

156. Major misfortunes

By Ron Klinger

Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ 74
♥ A65
♦ KJ10973
♣ 73

South
♠ AQ
♥ KQJ108
♦ Q42
♣ K92

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

West leads the ♥4: five – two – eight. What do you play at trick 2?

Suppose you play the ♦2: six . . . Which diamond do you play from dummy?

Dummy's card wins the trick. How would you continue?

The second semi-final in The Major Alt, organized by bid72 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online) was between [BIANCHI](#) (Reno Bianchi – Leonardo Cima, Giovanni Donati – Valerio Giubilo, Alessandro Gandoglia – Alfredo Versace, Italy) and [GUPTA](#) (Naren Gupta, Huub Bertens, Bauke Muller, Simon de Wijs, Thomas Bessis, Curtis Cheek, Cedric Lorenzini, USA). [GUPTA](#) won by 64-47.1.

In the problem above, you would like to set up the diamonds and use the ♥A entry to reach the diamonds. If East has the ♦A, you would like East to take the ♦A on the first round. You could play a diamond at trick 2 but it cannot hurt to cash the ♥K at trick 2 and then play a diamond. Play the ♦2. If West plays low, play the ♦K from dummy. East is more likely to take the ace if you play the ♦K than if you play the ♦10 or ♦J, as the ♦K looks as though you began with a singleton diamond or misguessed with a doubleton diamond. If East wins and switches to a club and the ♣K loses, you lose the next club, ruff the third club with the ♥A, cross to the ♠A, draw the missing trump and then run diamonds.

Board 9: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ 74
♥ A65
♦ KJ10973
♣ 73

West
♠ K1032
♥ 974
♦ A65
♣ Q86

South
♠ AQ
♥ KQJ108
♦ Q42
♣ K92

East
♠ J9865
♥ 32
♦ 8
♣ AJ1054

South wins trick 1 with the ♥8, cashes the ♥K and plays the ♦2 to the ♦K. Declarer continues diamonds and makes 11 tricks, no matter how West defends.

With [BIANCHI](#) North-South, the auction went as above and West led the ♥4: five – two – eight. South played the ♦2: six – ten – nine. All would have been well if declarer had now crossed to the ♥K and played another diamond, but South continued with dummy's ♦3 and that was fatal. East ruffed and switched to the ♠9, queen, king. West shifted to the ♣6. East took the ♣A and returned the ♣J. South won, but still had to lose to the ♦A. South thus lost a trick in each suit, East-West +50

Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 74	
	♥ A65	
	♦ KJ10973	
	♣ 73	
West		East
♠ K1032		♠ J9865
♥ 974		♥ 32
♦ A65		♦ 8
♣ Q86		♣ AJ1054
	South	
	♠ AQ	
	♥ KQJ108	
	♦ Q42	
	♣ K92	

At the other table with GUPTA North-South:

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

(1) Weak two in diamonds or any very strong hand

(2) Inquiry

(3) Good weak two in diamonds

West led ♠3; four – jack – queen. South knocked out the ♦A. When West returned the ♠K, South claimed 12 tricks for +490.

Did East-West miss an opportunity to defeat 3NT?

East could have taken the opportunity to indicate a good lead to West by doubling 3♣. If South still bids 3NT and West now leads a club, East can take ♣A and switch to a spade or play ♠10 or ♠J to beat 3NT.

With **GOLDBERG** North-South, North opened 2♦ (weak two) and South bid 3NT, all pass. West led the ♠3: four – jack – queen. South played diamonds. On taking the ♦A, West switched to a club, East won and South claimed 11 tricks, +460.

LAVAZZA North-South:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Fit-showing jump: Good 5+ diamond suit + heart support

West led ♣6. East took the ♣A and switched to the ♠8. South took the ♠A, cashed the ♥K, ♣K and ruffed the ♣9 with the ♥A. South drew trumps and made ten tricks, losing a spade, a diamond and a club: +420, but –1 Imp.

Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	?		

What would you do as North with:

♠ A63
♥ K92
♦ K10852
♣ 106

After a 1♠ opening, a raise to 2♠ is generally played as 6-9 points. You can downgrade a 4-3-3-3 10-count to a 2♠ raise, but with 10 HCP, spade support and other hand patterns, the hand is too strong for a raise to 2♠. Almost all partnerships have some way to show the 10-12 point hand with support for opener's major. Some play 1♠ : 3♥ as specifically 3-card support and 10-12 points. Others use 1-Major : 2♣ as multi-purpose to show various hand types (balanced game-force, club length and game-force or 3-card support and 10-12 points). Others still play 1-Major : 2♣ as any 10-12 point hand and show 3-card support on the next round of bidding.

With **GUPTA** North-South it did go 1♠ : 2♠, by North, all pass. This was not a success for North-South.

Board 25: Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ A63	
	♥ K92	
	♦ K10852	
	♣ 106	
West		East
♠ 82		♠ Q97
♥ A87		♥ QJ654
♦ QJ64		♦ 3
♣ J875		♣ K932
	South	
	♠ KJ1054	
	♥ 103	
	♦ A97	
	♣ AQ4	

Against South's 2♠, West led the ♠2: three – queen – king. South played the ♦7: four – two – three. Declarer drew trumps, followed by ♦A, ♦K, diamond ruff and the ♥3. West grabbed the ♥A and switched to the ♣5: six – king – ace, Declarer crossed to the ♥K and played the ♦10 winner, discarding the ♣4. Making two spades with four overtricks, North-South +230. Not a result one wants on one's CV.

BIANCHI North-South produced a different way to show a limit raise with 3-card support:

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

(1) Game-invitation with 3 spades or 6-9 points with 4 spades

(2) Artificial, will accept game invitation

West led the ♦Q: two – three – ace. South played ♠A, ♠K and ♠J. East won and switched to the ♣3. South took the ♣A, rejecting the second finesse that would have won, and played the ♦9, winning, followed by the ♦7: six – eight – ♥5, the ♦K and the ♦10 to discard ♣4 and ♣Q. After a club ruff, South played the ♥3: seven – king – six for 11 tricks, +450 and 6 Imps to **BIANCHI**.

In the other semi-final:

GOLDBERG North-South:

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

(1) 5-card major Stayman

(2) 5 spades

West led the ♠2: three – queen – king. South drew trumps and continued with the ♦A and the ♦9, winning. Next came the ♥3 to the ♥K. Declarer exited with a heart. When dummy came in with the ♦K, declarer finessed the ♣Q and had 11 tricks, +450.

LAVAZZA North-South:

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

(1) Puppet Stayman

(2) 5 spades

West led the ♠8. South captured the ♠Q, drew trumps, cashed ♦A and played ♦7: six – five – ♥4. After ♦9, jack, king, South ruffed the ♦8 and played the ♥3. West rose with the ♥A and switched to the ♣7. South captured the ♣K, crossed to the ♥K, cashed ♦10 discarding ♣4, 12 tricks, +480 and 1 Imp to **LAVAZZA**.

Problems for Tomorrow:

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

♠ A8
♥ K92
♦ 98643
♣ KQ5

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

♠ Q107
♥ J86
♦ AJ943
♣ A5

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

Those who are terrified of elevators should take steps to avoid them.