## 387. A shunning of spades

## By Ron Klinger

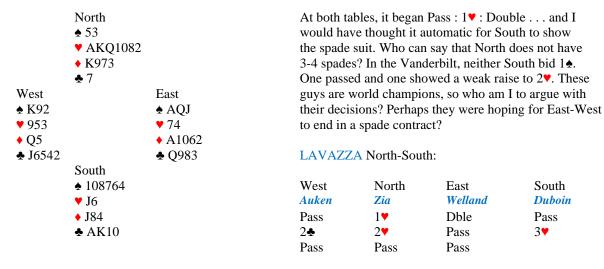
Dealer West: Both vulnerable

```
North
 ★ 53
 ♥ AKQ1082
 ♦ K973
 ♣ 7
                East
                ♠ AOJ
                74
                ♦ A1062
                ♣ Q983
 West
        North
                East
                        South
 Pass
         1♥
                 Dble
                        1♠
         2♥
 2
                 3♣
                        All Pass
Trick 1: \forallA – four – jack – nine.
Trick 2: \forall K – seven – six – five.
```

You play high-encouraging and, given the auction and South's carding, you can be confident that South began with ♥J-6 doubleton. You intend to play a heart and hope that South can over-ruff dummy, but which heart will you choose?

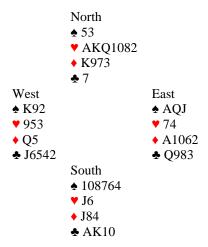
The deal arose in the quarter-final match between FLEISHER and LAVAZZA in the 2016 Vanderbilt (USA Knockout Open Teams):

Dealer West: Both vulnerable



East led the ♥4: six – nine – ten. After drawing trumps, North pitched a spade on dummy's second club winner and led the ◆J: queen – king – ace. North lost a spade and two diamonds, 10 tricks, North-South +170

Dealer West: Both vulnerable



## **FLEISHER** North-South:

West	North	East	South
Bocchi	Grue	<b>Brenner</b>	Moss
Pass	1♥	Dble	<b>2</b> ♦ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass
(1) Weal	k raise to	2♥	

Exactly why South is raising hearts is too tough for me to fathom. West led the ♠2: three – jack – six. East switched to the ♣8: ace – two – seven. After ♠4: five – nine – ten, East switched to the ♥4: jack – three – two. South quite rightly thought it too risky to play another diamond and claimed 8 tricks, one light, –200 and 9 Imps to LAVAZZA.

When the deal was replayed in a game on BBO, it went:

```
West North East South
Pass 1♥ Dble 1♠
2♠ 2♥ 3♠ All Pass
```

In general, at teams, it is not attractive to bid 3-over-3. Here 3♥ would have worked – declarer can always hold the losers to 2 spades and 2 diamonds, but might make 10 tricks (no spade lead) – but defending 3♣ was even better. North led the ♥A, ♥K, South following with the ♥J, ♥6, encouraging. To trick 3, North played the ♥Q, in theory suit-preference for spades. North knew that if South had the ♠K, South would not switch to a spade and if South did not have the ♠K, a spade shift would not hurt. What North was trying to let South know was that a diamond switch was not appealing. As you can see, a diamond switch from South can eliminate West's diamond loser.

Declarer ruffed the  $\P$ Q with the  $\P$ 9. South over-ruffed with the  $\P$ 10 and switched to the  $\P$ 10. Playing  $\P$ A,  $\P$ K, and then a spade would be better. That would kill any hope for West to avoid a diamond loser. Hoping to produce an endplay, declarer played  $\P$ J,  $\P$ A and the  $\P$ Q to the  $\P$ K. Had the North-South spades been 4-3, that would have worked, but North ruffed the third spade for the fourth trick for the defence. South had two trump winners to come for +200 to North-South. Defending at the 3-level can be rewarding.

## **Problem for Tomorrow:**

Dealer East: North-South vulnerable

West North East South
Pass 1

↑ 1NT Pass ?

What would you do as South with:

- **♠** 7
- **♥** AKJ832
- ♦ A10652
- **♣**8

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

Police car loses wheels to thief. Police are working tirelessly to nab the culprit.