

# ACBL-wide Senior Pairs—Monday Afternoon, March 2, 2015—Set 113452

Bd: 1 ♠ 753  
 Dir: North ♥ A832  
 Vul: None ♦ 6  
 ♣ A9863  
 ♠ Q94 ♠ AKJ10  
 ♥ J7654 ♥ K  
 ♦ Q97 ♦ AKJ54  
 ♣ 107 ♣ KQ4  
 ♠ 862  
 ♥ Q109  
 ♦ 10832  
 ♣ J52

The potential problem with East's opening 1♦ on such a strong hand is obvious, but starting with 2♣ and rebidding either 2♠, 2NT or 3♦ seems equally flawed (while jumping to 3♠ to show diamonds and spades conventionally is also imperfect). Regardless of what East does, it will be very hard to bid scientifically to 3NT and protect the ♥K. As the cards lie, the spade game is the highest scoring spot - at least at double-dummy, where on repeated heart leads declarer might have to risk his contract to make +450. +430 rates to matchpoint just fine for E/W.

Bd: 5 ♠ AJ8  
 Dir: North ♥ Q942  
 Vul: N-S ♦ AKQ7  
 ♣ 93  
 ♠ 96432 ♠ 75  
 ♥ 106 ♥ A75  
 ♦ 10 ♦ 98542  
 ♣ QJ852 ♣ K64  
 ♠ KQ10  
 ♥ KJ83  
 ♦ J63  
 ♣ A107

hand flawed for a strong notrump because of their small doubleton. But that ought not to hold you back from making the value bid, since otherwise you will never be able to show your hand-type properly. South might sensibly raise 1NT to game without using Stayman. Indeed, on this occasion notrump plays better than hearts, after the logical diamond lead. In 4♥ the defenders can take a ruff to hold North to +620, while at notrump only the 'impossible' club lead prevents N/S from scoring up +660.

Bd: 2 ♠ K752  
 Dir: East ♥ KJ76  
 Vul: N-S ♦ 75  
 ♣ 872  
 ♠ 986 ♠ A3  
 ♥ 8543 ♥ A  
 ♦ AK10 ♦ 98642  
 ♣ 643 ♣ A QJ95  
 ♠ QJ104  
 ♥ Q1092  
 ♦ QJ3  
 ♣ K10

After East opens 1♦, few Souths will dredge up a double - for which they have the major-suit pattern, if very little else. Assuming South passes, then E/W will bid unopposed, almost certainly to a diamond partscore. After a spade lead, East can try a diamond to the 10, then a club to the jack. Simply scoring 11 tricks should produce a decent pairs result, since in notrump declarer may decide he only has time to play for one of the minors to behave. So he might cross to a top diamond to finesse in clubs, thereby holding himself to eight tricks.

Bd: 6 ♠ A84  
 Dir: East ♥ A83  
 Vul: E-W ♦ K93  
 ♣ A1062  
 ♠ 75 ♠ K96  
 ♥ KJ1062 ♥ Q754  
 ♦ A42 ♦ QJ  
 ♣ QJ9 ♣ K743  
 ♠ QJ1032  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ 108765  
 ♣ 85

Few Easts or Souths will open, unless you act with all 11-counts systemically, or unless you'd treat the South cards as a two-level opener. If West gets to open 1♥ in third seat, then North will either double or overcall 1NT. Either way you'd expect N/S to compete in spades, and E/W to bid up to 3♥, where they can rack up +140 easily enough. However, even after a heart lead, N/S can make 3♠ - though only by giving up on the spade finesse and then guessing to lead a diamond to the king. Even -50 or -100 may matchpoint well for them.

Bd: 3 ♠ A4  
 Dir: South ♥ 1043  
 Vul: E-W ♦ K5  
 ♣ KQ10842  
 ♠ Q95 ♠ J763  
 ♥ Q987 ♥ AK52  
 ♦ 98742 ♦ 1063  
 ♣ 5 ♣ A6  
 ♠ K1082  
 ♥ J6  
 ♦ AQJ  
 ♣ J973

Although N/S don't belong in game, it may take great restraint to stop in partscore. Either South must pass his 12-count, or North must identify the problem with notrump, and also that they are missing three control cards in a club game. That will be too hard for most of us, and it is equally difficult to see a plausible way to let through any game here. So results of +50 or even +100 for E/W will litter the scoresheets - if anyone still uses them instead of Bridgemates. Perhaps if East comes into the action he may slow his opponents down - fatally, from his perspective.

