## 298. Bidding according to the three bears

## By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West North East South  $2 \bigstar^{(1)}$  Dble  $3 \bigstar$ ? (1) 6 spades, 5-10 points

What would you do as North with:

▲ AK83
♥ QJ108654
◆ 4
♣ J

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

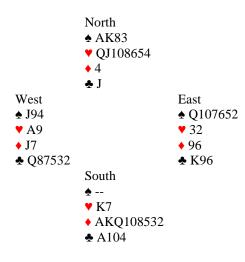
West North East South  $2 e^{(1)}$ ? (1) 6 spades, 5-10 points

What would you do as South with:

★ --▼ K7
◆ AKQ108532
★ A104

The deal comes from the quarter-final match between SCHWARTZ and TULIN in the 2017 Spingold (US Knock-out Open Teams)

Board 32: Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

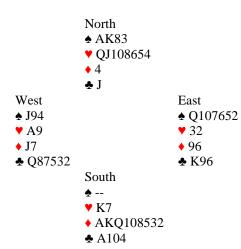


This was not enough:

West Schwartz	North <i>Birman</i>		
		2♠	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the 4 (normal) and South made twelve tricks easily, +620.

Board 32: Dealer East : North-South vulnerable



This was too much:

West	North	East	South	West led the ♥A: four – three – king to take 7♦ one off
Verhees	Stamatov	Prooijen	Danailov	for +100 and +12 Imps.
		2♠	Dble	-
3♠	4NT	Pass	7♦	Would North's 4NT be Blackwood for you and partner?
Pass	Pass	Pass		Some would play 4NT as pick a minor.

You can see what North was thinking. After South's takeout double, North can see a slam in hearts if partner can provide three key cards and  $7^{\checkmark}$  if South has the four missing key cards. North's 4NT would be fine as Key Card Blackwood if it simultaneously set hearts as trumps. In fact, as the cards lie,  $6^{\checkmark}$  would have been a fine slam. What should North do over  $3^{\diamond}$ ? A tough question. What would  $4^{\diamond}$  have meant?

When the deal was replayed in a BBO game, with Susan Humphries South and Jessica Brake North, members of Australia's current Women's Team, this turned out to be just right:

West	North	East	South
		2♠	3♠!
4♠	Dble	Pass	6•!
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South's  $3 \triangleq$  asked for a stopper in spades for 3NT. Had it gone  $2 \triangleq : 3 \triangleq :$  Pass : 3NT, Pass, I am confident that South with a 3-loser hand would still have tried for slam, possibly via  $5 \triangleq$  next.

West led the ♠4. South pitched her club losers on the ♠A, ♠K, drew trumps and had 12 tricks, +1370.

It is true that a trump lead by West defeats  $6 \blacklozenge$  (as long as West ducks if South plays the  $\forall K$  or rises with the  $\forall A$  if South plays the  $\forall 7$ ), but why should West find a trump lead on this auction? A spade is the normal start. Some might choose the  $\forall A$  and others might opt for a club. A trump lead looks the least likely choice.

## **Problem for Tomorrow:**

You are the dealer with both sides vulnerable. What do you do with:

▲ Q3
♥ J94
◆ AK98754
♣ 9

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

Maxine: I believe that everything happens for a reason. Usually the reason is that somebody screwed up. (John Wagner)