

119. Two-suiters everywhere

By Ron Klinger

Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

North
♠ J1042
♥ AQ1093
♦ K3
♣ 97

South
♠ AKQ76
♥ K65
♦ A
♣ AKJ2

Suppose you have reached 7♥ by North after East opened with a weak 2♦. East leads the ♦Q. Plan the play.

After four virtual Alt-Invitational Open Tournaments and one Alt-Invitational Mixed, bid72, bridge 24 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online), reverted to Open Teams with Alt-Invitational V. The structure was the same with eight invited teams playing a round-robin of 24-board matches, followed by semi-finals and a final.

After Round 7, the leaders were 1. **DE BOTTON** (Janet de Botton, Thomas Charlsen, Jason Hackett, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Alexander Hydes, Artur Malinowski, 98.50 Victory Points), 2. **GUPTA** (Naren Gupta, Bauke Muller, Cedric Lorenzini, Huub Bertens, Thomas Bessis, Curtis Cheek, 88.75), 3. **BLASS** (Josef Blass, Jacek Kalita, Michael Nowosadzki, Jacek Pszczola, Fredrik Nystrom, Johan Upmark, 86.47), 4. **STREET** (Paul Street, Kamel Fergani, Nicolas L'Ecuyer, Ron Pachtman, Fred Pollack, Piotr Zatorski, 74.38).

For the semi-finals, **DE BOTTON** chose **STREET**.

This was yesterday's first problem:

Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------------------|------|--------------------|
| | Pass | Pass | 2♣ ⁽¹⁾ |
| Pass | 2♦ ⁽²⁾ | Pass | 2♣ ⁽³⁾ |
| Pass | 3♠ ⁽⁴⁾ | Pass | 3NT ⁽⁵⁾ |
| Pass | 4♦ ⁽⁶⁾ | Pass | 4♥ ⁽⁶⁾ |
| Pass | 4NT | Pass | 5♦ ⁽⁷⁾ |
| Pass | 7♠ | ? | |

(1) Very strong

(2) Negative or waiting

(3) 5+ spades

(4) Stronger than 4♠

(5) Please start cue-bidding.

(6) Cue bid

(7) 1 or 4 key cards for spades

What would you do as East with:

♠ 853
♥ --
♦ QJ9642
♣ 8653

The problem for East after the preceding auction is whether to double. This is known as a Lightner Double, asking partner to make an unusual lead, usually the first genuine suit bid by dummy. Here North's 2♦ was artificial, so that does not count, and North did not bid a genuine suit outside trumps later. In that case, the double says, 'I have a surprise trick available. It is either a void or an ace I expect to make. Try to find my void.'

There is a danger to doubling. If you pass, partner might find the killing heart lead anyway. That is a fairly big 'If', since one often leads a trump against a grand slam. Partner might have an obvious heart lead (a sequence) or might have an obvious lead elsewhere. The drawback to doubling is that the opponents might recognize the danger in 7♠ and run to 7NT, which perhaps you cannot defeat. The choice whether to double or whether to pass is a tough one. What you must not do is stew for a while and then pass 7♠. That will give partner unauthorized information. You need to make up your mind whether to double or to pass way back when spades were agreed as trumps. At that point, you had to ask yourself, 'If they bid 6♠ or 7♠ later, will I pass or will I double?' Then if your decision was to pass, you can do it smoothly when slam is reached.

This was the deal:

Semi-final: Board 5: Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--|
| | North ♠ J1042 ♥ AQ1093 ♦ K3 ♣ 97 | |
| West ♠ 9 ♥ J8742 ♦ 10875 ♣ Q104 | East ♠ 853 ♥ -- ♦ QJ9642 ♣ 8653 | |
| | South ♠ AKQ76 ♥ K65 ♦ A ♣ AKJ2 | |

After the auction on the previous page, East for **STREET** did double 7♠. It went Pass : Pass to North for **DE BOTTON**, who ran to 7NT, all pass. When East showed out on the first round of hearts, declarer could finesse the ♥10 later and collected 5 spades, 4 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs, +2220.

At the other table, with **STREET** North-South:

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Pass | 2♦ ⁽¹⁾ | Dble |
| 4♣ ⁽²⁾ | 4♥ | Pass | 4NT |
| Pass | 5♣ ⁽³⁾ | Pass | 5♦ ⁽⁴⁾ |
| Pass | 6♥ ⁽⁵⁾ | Pass | 7♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

- (1) Weak two
- (2) Muddying the waters
- (3) One key card for hearts
- (4) Do you have the ♥Q?
- (5) Yes. (Many would bid 6♦ to say ♥Q + ♦K.)

East led the ♦Q. After taking the ♦A, it is easy to slip as declarer and play a low heart to the ♥A or ♥Q. If you do, you encounter a trump loser when West began with all five trumps. Since 7♥ looks so easy, you have to ask yourself what could go wrong. Only a 5-0 or 4-1 trump break is a problem. Having opened with a weak 2♦, East is unlikely to have four or five hearts and so you should cater for West having four or five. If West has four hearts, heart to the ace and heart to the king will reveal, but that does not work if West has all five hearts. For that you need to cash the ♥K first. That is what L'Ecuyer did at trick 2. When East showed out, declarer played the ♥5 to the ♥9, the ♣7 to the ♣A and the ♥6 to the ♥10, drew trumps and claimed 13 tricks, +2210, no swing.