Bd: 7 ♠ Q962  
 Dir: South ♥ Q873  
 Vul: Both ♦ 104  
 ♣ K98  
 ♠ J1085 ♠ 743  
 ♥ 4 ♥ 105  
 ♦ J9865 ♦ AKQ  
 ♣ J53 ♣ A Q1076  
 ♠ AK  
 ♥ AKJ962  
 ♦ 732  
 ♣ 42

When South opens 1♥, North can describe his hand best by a Bergen mixed raise or a simple constructive raise, if you have either weapon available. Now East had better be able to double an artificial club bid, or bid clubs himself, rather than doubling for take-out, if he wants to prevent N/S from recording +170 or +620 in hearts. On any other lead, South discards his second club loser on dummy's spades, and gives up just three tricks in the minors, whereas a club lead gets the defenders four tricks. As West, I know I'd guess wrong if left to my own devices.

Bd: 4 ♠ Q72  
 Dir: West ♥ 10  
 Vul: Both ♦ J98653  
 ♣ A92  
 ♠ K53 ♠ J864  
 ♥ AKQ4 ♥ 95  
 ♦ 72 ♦ AK104  
 ♣ Q1074 ♣ J86  
 ♠ A109  
 ♥ J87632  
 ♦ Q  
 ♣ K53

Optimists in the West seat or those using a 14-16 notrump could climb to a game here, but far more players will open the West cards 1♣. If North passes, then E/W are likely to bid to a partscore in notrump or even in spades, should West have a predilection for three-card raises. If North butts in, then he may mislead his partner into going for a possibly sizeable penalty. Yes, technically West can bring home nine winners in notrump, dropping South's singleton diamond honor, then setting up both black suits, while losing only two tricks in each. A few diehard Norths will see their

Bd: 8 ♠ A952  
 Dir: West ♥ J876  
 Vul: None ♦ Q9  
 ♣ QJ6  
 ♠ QJ108 ♠ K74  
 ♥ AK94 ♥ 52  
 ♦ 8 ♦ A10763  
 ♣ AK83 ♣ 1092  
 ♠ 63  
 ♥ Q103  
 ♦ KJ542  
 ♣ 754

West will open 1♣ and hear his partner reply 1♦ (a response of 1NT would be both misdescriptive and anti-positional). Now West can bid hearts and raise his partner's rebid of 1NT to 2NT, allowing East to pass and play a sensible partscore. Admittedly, the combination of the 3-3 club break plus the lie of the spotcards may be enough to allow E/W to come home with nine tricks, but game certainly feels against the odds to me. Still, I'm sure that many will bid to 3NT, and not all of them will find their way to nine winners.

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

Tempting as it is for South to jump to 3NT opposite a 1♣ opening bid that would be a terrible idea today, with West ready to produce one of the easier defenses of his life. If South more thoughtfully responds 1♦, then West will overcall in spades and North may repeat his clubs, letting N/S conduct a delicate conversation to 5♣. North will then have to negotiate trumps without much to go on, bar the fact that spades are known to be 5-3. The odds seem to me to favor the second-round finesse - but the cards do not agree today.

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

East is likely to declare 3NT here, on a relatively uninformative auction. I suppose some Souths might overcall in diamonds, and get North off to the best lead against 3NT by West, but not many will. If South has not bid at all, and leads a diamond against 3NT, declarer will probably take the third diamond and have to guess whether to take one or both of the key finesses. It looks normal to play on clubs, then cash the black winners... and then? Some may go all out for 11 tricks, some will settle for nine. Much could depend on the defenders' signals and discards.

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

Over East's strong notrump we'll see a range of actions by South. Those who show diamonds directly, or as part of a two-suiter, rate to get their side to a diamond partscore. Declarer can negotiate the red suits for 11 tricks and +150. Equally, if N/S find the ♦Q they can come home with at least nine winners in notrump. But whether anyone can bid the N/S cards to 3NT from the North seat, to protect the ♣Q, is quite another matter. A few E/W pairs may even buy the hand in spades, scrambling six or seven tricks in that contract.

