23. Behind the 8-Ball

By Ron Klinger

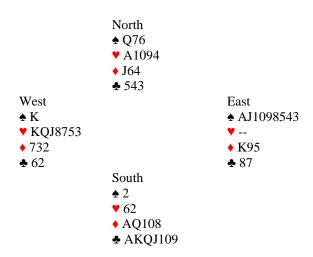
With only North-South vulnerable, North deals and passes. What do you do as East with:

- **▲** AJ1098543
- **Y** --
- ♦ K95
- **♣** 87

The first two deals today come from the 2018 Victor Champion Cup.

Match 2: Board 15

North dealer: North-South vulnerable



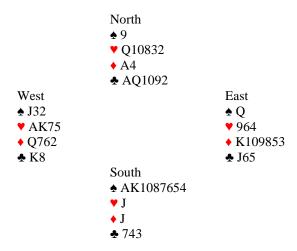
East has six losers, hence seven playing tricks. Adding three makes a $4 \triangleq$ opening the normal choice. South has a 4-loser hand. After a pre-empt, it usually pays to play partner for two defensive tricks. That means $5 \triangleq$ is the recommended choice. In the BBO match, it went Pass : $4 \triangleq$, $5 \triangleq$, all pass at both tables. Whether West led the $\forall K$ (ace, ruffed) or the $\triangleq K$ and then the $\forall K$, the result was two light, no swing.

With neither side vulnerable, what do you do as dealer with:

- **♦** AK1087654
- **♥** J
- J
- **♣** 743

Match 6: Board 27

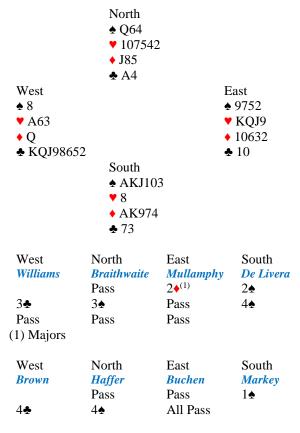
South dealer: Nil vulnerable



Again, you have a 6-loser hand and so 7-playing tricks, making a 4♠ opening the preferred action. On BBO, both Souths opened 4♠, all pass. South loses a spade, a heart and a club, but has ten tricks, +420.

The next two deals arose in the final of the 2018 Autumn National Open Teams:

Bd. 9: North dealer: E-W vulnerable



De Livera won the ♣K lead, played ♦5 to ♦A, drew trumps and made 11 tricks, +450. Markey won the ♣K lead, drew trumps and led a low diamond, ten tricks, +420, -1 Imp. Unfavourable vulnerability causes players to hold back a little in the bidding (with good reason). There was an opportunity for the rare vulnerable sacrifice against the non-vulnerable game. If West can find a 5♣ bid, that is only one down, -200 if doubled for +6 Imps.

How would you bid these East-West hands?

Bd. 52: West dealer: Nil vulnerable

West	East	
♠ A82	♦ K5	
♥ AKJ8	♥ 97	
♦ AJ63	♦ 10	
♣ 53	♣ AKQJ8742	

Justin Williams (W) – Matt Mullamphy (E) bid 1NT (15-17): $2 \spadesuit$ (transfer to clubs), $3 \spadesuit$: $4 \spadesuit$, $4 \blacktriangledown$ (0 or 3 key cards for clubs): 4 NT, $5 \spadesuit$: $7 \spadesuit$, +1440. Terry Brown (W) – Peter Buchen (E) bid 1NT: $3 \spadesuit$ (strong), 3 NT: $4 \spadesuit$, $4 \blacktriangledown$ (0 or 3 key cards), 7 NT, +1520, +2 Imps. East just needs to find 3 aces and 1 king to bid 7 NT.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. South dealer: North-South vulnerable

North

♠ Q4

♥ K53

♠ QJ107

♣ QJ96

East

♠ 1073

♥ A64

♠ 9654

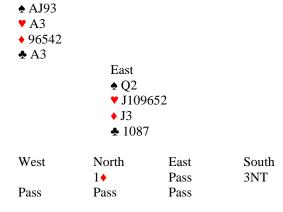
♣ 432

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

West leads the ♠A: four – ten (discouraging) – five. West switches to the ♥J: three from dummy. Which heart would you play as East?

2. West dealer: Nil vulnerable

North



West led the ♠6: three – queen – king. South returned the ♠5: four – jack – two and played the ♦2: three – seven – ten. West switched to the ♥Q, ace from dummy. Which heart would you play as East?

Why not discuss the problems by phone with your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

We all know the story of Chase Who played at a maddening pace But the slowness proved minor To the sin much sublimer The trumping of his partner's ace. (ACBL Bulletin, March 2020)