

# 68. Tales with spades

By Ron Klinger

South dealer : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	?		1NT <sup>(1)</sup>

(1) 15-17 points, might have a 5-card major

What would you do as North with:

♠ 842  
♥ KJ10  
♦ KJ102  
♣ KQ4

The deal comes from GAUTRET vs ZIMMERMANN, one of the semi-finals in the 2019 Spingold (USA Knockout Open Teams).

Bd. 3: South dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 842	
	♥ KJ10	
	♦ KJ102	
	♣ KQ4	
West		East
♠ AQ1076		♠ --
♥ 9743		♥ Q86
♦ 75		♦ A9864
♣ 72		♣ 109653
	South	
	♠ KJ953	
	♥ A52	
	♦ Q3	
	♣ AJ8	

After 1NT : Pass, my vote for the North hand is 3NT. Most of the time a 4-3-3-3 pattern opposite a 5-3-3-2 makes as many tricks in no-trumps as in the 5-3 fit. When that number is nine, you want to be in 3NT. Sometimes, as above, you definitely do not want to be in 4♠.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fr'esche</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>M.Mus</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Presumably North was interested in 4♥ if he could find South with five hearts. Warned off a spade lead, West started with the ♦7: ten – nine – three. Declarer played the ♠2: ♠6 – ♠J – ♠Q. West curtailed proceedings with a switch to the ♥3: jack – queen – ace, nine tricks, +400. South would have succeeded even if West shifts to a club or returns the ♦2. South can win a club in hand and lead a low spade towards dummy's ♠8-4 and eventually set up a spade trick.

Note that if the bidding goes 1NT : 3NT, West will probably lead a low spade. Now South needs only to knock out the ♦A for nine tricks and can play for an overtrick by guessing the position of the ♥Q.

	North	
	♠ 842	
	♥ KJ10	
	♦ KJ102	
	♣ KQ4	
West		East
♠ AQ1076		♠ --
♥ 9743		♥ Q86
♦ 75		♦ A9864
♣ 72		♣ 109653
	South	
	♠ KJ953	
	♥ A52	
	♦ Q3	
	♣ AJ8	

West	North	East	South
<i>Zimmermann</i>	<i>C.Mus</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Gautret</i>
Pass	3♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	1NT
Pass	4♠	Pass	3♠ <sup>(2)</sup>
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) "Do you have a 5-card major?"

(2) "Yes, I have 5 spades."

With so much strength in hearts, diamonds and clubs, there is a huge case for North rebidding 3NT over 3♠. It can certainly be right to look for 4♥ in case partner has ♠J-x and is missing an ace in the other suits, when 4♥ can make and 3NT fails. If partner does not have five hearts, 3NT will be your best spot most of the time.

West led the ♥4: ten – queen – ace. South played the ♦3: five – jack – six and the ♠2: ♣3 – ♠J – ♠Q. The ♦7 went to the ♦A and West ruffed the diamond return. South was two off, –300, 12 Imps to [ZIMMERMANN](#).

On the same theme, this deal arose in a major teams' event on BBO:

East dealer : Nil vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ5	
	♥ 975	
	♦ A4	
	♣ A10962	
West		East
♠ 73		♠ K10964
♥ Q10832		♥ --
♦ 109875		♦ QJ62
♣ J		♣ K743
	South	
	♠ Q82	
	♥ AKJ64	
	♦ K3	
	♣ Q85	

At one table, East passed, South opened 1NT and North bid 3NT, all pass. West led the ♥3. Dummy won cheaply and declarer continued with the ♣A and another club for 11 tricks, +460.

At the other table, East opened 1♠, South overcalled 1NT and North raised to 3NT. West also led the ♥3, won in dummy. Declarer played the ♣10: three – five – jack. After the heart lead, South is sure to make nine tricks, but the ♣A first is a better play. West switched to the ♦10 and declarer made 9 tricks, +400 but –2 Imps.

West dealer : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	?

(1) Weak two in hearts or in spades:

What would you do as South with:

♠ K6  
♥ A52  
♦ AKJ2  
♣ 8643

What if North had opened 2♠, weak two, and East passes?

A weak two usually has seven or eight losers, which translates into six tricks if maximum, five if minimum. South has four quick tricks (the ♠K counts as one), plus potential for an extra trick via the ♦J finesse. Opposite, say, ♠A-Q-J-x-x-x, 4♠ is essentially on the diamond finesse, certainly reasonable when vulnerable at Imps. South should do something. At the very least find out whether opener is minimum or maximum and bid 4♣ opposite a maximum

Bd. 4: West dealer : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ J109852	
	♥ J	
	♦ Q984	
	♣ A10	
West		East
♠ A7		♠ Q43
♥ 9876		♥ KQ1043
♦ 763		♦ 105
♣ QJ92		♣ K75
	South	
	♠ K6	
	♥ A52	
	♦ AKJ2	
	♣ 8643	

If North opens 2♠ (suit quality not so great) and South bids 2NT Ogust, asking for strength and suit quality, North would bid 3♥, maximum points, poor suit. North has 8 HCP, but you might well discount the singleton ♥J. However, North's shape is good and the 6-4 pattern justifies showing a maximum with 7½ losers.

In the 2019 Spingold, neither South invited game. They insisted on game!

C. Mus (N) – Gautret (S) bid 2♦ (multi) : 2NT (inquiry), 3♥ (maximum with spades) : 4♠, all pass, ten tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fr'esche</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>M.Mus</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
Pass	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	4♣ <sup>(2)</sup>
Pass	4♥ <sup>(3)</sup>	Dble	Pass <sup>(4)</sup>
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

- (1) Multi, weak two in spades or in hearts
- (2) Transfer me to your major
- (3) Transfer to spades
- (4) Nah, you go ahead and play 4♠.

North made ten tricks. As you can see, declarer loses only a club and two spades for +620, no swing.

## Problems for Tomorrow:

1. East dealer : Nil vulnerable

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

What would you do as South with:

♠ AJ432  
♥ AK2  
♦ Q  
♣ 9765

2. South dealer : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			2♥ <sup>(1)</sup>
?			

(1) 5 hearts, 4+ minor, 6-10 points

What would you do as West with:

♠ Q10975  
♥ J  
♦ A4  
♣ QJ854

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

*Every few days during isolation, try your jeans on just to make sure they still fit. Pyjamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.*