

105. Meaning versus interpretation

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ KQ842
♥ Q85
♦ 9
♣ KQ109

Today's deals are from the 36-board final of Alt-Invitational IV, organized by bid72, bridge 24 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online). The finalists were **STREET** (Paul Street, Kamel Fergani, Nicolas L'Ecuyer, Ron Pachtman, Fred Pollack, Piotr Zatorski) who had come first in the qualifying stage and **BLASS** (Josef Blass, Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Jacek Kalita, Michael Nowosadski, Jacek Pszczola), fourth in the qualifying.

BLASS won Set 1 by 20-10. **STREET** won Session 2 by 43-28 to lead by 53-48 with 12 boards to go.

Board 30: Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 103	
	♥ 107	
	♦ AKQJ107	
	♣ 764	
West		East
♠ 95		♠ AJ76
♥ AK432		♥ J96
♦ 864		♦ 532
♣ A32		♣ J85
	South	
	♠ KQ842	
	♥ Q85	
	♦ 9	
	♣ KQ109	

Before you can answer the problem given, you need to know the meaning of North's 2♦, followed by 3♦. In standard methods, 3♦ is not forcing. It shows about 9-11 points and long diamonds. On that basis, South should pass 3♦. With solid diamonds, North will have nothing extra. South's lack of aces is a significant drawback for a contract of 3NT. If North does not have solid diamonds, where will South garner nine tricks for 3NT?

Some play that a 2-over-1 is forcing to game unless responder repeats the suit. Some play that 2♦ is forcing to game. In that case, South has to bid again and 3NT is the logical choice. It appears that North-South had differing views as to the meaning and status of North's sequence.

After the auction above, **STREET's** South bid 3NT, all pass. Did South think 3♦ was forcing? West led ♥A, ♥K and ♥2 (suit-preference for clubs). South won, cashed the diamonds and exited with a club. The defence had the rest, East-West +200.

At the other table it went 1♠ : Pass : 3♦ (long diamonds, inviting game), all pass. North lost a spade, a club and two hearts, but had nine tricks, +110 and 7 Imps to **BLASS**.

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♥	Pass	1♠ ?

What would you do as South with:

♠ K10762
♥ A4
♦ AK75
♣ 83

Here, too, you cannot answer the question without knowing the meaning of 4♥. Is it natural and pre-emptive?

Many years ago, this auction determined the outcome of an Australian Open Team Selection. At one table, North bid 4♥ as a splinter, good hand, 4+ spades 0-1 heart. South took it as natural, 7+ hearts, weak hand. South passed. The 2-1 fit did not play well. Clear understandings are essential. At the other table, it also began 1♠ : 4♥, but here North-South knew what they were doing. They reached 6♠ and made it for a huge swing.

Here another misunderstanding occurred. This time the 4♥ bid was natural, but South took it as a splinter.

Board 32: Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ A4	
	♥ KQ987652	
	♦ 6	
	♣ 76	
West		East
♠ QJ83		♠ 95
♥ J103		♥ --
♦ Q98		♦ J10432
♣ KQ9		♣ AJ10542
	South	
	♠ K10762	
	♥ A4	
	♦ AK75	
	♣ 83	

STREET North-South:

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	5♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4NT
Pass!	Pass	Dble ⁽²⁾	6♣
Pass	7♥	Dble	Pass
			All Pass

(1) Two key cards and the queen of trumps, based on hearts being trumps. That was totally feasible for South who took 5♠ as two key cards plus the ♠Q, based on spades as trumps.

(2) Lightner double, asking for the first suit bid by dummy

East led the ♣A: three – king! – six. West won the next club. Declarer had the rest, two light, –500.

BLASS North-South:

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	2♥

(1) Transfer to hearts. Opener is expected to bid 2♥ unless very strong or with good support for hearts.

West led the ♣K, followed by the ♣Q. Declarer had the rest, +650 and +15 Imps.

An advantage of the 1♠ : 2♦ : 2♥, 4♥ auction is that you can still use 1♠ : 4♥ as a splinter. If you want to use 1♠ : 4♥ as a splinter, a natural auction could go 1♠ : 2♥, 2♠ : 4♥, all pass. To save bidding space for slam purposes, some play 1♠ : 3NT as a splinter in hearts.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ A4
♥ AKJ62
♦ Q8
♣ AKJ5

Suppose you double. It continues:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Dble
2♠	Pass	Pass	?

What now?

2. Dealer West : Both vulnerable

North
♠ J3
♥ K73
♦ KQJ9
♣ 6432

South
♠ A95
♥ AJ10862
♦ 1084
♣ 5

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

(1) 4+ spades

(2) Support double, 3 spades exactly

West leads the ♠K: three – four (odd number) – five and switches to the ♣K: two – nine – five, followed by the ♠Q: jack – eight – ace. Plan the play.

Suppose at trick 4 you play the ♦8: three – king – seven and then the ♣3: ace – ♥2 – ♣8. How would you play from here?

Suppose that when you played the ♦8 to the ♦K, East thought for some time and then played the ♦7. Does this affect your play after ruffing the ♠A?

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

If you get an email with the subject, Knock, Knock, don't open it. It's a Jehovah Witness working from home