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

When West overcalls 2♣ over 1♠ and receives a simple raise, he must try for game, or even simply up and bid one. A call of 3♦ feels right, planning to bid 3NT over 3♥, perhaps intending to raise 4♣ to game. Here 3NT by West makes at least nine tricks and almost certainly 10, but the limit in clubs is 10 tricks. Some E/W pairs will miss game, and many won't find notrump, so +430 should earn an excellent result.

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

Non-vulnerable, South has too many aces for a 2♦ opening, in my book. But not everyone has read that book... Whether South opens 1♦ or 2♦, it will be very hard for E/W to go plus here. With a combined 27 HCP, they can certainly make game, in notrump. But I'd expect the vast majority of E/W pairs to play either spades or hearts, and at too high a level, given the defensive ruffs available. After West doubles a diamond call, getting to notrump will be very challenging, so anyone bringing home game is going to achieve a fine result for so doing.

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

The world's most classical weak 2♥ opening for West will see North torn between a 2♠ call and a double. Whatever he bids, it will be extremely hard for N/S to stop safely here. However, one could imagine the defenders messing up against 3♠ after a heart lead to the ace and a diamond shift. If declarer wins in hand and tackles trumps, East must duck rather than play for the immediate diamond ruff. Nine tricks are the limit in clubs, so long as West shifts to, or leads, an early diamond. I'd expect most N/S pairs to go minus on the board.

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

Few people pass 12-counts any more. If West does pass initially, he may let N/S play their diamond partscore, or he might double South's fourth-seat 1♦ opening and encourage East to compete in spades. Whether or not West opens the bidding, 2♦ and 2♠ rate to be the most popular final contracts today, with a diamond partscore as likely to come to +110 as be held to +90, an important overtrick given the probable result in 2♠. Seven tricks are the limit in that denomination on accurate defense.

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

When West opens 1♦ North will overcall 1♠, and even if East has a weak-jump available, I hope most will be discreet enough not to use one, at unfavorable vulnerability. Regardless, one would expect N/S to buy the contract in a spade partscore, making nine tricks via a diamond ruff in dummy. However, Deep Finesse tells us that the unlikely 3NT cannot be defeated with the clubs blocked as they are. There are several ways for E/W to misjudge the deal and go -200, or worse, in a minor suit. But not that many pairs rate to do that, do they?

Bd: 17 ♠ Q 9  
 Dlr: North ♥ K Q 5  
 Vul: None ♦ Q 9 7 6  
 ♣ K 10 3 2

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

♠ A 5 3 2  
 ♥ A 8 7 6 3 2  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ Q 9 5

North's 12-count doesn't really look like an opening bid, but few pass such hands these days. And opening the bidding would certainly make it simpler for South to reach 4♥ here. Still, if North passes and East opens 2♦, South will overcall 2♥ and probably end up in 4♥ just the same. Declarer should be able to come to 10 tricks painlessly enough, but West might allow himself to get squeezed in the black suits for an 11th winner. The best results for N/S will go to those pairs picking up 500 or more on defense to a sacrifice in spades or diamonds.

Bd: 21 ♠ 2  
 Dlr: North ♥ Q 6 4  
 Vul: N-S ♦ K Q 10 7 5  
 ♣ J 10 7 6

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

♠ A 9 6  
 ♥ K J 9 8 3  
 ♦ 9 2  
 ♣ K 8 3

The South cards present a problem both in overcalling and in balancing. It is highly risky to overcall 2♥ over 1♠, vulnerable facing a passed hand. But if the opponents come to rest in 2♠, should one balance with 3♥ — an almost equally dangerous action, despite the reassurance provided by the spade length? As it happens, N/S can make 3♥ very easily — they might even collect 10 tricks occasionally. Meanwhile, E/W have no legitimate play for a ninth trick at spades; so South will need to compete to score any matchpoints.

