## 360. Trick counters

## By Ron Klinger

Dealer South: Both vulnerable

West North East South
3♠
Pass ?

What would you do as North with:

- A✓ AKJ987◆ 98◆ K854
- This was yesterday's question:

As dealer, both sides vulnerable, what would you do with:

- ♠ Q9876432♥ 62♦ A7♠ 6
- The hand has six losers and thus seven playing tricks. Adding three for a pre-empt indicates an opening bid of 4. There are two cases against that, even though an 8-card suit makes a high pre-empt attractive. Firstly, your suit is quite poor and you could reasonably count this as  $2\frac{1}{2}$  losers in spades. If the spades were a bit stronger, say, Q-J-10-7-6-4-3-2 or even Q-J-9-7-6-4-3-2, you would have a good case for 4. Secondly, because the opening is 4. there is a greater chance of being doubled for penalties when the opponents don't want to commit to the five-level.

As it is, South has 6 - 6.5 losers and so 6.5 - 7 playing tricks. It is borderline between a  $3 \clubsuit$  and a  $4 \spadesuit$  opening. Some would open  $4 \spadesuit$ , but  $3 \spadesuit$  looks quite enough.

As for today's question, if partner had opened  $4 \triangleq$ , you have an easy pass. For the  $3 \triangleq$  opening, as partner is counting on you for three tricks, you expect 6 tricks opposite. You have three winners for partner with the  $\triangle A$  and the A, A. The question then arises, 'Do you have more than three tricks for partner?' The answer is clearly a 'Yes' as you have the CK which is at least a 50-50 chance for an extra trick. That should make it easy to raise  $3 \triangleq$  to  $4 \triangleq$ .

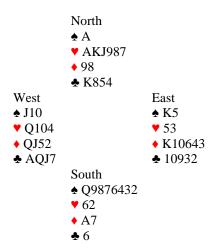
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North **♠** A ▼ AKJ987 **♦** 98 ★ K854 West East **♦** J10 **♦** K5 ♥ Q104 **y** 53 **♦** QJ52 ♦ K10643 ♣ AQJ7 **♣** 10932 South ◆ Q9876432 **9** 62 **♦** A7 **♣** 6

The 4♠ game is a bit better than 50%. It would fail some of the time when an opponent has ♠K-J-x or ♠K-10-x, but it succeeds here with trumps 2-2 (42%). It would also make if either opponent had the ♠K singleton. (12%). That gives 4♠ a total chance of about 54%.

Those who did choose a 4♠ opening can thank their lucky stars that North produced such a suitable hand. Imagine if the hand opposite South had been West or East. Now 3♠ is as much as you could make.

Dealer South: Both vulnerable



The deal arose in a club duplicate pairs:

The popular spot was 4♠. Top board went to South making 11 tricks, +650, on the ◆Q lead. Maybe West ducked when South led a club? The others made 10 tricks, +620 and 68%. Those in 3♠ scored 38% for 11 tricks, +200, and 20% for 10 tricks, +170. Ditto for 2♠ making 10 tricks. Bottom score and a top for East-West was South going two off in 6♠.

## **Problem for Tomorrow:**

Dealer East: Nil vulnerable

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West North East South 2^{\checkmark} Pass 4^{\checkmark} ? (1) 5 hearts and a 4+ minors, 6-11 points
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What would you do as North with:

- **★** 1093
- **Y** ---
- ♦ A10874
- ♣ AKQJ7

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

What do you get when you cross a bunny with a Rottweiler? Just the Rottweiler.