead, declarer can bring home +650 by cashing the top clubs before ruffing his small clubs. This way the defenders can score no more than their two aces.