

245. Bridge for tailors: Suit combination II

By *Ron Klinger*

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
Pass	4♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	?

(1) Splinter, 11+ HCP, 4+ hearts, 0-1 club

What would you do as South with:

♠ KQ52
♥ AQ976
♦ --
♣ AKQ4

(Answer later)

How would you play this trump suit? You have plenty of entries.

North (dummy)
J852

South (you)
AQ976

Should you play low and finesse the queen or should you lead the jack from dummy? Either play works if the layout is like this:

	North		Or		North
	J852				J852
West		East		West	East
103		K4		10	K43
	South				South
	AQ976				AQ976

In the second case, after low to the queen drops the ten, you return to dummy in another suit and play from dummy again, jack or low.

Playing low from North is better because it also caters for this position:

	North	
	J852	
West		East
1043		K
	South	
	AQ976	

After two, king, ace, the jack and the queen mop up West's holding. Lead the jack, king, ace and you lose a trick to West's ten.

This deal arose in the 2019 Vanderbilt (USA Knock-Out Open Teams) Round of 32 match between [FLEISHER](#) and [PAVLICK](#).

Bd, 51: Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

North	
♠ A3	
♥ J852	
♦ AKJ952	
♣ 3	
West	East
♠ 9876	♠ J104
♥ 103	♥ K4
♦ Q643	♦ 1087
♣ 975	♣ J10862
South	
♠ KQ52	
♥ AQ976	
♦ --	
♣ AKQ4	

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
Pass	4♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♦ ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♠ ⁽²⁾	Pass	7♥?
Pass	Pass	Pass	
(1) 11+ HCP, 4+ hearts, 0-1 club			
(2) Cue bid			

South's 7♥ was an out-and-out gamble. South played the hearts as recommended above, low to the ♥Q, then ♥A and was very lucky with the actual layout, making 13 tricks, +1510. Had the ♥K been with West or if East had ♥K-10-4-3, the grand slam would have been one down. What could South have done differently to find that the ♥K was missing?

After North's 4♣ splinter, a good choice for South would be 5♦, asking for key cards outside diamonds. After a trump suit has been agreed (as 4♣ above agreed hearts), a jump in a new suit beyond game in the agreed suit is played as Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood. It shows a void in that suit and asks for key cards outside that suit.

Bidding and making 7♥ for 1510 was a huge swing. At the other table, a world-champion pair had a system stuff-up and ended in 7♦, one down, -100 and 17 Imps away.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
2♦	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

What would you lead as West from:

♠ A876
♥ J6
♦ AJ943
♣ 73

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

Today I saw a dwarf climbing down the outside of a prison wall. I thought to myself, 'That's a little condescending'.