

# 87. Show business

*By Ron Klinger*

West dealer : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ Q875

♥ J5

♦ AJ986

♣ 97

East

♠ AJ962

♥ 102

♦ 1075

♣ 1042

West

2♣<sup>(1)</sup>

Pass

North

Pass

Pass

East

3♣

Pass

South

3♥

(1) 10-14 points, 5+ clubs

West leads the ♦3, ace from dummy. Which diamond would you play as East?

Declarer plays the ♥J from dummy. Which heart would you play as East?

This deal comes from the weekly on-line matches between Australia and New Zealand open team players.

Session 11 : Board 11

Wes dealer : Nil vulnerable

North

*Martin Reid*

♠ Q875

♥ J5

♦ AJ986

♣ 97

West

*Sartaj Hans*

♠ 43

♥ K876

♦ 3

♣ AQJ865

East

*Peter Gill*

♠ AJ962

♥ 102

♦ 1075

♣ 1042

South

*Peter Newell*

♠ K10

♥ AQ943

♦ KQ42

♣ K3

After the auction above, West led the ♦3 against 3♥. On dummy's ace, East played the ♦10. East figured the ♦3 could well be a singleton. If so, West would want to know and entry to East's hand. The ♦10 was intended as suit-preference for spades.

When declarer played the ♥J from dummy, East played the ♥10. Again, this was intended as suit-preference for spades. East figured that West might not read the ♦10 as suit-preference, but merely as high-d discouraging. East did not want to play the ♥2 on the ♥J in case West took that as suit-preference for clubs. Taking care of partner should be high priority in defence for everyone.

	North	
	♠ Q875	
	♥ J5	
	♦ AJ986	
	♣ 97	
West		East
♠ 43		♠ AJ962
♥ K876		♥ 102
♦ 3		♦ 1075
♣ AQJ865		♣ 1042
	South	
	♠ K10	
	♥ AQ943	
	♦ KQ42	
	♣ K3	

In defence, one normally plays low-high with an even number of trumps and high-low with an odd number (unless doing so may give away the location of a vital trump honour). After ♦3: ace, East judged that either West would be able to tell that East could not have three trumps or it would become obvious in the later play that East had started with two hearts exactly, again making the ♥10 a suit-preference signal.

West allowed the ♥J to win trick 2. Next came the ♥5: two – queen – king. West shifted to the ♠4: five – ace – ten. East was now in a quandary: give partner a diamond ruff or switch to a club. A diamond ruff would put West on lead with no way to collect two club tricks. Worse still, if West ruffed and returned a spade or a trump, South would remove West's last trump and discard both clubs, after ♠K, ♦K, ♦Q, ♦4 to dummy, one club on the ♠Q and the other on the fifth diamond.

East therefore shifted to the ♣2, promising an honour. West knew this could not be from the ♣K, given East's earlier signaling with the red tens. Had South risen with the ♣K, West would win and know to return a low club to East's ♣10 for a diamond ruff.

From the bidding and East's turning up with the ♠A, South knew that West must have the ♣A for the 2♣ opening. After all, only 15 HCP were missing and East had turned up with 4 HCP. As the ♣K was futile and possibly risky, South played low. West won and cashed the ♣A, but could not defeat 3♥. North-South +140.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Bach</i>	<i>Wyer</i>	<i>Cornell</i>	<i>Courtney</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥ <sup>(1)</sup>	1NT
2♣	3♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 4+ spades

(2) Good hand

West led the ♠4. East won and switched to the ♣2: three – jack – seven. West cashed the ♣A and returned the ♠3. South won with the ♠K and played a low heart. South lost a heart eventually for one down, East-West +50 and 5 Imps to New Zealand.

South dealer : North-South vulnerable

	North		
	♠ Q976		
	♥ 964		
	♦ KJ97		
	♣ 94		
West			
♠ 84			
♥ K1032			
♦ 864			
♣ AKJ10			
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT (15-17)

1. West leads the ♣A: four – two (encouraging) – seven.
2. West switches to the ♥2: four – ace – five.
3. East returns the ♣5: queen – king – nine.
4. West cashes the ♣J: ♠6 – ♣6 – ♦2.
5. West cashes the ♣10: ♥6 – ♣3 – ♦5.

What would you play as West at trick 6?

When following suit with idle cards, you can play them in various orders. From 6-4-2, play 6-then-4-then-2 as suit-preference for the high suit (highest card each time) or 2-4-6, lowest each time, to ask for the low suit.

In a trump contract, the trump suit is not normally in contention and neither is the suit from which you are playing these cards. In no-trumps, three suits can be in contention. In that case, from 6-4-2- you can play 4-then-2-then-6 to ask for the middle suit. Each time, you have played your second-highest card and so you are asking for the second-highest suit. Of course, it is vital that partner is watching and noting the cards played.

This arose in a teams' game on BBO:

	North	
	♠ Q976	
	♥ 964	
	♦ KJ97	
	♣ 94	
West		East
♠ 84		♠ 1053
♥ K1032		♥ AQ8
♦ 864		♦ 103
♣ AKJ10		♣ 86532
	South	
	♠ AKJ2	
	♥ J75	
	♦ AQ52	
	♣ Q7	

In theory, East-West can collect five clubs and four hearts to take 1NT three down. Neither table managed to do that. At one table, East signaled with the ♣2, encouraging, at trick 1 to ask West continue clubs if the holding was ♣A-K-x. West switched to the ♥2. Given the choice of the ♥2 by West, East should have played the ♥Q on this to clarify the defence, but instead won with the ♥A in order to return a club. The ♣5 as the original middle card was intended to ask for the middle suit later, i.e., hearts. West won and cashed the ♣J. East's ♣6, second highest was again suit-preference for hearts. On the ♣10, the ♣3 of the remaining 8-3 was against second highest for the second-highest suit. Had East wanted a diamond, the ♣3 would have been returned at trick 3, followed by the ♣5 and the ♣6. Had West continued with ♥3, the defence takes 9 tricks or the ♥K for 8 tricks. West shifted to the ♦8, North-South +120.

	North	
	♠ Q976	
	♥ 964	
	♦ KJ97	
	♣ 94	
West		East
♠ 84		♠ 1053
♥ K1032		♥ AQ8
♦ 864		♦ 103
♣ AKJ10		♣ 86532
	South	
	♠ AKJ2	
	♥ J75	
	♦ AQ52	
	♣ Q7	

At the other table, West led ♣K, asking for reverse count, against South's 1NT. East played ♣6, showing an odd number. This gave West no help whatsoever. West switched to the ♥2. East could/should have played the ♥Q on this to clarify the defence, but instead, as at the other table, East won with the ♥A in order to return a club.

East chose the ♣3: queen – king – 9. On the ♣J, East played the ♣2 and on the ♣10, East followed with the ♣5. Whatever East intended with this order of carding did not persuade West to revert to hearts. East's carding in clubs certainly did not suggest spades, but West switched to the ♠8 and South made eight tricks, +120, just another flat board. If wanting a spade, East would have played ♣8 on the ♣J and the ♣6 on the ♣10.

## Problems for Tomorrow:

1. West dealer : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	?	

What would you do now as East with:

♠ AKJ10832  
♥ 75  
♦ Q  
♣ A43

Suppose you bid 3♣, fourth-suit forcing. West now bids 3♥, you rebid 3♠ and West bids 4♥. What would you do now?

2. West dealer : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2♦	2♥
4♦	?		

What would you do as North with:

♠ AKQ97532  
♥ J96  
♦ --  
♣ K10

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

*Happy hour is starting earlier and earlier. If this keeps up, I'll be pouring wine in my cereal!*