

388. Reds

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
1♠	1NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	?		

Playing pairs, what would you do as North with:

♠ J863
♥ 76
♦ KQ73
♣ J96

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
1♠	1NT	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ 7
♥ AKJ832
♦ A10652
♣ 8

You have only 12 HCP and so you might consider a rebid of 2♦. That is natural and non-forcing. With the hand above, North would be very likely to pass 2♦.

How about a 3♦ jump shift? If you did that, would you pass a rebid of 3NT by North? It does not appeal, does it? The 3♦ jump-shift is forcing to game and shows about 19 point or better. Your hand is not close to 19 or 18 or 17. The suggestion for South is to rebid 1♥ : 1NT, 4♦ to show a highly distributional hand, 6-6 or at least 6-5, but lacking the high-card strength for a jump-shift.

North is likely to be able to fit one red suit or the other if South is known to be at least 6-5. South has a 5-loser hand (4½ if you count the ♥A-K-J as half a loser). North's 1NT of 6-9 points will usually produce two tricks, sometimes three. That gives you a strong chance to make game in 4♥ or 5♦.

Reverting to today's question at the top of the page, if North appreciates that South is at least 6-5, then North should bid 4♥ over 4♦. Playing pairs, you do not want to be in game in a minor unless nothing else is available.

North
♠ J863
♥ 76
♦ KQ73
♣ J96

South
♠ 7
♥ AKJ832
♦ A10652
♣ 8

You have reached 5♦ by South. West leads the ♣K, followed by the ♣7: nine – ace – ♦2. Plan the play. Trumps will turn out to be 3-1.

The deal arose in a club pairs' duplicate:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ J863	
	♥ 76	
	♦ KQ73	
	♣ J96	
West		East
♠ KQ10954		♠ A2
♥ Q5		♥ 1094
♦ 4		♦ J98
♣ KQ107		♣ A5432
	South	
	♠ 7	
	♥ AKJ832	
	♦ A10652	
	♣ 8	

Top score for East-West was 3♠ by West, making 9 tricks for +140. West lost two hearts, a spade and a diamond. Maybe the auction went:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♦
2♠	3♦	3♠	All Pass

Note incidentally, that if North-South reach 4♥, East-West have an excellent save in 5♣ and 5♠ doubled is also a winning sacrifice against 5♦.

Next best for East-West was +100 for 5♦ by South, one down. That is a curious result. If the defence starts with ♣K and a second club or ♠K and a switch to clubs or a second spade, South can ruff, draw trumps and play ♥A, ♥K and a third heart for 11 tricks and +400. The chance of hearts 3-2 is 68%. It looks like what happened is that South ruffed the second club, played ♥K, ♦A, ♦Q and finessed the ♥J (50% or perhaps a bit better, depending on the bidding). That lost to West and the defence took their spade trick.

Maybe the bidding persuaded South to adopt that line, but once West turned up with a singleton diamond, it was not likely that West also had a singleton heart. After ♣K and a second club ruffed, maybe South was hoping to avoid a spade loser. If East had started with ♥Q-x-x, then after ruffing the second club, ♦K, ♦A, ♥A, ♦Q and a heart to the jack wins. Now South can discard all of dummy's spades on the heart winners, ruff the spade 7 and score +620, tying hopefully with those in 4♥ +620. Of course, if East did have ♥Q-x-x, those in 4♥ could make 11 tricks and score +650. Taking the better chance to make 5♦ (♥A, ♥K, heart ruff) was advisable, since East-West might have found the save in either black suit.

East-West collected 74% for 4♠ -50. Then followed the North-South pairs in 3♥, making 11 tricks for +200, but that was 56% for East-West. How come the Souths made 11 tricks? Because they judged it too risky to play a diamond to dummy to finesse the ♥J in case there was a diamond ruff. They played ♥A, ♥K, and were rewarded for this play when the ♥Q dropped. However, their bidding, probably Pass : 1♥ : (1♠) : 1NT, (Pass) : 3♥, all pass, left them short of game. With 7 HCP and a wasted ♠J, it was certainly normal for North to pass 3♥. The fault lay with South. It is almost always wrong to treat a 2-suiter as a 1-suiter if you can show the 2-suiter. Similar West has a 2-suiter. Had West been able to show the clubs at some point, East would have saved in 5♣.

At the other tables, the contract was 4♥ by South. The popular lead was the ♣K. Others led the ♠K or the ♦4. One South made 10 tricks, +620, North-South 62%. The others made 11 tricks, playing the ♥A, ♥K, lest there be a diamond ruff, +650, and 86%.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	2♥ ⁽¹⁾	?

(1) Weak two, 6-10 points, 6 hearts

What would you do as South with:

♠ A
♥ J764
♦ A43
♣ AQ1062

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

My resolution was to exercise . . . no, wait . . . I mean extra fries.