Bd: 18 ♠ J 4 3 2  
 Dlr: East ♥ A 5  
 Vul: N-S ♦ 10 8 5  
 ♣ Q 7 5 2

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

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

At most tables West will be allowed to open 1♥ in third seat and buy the hand in hearts. There are at least eight easy tricks in that strain; but one can imagine the defenders leading clubs early. This may force declarer to risk the contract to find the ♠J if he wants to play for his overtrick. South does best in practice to open a natural though feeble 1♦ or a weak notrump, if that is in his armory. In that case E/W might sell out to 1NT and collect +100, a measly return on their heart partscore.

Bd: 22 ♠ A 9 7 5  
 Dlr: East ♥ K  
 Vul: E-W ♦ J 7 4  
 ♣ K Q 6 3 2

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

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

The more timid Easts might pass initially, but most will preempt to the two or three level. Whichever action East chooses, South should double for takeout and North will have to rein in his ardor and avoid exploring for slam in order to go plus in one of the various games at his side's disposal. Most will declare clubs or spades today, rather fewer will find notrump. +450 in spades looks painless enough, for something like a share of a top board, though defending 3♥x for +500 would be even nicer.

Bd: 19 ♠ K Q J 5  
 Dlr: South ♥ K 9 7  
 Vul: E-W ♦ 7 6 5 2  
 ♣ K 4

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

♠ A 8 6  
 ♥ A 8 6 5 3  
 ♦ K 4  
 ♣ 10 8 3

Yet another marginal opening bid — this time Culbertson might be less censorious, given South's controls and the vulnerability. If South opens 1♥, N/S may well end in a major-suit game. With the minor-suit aces so poorly placed they will need the major suits to split to escape for two down. If South passes then some Norths may open 1♠ and play in 2♠ after Drury, some will open 1♦ (for the lead?) and pass the 1♥ response on the grounds that even the one level could be too high. +110 ought to work out well for N/S today.

Bd: 23 ♠ K Q 10 8 2  
 Dlr: South ♥ 9 7 4  
 Vul: Both ♦ 7 5  
 ♣ K 5 4

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

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

East will generally be allowed to open 1♥, over which South may risk an overcall of 2NT, despite the risks of getting too high, or tipping off the play in the majors. This call might work well because West could be railroaded into treating his hand as a limit raise of hearts. Now East will end up in 4♥, down one on the diamond ruff. It may be hard for E/W to avoid reaching game, no matter what action their opponents take. From East's perspective, if partner had less wasted in clubs, with a diamond or spade card, game would be favorite to come home.

Bd: 20 ♠ Q 7 2  
 Dlr: West ♥ A 7 3  
 Vul: Both ♦ K Q J 7  
 ♣ K Q 7

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

♠ J 10 6  
 ♥ K Q J 10  
 ♦ 9 6 2  
 ♣ J 9 6

North's strong notrump rates to open and close the auction, but we might see a variation if N/S use a 14-16 notrump, or even a strong club. Then N/S may get to 3NT when South can be sure from North's rebid that his side will have the combined values to play game. Not surprisingly, when N/S have only 25 HCP with no long suit and few aces, the defense will have to be VERY careless not to hold North to eight tricks in notrump by ducking an early spade, or by setting up clubs. If South gets to play 3NT on a diamond lead, he could maybe manage to find a way home.

Bd: 24 ♠ Q 9 5  
 Dlr: West ♥ 10 5 4  
 Vul: None ♦ 10 3  
 ♣ K 9 7 6 2

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

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

The West cards look nothing like a 2NT opening bid to me, but some will make that upgrade. Apparently nothing matters, since virtually the whole field seems likely to declare 3NT rather than wander into the slam zone. But of course today is the day that 12 tricks can be made...even if only with smoke and mirrors. Play a spade to the king then run hearts, which forces South down to one spade. Now if he keeps the ace he is endplayed to lead diamonds; should he pitch it, North can be endplayed to lead clubs.

Bd: 25 ♠ A K 10 6 5  
 Dir: North ♥ K 6 2  
 Vul: E-W ♦ K 8 7  
 ♣ 9 3

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

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

In a spooky mirror image of deal 21, it is East who must decide whether to overcall 2♥ over 1♠ or balance when the opponents have settled in 2♠, again with unfavorable vulnerability hanging over his head. If he acts directly, he may find himself in 4♥, down 200 on the accurate defense of an early diamond lead or shift. Meanwhile N/S have an equally painless route to +140 in a spade partscore, and, again, the defenders must set up their minor trick early to avoid conceding an extra overtrick.

