

305. Takeout or penalty or something else?

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ | Dble |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Dble |
| Pass | ? | | |

How do you take South's second double?

What would you do as North with:

♠ 432
♥ Q3
♦ 9432
♣ AJ84

Today's deal comes from the [LAVAZZA](#) vs [ROSENTHAL](#) quarter-final match in the 2017 Spingold (USA Knockout Open Teams):

Board 57: Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

| | | |
|------------|---------|--------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ 432 | |
| | ♥ Q3 | |
| | ♦ 9432 | |
| | ♣ AJ84 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ AKQ10985 | | ♠ J76 |
| ♥ 864 | | ♥ A752 |
| ♦ AJ | | ♦ Q86 |
| ♣ 2 | | ♣ Q107 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ -- | |
| | ♥ KJ109 | |
| | ♦ K1075 | |
| | ♣ K9653 | |

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ | Dble |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | ? |

What would you do as South with:

♠ --
♥ KJ109
♦ K1075
♣ K9653

At one table, South passed and Giorgio Duboin, West for [LAVAZZA](#), had no trouble making 4♠ with 7 spades plus the ♥A and 2 diamonds via the diamond finesse with the ♦K onside (if North leads a heart). In practice, North led a trump. Declarer drew trumps and played ♦A and ♦J for ten tricks that way.

At the other table, South doubled 4♠, as in the problem at the top of the page. South lacks the high card values to look for a contract at the 5-level, but was no doubt enamoured by the shape of the hand. Maybe North had a strong trump holding and would play for penalties. If not, maybe North-South had a decent trump fit somewhere. If North did bid at the 5-level, maybe East-West would bid 5-over-5. South's double can be called a 'Do what's right double'. What should North do after South has doubled 4♠?

Board 57: Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

| | | |
|------------|---------|--------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ 432 | |
| | ♥ Q3 | |
| | ♦ 9432 | |
| | ♣ AJ84 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ AKQ10985 | | ♠ J76 |
| ♥ 864 | | ♥ A752 |
| ♦ AJ | | ♦ Q86 |
| ♣ 2 | | ♣ Q107 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ -- | |
| | ♥ KJ109 | |
| | ♦ K1075 | |
| | ♣ K9653 | |

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| <i>Hamman</i> | <i>Bianchedi</i> | <i>Berkowitz</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| | | | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ | Dble |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Dble |
| Pass | 4NT ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 5♣ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

(1) Pick your longer or better minor

A natural move by North after South doubled 4♠ would be to bid 5♣, the stronger suit, but you would like to be in your longest combined trump suit. On some days South might have a 1-4-5-3 pattern. Bidding 5♣ lands you in your 4-3 fit, while 4NT finds your 5-4 fit.

Sometimes, North's 4NT might be two-suited in the red suits. Now after 4NT : 5♣, 5♦ would ask South to choose the longer red suit or the stronger one if they have equal length.

Against 5♣, West led the ♠A. South ruffed and played the ♥9 to the ♥Q and ♥A. East shifted to the ♦6: king – ace – two. West won trick 4 with the ♦J and reverted to the ♠K. South ruffed, cashed ♣A, ♣K and the heart winners, ditching two diamonds from dummy, followed by a diamond ruff. South lost a heart, two diamonds and a club, two down for – 100, but 7 Imps to *LAVAZZA*, who won the match by 122 Imps to 101.

Had East overtaken the ♦J (trick 4) with the ♦Q and returned a diamond, West would ruff and that would be three down. South could always have limited the loss to two down by ducking in hand on East's ♦6 at trick 3 and ducking another diamond later. When the ♦A falls doubleton, South's diamonds become high.

It was certainly surprising that South rose with the ♦K. Once East turned up with the ♥A, the ♦A was bound to be with West. West might have a 1♠ opening without the ♦A, but it is hard to imagine that West would bid 4♠ after 2♠ from East if West did not have the ♦A. Also, if you give East the ♥A and the ♦A, surely East would have doubled 5♣.

Indeed, East might well have doubled 5♣ anyway. At equal vulnerability, after your side has bid game, many would take West's pass over 5♣ as forcing, inviting East to bid 5♠ or to double 5♣. Clearly East did not think the situation was forcing. I wonder whether West did.

When the deal was replayed in a game on BBO, it went:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|-------|
| Dealer South : Nil vulnerable | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ | Dble |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

North led the ♥Q, taken by the ace. Avi Kanetkar (W) drew trumps ending in dummy and then finessed the ♦J for ten tricks, +420.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥ | ? | | 1♣ |

What would you do as North with:

♠ 3
♥ 4
♦ Q1065
♣ A1086532

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

My favourite books are the ones where no one bothers me while I read them.