

163. The Two Jacks

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

North
♠ 873
♥ A8
♦ K943
♣ A972

South
♠ AJ6
♥ J65
♦ AQ
♣ QJ1063

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT – 15-17

West leads the ♠K. East plays the ♠2, low discouraging. Plan the play.

There will be no problem if the club finesse works. Therefore, assume that the ♣K is with East. You still have enough tricks with 4 clubs, 3 diamonds, 1 heart and 1 spade. The danger is that the opponents collect five tricks before you can collect nine. You can foresee what could happen if you take the ♠A and play on clubs. If East wins and returns a spade, you will be all right if spades are 4-3, but you lose a club and 4 spades if West began with something like ♠K-Q-10-9-5.

At teams or rubber bridge, it is better to play ♣A first and another club – you are safe if the ♣K is with West and this gives you a slight extra chance of the ♣K being singleton with East. It will not help at all if East began with ♣K-x or ♣K-x-x. Here is the full deal

	North	
	♠ 873	
	♥ A8	
	♦ K943	
	♣ A972	
West		East
♠ KQ1094		♠ 52
♥ 973		♥ KQ1042
♦ J85		♦ 10762
♣ 84		♣ K5
	South	
	♠ AJ6	
	♥ J65	
	♦ AQ	
	♣ QJ1063	

So, if you take the ♠A, East comes in with the ♣K and a spade return lays you low. If you play the ♠6, West will place you with A-J-6(-5) and switch. With ♠J-x, East would have unblocked and with ♠J-x-x, East would have encouraged spades. Which switch will West choose? With the minor suit lengths in dummy, West will switch to a heart. Now you will lose a spade, a club and four hearts.

What you want is a spade continuation. The best chance for that is to play the ♠J. West will almost certainly assume you began with ♠A-J bare and East with ♠6-5-2. When West plays another spade, you take the ♠A and finesse in clubs. If East wins and has a spade, spades figure to be 4-3. If East has no spade left, you are home. The preceding problem is not unusual in bridge literature and bridge quiz books. The situation is almost always in a no-trump setting.

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

North
♠ 1087
♥ 94
♦ KJ75
♣ AQ82

South
♠ AJ6
♥ KQJ10753
♦ Q42
♣ --

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

West leads the ♠K. East plays the ♠9 (high-encouraging). Plan the play.

The deal arose in the 1997 World Transnational Open Teams. Having seen the previous problem, this one will not challenge you. What is unusual is that the situation arose in a trump-contract setting.

	North <i>Tim Rees</i> ♠ 1087 ♥ 94 ♦ KJ75 ♣ AQ82	
West ♠ KQ432 ♥ A ♦ 863 ♣ J743		East ♠ 95 ♥ 862 ♦ A109 ♣ K10965
	South <i>Andrew MacNair</i> ♠ AJ6 ♥ KQJ10753 ♦ Q42 ♣ --	

West led the ♠K against South's 4♥ and East played the ♠9 (encouraging). If you take the ♠A and play a heart at once, West wins and continues with ♠Q and gives East a spade ruff. The ♦A is the fourth trick for the defence. If you play the ♠6, West continues with a spade. When West comes in with the ♥A, West gives East a spade ruff and you lose a spade, a spade ruff and two red aces, one down again. With British player, Andrew Macnair sitting South, trick 1 went: ♠K – ♠7 – ♠9 – ♠J! Placing East with the ♠A, West continued with the ♠3. Declarer played dummy's ♠10, winning, and cashed the ♣A to discard the ♠A! Now South played a trump and the defence made only the spade trick at trick 1 and the two red aces, North-South +420.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North		
	♠ 432		
	♥ KJ75		
	♦ A4		
	♣ J953		
West			
♠ J8765			
♥ 2			
♦ KJ			
♣ 108642			
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT ⁽¹⁾
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠ ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

(1) 19-20 points

(2) 5 spades

West leads the ♥2: five – ace – eight. East returns the ♥4: queen – ♠5 – ♥7.

What would you play as West at trick 3?

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

Electricians have to strip to make ends meet.

The ABF Management Committee has requested that the ABF Daily Column should consist of only one deal per column. From tomorrow that will apply.

New book: <i>The Power of Pass</i> (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email suzie@ronklingerbridge.com or telephone 0411 229 705.
