

327. The strong, handsome type

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Splinter, 4 spades, 0-1 club

(2) Club void, choose the contract

What would you lead as West from:

♠ 92
♥ K98652
♦ --
♣ 108753

Make up your mind before reading further.

The deal comes from the semi-finals of the 2015 Bermuda Bowl (World Open Teams):

Board 80: Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ1076	
	♥ A7	
	♦ AKJ986	
	♣ --	
West		East
♠ 92		♠ 4
♥ K98652		♥ QJ3
♦ --		♦ Q1032
♣ 108753		♣ AQJ42
	South	
	♠ KQ853	
	♥ 104	
	♦ 754	
	♣ K96	

USA2 was North-South in the auction at the top of the page. Johan Sylvan, West for Sweden, led the ♥8. With North advertising a void in clubs, a club lead held little interest. It also followed that North would have long diamonds and that strongly argues against a trump lead, which could see declarer setting up diamonds for a heart discard.

The heart lead was essential. Joel Wooldridge, South, took the ♥A, drew trumps and played a diamond. There was no way to avoid losing a diamond and a heart, one down, East-West +50.

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
2♥ ⁽¹⁾	?		

(1) Weak two

What would you do as North with:

♠ AJ1076
♥ A7
♦ AKJ986
♣ --

Board 80: Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

North	
♠ AJ1076	
♥ A7	
♦ AKJ986	
♣ --	
West	East
♠ 92	♠ 4
♥ K98652	♥ QJ3
♦ --	♦ Q1032
♣ 108753	♣ AQJ42
South	
♠ KQ853	
♥ 104	
♦ 754	
♣ K96	

Sweden North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Warne</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Bergdahl</i>
2♥ ⁽¹⁾	4♦ ⁽²⁾	4♥	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

(1) Weak two

(2) Leaping Michaels, diamonds + spades, at least 5-5

West had it easier to find the heart lead here. He led the ♥9 and in due course South was one down, East-West +50, no swing.

Leaping Michaels is a very useful way to show a 2-suiter after a weak-two opening. The downside is that you cannot jump to 4♣ or 4♦ to show a strong 1-suiter, but those hands can start with a takeout double and bidding the 1-suiter next. What should North do if you do not play Leaping Michaels? Your partnership needs some agreements here. What would (2♥) : 4♥ show?

Bidding 3♦, not forcing, does not do the North hand justice. You will survive a takeout double on the actual hand, but it might not work out so well opposite other South hands.

England North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Bekhshi</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣ ⁽²⁾
Pass	5♦ ⁽³⁾	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Splinter, 4 spades, 0-1 club

(2) 1 or 4 key cards for spades

(3) Asking for the ♠Q

(4) 'I have it, but nothing else useful.'

West led the ♥6 and 6♠ went one down in due course, East-West +50.

Board 80: Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ1076	
	♥ A7	
	♦ AKJ986	
	♣ --	
West		East
♠ 92		♠ 4
♥ K98652		♥ QJ3
♦ --		♦ Q1032
♣ 108753		♣ AQJ42
	South	
	♠ KQ853	
	♥ 104	
	♦ 754	
	♣ K96	

Poland North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Robson</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>
2♦ ⁽¹⁾	4♦ ⁽²⁾	Pass	4♥ ⁽³⁾
Pass	4♣ ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	5♣ ⁽⁴⁾
Dble	5♦	Pass	6♠
Dble ⁽⁵⁾	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Weak 2-major, 4-8 points or 17-20 4-4-4-1

(2) Diamonds and a major

(3) Pass or correct

(4) Cue-bid

(5) Ignore my previous double.

The good news was that East led a diamond and West ruffed. The bad news was that after that lead there was no more defence. West returned a club, ruffed. North could draw trumps, set up the diamonds with a ruff, discard a heart loser in the South hand and ruff his own heart loser for twelve tricks, +1210, 15 Imps to Poland.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Dble	?		

What would you do as North with:

♠ Q853
 ♥ 96
 ♦ 1054
 ♣ 7432

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

His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity. (British Military Annual Staff Appraisal)