

324. Stopping short

By Ron Klinger

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dble	1NT ⁽¹⁾	2♥
Pass	Pass	?	

(1) Artificial, shows clubs

What would you do as East with:

♠ 108
♥ 965
♦ 1093
♣ AKJ75

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♠	?		

What would you do as North with:

♠ 7542
♥ AQ3
♦ AK
♣ Q943

There is a general principle that if you have the values for a 1NT overcall, but you do not have a stopper in opener's suit, then you should start with a takeout double. On that basis, with the hand above, North should double 1♠. Of course, no one can promise you that this will turn out well, but also the worst need not happen. You cannot go through your bridge life with fear and anxiety as your primary emotions.

Today's deal arose in the 2017 Spingold (USA K-O Open Teams) semi-final between [LAVAZZA](#) and [SCHWARTZ](#).

Board 9: Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

	North		West	North	East	South
	♠ 7542		<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Danailov</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>
	♥ AQ3		1♠	Dble	1NT ⁽¹⁾	2♥
	♦ AK		Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♣ Q943		(1) Artificial, shows clubs			

West	East
♠ AKQJ3	♠ 108
♥ 72	♥ 965
♦ Q754	♦ 1093
♣ 102	♣ AKJ75

South
♠ 96
♥ KJ1084
♦ J862
♣ 86

When the opponents have found a fit at the 2-level and there are two passes to you, it usually pays you to compete. It is not certain that North-South have an 8-card heart fit, but it is likely.

What should East do? I'd vote for 2♣. Having shown the clubs on the previous round, partner should not expect more than 2-card support now if you are playing 5-card majors. A takeout double would work on the actual deal. West would definitely rebid 2♠. West would have no trouble making 2♣.

Against 2♥, West began with ♠A, ♠K, ♠Q: five – ♦3 – ♥4. South played ♦A, ♦K, ♠7: ♥9 – ♥10 and ruffed the ♦8 with the ♥Q. South ruffed the ♦J later with the ♥A for nine tricks, North-South +140.

Board 9: Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 7542	
	♥ AQ3	
	♦ AK	
	♣ Q943	
West		East
♠ AKQJ3		♠ 108
♥ 72		♥ 965
♦ Q754		♦ 1093
♣ 102		♣ AKJ75
	South	
	♠ 96	
	♥ KJ1084	
	♦ J862	
	♣ 86	

West	North	East	South
<i>Schwartz</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Sementa</i>
1♠	Dble	1NT ⁽¹⁾	2♥
Pass	Pass	2♣!	3♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Artificial, shows clubs

The play followed similar lines to the play at the other table. South ruffed two diamonds high in dummy for 9 tricks, no swing.

When the deal was replayed in a game on BBO:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Dble	1NT ⁽¹⁾	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Natural, not forcing

The play went as at the other tables, with two diamonds ruffed high in dummy. A trump switch at trick 2 might hold declarer to eight tricks, although after ♥A, ♦A, ♦K, ♥3 to hand, South can play the ♦J to pin East's remaining diamond and still come to nine tricks.

So, three out of three Norths made a takeout double over 1♠, but only one East competed against 2♥. Given the favourable vulnerability it certainly looks attractive for East to find a second bid.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Dble	Rdbl ⁽¹⁾
?			

(1) 10+ HCP

What would you do as West with:

♠ --
♥ A
♦ 76432
♣ 10876532

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

Takes him two hours to watch '60 Minutes'. (British Military Annual Staff Appraisal)