

## 257. You pays your money, you takes your chances

By Ron Klinger

With neither side vulnerable, North opens 1NT, 15-17 and South jumps to 5♦. What would you lead as West from:

♠ Q109762  
♥ A983  
♦ 109  
♣ K

(Answer later)

This deal comes from the semi-finals of the 2015 World Teams.

Board 56: Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AKJ8	
	♥ K754	
	♦ Q3	
	♣ A108	
West		East
♠ Q109762		♠ 543
♥ A983		♥ Q106
♦ 109		♦ A6
♣ K		♣ Q7652
	South	
	♠ --	
	♥ J2	
	♦ KJ87542	
	♣ J943	

Bermuda Bowl (Open Teams), USA 2 North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Sylvan</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦
1♠	Pass	2♠	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

North was too strong for his 14-16 1NT opening. Angling for penalties, he passed 1♠. West led ♠9 (consistent with honour-ten-nine). South finessed the ♠J, a practice finesse, and cashed ♠A. South's hearts were gone. He ruffed a heart, played a diamond to the queen and ace, won the diamond return and led a club for eleven tricks, +400. A club or a diamond or the heart ace lead could beat 5♦, but who can blame West for the spade lead?

Sweden North-South

West	North	East	South
<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Upmark</i>
	1♣ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	1♦ <sup>(2)</sup>
Dble	Pass	1♥	Dble <sup>(3)</sup>
1♠	Dble	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Artificial, strong

(2) Negative

(3) Takeout, good values given the initial 1♦

West led the ♣K, ♣A. South ditched the hearts losers on ♠A, ♠K and played a diamond. East took ♦A, ♣Q and gave West a ruff. South made ten tricks, +130, but 7 Imps to USA 2.

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Poland North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nowo'zki</i>	<i>Jason H.</i>	<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Justin H.</i>
	1NT	Pass	2NT <sup>(2)</sup>
Pass	3♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	3♦ <sup>(3)</sup>
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Minors or diamonds

(2) Pass or correct

(3) To play

Jason Hackett (W) led the ♣K. South made ten tricks, North-South +130.

England North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Maz'wicz</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Jassem</i>	<i>Robson</i>
	1NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This was the situation for the problem on page 1. Marcin Mazurkiewicz found the perfect layout for his opening lead when he began with the ♥3. South can succeed by playing the heart king, but that was not going to happen. He played low from dummy and East's queen won. West won the heart return and the trump ace was the third trick for the defence, East-West +50, 5 Imps to Poland.

In general, when choosing a lead against a trump contract, it is not recommended to lead a low card from a suit headed by the ace. When might you do so despite the advice to the contrary? It is usually best when dummy has shown a strong hand, preferably balanced or with known length and likely strength in the suit. Clearly, there are several losing positions for leading the low card, including declarer holding the singleton king. This layout occurred in the 1989 Bermuda Bowl qualifying match between Australia and France.

North	
♠ KQ10	
West	East
♠ A652	♠ J93
South	
♠ 874	

The French North opened 2NT and South bid 3♥ (5+ hearts, not playing transfers yet), North 4♥, all pass. West led the ♠2 (North had shown a very strong, balanced hand). Declarer played the ♠K, winning. South drew trumps and played the ♠7: five . . . Thinking that East had ducked at trick 1 with the ♠A, South inserted the ♠10. East won with the ♠J. The defence thus collected two spade tricks and 4♥ went one down. Of course, South might have lost two spade tricks anyway, but the low spade opening lead made it much, much harder for South to pick the spade position.

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	♦ Q3	
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Semi-finals, Venice Cup (World Women's Teams):

France North-South:

West	North	East	South
	1NT	Pass	3♣ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	4♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Transfer to diamonds

East led the ♠3. North ditched dummy's two hearts and lost a club and a diamond, 11 tricks, North-South +150. West was playing with fire with the 3♠ bid which North might have doubled. Bidding 3-over-3 can also run the risk of pushing the opponents into a game, which they were not bidding but which they now make.

England North-South:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	3♦
3♠	3NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♥A and switched to the ♣K: ace – seven – four. South played off the ♠A, ♠K, discarding ♣9 and ♣J. Next came the ♦Q, winning, and the ♦6. East won and, convinced by South's club discards that the ♣Q would be ruffed, returned a spade. South ruffed and played off the trumps. If South throws dummy's clubs, 5♦ comes home via a double squeeze. This would be the ending:

	North	
	♠ J	
	♥ K7	
	♦	
	♣	
West		East
♠ Q		♠
♥ 98		♥ Q10
♦		♦
♣		♣ Q
	South	
	♠ --	
	♥ J	
	♦ 7	
	♣ 3	

When South plays the ♦7, West has to keep the ♠Q and lets a heart go. Now declarer discards dummy's ♠J and East has a choice of poisons. Ditch the ♣Q and South's ♣3 is high. Pitch a heart and declarer plays ♥K and ♥7. Alas, the double squeeze was destroyed when South discarded dummy's low hearts on the diamonds.

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

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♥ A983		♥ Q106
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	♠ --	
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	♦ KJ87542	
	♣ J943	

The other Venice Cup semi-final:

Netherlands North -South:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♥A and the ♥3: five – queen – jack, one down, East-West +50.

USA2 North-South:

West	North	East	South	
	1♣ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	1♦ <sup>(2)</sup>	(1) Artificial, strong
1♠	1NT	Pass	2NT <sup>(3)</sup>	(2) Artificial negative
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠ <sup>(4)</sup>	(3) Transfer to diamonds
Pass	3NT	All Pass		(4) 0-1 spade

Lead: ♠4: ♦2 – ♠Q – ♠A. North played the ♦Q, winning, and the ♦3. East won and reverted to the ♠5. North captured the ♠9, played the ♣A, dropping the ♣K, and the ♣8. East took the ♣Q. When East returned the ♠3, North had the rest, 11 tricks, +460 and 11 Imps to USA2.

In the D'Orsi Trophy (World Seniors' Teams), Poland's North-South bid 1NT : 2NT (transfer to diamonds), 3♣ (likes diamonds) : 5♦, all pass. As Marcin Mazurkiewicz had done, Per Eliasson (W) led a low heart, the ♥8: four – queen – two. West won the heart return and South went one down, East-West +50.

Sweden's North-South began 1♣ : 1♦ : (2♠ West), 2NT and ended in 5♦. West led the ♠10. Declarer played ♠A, ♠K, pitching the two hearts, and made 11 tricks, +400 and 10 Imps to Sweden.

USA1 and USA2 had a flat board in 3♦, +150. USA1 North-South bid 1NT : 2NT, 3♣ : 3♦, all pass. At the other table, with USA2 North-South, it went: 1♣ : Pass : 1♦ : 2♣, Pass : Pass : 3♦, all pass.

## Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : Nil vulnerable

What would do as South with:

West	North	East	South	
Pass	Pass	1♣	?	♠ J105
				♥ AJ76
				♦ AQ5
				♣ QJ9

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

*I danced like no one was watching. My court case is pending.*

A great gift: *The Power of Pass* (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email [suzie@ronklingerbridge.com](mailto:suzie@ronklingerbridge.com) or telephone 0411 229 705.