

350. Blind spots

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	?		

What would you do as North with:

♠ QJ96
♥ K2
♦ A643
♣ A42

Make up your mind about your answer before reading further.

These were the North-South hands when the deal arose in an Imps-Pairs duplicate:

North
♠ QJ96
♥ K2
♦ A643
♣ A42

South
♠ AK
♥ AJ10
♦ 87
♣ KJ9753

You have reached 6♣ by South and West leads the ♦10. Plan the play.

This was yesterday's puzzle:

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	?

What would you do with the South hand?

I could empathize with 1NT if partner was a passed hand but opening 1NT carries a strong risk of missing a decent slam. It is not as though you have any special holding to protect from the opening lead. Quite the contrary. If no-trumps is the best spot for your side, it may well be better if played by partner to guard against a diamond lead. Put me down for a 1♣ opening.

After 1♣ : 1♠, 3♣, half the field ended in 3NT, North generally rebidding 3NT. That might be acceptable if it was a pairs event, but even then it is dubious. After 1X : 1Y, 3X, slam is usually a good chance if you have an opening hand and support for opener's suit. North has 14 HCP and decent support for clubs, North should be raising clubs and the other pairs did just that.

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

<p>West</p> <p>♠ 108743</p> <p>♥ 763</p> <p>♦ 1092</p> <p>♣ Q6</p>	<p>North</p> <p>♠ QJ96</p> <p>♥ K2</p> <p>♦ A643</p> <p>♣ A42</p>
<p>South</p> <p>♠ AK</p> <p>♥ AJ10</p> <p>♦ 87</p> <p>♣ KJ9753</p>	<p>East</p> <p>♠ 52</p> <p>♥ Q9854</p> <p>♦ KQJ5</p> <p>♣ 108</p>

Those in 3NT made 10 tricks, +430 (-3.06 Imps), 11 tricks +460 (-2 Imps), 12 tricks, +490 (-1.17 Imps) and 13 tricks, +520 (-0.17 Imps).

Those in 6♣ made 13 tricks, +940 (+8.83 Imps), except for one who went one off, -50 (-11.39 Imps).

Successful auctions:

West	North	East	South
	<i>Nikolas Moore</i>		<i>Rachel Langdon</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣! ⁽²⁾	Pass	4♦ ⁽³⁾
Pass	4♥ ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	5♣ ⁽⁵⁾
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

(1) 4+ spades

(2) Sets clubs, asks for key cards

(3) 0 or 3, clearly 3

(4) Do you have the ♣Q?

(5) No.

West	North	East	South
	<i>Linda King</i>		<i>Anita Curtis</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣!	Pass	4♥ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦ ⁽²⁾
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

(1) Cue-bid

(2) 0 or 3 key cards, clearly 3

West	North	East	South
	<i>Louise Leibowitz</i>		<i>Tony Leibowitz</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣!	Pass	4♥ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	5♦ ⁽¹⁾	Dble	6♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Cue-bid

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ QJ96	
	♥ K2	
	♦ A643	
	♣ A42	
West		East
♠ 108743		♠ 52
♥ 763		♥ Q9854
♦ 1092		♦ KQJ5
♣ Q6		♣ 108
	South	
	♠ AK	
	♥ AJ10	
	♦ 87	
	♣ KJ9753	

Each West led the ♦10. The recommended line of play is ♦A, ♣A, ♣K, ♠A, ♠K, heart to the king, ♠Q, discarding the diamond loser and claim 13 tricks. Even if the ♠Q is out after ♣A, ♣K, continue the same way. Anita Curtis and Tony Leibowitz followed that line of play. Rachel Langdon took the ♦A and played ♣A, ♠K, ♣A, ♠Q, ruffed with the ♣10, over-ruffed with the ♣J. Then came ♥K, ♥A, heart ruff, ♠J, discarding the ♦8, and the ♣K for all the tricks.

At one table, North-South reached 6♣ via artificial auction, which began 1♣ : 1NT (any game-force), 3♣. West led the ♦10, taken by the ♦A. South, a fine player, must have had a blind spot, because the play went ♣A and a finesse of the ♣J. West won and played another diamond, one light, North-South +11.39 Imps.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	?

What would you do now as South with:

♠ AKQJ1086
♥ AK
♦ 98
♣ K6

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

British Military Annual Staff Appraisals: Couldn't organize a woodpecker's picnic in Sherwood Forest.