Bd: 29 ♠ Q 7 4  
 Dir: North ♥ A Q 2  
 Vul: Both ♦ A K J 9 4  
 ♣ 9 7

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

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

North's strong notrump will see East overcall, showing a one- or two-suiter. Whichever action he chooses, South rates to bid or transfer into 2♠. The cards lie almost as badly as it is possible for a spade partscore, but if the contract is declared by North, only a club lead and heart shift will hold declarer to eight tricks, assuming he guesses the trumps. That same unfavorable lie of the cards lets E/W come home with nine winners in clubs, so any plus score here should work out fine for N/S.

Bd: 26 ♠ 10 8 6  
 Dir: East ♥ Q 9 8  
 Vul: Both ♦ 10 8 2  
 ♣ K J 6 2

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

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

When South opens 1♥ and West doubles, North should raise to 2♥, and East may be tempted to bid - he has four spades, a few values and a little extra shape, after all. If you think this hand is worth a call, then West has to be careful not to drive his partner to game but just to invite to 3♠. If East passes over 2♥, West will double again, and now should East do more than bid 2♠? My instincts say that at pairs it is prudent to downgrade the ♥K and stop in 2♠. Such caution would earn E/W a very decent result, and if N/S overreach to 3♥, they may be doubled and set 200.

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

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

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

Finally, a deal that all the field seem likely to cope with in pretty much the same way. You'd expect East to use Stayman after a 2NT opening bid and play 4♠ when he finds the fit. And of course, that decision will backfire today, when notrump handles for the same 11 tricks. +460 should earn any matchpoint hogs out there (you know who you are) a splendid result. Is it rash to suggest that the whole field will make 11 tricks here? Maybe, but I suppose a few foolish Norths might lead a low club against the notrump game, thus earning themselves a zero.

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

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

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

You can imagine that at many tables N/S will sell out to 2♠ down 100 or 150. After all, South has only a very marginal opening bid, while North might have to produce a four-card overcall if he wants to get into the bidding safely. Perhaps South will be allowed to balance over 1♦ or can double 1♠ from East. N/S are cold for game in hearts or notrump, and if South upgrades his hand and opens 1♣ you'd certainly expect N/S to record +420 or more with the minimum of inconvenience.

Bd: 31 ♠ 8  
 Dir: South ♥ J 9 5 3  
 Vul: N-S ♦ J 8 6  
 ♣ Q 10 8 6 2

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

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

Despite his technically holding an 11-count, a respectable percentage of the disciplined Souths in our field will open 2♠, discounting the singleton king and noting the absence of aces. East will then be able to balance himself into game (perhaps by jumping in notrump, or by doubling then bidding notrump). Even on a low spade lead, 3NT by East requires declarer to take some very good views in each minor to find a way home. +400 ought to fetch E/W an excellent score.

Bd: 28 ♠ 2  
 Dir: West ♥ 10 7 6  
 Vul: N-S ♦ A Q 5 3  
 ♣ K J 7 5 4

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

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

This deal may make its appearance in Challenge the Champs one day. Despite the completely wasted ♦K, E/W have 12 tricks ready to run in spades or hearts once the hearts break, and the defenders must cash the ♦A or it gets away. I guess that means the field will play 6NT by East, right? In your dreams! Relatively few pairs will reach slam at all, and simply getting to 3NT might earn East a splendid score (though how anyone would manage that feat is beyond me). And if North stretches to overcall, the task becomes harder still.

Bd: 32 ♠ K Q 7 5  
 Dir: West ♥ K 9 5  
 Vul: E-W ♦ 9 6  
 ♣ Q 7 5 3

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

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

The West cards don't look like a vulnerable 4♥ opening bid to me. While all routes seem to converge on the heart game, a few aggressive E/W pairs will find their way into the auction (especially if East responds with a forcing notrump, planning a limit raise, instead of making a constructive raise to 2♥). 4♥ is held to 10 tricks so long as the defenders lead or shift to spades (not guaranteed) while both clubs and spades are remarkably cheap saves for N/S - in fact defeating 4♠ is hardly trivial. So that 4♥ opening bid is looking better and better...