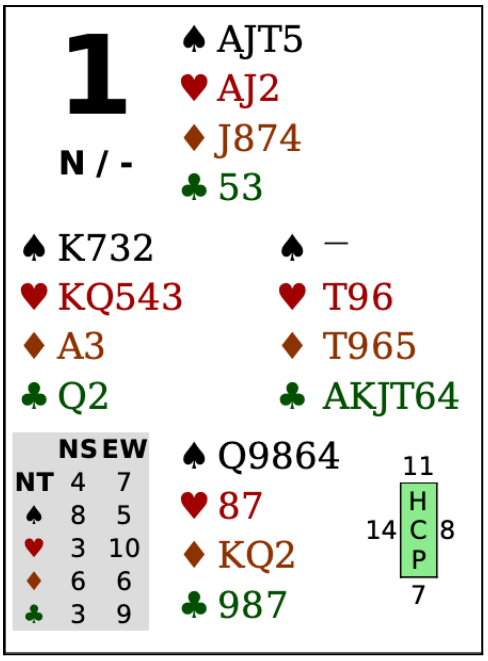
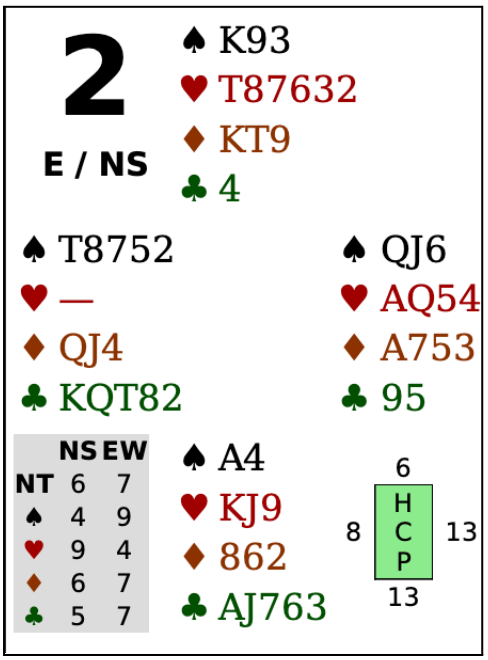
CaféBridge Dunkeld hand commentary by Liz McGowan



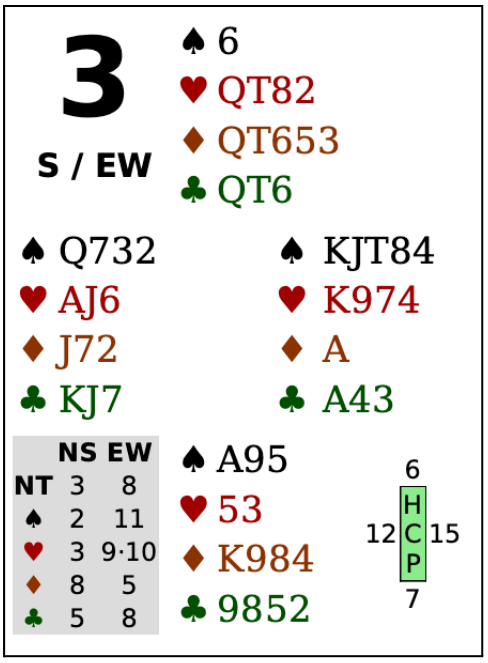
Hard to predict the outcome here. If North opens a (very) weak no-trump his side should buy the contract in spades, but over 1♦ either East or West might have different ideas.

If anyone reaches 4♥ and makes it they deserve a pat on the back.



A weak no-trump and transfer response will probably keep North-South quiet.

Over a 1♦ opener South may choose to overcall 2♣. North has a quandary: a rescue into 2♥ makes it hard to stop safely; but passing may leave partner in a horrible spot.



East-West should sail into 4♠ - some may even sail closer to the wind and reach the 5-level.

On a good day there might be 12 tricks, but it would have to be a very good day.

One way to get a really poor score at Pairs is to bid a failing slam.

4

W / All

	♠ QJ2 ♥ Q7 ♦ A7 ♣ KQ7432	
♠ K8653 ♥ A92 ♦ K6 ♣ A65		♠ A74 ♥ K6543 ♦ Q4 ♣ T98
	♠ T9 ♥ JT8 ♦ JT98532 ♣ J	

	NS	EW
NT	4	8
♠	4	8
♥	4	8
♦	7	6
♣	6	6

	14	
14	HCP	9
	3	

Sometimes it would be easy to make game with these combined East-West values, but the duplicated distribution means there are no more than 8 tricks.

