187. Missed by that much

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East: Both vulnerable

	NT 41
	North
	♠ A2
	v 10853
	◆ Q8764
	♣ AJ
West	
♦ 765	
∨ KQ972	
▶ K952	

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

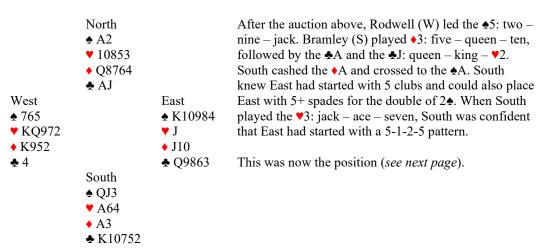
- (1) 14-16
- (2) Asking for a 5-card major
- (3) No 5-card major
- (4) Forcing, shows 4 hearts, fewer than 4 spades
- (5) Spades
- (6) Minimum, spade stopper, not 4 hearts

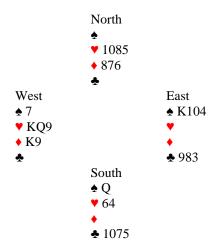
West leads ± 5 : two – nine – jack. South plays the ± 3 . What would you play as West?

With 5 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 112 Imps to 85. On the next two deals each side scored 1 Imp: 113-86. Then KOLESNIK picked up 5 Imps on a part-score deal: 113-91.

The above problem arose on the penultimate deal:

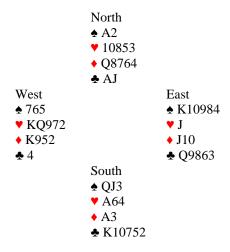
Board 55: Dealer East: Both vulnerable





South exited with the ♠Q. East won and cashed ♠10, ♠4, South discarding ♥4 and ♥6. When East then played the ♠9, South contributed the ♠5. East was left with ♠8-3 and South ♠10-7 East played a club and South won the last two tricks. South made 2 spades, 1 heart, 2 diamonds and 4 clubs, 9 tricks, +600. Very nicely played.

Board 55: Dealer East: Both vulnerable



At the other table:

West	North	East	South	Partner
Hamman	Helness	Weichsel	Helgemo	Many p
		Pass	1♣	leader.
1♥	1 ♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	1NT	hearts a
Pass	3NT	Dble	All Pass	would l
(1) Denies	s 4+ spades			opening

Partnerships have rules for the lead requested by a double of 3NT. Many play that it asks for the lead of the suit bid by the opening leader. That does not make much sense here. If East had decent hearts and the values to double 3NT after a mere overcall, East would have supported hearts over 1♠. If not the suit bid by the opening leader, the consensus is usually the first bid suit by dummy. That is normally a natural bid. What if the first suit bid

by dummy is artificial, as it was here? Is partner asking for a spade lead? Why then didn't partner double the artificial 14? It will repay partnerships to ensure their agreements are watertight in this area

East-West were on the same wavelength, as West did lead a spade, the \bigstar 7 to deny a spade honour: two – four – jack. South did not touch diamonds. The \bigstar 2 went to the ace, followed by the \bigstar 3: queen – king – \blacktriangledown 2 (low-like). South now knew that East had started with 5 clubs, presumably 5 spades, only 1 heart, as West figured to have 5 hearts for the 1 \blacktriangledown overcall. That left East with two diamonds. South hoped those diamonds included the king.

Declarer played the ♠3 to the ace, the ♥3 to the ace and exited with the ♠Q to East's ♠K. East cashed two more spades and switched to the ♠J: three – king – eight. The defence had already taken four tricks. West cashed the ♥K and ♥Q for two down, East-West +500 and 15 Imps to KOLESNIK. One board to go and LEVINE led by 113 Imps to 106. See tomorrow's column for the last deal.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West: Nil vulnerable

West North East South 3♣ Pass Pass ?

What would you do as South with:

- **♠** A
- **♥** A104
- ◆ QJ108543
- **♣** KJ

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

What are you vacating when you go on a vacation?

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.