

43. Trans-Tasman Trials and Tribulations

By Ron Klinger

With the 2020 World Championships called off, the Australian Open Team played some matches against New Zealand on BBO (www.bridgebase.com). For Session 1, 12 boards, Australia was represented by Peter Gill – Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung – Nabil Edgtton and New Zealand by Peter Newell – Martin Reid, Nick Jacob – Geo Tislevoll.

West dealer : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2♣ ⁽¹⁾	?

(1) Simple Stayman

What would you do as South with:

♠ 32
♥ K104
♦ 942
♣ KQJ63

Bd. 5: West dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 10854	
	♥ Q952	
	♦ 65	
	♣ A97	
West		East
♠ AKQ		♠ J976
♥ J83		♥ A76
♦ KQ10		♦ AJ873
♣ 10852		♣ 4
	South	
	♠ 32	
	♥ K104	
	♦ 942	
	♣ KQJ63	

Both tables began: 1NT : Pass : 2♣ (Stayman). Gill (S) passed, Reid (W) bid 2♦ (no major), Newell (E) 2NT and West 3NT, all pass. Hans (N) led the ♥2. Declarer took the ♥A, crossed to the ♦K and claimed ten tricks, +630.

At the other table, Jacob (S) doubled East's 2♣ and that seems a normal choice. Hung (W) bid 2♦ (no major) and Edgtton (E) jumped to 3NT, all pass. Tislevoll (N) led the ♣A and the defence took the first five tricks for +100 and +12 Imps. ("Stoppers? We don't need no stinkin' stoppers.").

Some play that after the double of 2♣, opener passes with no stopper and makes the usual reply with a stopper. If that was the case here, West must have treated 10-8-5-2 as a (probable) stopper. If that was not the case, East might have bid 3♣ to express concern about the club situation. After that, it is not easy for East-West to land safely.

South dealer : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT

What would you lead as West from:

♠ K102
♥ AQJ52
♦ 63
♣ Q62

South dealer : Nil vulnerable

	North		
	♠ Q54		
	♥ 76		
	♦ K92		
	♣ K8743		
West		East	
♠ K102		♠ J763	
♥ AQJ52		♥ 94	
♦ 63		♦ J75	
♣ Q62		♣ AJ109	
	South		
	♠ A98		
	♥ K1083		
	♦ AQ1084		
	♣ 5		

West	North	East	South
<i>Hung</i>	<i>Tislevoll</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Jacob</i>
1♥	1♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	1♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT

(1) Denies four spades

After 1♦ : 1♥, Double would show 4+ spades in the North-South partnership, so 1♠ is used to deny 4 spades and deny a hand suitable to bid no-trumps. The advantage is that it keeps the bidding lower. Here it allowed South to subside in 1NT.

West led the ♥Q: six – nine (discourage) – king. The appearance of the ♥9 allowed South to continue with the ♥3 to try to set up a second heart trick. West took the ♥J, cashed the ♥A and exited with the ♥5. South won with the ♥10 and took five diamond tricks and the ♠A for eight tricks and +120.

At the other table, North's 2♣ would be an overbid for most partnerships. With no 1♠ bid available as at the other table, the recommended action for North would be to pass. Reid (W) led the ♠2: four – jack – ace and Gill (S) returned the ♠9, taken by the king. If West wondered why declarer was not tackling clubs, he certainly came up with the right answer. At trick 3, West shifted to the ♣Q!: king – ace – five. Newell (E) switched to the ♥9: ten – jack – six. Back came the ♣6. East took his three club winners and reverted to the ♥4. That gave West two more heart tricks. The defence took a spade, four clubs and three hearts to take 2NT three down, +150 and +7 Imps.

At the end of Session 1, New Zealand led by 37 Imps to 32.

Problem for Tomorrow:

West dealer : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ K95

♥ Q95

♦ A10

♣ A10543

South

♠ 764

♥ A862

♦ Q432

♣ 92

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dble	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads the ♦5: ten – jack – queen. Plan the play.

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

If all the world's a stage, where is the audience sitting?