5332 often appears better than it actually is: you cannot develop length tricks from 3-card suits.

5

N / NS

	♠ Q ♥ J85 ♦ T875 ♣ JT753	
♠ AKJ5 ♥ QT732 ♦ AK ♣ 62		♠ T7642 ♥ K9 ♦ QJ64 ♣ 98
	♠ 983 ♥ A64 ♦ 932 ♣ AKQ4	

	NS	EW
NT	4	7
♠	2	10
♥	3	8
♦	4	8
♣	7	6

	4	
17	HCP	6
	13	

A weak no-trump will be doubled here, but North-South have a safe haven in clubs.

Game is easier for East-West to make this time, perhaps not so easy to bid.

A 5422 distribution is more likely to provide extra tricks.

6

E / EW

	♠ 52 ♥ 8 ♦ AJ98652 ♣ AK8	
♠ QT8764 ♥ KJ76 ♦ — ♣ Q72		♠ 9 ♥ QT952 ♦ KQ4 ♣ JT93
	♠ AKJ3 ♥ A43 ♦ T73 ♣ 654	

	NS	EW
NT	7	6
♠	7	5·6
♥	5	8
♦	10	3
♣	6·7	6

	12	
8	HCP	8
	12	

5♦ is a perfectly good contract that just needs trump to behave reasonably.

The only consolation if you bid well enough to reach 5♦ is that you should do better than the pairs who try 3NT and get a heart lead.

7

S / All

	♠ Q976 ♥ T97 ♦ A7 ♣ J842	
♠ AT542 ♥ KJ4 ♦ J83 ♣ K5		♠ K3 ♥ A532 ♦ T965 ♣ AQT
	♠ J8 ♥ Q86 ♦ KQ42 ♣ 9763	7 12 HCP 13 8

	NS	EW
NT	3	9
♠	3	8
♥	3	9
♦	3	10
♣	4	8

East-West should bid these cards to 3NT. Not a comfortable make, but the hearts lie well.

Paradoxically, the Double Dummy Solver tells us East-West can make 10 tricks in diamonds!

8

W / -

	♠ 74 ♥ 65 ♦ K83 ♣ AK9732	
♠ T ♥ AQ98 ♦ QJT9 ♣ JT86		♠ AKJ853 ♥ T74 ♦ A76 ♣ Q
	♠ Q962 ♥ KJ32 ♦ 542 ♣ 54	10 10 HCP 14 6

	NS	EW
NT	2	10
♠	2	11
♥	2	11
♦	2	11
♣	3	9

Another thin game for East-West. 3NT is a good spot because of the quality of West's intermediate cards.

Some Easts will insist on playing in spades, understandably enough. They will do well to make the 11 tricks predicted by the Double Dummy Solver.

9

N / EW

	♠ AJ975 ♥ 97 ♦ 7 ♣ 98642	
♠ Q63 ♥ AQJ62 ♦ T62 ♣ Q7		♠ 84 ♥ T53 ♦ AKQ4 ♣ AKJ5
	♠ KT2 ♥ K84 ♦ J9853 ♣ T3	5 11 HCP 17 7

	NS	EW
NT	1	8
♠	6	6
♥	1	11
♦	3	10
♣	4	8

An ideal hand for a two-suited weak 2♠ from North to put East-West under pressure.

East does not have an ideal double, but that is the way to reach 4♥.

Best to avoid 3NT unless you can persuade North not to lead a spade.

10
E / All

♠ A9532
♥ 97
♦ K9
♣ T962

♠ T
♥ AQ65
♦ QJ873
♣ Q87

♠ K86
♥ KT42
♦ 6542
♣ A4

♠ QJ74
♥ J83
♦ AT
♣ KJ53

	NS	EW
NT	6	6
♠	8	5
♥	4	9
♦	4	9
♣	8	5

	7	
11	HCP	10
	12	

A weak no-trump and transfer response should buy the contract.

South may break the transfer to 3♠ with 4-card support, which will make it hard for West to compete with a takeout double. Too high this time, but -100 outscores -140.

