

172. No highway in the sky

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South	What would you do as South with:
Pass	1♦ ⁽²⁾	Dble ⁽³⁾	1♣ ⁽¹⁾	♠ AJ65
2♥	3♣ ⁽⁵⁾	4♥	1♥ ⁽⁴⁾	♥ --
			?	♦ AKJ7543
				♣ A10

(1) Artificial, strong

(2) Artificial, negative 0-8 points

(3) Majors

(4) Artificial, 18+ points

(5) 6-8 points, 5+ clubs

Today's deal is from the quarter-final match between [NICKELL](#) (Nick Nickell – Ralph Katz, Eric Greco – Geoff Hampson, Robert Levin – Steve Weinstein) and [TULIN](#) (Stan Tulin – David Bahkshi, Alon Birman – Dror Padon, Cornelis Van Prooijen – Louk Verhees) in the North America Online Bridge Championships.

Board 44: Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 2	
	♥ 987	
	♦ Q1096	
	♣ KQ874	
West		East
♠ 10743		♠ KQ98
♥ Q6532		♥ AKJ104
♦ 82		♦ -
♣ J2		♣ 9653
	South	
	♠ AJ65	
	♥ --	
	♦ AKJ7543	
	♣ A10	

West	North	East	South
<i>Greco</i>	<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Van Prooijen</i>
Pass	1♦ ⁽²⁾	Dble ⁽³⁾	1♣ ⁽¹⁾
2♥	3♣ ⁽⁵⁾	4♥	1♥ ⁽⁴⁾
Pass	Pass	Dble	5♣
			All Pass

(1) Artificial, strong

(2) Artificial, negative 0-8 points

(3) Majors

(4) Artificial, 18+ points

(5) 6-8 points, 5+ clubs

There was good news and bad news. The good news: South made 5♣ doubled. West led the ♠4: two – queen – ace. South played the ♦3: two – queen – ♣3. East returned the ♣5. South took the ♣A and played ♦4: eight – ten – ♣6. South claimed the rest, winning any return by East and drawing the missing trumps, North-South +550.

It was very hard to do, but the defence could have defeated 5♣. East needs to discard on the ♦Q instead of ruffing and likewise discard on the next diamond. West can ruff the third diamond and play a heart or a spade. Declarer has no way home.

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West		East
♠ 10743		♠ KQ98
♥ Q6532		♥ AKJ104
♦ 82		♦ --
♣ J2		♣ 9653
	South	
	♠ AJ65	
	♥ --	
	♦ AKJ7543	
	♣ A10	

The bad news: North-South had missed 6♦. The 5♣ bid over 4♥ indicated that South thought or hoped that North had longer clubs. Thus, North-South ended in their 7-card trump fit and missed their 11-card trump fit. What could South have done instead? In competitive auctions such as these, some play 4NT not as Blackwood but as pick a minor. If that was available and South had bid 4NT, North would have bid 5♦ and South then has a comfortable raise to 6♦.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Padon</i>	<i>Katz</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Nickell</i>
			1♦
Pass	3♦ ⁽¹⁾	Dble	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥ ⁽²⁾
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Mixed raise, 4+ diamonds, 7-9 points

(2) Cue bid

West led the ♥2: seven – ace (suit-preference for spades) – ♦3. South played ♠A, ♦A, ♦K, spade ruff, heart ruff, spade ruff, ♣A, ♣K, ♣Q, discarding the last spade, 13 tricks +940 and 9 Imps to [NICKELL](#).

[TULIN](#) won the match by 160-107.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

North
♠ A98
♥ K97
♦ K62
♣ Q976

West
♠ J105
♥ Q84
♦ Q954
♣ KJ3

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

(1) Game-force, balanced, no 4-card major

West leads the ♠J: eight – seven (high-encouraging) – three, followed by the ♠10: nine – four – king. Declarer plays the ♣8. What would you do as West?

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

This Officer should go far and the sooner he starts the better. (British Military Staff Appraisal)

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.
