

243. Hard reconciliation

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
?			

What would you do as West with:

♠ AQ84
♥ Q6
♦ Q2
♣ J10654

This deal arose in the 2019 Vanderbilt (USA Knock-Out Open Teams):

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North		
	♠ J10932		
	♥ A109		
	♦ J73		
	♣ 32		
West		East	
♠ AQ84		♠ 65	
♥ Q6		♥ K543	
♦ Q2		♦ 108654	
♣ J10854		♣ Q7	
	South		
	♠ K7		
	♥ J872		
	♦ AK9		
	♣ AK96		
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♠???	Pass	Pass	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East-West have been world champions. That is so hard to reconcile with West's 1♠ overcall. Why should West have passed?

1. You have only four spades and partner will expect five.
2. The spade quality is reasonable, but not great.
3. Partner could not find a third-seat opening, a very strong sign that you should tread warily.
4. You are vulnerable vs not vulnerable. I don't get the 1♠ overcall, I just don't.

Anyway, the 1♠ overcall received its just deserts. North led the ♣3. South won with the ♣K and shifted to the ♠K, winning and the ♠7, taken by the ace. After ♣5: two – queen – ace, South switched to the ♥8 (high-hate): queen – ace – three. North returned the ♥10, taken by the ♥K. Declarer played the ♥4: jack – ♠8 – ♥9. Declarer made one more trick, the ♠Q, a total of four tricks (three spades and the ♥K. That was three down, North-South +800. Who says you cannot collect sizable penalties at the 1-level?

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

<p>West</p> <p>♠ AQ84</p> <p>♥ Q6</p> <p>♦ Q2</p> <p>♣ J10854</p>	<p>North</p> <p>♠ J10932</p> <p>♥ A109</p> <p>♦ J73</p> <p>♣ 32</p> <p>East</p> <p>♠ 65</p> <p>♥ K543</p> <p>♦ 108654</p> <p>♣ Q7</p> <p>South</p> <p>♠ K7</p> <p>♥ J872</p> <p>♦ AK9</p> <p>♣ AK96</p>
---	---

At the other table:

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

- (1) Artificial, 16+ HCP
- (2) Artificial, negative, 0-7 points
- (3) 16-19 points
- (4) Transfer to spades
- (5) Choice of contracts, 3NT or 4♣

West led the ♣10: two – seven – king. South played the ♠K: ace (ducking is an option) – two – five. West continued with ♣5: three – queen – ace. South: ♠7: queen – three – six. West ♠4: nine – ♦4 – ♥7. Then came ♠10: ♥3 – ♥8 – ♠8 and ♠J: ♥4 – ♥2? – ♣4. Declarer played the ♦3: five – ace – two and the ♥J: six – nine – king. When East returned the ♦6, South played low. West won with the ♦Q and cashed the ♣J, one down, East-West +50 and +13 Imps. There were ways to make 3NT, of course. Playing the ♦K would have worked and finessing again in hearts would have made ten tricks.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT ⁽¹⁾

(1) 11-14 points

What would you lead as West from:

♠ J

♥ A975

♦ KJ976

♣ J87

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

If you boil a funny bone, it becomes a laughing stock. That's humerus.