232. The defenders

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West: Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	?		

What would you do as North with:

★ KJ7652▼ AQJ85◆ --★ A7

This is similar to the problem on page 1 of yesterday's column:

Dealer South: East-West vulnerable

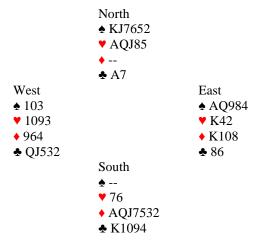
West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♣	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	?		

What would you do as North with:

AJ10432♥ 86AK976♣ --

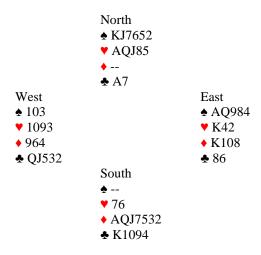
Yesterday's answer: When you bid 3♦, you showed 5+ spades and 4+ diamonds. Your hand is much freakier than that and most of the time it will be best to rebid 4♦ and ask partner to choose one of your suits.

The same applies to today's problem at the top of the page. When you rebid 2^{\blacktriangledown} you showed 5+ spades and 4+ hearts. Your 6-5 shape is much freakier than that and you should rebid 4^{\blacktriangledown} , asking partner to choose one of your majors. That is what Dave Beauchamp (N) did in a match on BBO, all pass. This was the full deal:



Against North's 4♥, East led the ♣8. How do you fancy your chances as North? How would you play?

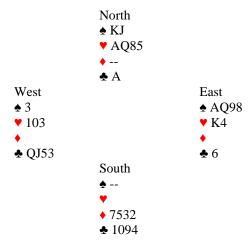
Dealer West: Both vulnerable



Contract: 4♥ by North. Lead: ♣8

Beauchamp (N) took the \$8 lead with the \$K, cashed the \$A, discarding a spade, and discarded another spade on the \$J, won by East, who switched to the \$2: six – nine – jack. (Given East's spade holding, a trump lead initially looks attractive.)

South ruffed a low spade and discarded the remaining low spade on the •Q. This was now the position:

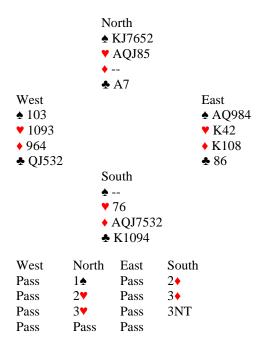


Declarer can get home from here by crossing to the ♣A and playing ♥A and a low heart to East's ♥K East wins but has only spades left and must give North a spade trick. North loses a spade, a heart and a diamond.

That is not what happened. In the ending above, declarer played another diamond from dummy: -43 - 4J - 4. East played the -80 - 4J - 4. East played the -80 - 4J - 4. West switched to the -90 - 4. When the -90 - 4 dropped the missing trumps, declarer was home, losing a spade ruff, a diamond ruff and the -40 - 4.

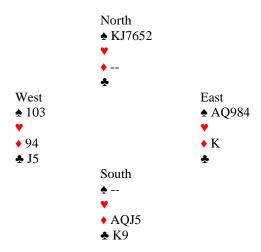
When declarer led a winning diamond in the above ending, the defence missed their opportunity. West needed to ruff the diamond. If North over-ruffs, East can win with the $\P K$ and exit with a club or a heart and await two spade tricks. If North discards the $\P J$ instead, West plays a spade. East wins and can play a spade or the $\P J$ and collect the $\P J$ klater as the fourth trick for the defence.

Dealer West: Both vulnerable



At the other table, South was in 3NT.

Ian Thomson (W) led the $\clubsuit 2$ (attitude lead: low = like): seven – eight – ten. Declarer played the $\blacktriangledown 6$: three (reverse Smith Peter: 'I like clubs') – queen – king. Matt Mullamphy (E) returned the $\blacktriangledown 4$, stranding declarer in dummy. (A club return would have had the same effect, as it happens.) Declarer cashed the hearts, East discarding •10 and •6, West the •6 and •0. Next came the •0. This was the position:



Declarer played the \clubsuit 7: four $- \spadesuit 5 - \spadesuit 10$. West returned the \spadesuit 3: five - eight $- \clubsuit 9$. East exited with the $\spadesuit 9$, won by the $\spadesuit J$ and East's $\spadesuit A$ -Q collected the next two tricks, one down, East-West +100 and +12 Imps.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West: North-South vulnerable What would you lead as West from:

West	North	East	South	♠ 1094
Pass	1♦	1♠	2♥	v 2
2♠	3♥	Pass	3NT	◆ AK106
Pass	4♥	All Pass		♣ J7643

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

Grammar humour: Unsure where to go, an Oxford comma walks into a bar, where it spends the evening watching the television getting drunk and smoking cigars.