

16. The Joy of Six

By Ron Klinger

You are the dealer at favourable vulnerability. What is your plan of bidding with this hand?

♠ A87
♥ A8
♦ 106
♣ AK10863

The deal arose in the 2018 TBIB Swiss Teams:

Round 5: Board 19

South dealer : East-West vulnerable

| | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ KQJ | |
| | ♥ K10975 | |
| | ♦ Q5 | |
| | ♣ QJ5 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ 10532 | | ♠ 964 |
| ♥ 3 | | ♥ QJ642 |
| ♦ AKJ974 | | ♦ 832 |
| ♣ 74 | | ♣ 92 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ A87 | |
| | ♥ A8 | |
| | ♦ 106 | |
| | ♣ AK10863 | |

A natural auction might well start 1♣ : (1♦) : 1♥ : (Pass), 3♣. North might then stopper ask with 3♦ or show a stopper with 3♠. In either case, with no diamond stopper and only two hearts, South figures to rebid 4♣ and North could then bid 5♣. It is harder for North-South if it starts 1♣ : (2♦) : 2♥. Now South's 3♣ does not show extra strength and South might bid 3♦, stopper ask instead. Reaching 5♣ now is trickier.

Datum: N-S +110. Results: 3NT x 17, made seven times; 5♣ x 9, all making; 6♣ x 3, all one light; 4♥ x 8, all failing. 4♠ -100 x 1.

You might wonder how a pair – and a very competent pair at that – reached 4♠ on the 3-3 fit. It came about because South chose a 1NT opening. Maybe the vulnerability was an influence, but with no benefit of having the opening lead come to South, there is no strong reason to choose 1NT.

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Pass | | 1NT |
| 2♣ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 2♦ ⁽²⁾ | Pass |
| Pass | Dble ⁽³⁾ | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3♥ ⁽⁴⁾ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♠ | All Pass | |

(1) Majors or minors or diamonds

(2) Pass or correct

(3) Takeout

(4) Five hearts

Given the 3♣ bid, South figured to have only three spades for the 3♠ rebid. At that point, North should have bid 4♣.

You are vulnerable against not. East deals and passes. What is your plan of bidding with:

♠ Q6
♥ J5
♦ AQ10954
♣ KQ3

If you choose a 1♦ opening and partner bids 1♥ or 1♠, do you rebid 2♦ or 3♦? You do have a 6-loser hand and bits and pieces in the majors even though they count two losers each. Here you could open 1NT despite the 6-card suit. A lead up to your hand in any of the four suits might be helpful. The deal also arose in the 2018 TBIB Swiss Teams:

Round 3: Board 25

East dealer : North-South vulnerable

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ AKJ4 | |
| | ♥ K9 | |
| | ♦ KJ6 | |
| | ♣ A1086 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ 8752 | | ♠ 1093 |
| ♥ A108732 | | ♥ Q64 |
| ♦ 87 | | ♦ 32 |
| ♣ 9 | | ♣ J7542 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ Q6 | |
| | ♥ J5 | |
| | ♦ AQ10954 | |
| | ♣ KQ3 | |

Datum: N-S 1160. Results: N 6NT x 8, all making; S 6NT x 3, two making (♥A lead x 2, at the other table, ♥7 lead: nine – queen – five, –500); 6♦ x 17, all making; S 4NT x 2, ♥7 lead: +720 and –300; S 7NT doubled –200 x 1; N 7♣ –300 x 1.

The heart position is the strong case for opening 1♦ rather than 1NT. The 7♣ contract was reached – again by a very competent pair – after South opened 1NT. North might have jumped straight to 6NT, but a mix-up in a complex auction led to the wrong minor and the wrong level. That could not happen after a 1♦ opening.

This came up in a bidding-practice session on Bridge Base Online:

West dealer : Both vulnerable

| | |
|----------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ AQ3 | ♠ 875 |
| ♥ K4 | ♥ A9632 |
| ♦ AKQ652 | ♦ 73 |
| ♣ QJ | ♣ K65 |

The auction went 1♦ : 1♥, 3NT : Pass, no damage done. Many play this sequence as showing 0-1 heart. In that case West is too strong to open 1♦. You can choose a 2NT opening or 2♣ : 2♦, 2NT (23-24 balanced).

Tomorrow's Problems:

1. Pairs: West dealer : E-W vulnerable

North
 ♠ Q8632
 ♥ 84
 ♦ A92
 ♣ A72

East
 ♠ K
 ♥ A952
 ♦ 10843
 ♣ 9853

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------------------|------|-------|
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 3♠ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 4♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

(1) Maximum pass, support for spades

West leads the ♥Q. What should East play?

Suppose you have decided to win trick 1 with the ♥A and South follows with the ♥3. What would you play at trick 2?

2. Pairs: West dealer : Both vulnerable

North
 ♠ 84
 ♥ Q653
 ♦ J9
 ♣ AQ1074

East
 ♠ A952
 ♥ J
 ♦ 10843
 ♣ 9853

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------------------|------|-------|
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 3♣ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

(1) Fit-showing jump

North's fit-showing jump here shows a maximum pass, support for opener's major and a strong 5+ club suit (at least K-Q-high). West leads the ♠Q. Which spade should East play?

Suppose you have decided to win trick 1 with the ♠A and South follows with the ♠3. What would you play at trick 2?

If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?