

325. Low man on the totem pole

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Danatov</i>	<i>Madala</i>
2♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	3♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	?

(1) Artificial, pre-empt in 3♣ or 3♦

(2) Pass or correct

What would you do as South with:

♠ Q9854
♥ J1095
♦ QJ8
♣ A

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

Session 2 : Board 16

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

North	
♠	J1062
♥	KQ8
♦	AK1095
♣	Q

West	East
♠ --	♠ AK73
♥ A	♥ 76432
♦ 76432	♦ --
♣ 10876532	♣ KJ94

South	
♠	Q9854
♥	J1095
♦	QJ8
♣	A

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

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

(1) 10+ HCP

What would you with the West hand:

When the deal was replayed in a game on BBO, West bid 5♣, North doubled, all pass. North led the ♦K, ruffed. Declarer played ♠A, ♠K, discarding diamonds, ♥2 to the ♥A, diamond ruff, heart ruff, diamond ruff. Dummy was down to the ♣K bare. When that was played, South won and North contributed the ♣Q. That was the only trick for the defence, East-West +950.

How would you feel as East-West making 5♣ doubled with an overtrick, but it turns out that the other scores are better than yours? Not just better, but much, much better? That is exactly what happened in the Spingold.

Board 16: Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ J1062	
	♥ KQ8	
	♦ AK1095	
	♣ Q	
West		East
♠ --		♠ AK73
♥ A		♥ 76432
♦ 76432		♦ --
♣ 10876532		♣ KJ94
	South	
	♠ Q9854	
	♥ J1095	
	♦ QJ8	
	♣ A	

West	North	East	South
<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>	<i>Danatov</i>	<i>Madala</i>
2♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	3♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	Pass
Pass			

(1) Artificial, pre-empt in 3♣ or 3♦

(2) Pass or correct

North clearly meant the double for takeout of clubs. South took it as penalties. Had North-South reached 4♠, probably doubled, diamond lead, ruffed, heart to the ace and diamond ruff will lead to five tricks for the defence and East-West +500. One diamond ruff will take 4♠ doubled one down. If the defence does not find a diamond ruff, 4♠ doubled will make.

Against 3♣ doubled, South led ♣A and so 3♣ doubled made with three doubled overtricks, East-West +1270.

That looks like a good score, doesn't it? Nope, it was a loss! This is what happened at the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>M.Bell</i>
Pass	1♦	Dble	1♠
3♣	3♣	5♣	5♣
6♣	Pass	Pass	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North led the ♦K, ruffed. After ♥2 to the ♥A and ♣2: queen – king – ace, West claimed 12 tricks for +1640, East-West +7 Imps. Making 6♣ with a combined total of 15 HCP. Talk about the power of shape over points!

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

What would you do as East with:

♠ 72
♥ Q
♦ J874
♣ AJ10742

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

Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming. (British Military Annual Staff Appraisal)