

175. Placing an ace

By Ron Klinger

Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

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

What would you do now as West with:

♠ AKJ
♥ KJ9
♦ KQ92
♣ K75

The problem from yesterday was:

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Dble	Pass	1♠	Pass
?			

What would you do now as West with:

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After the first auction, West bid 2NT and East raised to 3NT, all pass.

After the second auction, West also bid 2NT, but here 2NT was a jump bid. This 2NT jump-rebid shows about (21) 22-23 points, a bit stronger than the values held here. With a 1NT overcall showing 15-18 points, most play that Double and a subsequent 1NT rebid is 19-21 points and so a jump to 2NT should be stronger than that. In any event, East raised to 3NT.

West	East
♠ AKJ	♠ 10932
♥ KJ9	♥ 1032
♦ KQ92	♦ A8
♣ K75	♣ 10632

Both Norths led the ♥Q: two – five – king. Plan the play.

At halfway in one semi-final match in the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship, [SPECTOR](#) (Warren Spector – Gavin Wolpert, Kevin Bathurst – John Hurd, Vincent Demuy – John Kranyak) led [KOLESNIK](#) (Finn Kolesnik – Jacob Freeman, Bob Hamman – Peter Weichsel, Bart Bramley – Kit Woolsey) by 72 Imps to 39.

[KOLESNIK](#) won Session 3 by 33-5 to trail by 72-77 with 14 boards to go. Today's deal is from Session 4.

Bd. 51: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

North	
♠ 754	
♥ Q7	
♦ 106543	
♣ A94	
West	East
♠ AKJ	♠ 10932
♥ KJ9	♥ 1032
♦ KQ92	♦ A8
♣ K75	♣ 10632
South	
♠ Q86	
♥ A8654	
♦ J7	
♣ QJ8	

North's raise to 2♥ in the first auction on the previous page is not recommended. If you must bid to show your 6 points, a 1NT response is an option, but passing is sensible.

After the first auction and the ♥Q lead: two – five – king, Woolsey (W) set up a spade trick in dummy via ♠K, ♠A (unlucky – ♠Q doubleton would have been nice) and the ♠J. Demuy (S) won and led the ♥5. He was no doubt quite disappointed when West produced the ♥J and not North.

West crossed to the ♦A and cashed the ♠10: ♦J – ♥9 – ♣4. South had taken a trick with the ♠Q and had three heart tricks available. If South also had the ♣A, 3NT was doomed. West therefore placed the ♣A with North. As North had no HCP in spades or in diamonds, holding the ♣A was quite consistent with the strength expected for the (unorthodox) raise to 2♥. West continued with the ♦K and ♦Q. These cards remained:

North	
♠	
♥	
♦ 105	
♣ A9	
West	East
♠	♠
♥	♥ 10
♦ 9	♦
♣ K75	♣ 1063
South	
♠	
♥ A6	
♦	
♣ QJ	

West had taken 3 spades, 2 hearts and 3 diamonds. He played the ♦9. North won and cashed the ♦5 and ♣A. The ♣K was West's ninth trick, East-West +600.

At the other table, after the ♥Q lead, taken by the ♥K, Bathurst crossed to the ♦A and played the ♣3: eight – king – ace. North returned the ♥7: three – ace – jack. The next heart was won by dummy's ♥10. Declarer finessed the ♠J, winning, and had eight tricks (3 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds), but that was one down, North-South +100 and 12 Imps to [KOLESNIK](#). Even if the ♣K had won trick 3, declarer still had only eight tricks, unless the ♠Q fell doubleton or an opponent had started with ♦J-10-x.

If South did have the ♣A, 3NT was likely to fail unless there was a very lucky position in spades or in diamonds. Therefore, one could place the ♣A with North and decide how to proceed on that basis. Starting with ♠A, ♠K at tricks 2 and 3 looks like a good move. When Woolsey played the ♠J at trick 4, Demuy (S) could have tested declarer with a switch to the ♣Q. If West plays ♣K, the defence can take 3 club tricks and beat 3NT. Of course, Demuy was not about to play a club, as he thought North had the ♥J for the raise to 2♥ and the ♥Q lead.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	1NT ⁽²⁾
Pass	2♥ ⁽³⁾	Pass	2♠
Pass	?		

(1) 4+ spades

(2) Minimum opening, denies 3 spades

(3) Transfer to 2♠

What would you do now as North with:

♠ KJ10954

♥ 752

♦ 102

♣ AQ

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

Instead of cleaning the house, why not just turn off all the lights and pull the blinds down.

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