290. Length and height

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

West North East South $1 \\ 4 \\ ? \\ ? \\ \end{bmatrix}$ As Pass Pass

What would you do as West with:

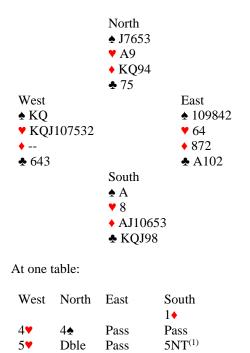
▲ KQ
♥ KQJ107532
-▲ 643

Do you agree with West's 4♥ bid?

Today's deal arose in the 3rd European Winter Games, 29 February - March 8, 2020.

Round 13: Board 5

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable



Pass

All Pass

Pass

6♥ Dble (1) Pick a slam

6

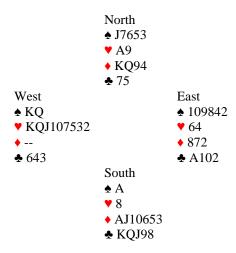
Pass

Declarer lost a spade, a heart and two clubs, three down, -500, an excellent save against 6, which is unbeatable. Still, West could have achieved a better result by passing out 4. The point of a pre-empt is to hope that you have forced the opponents to guess and that they have guessed badly. West has no idea what North-South might or might not make. If you are going to bid 4. and that is another question – then you should let sleeping dogs lie.

On the normal $\forall 6 \text{ lead}$, $4 \bigstar$ would be a couple off. North takes the $\forall A$, plays the $\bigstar A$ and run diamonds or knocks out the $\bigstar A$. It is true that -500 in $6 \forall$ doubled is better than -1370 defending $6 \blacklozenge$, but +200 in $4 \bigstar$ is heaps better than -500.

Round 13: Board 5

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable



You cannot expect East to double $4 \clubsuit$. East can see one spade trick and one club trick. Opposite a normal $4 \clubsuit$ preempt, $4 \clubsuit$ might make easily, possibly with an overtrick. One expects a pre-emptive bidder to have no more than one defensive trick.

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♦
4♥	?		

What would you do as North with:

▲ J7653
♥ A9
♦ KQ94
♦ 75

There is not much that can be said in favour of North's choice of 4♠ with such a poor 5-card suit. A better choice would be 5♦. Better still was North's action at the other table:

West	North	East	South
			1♦
4♥	Dble ⁽¹⁾	Pass	6*
Pass	6♦	All Pass	
(1) For	takeout		

Note North's choice. If South bid $4 \pm$ in reply to North's double, fine. If South had bid $5 \pm$, North had an easy correction to 5 +. With a 4-loser hand facing a likely 7-loser hand or better, South was certainly worth $6 \pm$. There were no problems in 6 +, North-South +1370 and +15 Imps.

Note also that West did not save against $6\bullet$, even though the save is cheap. That makes one wonder about the original choice of $4\bullet$ over $1\bullet$. With eight playing tricks at favourable vulnerability, the West hand has far too much playing strength. If you bid $4\bullet$ and want to bid again later, then you should not start with $4\bullet$. Rather choose $1\bullet$ and see where the opponents intend to play. You can always sacrifice later if that seems the right decision. It might start $1\bullet: 1\bullet: 1\bullet: 2\bullet$. . . and who knows what will happen after that?

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

West North East South 1NT Pass $2^{(1)}$ Pass ? (1) Transfer to hearts

What would you do as South with:

♠ A954

♥ A54

♦ K974

♣ A8

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

In response to your request, I have just been diagnosed with NCD: No Can Do.