11
S / -

♠ AQ943
♥ 82
♦ KT32
♣ 93

♠ 872
♥ 96
♦ QJ765
♣ AQ6

♠ KJ5
♥ AQ753
♦ 9
♣ K872

♠ T6
♥ KJT4
♦ A84
♣ JT54

	NS	EW
NT	6	7
♠	7	6
♥	6	7
♦	6	7
♣	6	7

	9	
9	HCP	13
	9	

I doubt any pair can stop in a making contract as the cards lie here.

If North opens light East will surely overcall 2♥, which West will do well to pass.

If East is allowed to open 1♥ West responds 1NT, which East is unlikely to pass.

12
W / NS

♠ QT8
♥ QJ75
♦ Q65
♣ A98

♠ KJ976
♥ K
♦ AK42
♣ J75

♠ 543
♥ 943
♦ JT73
♣ KT3

♠ A2
♥ AT862
♦ 98
♣ Q642

	NS	EW
NT	9	4
♠	6	7
♥	9	3
♦	6	7
♣	9	4

	11	
15	HCP	4
	10	

If playing a 5-card spade suit East may raise partner's 1♠ opener to 2♠, buying the contract.

Two down may look like a save against a heart contract, but if North-South get into the auction they will probably reach 3♥.

Our Double Dummy Solver makes 9 tricks by dropping the singleton ♥K, but mere humans are not allowed to peek.

13
N / All

♠ 3
♥ K952
♦ AJ9652
♣ 74

♠ KQ982
♥ 4
♦ K7
♣ AQJ92

♠ T7
♥ AJ63
♦ Q83
♣ T863

♠ AJ654
♥ QT87
♦ T4
♣ K5

	NS	EW
NT	3-5	8
♠	3-5	8
♥	7-8	5
♦	8	5
♣	2	10

8
15 HCP 7
10

Hard to predict what might happen here, except that whoever is first to bid spades will probably regret doing so. Good luck!

14
E / -

♠ J
♥ QJ7652
♦ J964
♣ 86

♠ A987642
♥ 9
♦ Q3
♣ KQ5

♠ KQT
♥ T3
♦ AKT2
♣ AJ42

♠ 53
♥ AK84
♦ 875
♣ T973

	NS	EW
NT	0	7
♠	0	12
♥	7	6
♦	0	11
♣	0	12

5
11 HCP 17
7

A really great 6♠ no problems in the play. Not so easy to bid: West needs to know how good partner's spades are, and that there is nothing wasted in hearts. If you can set spades as trump maybe Keycard Blackwood will get you there.

15
S / NS

♠ 532
♥ AJ9
♦ A875
♣ 432

♠ J6
♥ Q632
♦ J62
♣ KT95

♠ KQT84
♥ 875
♦ Q9
♣ Q86

♠ A97
♥ KT4
♦ KT43
♣ AJ7

	NS	EW
NT	8	5
♠	7	6
♥	7	6
♦	9	4
♣	7	6

9
7 HCP 9
15

Some will reach 3NT here and may make it on a club lead with a good view in hearts.

But it is not usually good to stretch for game with a 4333 9 count opposite what may be only 15 points: best to stop in 1NT or 2NT.

16
W / EW

♠ KQ75
♥ 874
♦ KJ
♣ T974

♠ T864
♥ Q9532
♦ A4
♣ A5

♠ AJ9
♥ AT6
♦ Q762
♣ Q82

♠ 32
♥ KJ
♦ T9853
♣ KJ63

	NS	EW
NT	4	9·8
♠	4	8
♥	3	9
♦	6	5·7
♣	8	5

9 / 10 HCP 13 / 8

One way or another East-West should reach a part score in hearts and make 9 tricks.

I hesitate to predict a flat board, but this just might be one.

17
N / -

♠ 43
♥ 95
♦ QJ653
♣ Q853

♠ AKJ962
♥ AJ4
♦ KT
♣ 64

♠ 5
♥ KQT7
♦ A874
♣ JT72

♠ QT87
♥ 8632
♦ 92
♣ AK9

	NS	EW
NT	4	9
♠	2	10
♥	2	10
♦	5	8
♣	4	9

5 / 16 HCP 10 / 9

A game for East-West. Whichever Major you choose you have to shut your eyes and take the spade finesse to come to 10 tricks. You might just make 11 in hearts if the defenders help you to make two ruffs in the short hand before drawing trump.

