

64. Favourable leads

By Ron Klinger

South dealer : Nil vulnerable

North
♠ 3
♥ K1032
♦ A865
♣ AKJ4

South
♠ QJ108654
♥ 94
♦ KJ
♣ 82

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♠	All Pass	3♠

West leads the ♦4. Plan the play.

Suppose it goes ♦4: five – nine – jack. You cash the ♦K, cross to the ♣A and play the ♦A: three - ♥4 – ♦Q. What next?

The deal comes from a session on BBO.

	North	
	♠ 3	
	♥ K1032	
	♦ A865	
	♣ AKJ4	
West		East
♠ A972		♠ K
♥ QJ5		♥ A876
♦ Q74		♦ 10932
♣ Q95		♣ 10763
	South	
	♠ QJ108654	
	♥ 94	
	♦ KJ	
	♣ 82	

South was lucky to receive the ♦4 opening lead. South would have had no chance on the ♥Q lead. Exactly why West did not choose the ♥Q is not clear.

South however did not make the most of this good fortune. After ♦J, ♦K, ♣A, ♦A, discarding the ♥4, South played dummy's ♠3. All would have been well if trumps had been 3-2, but with the 4-1 break, the play of a trump was premature. East won with the ♠K, cashed the ♥A and continued with the ♦10. If South ruffed low, West would over-ruff. In practice, South ruffed high and West discarded a club. West now had ♠A-9-7 over South's ♠J-10-8-6-5 and was bound to come to two trump tricks. South was thus one down, –50.

What should South have done? After ♦J, ♦K, ♣A, ♦A, discarding the ♥4, continue with the ♦8 and discard the ♥9 (loser on loser play. Now there is no promotion and South makes five spades, three diamonds and two clubs.

Results: 4♠ +420 x 4, –50 x 3; 3♠ +140 and –50; 2♠ +110; North-South 3NT failing x 6.

North dealer : Nil vulnerable

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

(1) Some two-suiter

(2) Diamonds and hearts

What would you lead as West from:

♠ 1097
♥ QJ9
♦ K8
♣ Q10542

North dealer : Nil vulnerable

	North		East
	♠ 4		♠ AKJ865
	♥ A10854		♥ K
	♦ A107543		♦ QJ9
	♣ 9		♣ 876
West		South	
♠ 1097		♠ Q32	
♥ QJ9		♥ 7632	
♦ K8		♦ 62	
♣ Q10542		♣ AKJ3	

This was yesterday's problem #2:

With neither side vulnerable, the auction starts Pass : 1♠ : Pass : 2♠, back to you. What do you do now with

♠ 4
♥ A10854
♦ A107543
♣ 9

Options include 3♠ Michaels, 5 hearts and a 5+ minor, or a jump to 4♦, Leaping Michaels, showing 5+ hearts and 5+ diamonds. The problem is that either of these commits you to the 4-level. North chose 2NT, hoping to buy the hand at the 3-level or push the opponents up to 3♠. The plan was to remove South's likely 3♣ bid to 3♦, showing a two-suiter in the red suits. South would be aware that North was a passed hand.

Given that North was below opening strength, there was no pressing need for South to jump to 4♣ with a balanced 10-count. North corrected to 4♦ and South showed preference with 4♥. Had West made the normal lead of the ♠10, East-West would collect a spade, two hearts and a diamond. It is hard to know what prompted West to choose the ♣4 lead.

South won with the ♣J and discarded dummy's ♠4 on the ♣A. Declarer played the ♦2: eight – ten – jack. East switched to the ♠A, ruffed in dummy. Declarer cashed the ♥A, ♦A and ruffed a diamond. Declarer had two hearts to lose, but still made ten tricks, for +420 and +9.2 Imps. Other results: 3♠ –100 x 2; 3♠ doubled –100; 3♠ –50 x 3; 4♠ –50; 4♦ –50 x 2; 4♥ –50; 2♠ +110; 3♠ +140 x 3; 4♥ –150.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. As dealer, vulnerable vs not vulnerable, what would you do with:

♠ 1076
♥ KQ
♦ AKQ1098
♣ 43

2. South dealer : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♥	1NT ⁽¹⁾	Pass
Pass	?		

(1) 15-18 points

What would you do as North with:

♠ Q85
♥ K8762
♦ AJ1063
♣ --

Why not phone or email your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

Wearing a mask inside your home is now highly recommended. Not for COVID-19, but to stop eating.