Semi-final: Board 5: Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| | North ♠ J1042 ♥ AQ1093 ♦ K3 ♣ 97 | |
| West ♠ 9 ♥ J8742 ♦ 10875 ♣ Q104 | South ♠ AKQ76 ♥ K65 ♦ A ♣ AKJ2 | East ♠ 853 ♥ -- ♦ QJ9642 ♣ 8653 |

Have you noticed that each player had an unbalanced two-suiter on this deal?

With **GUPTA** North-South, North opened 1♥, South forced to game and after a series of artificial relays, South discovered all the relevant details of the North hand and jumped to 7♠, where he was declarer. After Pass : Pass, East doubled. Here it asked specifically for a heart lead. South instantly ran to 7NT. North was declarer in no-trumps and East led the ♠3. North made 13 tricks, +2220.

At the other table, with **BLASS** North-South, East also opened with a weak 2♦:

| | | | |
|------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | Pass | 2♦ ⁽¹⁾ | Dble |
| 5♦ | Dble | Pass | 5NT ⁽²⁾ |
| Pass | 6♦ ⁽³⁾ | Pass | 7♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

- (1) Weak two
- (2) Pick a slam
- (3) Choose a major

West reasoned that with South asking North to pick a slam and North showing both majors, there was a good chance that East would be short in hearts. West led the ♥2. East ruffed and 7♠ was one down, East-West +100 and 20 Imps to **GUPTA**. As **GUPTA** won the match by 52-38, you can credit this deal for providing sufficient Imps for the winning margin.

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 2♥ ⁽¹⁾ |

?

- (1) 7-10 points, 5 hearts and a 4+ minor

What would you do as West with:

♠ KQJ62
 ♥ A4
 ♦ KJ852
 ♣ 4

Semi-final: Board 18: Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ A983 | |
| | ♥ QJ83 | |
| | ♦ A4 | |
| | ♣ 1083 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ KQJ62 | | ♠ 754 |
| ♥ A4 | | ♥ 102 |
| ♦ KJ852 | | ♦ Q963 |
| ♣ 4 | | ♣ KQ52 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ 10 | |
| | ♥ K9765 | |
| | ♦ 107 | |
| | ♣ AJ976 | |

This time only South and West have unbalanced two-suiters.

BLASS North-South:

| | | | |
|------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 2♥ ⁽¹⁾ |
| 2♠ | 4♥ | All Pass | |

(1) Hearts and a minor

West led the ♠K, taken by the ace. The ♥J went to the ace. South ruffed the ♠Q return, crossed to the ♥Q and played the ♣10: two – six – four, followed by the ♣3, queen, ace. South made 11 tricks, +650.

GUPTA North-South:

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

(1) Hearts and a minor

West won the ♥Q lead and played the ♠K. North ducked, won the ♠Q continuation, cashed the ♥J and switched to the ♣3: king – ace – four. West lost two spades, a heart, a diamond and a club, two down, –300, but +8 Imps to **BLASS**.

DE BOTTON North-South:

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

(1) Hearts and a minor
 (2) Strong inquiry
 (3) Shortage

After ♠K to the ♠A and the ♥Q to the ace, West shifted to the ♦5, taken by the ace. Declarer drew trumps with the ♥K, crossed to the ♥J and led the ♣10, winning. South lost a heart, a diamond and a club, but had ten tricks for +620. East might have bid 3♠ over 2NT.

STREET North-South:

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

(1) Some two-suiter
 (2) Trial bid

North led ♠3. Declarer lost 2 spades, a heart, a diamond and a club, two off, –100, but 11 Imps to **DE BOTTON**.

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ A983 | |
| | ♥ QJ83 | |
| | ♦ A4 | |
| | ♣ 1083 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ KQJ62 | | ♠ 754 |
| ♥ A4 | | ♥ 102 |
| ♦ KJ852 | | ♦ Q963 |
| ♣ 4 | | ♣ KQ52 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ 10 | |
| | ♥ K9765 | |
| | ♦ 107 | |
| | ♣ AJ976 | |

Where South passed initially, East-West ended in 4♣. Where South opened 2♥, North-South bought the contract in 4♥ for a significant gain. How could East-West have found the 4♣ sacrifice after the 2♥ opening? Given the vulnerability, East might have supported West's 2♠ overcall, even after North's jump to 4♥.

Whenever it is available, a bid to show a two-suiter will almost always be more effective than just showing a one-suiter. If you can specify the two suits, it gives partner a much better appreciation of how the two hands fit. After a weak two, an option is to play Leaping Michaels, showing two 5-card or longer suits: (2♥) : 4♣ = clubs + spades, (2♥) : 4♦ = diamonds + spades, (2♠) : 4♣ = clubs + hearts and (2♠) : 4♦ = diamonds + hearts. It is recommended to play the 4-minor Leaping Michaels bid as forcing.

If West had Leaping Michaels available, West could have bid (2♥) : 4♦ and East would have bid 4♠. The best that North-South can now do is to double for +300. If North-South bid to 5♥, that can be defeated.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | 3♣ |
| Dble ⁽¹⁾ | ? | | |

(1) For takeout

What would you do as North with:

♠ 963
♥ A1073
♦ Q32
♣ K106

2. Dealer West : Both vulnerable

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 2♠ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 2NT ⁽²⁾ | ? |

(1) Weak two, 6 spades, 6-10 points
(2) Strong inquiry

What would you do as South with:

♠ Q73
♥ KQ7642
♦ J962
♣ --

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

Corduroy pillows are making headlines!