

35. There's always one

By Ron Klinger

West dealer : North-South vulnerable

North
♠ K532
♥ KJ104
♦ 973
♣ 54

South
♠ AQ1096
♥ 8
♦ AK8
♣ J1073

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads the ♦J. Plan the play.

The deal arose in Columbus Alt, a teams' tournament – eight invited teams – organized by www.bid72.com and www.netbridge.online and held on BBO (Bridge Base Online) near the end of March.

Round 1: Board 19

West dealer : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ K532	
	♥ KJ104	
	♦ 973	
	♣ 54	
West		East
♠ 874		♠ J
♥ Q93		♥ A7652
♦ J1062		♦ Q54
♣ K82		♣ AQ96
	South	
	♠ AQ1096	
	♥ 8	
	♦ AK8	
	♣ J1073	

In each match, one side bid 4♠, the other played 2♠ or 3♠. At six tables, it began Pass : Pass : 1♥ : 1♠, 2♥ : 2♠. At two tables that was passed out. At two tables it continued 3♥ East : Double (game try) South. One North bid 3♠, all pass, the other 4♠, all pass. At one table, it continued 3♣ East, 3♦ South, 3♥ West, Pass : Pass : 3♠, all pass and one continued 3♠ South, 4♠ North, all pass. Two tables bid Pass : Pass : 1♥ : 1♠, 2♥ : 3♠ : Pass : 4♠, all pass.

In three matches, everyone made ten tricks. That was worth 10 Imps for +620 vs +170. On a diamond lead or a diamond switch, South wins and plays a heart: three from West . . . Which card from dummy?

	North	
	♠ K532	
	♥ KJ104	
	♦ 973	
	♣ 54	
West		East
♠ 874		♠ J
♥ Q93		♥ A7652
♦ J1062		♦ Q54
♣ K82		♣ AQ96
	South	
	♠ AQ1096	
	♥ 8	
	♦ AK8	
	♣ J1073	

Your side has 21 HCP, the opposition 19. As East opened the bidding and West bid 2♥, East figures to have more points than West, maybe 11-8, 12-7, 13-6. East is therefore more likely than West to have the ♥A. Therefore, finesse the ♥J rather than play the ♥8 to the ♥K.

East wins with the ♥A and returns a diamond. South takes the trick, crosses to the ♠K, cashes the ♥K to pitch the ♦8, ruffs the ♥4, bringing down the ♥Q, draws trumps and loses just two clubs and a heart.

At the remaining tables, one table was +170 in 3♠ for +7 Imps. At the other table, declarer in 4♠ played the ♥8: three – king – ace and was one down.

East dealer : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
1♠	2♦	4♠	5♣
Pass	?	Pass	

What would you do as North with:

♠ 94
♥ A104
♦ A754
♣ 9762

Make up your mind before reading further.

East dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 94	
	♥ A104	
	♦ A754	
	♣ 9762	
West		East
♠ KJ8532		♠ AQ1076
♥ QJ7		♥ 9832
♦ K98		♦ 10
♣ 3		♣ J105
	South	
	♠ --	
	♥ K65	
	♦ QJ632	
	♣ AKQ84	

You would be happy to be in 6♦. You have a trump loser, but after drawing trumps, you can pitch a heart from dummy on the fifth club and ruff a heart in dummy and ruff dummy's spade losers in your hand. There are only 23 HCP North-South, but with a good trump fit and a spade void, only 30 HCP are relevant.

After 1♦ : 1♠ /2♠ : diamond raise : 4♠, one South bid 5♦, all pass, +420. With a 4-loser hand, that was a very conservative view.

Six Souths bid 5♣ and five Norths signed off in 5♦, +420. At the sixth table, John Kranyak, USA, North for Spector, bid 5NT (!) over 5♣ to say, 'Pick your slam.' Vince Demuy (S) bid 6♦, all pass. West led the ♥Q, which solved declarer's heart problem anyway, N-S +920 and +11 Imps.

At the remaining table, the auction went this way:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
2♠	Pass	4♠	Dble
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

Declarer made 12 tricks for +650 and +6 Imps vs 5♦ +420 at the other table.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. East dealer : Both vulnerable

North
♠ KJ8
♥ AK10754
♦ --
♣ A1032

South
♠ 10963
♥ --
♦ 6532
♣ KQ764

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1NT	Dble	2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

(1) Diamonds + a major

West leads the ♦A. Plan the play.

2. South dealer : North-South vulnerable

North
♠ 8
♥ K1086
♦ AKJ9
♣ 10853

East
♠ 9654
♥ QJ943
♦ 4
♣ AJ2

South opens 4♣. All pass. West leads the ♥7: eight from dummy. Which heart would you play as East?

Why not discuss the problems by phone with your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

“Take care of him. And make him feel important. And if you can do that, you’ll have a happy and wonderful marriage. Like two out of every ten couples.” (Mother in Barefoot in the Park, by Neil Simon)