18
E / NS

♠ 6
♥ KJ32
♦ J62
♣ KJ742

♠ AT985
♥ 76
♦ 83
♣ AQ83

♠ K742
♥ T984
♦ AKT94
♣ –

♠ QJ3
♥ AQ5
♦ Q75
♣ T965

	NS	EW
NT	6	5
♠	2	10
♥	5	7
♦	5	8
♣	7	5

9 / 10 HCP 10 / 11

An even thinner game for East-West. In general it does not pay to stretch for thin games at pairs, better to take the safe plus in a part score.

Defenders are more likely to slop a trick against a lower-level contract.

19

S / EW

	♠ Q8 ♥ AK93 ♦ J97 ♣ AJT2	
♠ 3 ♥ QT7 ♦ T6542 ♣ K876		♠ A964 ♥ J542 ♦ AK83 ♣ 9
	♠ KJT752 ♥ 86 ♦ Q ♣ Q543	

	NS	EW
NT	7	6
♠	11	2
♥	6	7
♦	4	8
♣	9	4

15 HCP 8 (5 – 12)

A thin game for NS this time, one that you really should not bid at Pairs.

When South opens a Weak 2♠ North should pass rather than press for game.. winning policy in the long term but not on this board.

20

W / All

	♠ AKQJ7432 ♥ T4 ♦ 4 ♣ J6	
♠ 96 ♥ J72 ♦ KT7 ♣ T9842		♠ T85 ♥ AQ9 ♦ Q6532 ♣ A3
	♠ — ♥ K8653 ♦ AJ98 ♣ KQ75	

	NS	EW
NT	6·5	7·3
♠	11	2
♥	7	4
♦	6·5	7
♣	7	5

11 HCP 13 (4 – 12)

A trendy convention is for an opening 3NT to show a sound preempt in either Major. (Anything is better than the old Gambling 3NT which wrongsides a 3NT contract.)

Here South will guess the Major and play in 4♠. The non-trendy just open 4♠ and play there.

21

N / NS

	♠ 75 ♥ T98 ♦ J95 ♣ AQJT5	
♠ AJ64 ♥ J32 ♦ K82 ♣ 732		♠ KT832 ♥ A64 ♦ AT ♣ 984
	♠ Q9 ♥ KQ75 ♦ Q7643 ♣ K6	

	NS	EW
NT	5	8
♠	5	8
♥	7	6
♦	8	5
♣	7	5

8 HCP 12 (9 – 11)

Another deal where it does not pay to get too high.

If East opens South must compete to push opponents up; if not he can probably bid later and perhaps stop lower.

Part score guesses can create big swings at pairs.

22

E / EW

	♠ A9754 ♥ 632 ♦ T8 ♣ J52	
♠ Q6 ♥ QT94 ♦ AJ74 ♣ KQT		♠ T32 ♥ AJ75 ♦ 92 ♣ 9763
	♠ KJ8 ♥ K8 ♦ KQ653 ♣ A84	

	NS	EW
NT	6	5
♠	8-9	4
♥	5	8
♦	7-8	5
♣	7	6

HCP: 5 / 14 / 5 / 16

2♠ is a comfortable make, but if South lands in 1NT the spade blockage is very annoying.

You have to duck one round to make four spade tricks. – three are not enough.

The defence will do well to establish seven tricks before you make your contract, but even +90 will not score very well.

23

S / All

	♠ 7 ♥ J ♦ AQJ982 ♣ K7542	
♠ K8432 ♥ K976 ♦ 76 ♣ 93		♠ A5 ♥ AQ842 ♦ 53 ♣ AQT8
	♠ QJT96 ♥ T53 ♦ KT4 ♣ J6	

	NS	EW
NT	4	7
♠	5	8
♥	2	11
♦	9	4
♣	5	7

HCP: 11 / 6 / 16 / 7

North will want to play this hand, but 5♦ is not much of a sacrifice unless the defenders forget to lead trump and you can ruff two clubs in dummy.

Fortunately East-West will probably bid on to 5♥ over 5♦ and you lose only 650 like everybody else.

24

W / -

	♠ J853 ♥ 95 ♦ 842 ♣ KT96	
♠ A9 ♥ T82 ♦ 63 ♣ AQJ843		♠ 762 ♥ AK7643 ♦ A95 ♣ 2
	♠ KQT4 ♥ QJ ♦ KQJT7 ♣ 75	

	NS	EW
NT	3	9
♠	6	6
♥	1	11
♦	6	6
♣	4	9

HCP: 4 / 11 / 11 / 14

Important to make the overtrick in 4♥.

If the defenders lead trump to stop two ruffs, in dummy you can set up a club trick with a ruffing finesse.

