176. Making but could be beaten and vice versa

By Ron Klinger

Today's deal arose in Session 4 of the semi-final match in the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship between SPECTOR (Warren Spector – Gavin Wolpert, Kevin Bathurst – John Hurd, Vincent Demuy – John Kranyak) and KOLESNIK (Finn Kolesnik – Jacob Freeman, Bob Hamman – Peter Weichsel, Bart Bramley – Kit Woolsey).

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South 1 ♣
Pass	1 ♥ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	1NT ⁽²⁾
Pass	2 ♥ ⁽³⁾	Pass	2♠
Pass	?		
(1) 4+ spades	5		
(2) Minimum	opening, deni	ies 3 spades	
(3) Transfer	to 2♠		

What would you do now as North with:

- ▲ KJ10954♥ 752
- ♦ 102
- ♣ AQ

You have only 10 HCP and partner will be below 15 HCP. That suggests passing 24. On the plus side, you have not only 10 HCP, but also a good 6-card suit with strong intermediates, plus an outside 10. Give partner 4Q-x for example, and game becomes viable.

One North passed 2♠, which became the contract. The other raised to 3♠ and South rebid 3NT, all pass. One declarer succeeded and one went down, but it was the 3NT contract that came home.

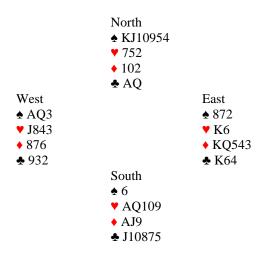
Board 53: Dealer North : Both vulnerable

	North ▲ KJ10954 ♥ 752 ♦ 102 ♣ AQ	
West ▲ AQ3 ♥ J843 ◆ 876 ◆ 932	₹ AQ	East ▲ 872 ♥ K6 ◆ KQ543 ♣ K64
1,52	South ▲ 6 ♥ AQ109 ♦ AJ9 ♣ J10875	

Against 3NT, Bathurst (W) led the \checkmark 3: two – king – ace. Hamman (S) played the \bigstar 6: three – jack – two, followed by the \checkmark 5: six – ten – jack. West switched to the \bigstar 2, queen, king. East returned the \bigstar 6 to the \bigstar A. South claimed nine tricks, 1 spade, 3 hearts, 1 diamond and 4 clubs, North-South +600.

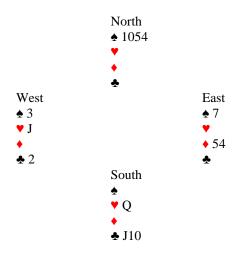
If West had led a diamond, 3NT could be defeated. East plays the $\diamond Q$. If South wins and finesses the $\blacklozenge Q$, East wins and returns a low diamond. If instead, South plays a spade, West rises with the ace and continues diamonds. East wins and plays a third diamond. When in later with the $\blacklozenge K$, West cashes two more diamonds.

Board 53: Dealer North : Both vulnerable



At the other table, the bidding had been $1 \clubsuit : 1 \bigstar$, 1NT : $2 \checkmark$ (transfer), $2 \bigstar$, all pass and so North was declarer. East led the $\bigstar K$, taken by the ace. Declarer played the $\blacklozenge 9$ to the $\bigstar 10$ and the $\blacklozenge Q$. East switched to the $\blacktriangledown 6$.

Declarer would have succeeded by playing the $\forall Q$ – and why not, as there is only one heart discard on the $\diamond J$ anyway? – but he rose with the $\forall A$. When the club finesse lost, East cashed the $\forall K$ and reverted to a club. North won and played the $\diamond 9$: eight – six – queen. West returned a heart. North ruffed with the $\diamond J$, followed by $\diamond K$: two – $\diamond 8 - \diamond A$ These cards remained:



When West returned the ♥J, North could not prevent East's ♠7 becoming the sixth trick for the defence. North ruffed low and East over-ruffed. One down, East-West +50 and 10 Imps to KOLESNIK. Even if North had made 2♠, it would have been 7 Imps out.

KOLESNIK won Session 4 by 60 Imps to 7 and the match by 132-84.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	?

What would you do as South with:

▲ AQ10982

♥ K642

♦ 107

♣ 7

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

This man is depriving a village somewhere of it idiot. (British Military Staff Appraisal)

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