

207. Black out

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	Dble ⁽¹⁾	3♦ ⁽²⁾
Pass	Pass	?	

(1) Clubs or both majors

(2) Natural, not forcing, not invitational

What would you do as East with:

♠ AJ1095
♥ QJ875
♦ --
♣ Q62

The third quarter-final in MontreALT, organized by bid72 and netbridge.online, was between **BLACK** (Andrew Black, David Gold, Gunnar Hallberg, Simon Hult, Phil King, Andrew McIntosh), third with 123.92 Victory Points (13.53 VPs behind the leader) and **RED DEVILS** (Geert Arts, Sam Bahbout, Philippe Caputo, Philippe Coenraets, Steven de Donder, Steve de Roos, Zvi Engel, Mike van der Vorst), eighth on 112.49 VPs.

Board 20: Dealer West : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ K6	
	♥ A1032	
	♦ A7	
	♣ K10873	
West		East
♠ Q832		♠ AJ1095
♥ 96		♥ QJ875
♦ K983		♦ --
♣ AJ9		♣ Q62
	South	
	♠ 74	
	♥ K4	
	♦ QJ106542	
	♣ 54	

With **RED DEVILS** East-West, 3♦ was passed out. You probably know that I am no fan of bidding three-over-three, but East does have excellent playing strength. One can sympathize with East's not doubling for takeout, lest West pass for penalties, and would double show the majors or the long clubs? Still, East could have bid 3♥ to show the majors. Despite the wasted ♦K, West would then be entitled to jump to 4♠. If one is reluctant to compete three-over-three, then when one does so, one will have sound values and shape for that action.

West led the ♠3: six – nine – four. East switched to the ♥Q: king – six – two. The ♦J won trick 3, followed by the ♦2 to the ♦A, East shedding the ♥5 and the ♠5. Then came the ♠K. East won and played the ♣2 to the ♣A. Declarer lost two spades, a diamond and a club, but had nine tricks, North-South +110.

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	North		
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	♦ A7		
	♣ K10873		
West		East	
♠ Q832		♠ AJ1095	
♥ 96		♥ QJ875	
♦ K983		♦ --	
♣ AJ9		♣ Q62	
	South		
	♠ 74		
	♥ K4		
	♦ QJ106542		
	♣ 54		

At the other table, **BLACK** East-West had an easier time:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	2♣ ⁽¹⁾	2♦
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Majors

North led the ♦A, ruffed with the ♠5. The ♥Q from dummy was won by South, who shifted to the ♣5: nine – king – two. North returned the ♣7, taken by West with the ♣A. West cashed the ♦K, discarding dummy's ♣Q, and played the ♥9. North took the ♥A and played the ♣8, ruffed with the ♠9. After ruffing a low heart from dummy, West continued with the ♠Q, winning, and another spade, king, ace. West lost two hearts and a club, but had ten tricks, +620 and 12 Imps to **BLACK**.

The match was won by **RED DEVILS** by 72 Imps to 54.1.

GUPTA North-South:

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

(1) Hearts and spades

(2) Diamonds, maybe just competing for the part-score

If you think I dislike competing for a part-score by bidding three-over-three, you can imagine my great distaste for part-score competition via four-over-three. Most of the time, doing so is a losing proposition. Here the price for South was minor (–200 vs –170), but imagine if West had passed and East had now bid 4♠. How would that 4♦ bid look then? Also, if West could bid 3♠ over 3♦, how could East not bid 4♠? Was this another blackout?

A raw count gives East 6½ losers. Given the excellent spade intermediates and the 1NT opening the right, you can certainly upgrade the East hand to 6 or even 5½ losers. For the 3♠ bid, West would be expected to have about an 8-loser hand. East 6 + West 8 = 14 and 24 – 14 = 10 tricks expected. *QED*.

West led the ♥9, ace. Declarer played the ♦A and the ♦7. South lost 2 spades, a diamond and a club, –200.

MACAVITY North-South

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

(1) Majors

(2) Natural, not forcing

North led the ♦A, ruffed. After ♣Q to the ♣K, North returned a club. West won, ran the ♠8, followed by the ♠Q, king, ace. After a club to hand West played the ♥6 to the ♥Q and ♥K. South returned the ♥4, nine... North had a blackout and mislicked, playing ♥3 instead of winning with the ♥A. West thus lost one heart and a club for 11 tricks, +650 and 10 Imps to **GUPTA**.

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	♠ K6	
	♥ A1032	
	♦ A7	
	♣ K10873	
West		East
♠ Q832		♠ AJ1095
♥ 96		♥ QJ875
♦ K983		♦ --
♣ AJ9		♣ Q62
	South	
	♠ 74	
	♥ K4	
	♦ QJ106542	
	♣ 54	

With **BARNESLEY** East-West, it went Pass : 1♣ : 2♣ (majors) : 3♦, 4♠! : Pass : Pass : Pass. North led the ♦A, ruffed. West lost a club and two hearts, +620.

With **SWEICE** East-West, it went Pass : 1NT (14-16) : 2♣ (majors) : 2♦, 3♠ : Pass : 4♣, all pass. North led the ♦A: ♠9 – ♦10? – ♦3. After ♥5: four – nine – ten, North reverted to the ♦7: ♣2 – ♦J – ♦K. Declarer played ♣2 to ♠10 and the ♥7: king – six – two. One would think a club at this point would be appropriate, but South played the ♦Q, thereby setting up West's ♦9 – that is why the ♦6 at trick one would have been better than the ♦10.

Declarer ruffed the ♦Q in dummy, ruffed a heart with the ♠Q, played the ♠3: king – ace – seven, ruffed a heart and cashed the ♦9, discarding a second club from dummy for 11 tricks, +650 and 1 Imp to **SWEICE**.

ZHAO East-West, it went Pass : 1NT : 2♣ (majors) : 2♠ ('diamonds, limit or more'), 3♠ : Pass : 4♣, all pass. North led ♦A, ruffed. Declarer played ♥5: king – six – two. South switched to ♣5. West made ten tricks, +620.

KOEPEL East-West: Pass : 1NT : 2♣ (majors) : 2♦, Double (takeout) : Pass : 2♥ : 3♦, 3♠ : Pass : 4♣, all pass. North led the ♦A, ruffed. Declarer played the ♥Q: king – six – two (even number). Double dummy, this would be a good moment for a club switch. South did switch, but it was to the ♠4: eight – king – ace. South's idea was to cut down heart ruffs if West had only three spades. Declarer crossed to the ♠Q and led the ♥9, ace. North switched to the ♦7, ruffed. Then ♥J, pitching ♣9, and a heart ruff set up dummy's fifth heart for another club discard. West made 11 tricks, +650 and 1 Imp to **KOEPEL**.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	1♦ ⁽²⁾	Pass	1NT ⁽³⁾
Pass	2♥ ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	2♣
Pass	?		

- (1) Artificial, 16+ points
- (2) Artificial, 0-7 points
- (3) 16-17 points
- (4) Transfer to spades

What would you do as North with:

♠ 108642
♥ 52
♦ AJ953
♣ 9

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

The three symptoms of laziness: #1.

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.