151. The tell-tale heart

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South: East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
(1) 3+ club	os, seeking help	in clubs	

What would you lead as West from with:

- **★** K982
- **♥** A
- ◆ 109542
- ♣ A106

There is a natural temptation to lead the singleton ♥A, find partner's entry, cross to partner's winner and receive a heart ruff. That will take 4♠ two down, as you expect to make your ♣A and ♠K as well.

There is a sensible approach to defence: Take the contract one down before concerning yourself with two down. In the above plan, you need to find partner's entry. If partner has a winner, then you will defeat 4♠, since you have three tricks in defence. In the meantime, leading the ♥A might set up winners in declarer's hand or in dummy.

	Q763		Lead the ace and declarer has two tricks. Left alone, declarer
A		J109854	might lead low from dummy to the king and your ace. Now
	K2		declarer makes only one trick in the suit.

More later.

After six Alt-Invitational events (Open Teams with eight teams in each event) and two Alt-Mixed (eight teams in each event,) bid72 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online), organized another on-line bridge event, The Major Alt with 36 teams. After ten 14-board rounds, Swiss style, the leading eight teams played 28-board quarter-finals, followed by 28-board semi-finals and a 32-board final.

In the first quarter-final, GOLDBERG (Connie Goldberg – Hua Poon, Vesa Fagerlund – Kauko Koistinen, Arttu Karhulahti – Clas Nyberg, USA, #1 qualifier with 134.86 Victory Points) defeated SELIGMAN (Martin Seligman – Seppo Sauvola, Dennis Clerkin – Jerry Clerkin, Mark Lair – Mike Passell, #6 qualifier, 117.33 VP) by 105.1-41.

This was yesterday's first question:

Dealer South: East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3 ♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	?		

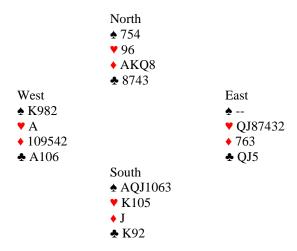
(1) 3+ clubs, seeking help in clubs

What would you do as North with:

- **★** 754
- **9**96
- ♦ AKQ8
- **♣** 8743

If partner is seeking help in clubs, your 8-7-4-3 is not the stuff dreams are made of. You could reasonably sign off in 3♠. Some Norths took the view that the hand was maximum for a raise to 2♠ and – so what if I have no help for partner in clubs – they jumped straight to 4♠. The bid I like, if partner will understand it, is 3♠, intended to mean, 'I cannot help you in clubs, but I am maximum with strong diamonds. Do with that what you will.' The downside of 3♠ is that a diamond lead might have been helpful and the 3♠ bid will probably dissuade West from a diamond lead. If you reject 3♠ as a choice, then 3♠ would be appropriate.

Board 3: Dealer South: East-West vulnerable



With SELIGMAN North-South and East-West passing throughout, it went $1 \ge 2 \le 3 \le 4 \le 1$, all pass. West led the $4 \le 2 \le 4 \le 1$. Declarer ditched the $4 \le 2 \le 4 \le 1$ and $4 \le 4 \le 1$ on dummy's diamond winners, followed by the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. See how good it was not to lead the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. West exited with the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. South ruffed and played the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. Last returned the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. West made the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. West made the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. West made the $4 \le 4 \le 1$. That was two down, East-West +100.

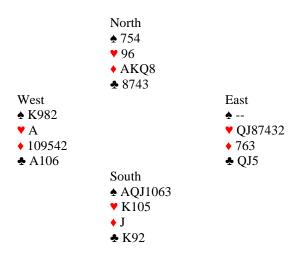
GOLBERG North-South:

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

- (1) Conservative
- (2) Not conservative

West would have reaped the rewards for the brave $3 \blacklozenge$ balance with a passive diamond lead. Instead West began with the $\blacktriangledown A$, followed by a panicky $\blacktriangle A$ and the $\blacklozenge 2$ exit. After $\blacklozenge A$, then $\blacklozenge K$, pitching a heart, and $\blacklozenge Q$ pitching a club, South lost only to the $\blacktriangle K$, ten tricks, North-South +590 and +12 Imps.

Board 3: Dealer South: East-West vulnerable



STREET North-South −50 after a bashing auction of 1♠: 2♠, 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♦2. LAVAZZA North-South −50 after a co-operative auction of 1♠: 2♠, 3♠ (long suit trial): 3♦ (values in diamonds), 3♠, all pass. Lead: ♦4. No swing.

NICKELL North-South −100 after 1♠: 2♠, 3♠: 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♦2. GUPTA North-South −50 and +2 Imps after 1♠: 2♠, 3♠, all pass. Some top players play 3♠ here as non-invitational.

