

152. When to push

By Ron Klinger

In the second quarter-final match in ALT-OPEN, organized by bid72 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online), **BIANCHI** (Reno Bianchi – Leonardo Cima, Giovanni Donati – Valerio Giubilo, Alessandro Gandoglia – Alfredo Versace, Italy, #2 qualifier, 130.31 Victory Points) defeated **IRELAND** (Grainne Barton, John Carroll, Nick Fitzgibbon, Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann, Adam Mesbur, Mark Moran, #8 qualifier, 113.44 VP) by 91.1-59.

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1NT ⁽¹⁾
2♦ ⁽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

There is an outside chance of game, but most of the time, you figure to make a part-score your way. Partner is likely to have three clubs, but that is no certainty. If there is no game for you, then with a balanced hand you are usually best off to defend. It can hardly hurt to pass and see what develops. You can still compete later if the level is right.

Board 20: Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 109	
	♥ Q43	
	♦ Q87	
	♣ KQ732	
West		East
♠ AKJ432		♠ 76
♥ 86		♥ 1092
♦ AJ942		♦ 1053
♣ --		♣ A10965
	South	
	♠ Q85	
	♥ AKJ75	
	♦ K6	
	♣ J84	

IRELAND North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT ⁽¹⁾
2♦ ⁽²⁾	2NT ⁽³⁾	Pass	3♣
Dble ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	Pass ⁽⁵⁾	Pass

(1) 14-16
(2) Single-suited in a major or a strong 5-5, major + minor
(3) Puppet to 3♣, invitational plus
(4) For takeout, major + diamonds
(5) For penalties

Board 20: Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 109	
	♥ Q43	
	♦ Q87	
	♣ KQ732	
West		East
♠ AKJ432		♠ 76
♥ 86		♥ 1092
♦ AJ942		♦ 1053
♣ --		♣ A10965
	South	
	♠ Q85	
	♥ AKJ75	
	♦ K6	
	♣ J84	

Against South's 3♣ doubled, West began with ♠A, ♠K and ♠2 (suit-preference for diamonds): ♦7: ♣5 – ♠Q. East switched to the ♦5, six, ace. That was four tricks for the defence and South still had two clubs to lose, two down, North-South –500.

BIANCHI North-South:

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

(1) 4-Major, 5-minor OR strong with long major

(2) Points

(3) 2-3 clubs

(4) 2-3 spades

West led the ♠K, ♠A and ♠2 (for clubs). Declarer ruffed with dummy's ♥Q and drew trumps. South still had a club and a diamond to lose, but had 9 tricks, +140 and 12 Imps to **BIANCHI**.

GOLDBERG North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT ⁽¹⁾
Dble ⁽²⁾	Rdbl ⁽³⁾	Pass	2♥
2♠	3♣	All Pass	

(1) (14) 15-17

(2) Penalties

(3) Points

East led the ♠7, five, jack. West played ♠K, ♠A. North ruffed with the ♣Q and finished three down, –300.

SELIGMAN North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT ⁽¹⁾
Dble ⁽²⁾	3♣ ⁽³⁾	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

(1) 14+ – 17

(2) Major + minor or strong major 1-suiter

(3) Artificial, asking for a 5-card major

West led the ♠A, ♠K and the ♠2, ruffed with the ♥Q. Declarer could not avoid losing two tricks to the minor suit aces and that was one down, –100 but 5 Imps to **SELIGMAN**.

Board 20: Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North ♠ 109 ♥ Q43 ♦ Q87 ♣ KQ732	
West ♠ AKJ432 ♥ 86 ♦ AJ942 ♣ --		East ♠ 76 ♥ 1092 ♦ 1053 ♣ A10965
	South ♠ Q85 ♥ AKJ75 ♦ K6 ♣ J84	

GUPTA North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT ⁽¹⁾
Dble ⁽²⁾	3NT	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) 15-17

(2) Clubs or diamonds or majors or strong hand

West led ♠K, ♠A, ♠4. South won and ran the hearts. West discarded three diamonds. When South played the ♦6, West grabbed the ♦A, cashed three spades and gave South a diamond at the end. Two down, East-West +500.

NICKELL North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT
2♦ ⁽¹⁾	2♠ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2NT ⁽³⁾
3♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Good hand, long major

(2) Range inquiry or long clubs

(3) Minimum

North led the ♣2: ace – four – ♥6. After ♦3: six – jack – queen, North returned a club. West ruffed and played ♠A, ♠K, spade ruff, ♦10- king – ace for 11 tricks, +150 but 8 Imps to **NICKELL**.

With **LAVAZZA** North-South it went 1NT : Double (good hand, could be unbalanced), Pass : Pass, 2♥ : 2♠ : 4♥ : Pass, Pass : Double, all pass. The defence took ♠A, ♠K and the minor aces, one off, East-West +200.

LAVAZZA East-West:

West	North	East	South
			1NT
2NT ⁽¹⁾	3♥	Pass	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

(1) Spades and diamonds

North led ♣K: ace – eight – ♥6. Declarer finessed the ♠J, cashed ♠A, ♠K and set about the diamonds. West lost a heart and two diamonds, but had ten tricks, +620 and 9 Imps to **LAVAZZA**. On any lead but a club, 4♠ could be defeated. So much for not leading partner's suit.

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♣ ⁽¹⁾	1♠	Dble ⁽²⁾	?

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

What would you do as South with:

♠ 9653
♥ J7
♦ 98
♣ A9532

Board 21: Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North		
	♠ AK1082		
	♥ 43		
	♦ J1075		
	♣ 86		
West		East	
♠ Q4		♠ J7	
♥ AK10652		♥ Q98	
♦ AK4		♦ Q632	
♣ QJ		♣ K1074	
	South		
	♠ 9653		
	♥ J7		
	♦ 98		
	♣ A9532		

IRELAND East-West:

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

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

The Achilles heel of the strong 1♣ opening is intervention and pre-emption. Giovanni Donati (S) made the most of the vulnerability with that jump to 4♠. East-West could have collected 300 from 4♠ doubled, but when West elected to bid 5♥, the result was one off, North-South +100. North led ♠A, ♠K and ♣8. South had played ♣3, ♣5, suit-preference for clubs, although it was not necessary. West's club loser was not going anywhere.

BIANCHI East-West:

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

(1) Strong hand, primarily take-out

Lead: ♠K. 10 tricks, +620, 11 Imps to [BIANCHI](#).

In the other three matches, the contract at each table was 4♠ doubled, East-West +300, no swing. The auctions were generally along the line of 1♥ : 1♠ : 2♥ : 3♣, 4♥ : 4♠ : Pass : Pass, Double, all pass. Only one other South jumped to 4♠ on the first round of bidding. There it went 1♣ (artificial, strong) : 1♠ : 2♠ (8+ balanced, no spade stopper) : 4♠, Pass (asking partner to double) : Pass : Double, all pass.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer South : Both vulnerable

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

(1) Game-force, 4+ spades

(2) Club shortage

(3) Please start cue-bidding.

(4) Cue-bid

What would you do now as North with:

♠ AKQ9
♥ 8
♦ A84
♣ J9832

2. Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	4♥	5♦	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ QJ93
♥ 432
♦ 43
♣ 8653

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

I speak my mind, because it hurts too much to bite my tongue every time.