

Board 23 ♠ 6  
 Dir:S ♥ A 9 2  
 V:Both ♦ A 9 8  
 ♣ K Q 7 6 3 2  
 ♠ K Q J 9 3 ♠ 10 2  
 ♥ 10 6 5 ♥ K J 8 7 3  
 ♦ Q 10 7 5 3  
 ♣ K 6 2 ♣ J 8 5  
 ♠ A 8 7 5 4  
 ♥ Q 4  
 ♦ J 4  
 ♣ A 10 9 4

The day will belong to light opener's. South will ponder how beautiful his 11 points. If he opens 1S, West will give him a dirty look. N-S should quickly reach the game and who knows maybe they will even try for a slam. If South passes the auction will be more painful in order the get to 3NT or 5C, especially if East overcalls 1H and West raises. +600 for NS and anything above will be great for them.

Board 24 ♠ A 10  
 Dir:W ♥ Q 8 4  
 V:None ♦ J 10 3  
 ♣ A Q J 6 2  
 ♠ J 9 7 5 4 ♠ 6 2  
 ♥ A K J 6 3 ♥ 7 2  
 ♦ K 8 ♦ Q 9 7 6 5 4 2  
 ♣ 10 ♣ 5 3  
 ♠ K Q 8 3  
 ♥ 10 9 5  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ K 9 8 7 4

Despite the better hearts West should open 1S (5-5 high rule !!!). N will overcall marginal 2C (I prefer to have 6 card suit when overcalling 2 of a minor), some aggressive North's will even overcall 1NT to show the world how they can declare. In either case South will steer towards 3NT. 10 or 11 tricks will be available. If South plays 3NT and West clears the hearts, rookies will be awarded all the matchpoints by finessing the Jack of spades.

Amazingly 4D by North-South is only down 2 for -300 ,

but don't get a headache about how to get there.

Board 25 ♠ J 8 6 2  
 Dir:N ♥ A J 5  
 V:E-W ♦ A 9 6 5  
 ♣ 10 9  
 ♠ A K Q 3  
 ♥ 8 6 4 2  
 ♦ Q 8  
 ♣ K 7 2  
 ♠ 10 9  
 ♥ K 9 7 3  
 ♦ K 10 4 2  
 ♣ Q 6 5  
 ♠ 7 5 4  
 ♥ Q 10  
 ♦ J 7 3  
 ♣ A J 8 4 3

The auction will be fast but the play will not.

Did you notice that the less tricks we have the longer we play ? Partial always require thorough thoughts both for defenders and declarer.

East will open 1C and West will have to choose which 4 card suit to bid. The "up the line" followers will choose 1D. Can you blame East if he decides to bypass his "robust" heart suit?

Tip: When partner opens 1C having 4 or 5 diamonds and 4

of a major and non-game forcing hand respond 1 of a major not 1 diamond.

Board 26 ♠ 6 4 2  
 Dir:E ♥ Q J 10 7 4  
 V:Both ♦ A 8  
 ♣ A 10 8  
 ♠ K 10 3 ♠ A 9 8  
 ♥ 8 ♥ K 6 3 2  
 ♦ J 10 9 5 3 ♦ K Q 7 6 4  
 ♣ 6 4 3 2 ♣ J  
 ♠ Q J 7 5  
 ♥ A 9 5  
 ♦ 2  
 ♣ K Q 9 7 5

The auction should be very dynamic: 1D -DBL-2D- 4H. Although seeing all hands 4H makes, in real life it will go down. The only way to make it's to ruff the second round of diamonds and drive out the kings of hearts ( antipercentage, antimatchpoints play) Few East's may consider taking the vul sac, but holding 4 trumps may stop them from bidding it. 5D doubled will be -200 or -500 for relatively poor score. Note for the rookies, it is wrong to overcall 2C with South's hand.

Tip: when they open 1 of a minor, with 5 in the other

minor and support in both majors double, don't overcall your minor.

Board 27 ♠ Q 4 3  
 Dir:S ♥ 10 8 5 4 3  
 V:None ♦ A  
 ♣ 10 9 7 6  
 ♠ K 10 2 ♠ A 8 6  
 ♥ K 6 ♥ Q 9 7 2  
 ♦ J 9 8 3 2 ♦ K Q 10 5  
 ♣ K 5 4 ♣ J 2  
 ♠ J 9 7 5  
 ♥ A J  
 ♦ 7 6 4  
 ♣ A Q 8 3

In the pre Goren days the hand would be passed out, but South should open 1C having 2 1/2 quick tricks.

The fate of the hand will depend if the rookies will overcall their chunky diamond suit.

1C - Pass - 1H - Pass - 1S - Pass - 2C will be the common auction when the rookies face the decision.

+130 for E-W will win most of the matchpoints.

Tip: The White vs white rule at matchpoints when the auction stops low: get aggressive.

Board 28 ♠ J 6 5  
 Dir:W ♥ A K Q J 7 2  
 V:N-S ♦ 4 3  
 ♣ K 4  
 ♠ 10 9 8 4 3 ♠ K  
 ♥ 10 6 4 ♥ 9 5 3  
 ♦ K Q 8 6 ♦ J 7 2  
 ♣ 6 ♣ Q J 10 9 8 2  
 ♠ A Q 7 2  
 ♥ 8  
 ♦ A 10 9 5  
 ♣ A 7 5 3

Some East's may get frisky and preempt 3C but that could be costly. It will take the diamond ruff for North-South to collect +800 otherwise they should bid their game.

Looking at all the hands 12 tricks is available and those who get to NT will be awarded significantly. More likely 4H will be the common spot.

Tip: Holding a solid 6+ card suit always consider playing 3NT, even if it's a major

Board 29 ♠ J 6 4  
 Dir:N ♥ K 10 9 7  
 V:Both ♦ 10 6 4 2  
 ♣ Q 2  
 ♠ A K 10 8 7 ♠ Q 9 5 2  
 ♥ 5 2 ♥ A Q 3  
 ♦ K 9 8 ♦ A Q J  
 ♣ 10 7 6 ♣ J 8 5  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ J 8 6 4  
 ♦ 7 5 3  
 ♣ A K 9 4 3

The uncontested auction by EW should be straightforward: 1NT - 2H - 2S - 3NT - 4S

South will play 3 rounds of clubs and +420 for East-West will produce the flattest board of the day.

A few greedy Easts will think about passing 3NT hoping to score the same amount of tricks based on the 4333 shape, but the relatively weak club holding should prevent them from doing it.

Tip: when holding 4333 shape against partner's 5 card major 4 of major usually is a better than 3NT. Don't get greedy.

Board 30 ♠ A 9 7  
 Dir:E ♥ 10 7 5  
 V:None ♦ A 9 4 2  
 ♣ K 10 9  
 ♠ 8 5 4 ♠ 10 3 2  
 ♥ K J 8 4 3 2 ♥ Q 6  
 ♦ K ♦ 10 8 7 6  
 ♣ 6 5 3 ♣ A J 8 4  
 ♠ K Q J 6  
 ♥ A 9  
 ♦ Q J 5 3  
 ♣ Q 7 2

This is the time for the South's (the rookies) to shine. After 1NT opening some West will overcall 2H but that will not stop N-S from reaching 3NT. West will lead his 4th best heart and South will make the first right move to duck the QH. After winning the second trick with the ace (nice play) South should know that if West has the ace of clubs he is doomed. (West will follow to the second trick with the lower heart indicating at least 5 hearts). So, let's not panic. Cash your spades and lay down the queen of diamonds. That brings us to seven tricks.

Oops, I ran out of space. Can you see the endplay?