

173. Up and down in 3NT

By Ron Klinger

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

North
♠ A98
♥ K97
♦ K62
♣ Q976

West
♠ J105
♥ Q84
♦ Q954
♣ KJ3

West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Freeman</i>	<i>Spector</i>	<i>Kolesnik</i>
Pass	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?

Today's deal comes from the semi-final match between **KOLESNIK** (Finn Kolesnik age 16 – Jacob Freeman age 19, Bob Hamman – Peter Weichsel, Bart Bramley – Kit Woolsey) and **SPECTOR** (Warren Spector – Gavin Wolpert, Kevin Bathurst – John Hurd, Vincent Demuy – John Kranyak) in the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship.

Board 7: Dealer North : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
♠ J105 ♥ Q84 ♦ Q954 ♣ KJ3	♠ A98 ♥ K97 ♦ K62 ♣ Q976	♠ Q7642 ♥ 10532 ♦ 107 ♣ A5	♠ K3 ♥ AJ6 ♦ AJ83 ♣ 10842

(Directions changed for convenience)

After the auction above, West led ♠J, a great start for the defence. East signaled encouragement with the ♠7 and South ducked. West continued with ♠10: nine – four – king. When South played ♣8, West needed to rise with ♣K (to preserve East's entry) and play the third spade. East then has two spade winners with the ♣A as entry.

Trick 3 went ♣8: three – six – ace. East returned the ♣6: ♦3 – ♠5 – ♠A. Declarer played the ♥7 to his ♥A and led the ♣10: king – seven – five. West could have exited safely with the ♣J, but switched to the ♥Q, taken by the ♥K. South now had 2 spades, 3 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs, 9 tricks, +600. Had West played the ♣J after the ♣K, South can still succeed via an endplay on West, but the ♥Q saved South any further thought.

Worth noting is South's ♣8 at trick 3. This might have given West an illusion that South was about to finesse for the ♣10 and so West played low. Had South led the ♣10, West would certainly have risen with the ♣K.

Board 7: Dealer North : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ A98	
	♥ K97	
	♦ K62	
	♣ Q976	
West		East
♠ J105		♠ Q7642
♥ Q84		♥ 10532
♦ Q954		♦ 107
♣ KJ3		♣ A5
	South	
	♠ K3	
	♥ AJ6	
	♦ AJ83	
	♣ 10842	

At the other table, 3NT was played from the North seat:

West	North	East	South
<i>Bramley</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Woolsey</i>	<i>Demuy</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East led the ♠2: three – ten – eight. West returned the ♠5 (♠10 preferred): nine – four – king. When declarer led the ♣10 from dummy, West produced the textbook play, the ♣K!, even though the ♣Q was not visible. West continued with the ♠J, taken by the ♠A, East following with the ♠6, his lowest, as suit-preference for clubs.

Declarer cashed the ♦K and finessed the ♦J, losing. West switched to the ♣3. East won and cashed two spades to take 3NT two down, East-West +200 and 13 Imps to [KOLESNIK](#).

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : Nil vulnerable

	North		
	♠ K8643		
	♥ --		
	♦ KJ85		
	♣ AKQ6		
	East		
	♠ A7		
	♥ KJ932		
	♦ 732		
	♣ J105		
West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads the ♠8: ace – five – seven. Declarer plays the ♠3: seven – ten – jack. West returns the ♠3: king – jack – nine. South continues with the ♠4 from dummy: ace – queen – two. What would you play at trick 5?

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

My doctor told me that jogging would add ten years to my life. He was right. I feel ten years older already.

New book: *The Power of Pass* (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.