

186. Limitations

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	1NT	Dble ⁽¹⁾
Pass	2♥	2♠	?

(1) Primarily for takeout

What would you do as South with:

♠ AQ4
♥ KQ4
♦ 865
♣ AK102

With 8 boards to go in the final of the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship, [LEVINE](#) (Mike Levine – Eddie Wold, Geir Helgemo – Tor Helness, Jeff Meckstroth – Eric Rodwell) led [KOLESNIK](#) (Finn Kolesnik age 16 – Jacob Freeman age 19, Bob Hamman – Peter Weichsel, Bart Bramley – Kit Woolsey) by 110 Imps to 75. On the next two deals each side scored 2 Imps: 112-77.

Then:

Session 4: Board 51

Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

	North		
	♠ 96		
	♥ 9852		
	♦ A1072		
	♣ 953		
West		East	
♠ K8753		♠ J102	
♥ A10		♥ J763	
♦ K943		♦ QJ	
♣ Q8		♣ J764	
	South		
	♠ AQ4		
	♥ KQ4		
	♦ 865		
	♣ AK102		

West	North	East	South
<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Hamman</i>	<i>Helness</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Dble ⁽¹⁾
Pass	2♥	2♠	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Primarily for takeout

In the abstract, a suit bid at the cheapest level in reply to a takeout double can be from 0-9 points. As South has 18 HCP, it makes sense to invite game with 2NT if North can have 7-9 points. However, the reality is something else. West opened the bidding, say, 11+ points. East responded 1NT. You might view that with some skepticism, given the vulnerability, but then East bid again, so about 6-7 points. If West and East are both minimum, that would give them 17 points and leave 23 for your side. That is not enough for game and who is to say that West might not be better? For North to raise to 3NT with a mundane 4-count, North obviously expected more from South for the 2NT rebid.

	North	
	♠ 96	
	♥ 9852	
	♦ A1072	
	♣ 953	
West		East
♠ K8753		♠ J102
♥ A10		♥ J763
♦ K943		♦ QJ
♣ Q8		♣ J764
	South	
	♠ AQ4	
	♥ KQ4	
	♦ 865	
	♣ AK102	

Against 3NT, Weichsel (W) led the ♦3: two – queen – six. The standard play by East would be the ♦J, the cheaper of equally high cards when playing third-hand-high. I suspect that East thought that South might have the ♦A and was playing a false-card to try to mislead South as to the location of the ♦J. Of course, one result is that partner is equally misled.

Hamman (E) switched to the ♠J. Helness took the ♠A and played the ♥K: ace – two – seven. West reverted to the ♦4: seven – jack – five. East returned the ♠10, queen, king and North cashed ♠8, ♠7 and ♠3. Next came the ♥10: eight – six – queen. South cashed the ♣A, ♣K, finessed the ♦10 and cashed the ♦A. Declarer made one spade, one heart, two diamonds and two clubs, six tricks, three down, East-West +300. Lucky there was no penalty double of 3NT.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>M'stroth</i>	<i>Bramley</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Woolsey</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Dble ⁽¹⁾
Pass	2♥	2♠	Pass!
Pass	Pass		

(1) Primarily for takeout

There is a new book out, *The Power of Pass*. This deal would have been a strong example. North led ♣3: four – king – eight. South switched to ♥K, taken by the ace. West played the ♦4. North grabbed the ♦A and returned ♥5 to the ♥Q. South cashed the ♣A, followed by the ♣2: ♦3 – ♣5 – ♣7. This was the position:

	North	
	♠ 96	
	♥ 98	
	♦ 1072	
	♣	
West		East
♠ K8753		♠ J102
♥		♥ J7
♦ K9		♦ Q
♣		♣ J
	South	
	♠ AQ4	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 65	
	♣ 10	

When declarer played the ♣2: four – king – six, South had two spade winners to go with one heart, one diamond and two clubs. West was one down, –50, and 8 Imps to **KOLESNIK**, now trailing by 85-112.

In the above diagram, it would not have helped West to play the ♠J from dummy. South would rise with the ♠A. The ♣10 would then create a second trump trick for the defence, no matter how West plays.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : Both vulnerable

North
♠ A2
♥ 10853
♦ Q8764
♣ AJ

West
♠ 765
♥ KQ972
♦ K952
♣ 4

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT ⁽¹⁾
Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♦ ⁽³⁾
Pass	2♠ ⁽⁴⁾	Dble ⁽⁵⁾	2NT ⁽⁶⁾
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) 14-16

(2) Asking for a 5-card major

(3) No 5-card major

(4) Forcing, shows 4 hearts, fewer than 4 spades

(5) Spades

(6) Minimum, spade stopper, not 4 hearts

West leads ♠5: two – nine – jack. South plays the ♦3. What would you play as West?

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

It's important for a man to know his limitations. (Clint Eastwood as 'Dirty Harry').

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.
--