

# 179. Heroics and all that jazz

*By Ron Klinger*

At halfway in the semi-final match in the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship between **LEVINE** (Mike Levine – Eddie Wold, Geir Helgemo – Tor Helness, Jeff Meckstroth – Eric Rodwell) and **TULIN** (Stan Tulin – David Bakhshi, Alon Birman – Dror Padon, Cornelis Van Prooijen – Louk Verhees), **LEVINE** led by 68 Imps to 39.

Dealer East : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	?	3♣	Pass

What would you do as North with:

♠ K4  
♥ KQ32  
♦ A8753  
♣ 108

You do have a 6-loser hand, but no attractive action. The flaw with a takeout double is the shortage in spades. You have no club stopper for 3NT. The diamonds are definitely underweight for balancing with 3♦. There is another option. You could pass, even though that is an anathema for many players.

Board 38: Dealer East : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
♠ AJ	♠ K4	♠ 873	♠ Q109652
♥ AJ8	♥ KQ32	♥ 1074	♥ 965
♦ KJ10962	♦ A8753	♦ --	♦ Q4
♣ 97	♣ 108	♣ AQJ6543	♣ K2

West	North	East	South
<i>Helness</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Padon</i>
Pass	Dble	3♣	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠ <sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Just what North did not want to hear.

West led the ♣9. East took the ♣A and returned the ♣J, a delicate suit-preference for diamonds. South won and played the ♠9: jack – king – three and the ♠4: seven – ten – ace. West switched to the ♦K, ace, ♠8. South still had the ♥A to lose and that was one down, East-West +100.

It could have been two down if West takes the ♠A on the first round of trumps and plays a diamond then. East ruffs and returns a heart to the ♥A. West gives East another diamond ruff. That would have been East-West +200 or +500 if West had found the double. So much for the merits of a takeout double by North. Meanwhile, what would have happened if 3♣ had been passed out?

Board 38: Dealer East : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ K4	
	♥ KQ32	
	♦ A8753	
	♣ 108	
West		East
♠ AJ		♠ 873
♥ AJ8		♥ 1074
♦ KJ10962		♦ --
♣ 97		♣ AQJ6543
	South	
	♠ Q109652	
	♥ 965	
	♦ Q4	
	♣ K2	

If the bidding had gone 3♣ : Pass : Pass : Pass, what would South lead? A club is out of the question and leading ♦Q does not appeal. South has a probable club trick anyway and does not need to look for a ruff. That leaves a spade or a heart. The ♠10 or a heart? Either is a reasonable choice. On the ♠10 lead, declarer can succeed.

Declarer probably plays ♠A and ♠J to aim for a spade ruff in dummy. North wins and shifts to a club. East will rise with the ♣A to play the third spade, ruffed and over-ruffed. North is now endplayed and will play a top heart. East now loses a spade and a spade over-ruff, a heart and a club.

If South leads a passive heart, the defence can prevail. If declarer rises with the ♥A to play ♠A and ♠J, the defence can come to two hearts, a spade, a spade over-ruff and a club. If declarer ducks in dummy, North wins and switches to a club. East will probably finesse. South wins and plays another heart. Now North-South come to two hearts, two spades and a club.

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer East : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		3♣	Pass
?			

What would you do as West with:

♠ AJ  
 ♥ AJ8  
 ♦ KJ10962  
 ♣ 97

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>M'stroth</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
		3♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

That was a seriously brave move by West. If East's clubs were K-Q-J-6-5-4-3 and the defence could duck the first club, dummy would provide only one trick. West would have foreseen that, but there was a second string to his bow. Maybe East had the ♦Q and the diamonds would set up. Maybe East would turn up with two low diamonds. Then when West plays a club and dummy's ♣K wins, West could turn play a diamond and finesse the ♦J. This would bring in the diamond suit if South had started with ♦Q-x (as South did in fact, but dummy had no diamond to make a finesse possible).

Board 38: Dealer East : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ K4	
	♥ KQ32	
	♦ A8753	
	♣ 108	
West		East
♠ AJ		♠ 873
♥ AJ8		♥ 1074
♦ KJ10962		♦ --
♣ 97		♣ AQJ6543
	South	
	♠ Q109652	
	♥ 965	
	♦ Q4	
	♣ K2	

The ♠K lead would defeat West's 3NT, but that was not about to happen. Double dummy, a club lead also beats 3NT, but that is even less likely than the ♠K lead.

North led ♥Q (underleading): four – queen – ace. The club finesse lost and South switched to ♠10, jack, king. North switched to the ♦A and cashed the ♥K. Declarer had the rest, 9 tricks, +600 and 11 Imps to [LEVINE](#).

## Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	?	

What would you do as East with:

♠ J97654  
♥ 6532  
♦ KJ  
♣ 7

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

*Take on the 'Nut-Free Diet'. Avoid people who drive you nuts.*

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 <a href="mailto:suzie@ronklingerbridge.com">suzie@ronklingerbridge.com</a> or telephone 0411 229 705.
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