

252. Offensive action

By Ron Klinger

With only North-South vulnerable, North passes and East opens a Gambling 3NT (solid 7+ minor, no outside ace or king). South doubles, penalties. What would you do as West with:

♠ J103
♥ J76532
♦ Q2
♣ 75

You can be confident that the vulnerable opponents have a game available, probably in spades, perhaps also in diamonds. They might even have a slam if one opponent has a singleton or a void in clubs.

You should certainly remove 3NT, but is 4♣, pass-or-correct, enough? A better shot is 5♣, pass or correct. Maybe your partner is the sort of player who might open 3NT with seven or eight diamonds to the A-K-J (not recommended). If 5♣ is doubled, you will be –800 if partner has seven winners and no more. That will be fine if the opponents have slam available, but a loss if they can make only game.

Then again, maybe partner has eight clubs or seven clubs plus a useful holding outside (♦J-10-x, perhaps) that will provide an eighth trick. Then you will be –500, a good save against their vulnerable game and a huge result if they have slam available. It generally pays to be an optimist in the bidding, brave but not reckless.

The deal arose in the finals of the 2016 World Teams:

Board 85: Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

North	
♠ Q642	
♥ K4	
♦ J8753	
♣ 42	
West	East
♠ J103	♠ 95
♥ J76532	♥ 1098
♦ Q2	♦ 4
♣ 75	♣ AKQJ1093
South	
♠ AK87	
♥ AQ	
♦ AK1096	
♣ 86	

In the Open Teams' final, both Norths passed, both Easts opened 3NT (Gambling), both Souths doubled and both Wests bid 5♣. For Monaco, North doubled 5♣, all pass. After 5♣ at the other table, it went Pass : Pass : Double, all pass.

Monaco's North led the ♣2. Netherlands' North led the ♠4. Declarer has to lose two spades and a diamond. With hearts 2-2, there were only two heart losers and so eight tricks, East-West –500, no swing.

As the cards lie, North-South can make 5♠, but 5♦ can be defeated via ♣A, ♠K and a third club, which promotes West's ♦Q.

Not everyone is enamoured with the Gambling 3NT opening. You can include me in the list of the disenchanted.

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		North		
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		♦ J8753		
		♣ 42		
West			East	
♠ J103			♠ 95	
♥ J76532			♥ 1098	
♦ Q2			♦ 4	
♣ 75			♣ AKQJ1093	
		South		
		♠ AK87		
		♥ AQ		
		♦ AK1096		
		♣ 86		

In the Women's final, both Easts opened 1♣. USA East-West:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	Dble
1♥	1♠	Dble	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

South led ♠A, ♦A, ♠K. Declarer finished three down, North-South +500.

France East-West:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	Dble
Pass	1♠	3♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East led ♣K, ♣A, and switched to the ♥8. Declarer made the rest of the tricks, USA +650 and +4 Imps.

And now for something completely different for the East hand. Seniors' final, France East-West:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣ ⁽¹⁾	4♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

(1) Stayman inquiry

South began with ♠K, ♠A and a third spade. East finished two down, North-South +300.

USA East-West:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	1♦ ⁽¹⁾
2♥ ⁽²⁾	3♦	4♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♣	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) A non-standard choice with 20 HCP

(2) Weak jump-shift

West led ♦A, ♠A, ♠K, ♦K. East ruffed and made the usual eight tricks, North-South +500 and 5 Imps to France.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

North
♠ QJ106
♥ 9765
♦ A
♣ AJ96

West
♠ K875
♥ KQ2
♦ K96
♣ Q73

West	North	East	South
	2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	3♥ ⁽²⁾
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 3-suiter, short diamonds or 4-3-1-5/3-4-1-5

(2) To play

You lead the ♦6: ace – jack – four. Declarer plays the ♥5: four – jack – queen. What do you play at trick 3?

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

Just because you are offended does not mean that you are right.

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