At Pairs every trick counts.

25

N / EW

	♠ 743 ♥ QJ ♦ AK75 ♣ JT85	
♠ AK8 ♥ KT9432 ♦ Q ♣ Q97		♠ T95 ♥ A76 ♦ J986 ♣ K64
	♠ QJ62 ♥ 85 ♦ T432 ♣ A32	

	NS	EW
NT	3	10
♠	5	8·7
♥	3	10
♦	6	7
♣	5	8

11 / 14 HCP 8 / 7

It is always nice when your 9-card suit breaks 2-2, but it should happen less than half the time.

The kind break makes 3NT easy this time, but in 4♥ you probably need the double spade finesse as well as the lucky break.

A high spade lead would help…

26

E / All

	♠ AKQT9 ♥ 9 ♦ KT762 ♣ 73	
♠ 872 ♥ A42 ♦ J543 ♣ 952		♠ J543 ♥ QT76 ♦ Q9 ♣ JT6
	♠ 6 ♥ KJ853 ♦ A8 ♣ AKQ84	

	NS	EW
NT	12·11	1
♠	11	1
♥	11	2
♦	11	1
♣	12	1

12 / 5 HCP 6 / 17

Misfits are often best played in no-trump. You have difficulty getting from one hand to the other, but defenders have the same problem.

If South declares, a spade lead cuts communication between the hands, so North should make a trick more.

27

S / -

	♠ KT72 ♥ A75 ♦ 86 ♣ AKT9	
♠ A4 ♥ KQJ9864 ♦ T ♣ 853		♠ 85 ♥ T32 ♦ AK97543 ♣ 2
	♠ QJ963 ♥ — ♦ QJ2 ♣ QJ764	

	NS	EW
NT	6	3
♠	9	3
♥	2	11·10
♦	4	9·8
♣	9	3

14 / 10 HCP 7 / 9

The scoresheet may contain contracts in all four suits – this time no-trump is unlikely.

Hearts scores best – the only contract where the defenders cannot take a ruff.

North-South do best to play in clubs, where the ruff is hard to find.

West must cash the ♠A at trick 1, then discard his second spade on a diamond.

28

W / NS

♠ Q4
♥ A95
♦ QJT5
♣ K875

♠ K975
♥ QJ4
♦ K84
♣ A63

♠ A6
♥ T762
♦ 9732
♣ QJ9

♠ JT832
♥ K83
♦ A6
♣ T42

	NS	EW
NT	6	7
♠	7	5
♥	6	7
♦	6	7
♣	7	6

HCP: 12 / 13 / 7 / 8

Weak no-trumpers should reach 1NT, nobody's favourite contract to play or defend.

Here North has a nice safe ♦Q lead, but West should just about come out ahead by playing on hearts.

If North can double an all-purpose 1♣ opener ("I have an opener too, partner") NS may struggle in 2♠ instead.

29

N / All

♠ J3
♥ J653
♦ KJ653
♣ 87

♠ A9865
♥ K872
♦ 4
♣ AJT

♠ KQ4
♥ A94
♦ AQ7
♣ KQ32

♠ T72
♥ QT
♦ T982
♣ 9654

	NS	EW
NT	0	13
♠	0	13
♥	1	12
♦	5	8
♣	0	13

HCP: 6 / 12 / 20 / 2

When partner opens 2NT West will surely drive to slam - but can you count the 13 tricks you need for the Grand Slam?

Bid out the shape: transfer into spades, then bid 4H (anew suit at the 4-level should be forcing)

When East goes back to spades bid 5C to 'pattern out'. Maybe East will get the message...

30

E / -

♠ KQJ8
♥ A842
♦ KQJ9
♣ 4

♠ T654
♥ Q
♦ A83
♣ KJ952

♠ A3
♥ KJ9763
♦ 74
♣ AQ8

♠ 972
♥ T5
♦ T652
♣ T763

	NS	EW
NT	1	9
♠	6	7
♥	1	10
♦	7	5
♣	2	10

HCP: 16 / 10 / 14 / 0

East-West will surely reach game, where the play needs care.

In 4H you do not need to establish the side suit, so win the opening lead and start on trump. If North ducks the HQ, cross to a top club to continue hearts.

In 3NT you cannot afford to hold up twice in diamonds. North will switch to spades to establish five tricks for the defence.

Cross your fingers, win the second diamond and hope the suit splits 4=4.