171. Heightened experience

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East Pass	South Pass
3♦	Dble ⁽¹⁾	P 888 ?	F 888
(1) Takeout			

What would you do as East with:

▲ 32
♥ 63
◆ Q32
♣ A109865

Today's deal is from the quarter-final match between NICKELL (Nick Nickell – Ralph Katz, Eric Greco – Geoff Hampson, Robert Levin – Steve Weinstein) and TULIN (Stan Tulin – David Bahkshi, Alon Birman – Dror Padon, Cornelis Van Prooijen – Louk Verhees) in the North America Online Bridge Championships.

This was yesterday's question:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
3♦	Dble ⁽¹⁾	4♦	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5 Y ⁽²⁾
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
(1) Takeout			
(2) Two key	v cards, no ≜ Q		

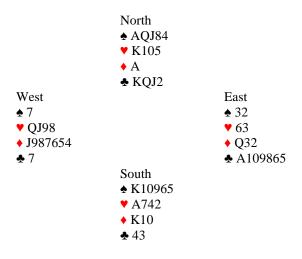
What would you lead as West with:

▲ 7
♥ QJ98
◆ J987654
₹ 7

In Chapter 14 *Leading against a small slam* in the excellent *Winning Suit Contract Leads*, David Bird and Taf Anthias had this to say: 'A side-suit singleton is a splendid lead against a suit slam – everyone knows that!'

Well, maybe not everyone. Levin (W) probably felt that the ♣7 lead did not appeal, because he had only one trump. However, the lead he chose did not prove effective.

Bd. 36: Dealer East : Nil vulnerable



As you can see, the \bigstar 7 lead against 6 \bigstar has instant success: \bigstar A at trick 1 and a club ruff at trick 2 (you hope). Levin chose the \blacktriangledown Q: five – three – ace. One of the things you hate to see when you lead from a sequence such as Q-J-x or longer is dummy appearing with A-10-x or K-10-x and declarer winning with the other top honour. Here $6\bigstar$ was cold on any lead but a club. Birman (S) drew trumps, cashed the \bigstar A, came to hand with a trump, ditched dummy's \clubsuit 10 on the \bigstar K and claimed 12 tricks, +980.

You are certainly entitled to sheet home the blame to West for the non-club lead, but East could have helped. As East chose to raise to 4, it would not have cost East to bid 4 instead. As a passed hand, this would be a lead-directing bid coupled with support for diamonds. Had East bid 4 and South 4, it is very likely that North, with clubs strongly held, would still proceed with 4NT : 5, 6. East's 4 bid showed the A but it did not promise such club length as well.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Van Prooijen	Greco	Verhees	Hampson
, i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i		Pass	1♠
3•	4 ♣ ⁽¹⁾	Dble ⁽²⁾	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	
(1) Strong spad	e raise		

(2) Lead-directing

After this auction, West would certainly have led the \bigstar 7 if South had ended in 6 \bigstar . Against 6NT, East led the \bigstar 2: ten – jack – ace. The \bigstar K was taken by the \bigstar A and East continued with the \bigstar 3: king – \bigstar 4 – \bigstar 4. Declarer played the \checkmark 2: queen – king – three, crossed to the \checkmark A and ran the spades, but as there was no squeeze, North made only 5 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs, 11 tricks, one light, East-West +50 and 14 Imps to TULIN.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South 1♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	1 ♦ ⁽²⁾	Dble ⁽³⁾	1 ♥ ⁽⁴⁾
2♥	3 ♣ ⁽⁵⁾	4♥	?
(1) Artifici	al, strong		
(2) Artifici	al, negative 0-	8 points	
(3) Majors			
(4) Artifici	al, 18+ points		
(5) 6-8 poi	nts, 5+ clubs		

What would you do as South with:

▲ AJ65
♥ -◆ AKJ7543
▲ A10

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

The saddest thing about betrayal is that it never comes from your enemies.

New book: *The Power of Pass* (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email <u>suzie@ronklingerbridge.com</u> or telephone 0411 229 705.