

1. Losing Face

By Ron Klinger

South dealer : Both vulnerable

North
♠ 63
♥ KQ5
♦ AQJ1096
♣ 52

South
♠ AK42
♥ A10763
♦ K
♣ AQJ

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠ ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♦ ⁽²⁾	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠ ⁽³⁾	Pass	7♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 5+ hearts, 4+ spades, game-force

(2) Cue-bid

(3) Two key cards + ♥Q

West leads the ♦4. Plan the play.

Today's problems appeared originally in *Polish Bridge* magazine and were recounted by Wally Malaczynski of Sydney.

South dealer : Both vulnerable

North
♠ 63
♥ KQ5
♦ AQJ1096
♣ 52

West
♠ Q975
♥ J2
♦ 42
♣ K10643

East
♠ J108
♥ 984
♦ 8753
♣ 987

South
♠ AK42
♥ A10763
♦ K
♣ AQJ

After reaching 7♥ via the auction above, South won the ♦4 lead with the ♦K and played the ♥3 to the ♥K. South, a competent player, went down. How do you account for that?

After taking trick 1 with the ♦K, South played the ♥3: jack! – king – four. Taking the ♥J at face value, declarer placed East with four trumps. If so, he could not afford to play ♥A and ♥Q next or cash the ♥Q. Therefore, he started to run the diamonds. West ruffed the third diamond, one down.

South could have saved face and the subsequent anguish by playing the ♥A at trick 2 and then a low heart to dummy. That would always work if hearts were 3-2 and South would also survive if West had the bare ♥J.

After winning trick 3 in dummy, declarer would run diamonds and coup East's ♥9-8-4-2.

South dealer : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ 986
♥ J9
♦ K952
♣ K743

South
♠ AK542
♥ 872
♦ AQ1063
♣ --

West	North	East	South
			1♠ ⁽¹⁾
1NT ⁽²⁾	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 5-card majors

(2) 15-18 points

West leads the ♦4. Plan the play. You will find trumps are 3-2.

Here is the full deal:

	North	
	♠ 986	
	♥ J9	
	♦ K952	
	♣ K743	
West		East
♠ QJ3		♠ 107
♥ AQ6		♥ K10543
♦ J84		♦ 7
♣ AQJ10		♣ 98652
	South	
	♠ AK542	
	♥ 872	
	♦ AQ1063	
	♣ --	

West has led the bottom diamond. As West has overcalled 1NT, you can place West with three diamonds, not one, and probably J-x-4. You can win and play ♠A, ♠K and then run diamonds but that will not work. Can you see why not?

West will not ruff in on diamonds, but will wait to come in with a heart and then cash the ♠Q to draw dummy's last trump. You lose a spade and three hearts. One successful line is win ♦9, ruff a club, cash ♠A, ♠K, ♦A, play ♦Q to ♦K, ruff a club and play ♦3. If West ruffs you are home. If not, dummy's ♦5 wins and you ruff another club. The last diamond scores dummy's ♠9 *en passant*.

Double dummy puzzle (Answer tomorrow):

	North	
	♠ A876	
	♥ A3	
	♦ 765	
	♣ A876	
West		East
♠ K5		♠ 32
♥ 2		♥ KQJ10987654
♦ KQJ1098		♦ --
♣ KQJ10		♣ 9
	South	
	♠ QJ1094	
	♥ --	
	♦ A432	
	♣ 5432	

North opened 1♣, East bid 4♥, South 4♠, West doubled, all pass. West leads the ♣K. Seeing all four hands, how can you make 4♠?

You can get more done with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone. (Al Capone, 1899-1947)