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BIANCHI North-South −100 after 1♠: 2♠, 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♦2. IRELAND North-South −50 and +2 Imps after 1♠: 3♠ (6-9 points + spade support), 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♦10.
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This was yesterday's second question:

Dealer West: Both vulnerable

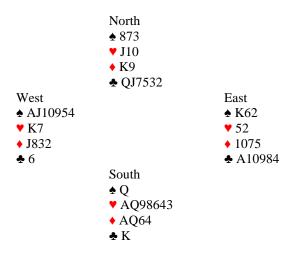
West North East South $2^{\bullet(1)}$ Pass $2^{\bullet(2)}$?

- (1) Weak two in hearts or in spades
- (2) Pass or correct

What would you do as South with:

After an opponent's pre-empt or a weak two, one usually plays partner for two tricks. South has a long, respectable heart suit and a 4-loser hand. If partner can provide two tricks, that should give you a very good chance to make game. The recommended action is a bid of 4. You can be very confident that West's suit is spades. Imagine it had started 2 : Pass : Pass . A bid of 3 would not come close to doing this hand justice.

Dealer West: Both vulnerable



SELIGMAN North-South:

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

- (1) Weak two in hearts or in spades
- (2) Pass or correct

West led the \clubsuit 6. East took the \clubsuit A, switched to the \clubsuit K and then reverted to the \clubsuit 9. South ruffed with the \blacktriangledown 9. West over-ruffed and tried the \clubsuit A. South ruffed, cashed the \blacktriangledown A, crossed to the \blacktriangledown J and played the \clubsuit Q, discarding the \spadesuit 4, 10 tricks, +170.

GOLDBERG North-South:

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♣6. East took the ♣A, cashed the ♠K and played the ♣10. South ruffed with the ♥9 and West discarded the ♠J. South led a low heart. West rose with the ♥K. South had the rest, 10 tricks, +620, +10 Imps.

NICKELL North-South: 1♠: Pass: 2♠: 4♥, all pass. Lead: ♣6, won by the ♣A, ♠2 switch, 10 tricks, +620. GUPTA North-South:

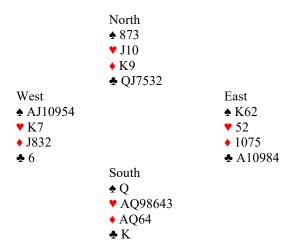
West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	3♠	4♥
Dble	Pass	4♠	All Pass

There was a time when a weak two opener did not take another bid unless forced to or invited to by partner. West was not an adherent to this philosophy and the double worked like a charm. With little defence, East bid $4\frac{1}{2}$, all pass. North led the $\sqrt[4]{J}$. West lost a heart and three diamonds, one off, -100 but +11 Imps.

IRELAND North-South: 2♠: Pass: 3♠: 4♥, all pass. Lead: ♦3. South won and played the ♠K next, 10 tricks, North-South +620.

The longest auction on this deal occurred at the other table:

Dealer West: Both vulnerable



BIANCHI North-South:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♠	3♥
3♠	Dble ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	4♠	5♦
Dble	5♥	Dble	All Pass
(1) Some v	alues		

West led the $\clubsuit 6$. East took the $\clubsuit A$, switched to the $\clubsuit K$ and reverted to the $\clubsuit 9$: $\blacktriangledown 8 - \spadesuit 5 - \clubsuit 3$. South was planning to make $5 \blacktriangledown$ doubled if East had the $\blacktriangledown K$ singleton or doubleton. Given that East had shown up with the $\clubsuit A$ and the $\clubsuit K$ and that West had opened with $1 \spadesuit$, playing East for the $\blacktriangledown K$ was wildly unlikely. Still, the cost was modest.

At trick 4, South crossed to the ◆K, returned to the ◆A and ruffed the ◆6 with the ▼10. Then came the ▼J: two – three – king. West returned the fourth diamond. East ruffed and South was two down, North-South –500 and –15 Imps. Had South ruffed the third diamond and then played ▼A and a second heart, the result would have been one down, –200 and –13 Imps.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer South: Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			$1NT^{(1)}$
2 \(\big(2) \)	?		
(1) 14-16			

(2) Single-suited in a major or a strong 5-5, major + minor

What would you do as North with:

- **♠** 109
- **♥** Q43
- ♦ Q87
- ♣ KQ732

2. Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West North East South $1 \stackrel{\bullet}{\bullet}^{(1)}$ $1 \stackrel{\bullet}{\bullet}$ Dble $^{(2)}$?

- (1) Strong 1♣. 16+ points
- (2) 8+ points, game-force

What would you do as South with:

- **◆** 9653
- **♥** J7
- **♦** 98
- ♣ A9532

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

Don't' worry about others. Some people are their own punishment in life.