## 398. Of minor consequence

## By Ron Klinger

Dealer East: Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

What would you lead as West from:

- **♠** KJ9
- **♥** K104
- ♦ KJ107
- ♣ K104

This would be a headache for anyone who has been told, 'Never lead away from a king'. (Answer later)

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer East: Nil vulnerable

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West North East South
Pass 1♣
Pass 1NT Pass 2♣
Pass ?
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What would you do as North with:

- **♠** Q **♥** A8762 **♦** A98543
- 115054. • 3

The hand smacks of a misfit. A good idea here is to bid 2• and hope to buy it there.

When the deal arose in a quarter-final match in the 2020 Spingold (USA Knock-out Open Teams):

At one table it went:

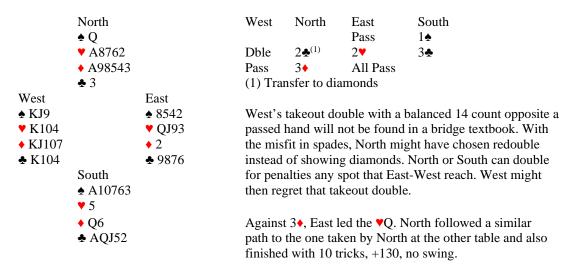
Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

North	West	North	East	South
<b>♠</b> Q			Pass	1♠
<b>▼</b> A8762	Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
♦ A98543	Pass	<b>2</b> ♦	All Pass	
<b>♣</b> 3				
-	- 1			

West East led the ♥Q. North won with the ♥A, ruffed a heart, East **♦** KJ9 **★** 8542 cashed the ♣A and played the ♣Q, king, ruff. Another **♥** K104 **♥** QJ93 heart ruff, was followed by the &J, declarer pitching a heart and a fourth club. West discarded and North ruffed. ♦ KJ107 **♦** 2 **♣** K104 **♣** 9876 North cashed the ◆A and was down to ♠Q, ◆9-8-5, ▼8. South After ♠Q to the ♠A, declarer played the club winner. West ruffed and North discarded the ♥8. North still had a **▲** A10763 **y** 5 trump trick to come. North lost just three diamonds and **♦** Q6 scored +130. ♣ AQJ52

Dealer East: Nil vulnerable

At the other table:



When the deal was played in a game on BBO, West had the opening lead problem after the auction on page 1:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Did I mention 'Never lead away from a king'? Maybe that is a mantra of West's, as he did not lead away from a king. Indeed, not. He led the  $\bigstar$ K! The idea, of course, was to snare a possible singleton  $\bigstar$ Q with South. South had shown at least 10 cards in the black suits and might well have had two hearts and the bare  $\bigstar$ Q.

Declarer could have played  $\P$ A, heart ruff,  $\P$ A, spade ruff, heart ruff. That would bring South to 8 tricks. Instead, South took the  $\P$ A and played the  $\P$ 9. East ruffed and switched to a club, queen, king. West switched to the  $\P$ K, safe since South was now known to hold a singleton heart. South made four club tricks and three aces, two light, East-West +100.

Incidentally, what do you think of North's pass of 3♣? Not that it would have helped, but might South not have 6 spades, 5 clubs? That would make a preference to 3♠ attractive. Of course, if South might be 5 spades, 6 clubs, then North has to guess whether to pass 3♠ or bid 3♠. It all comes back to North's rebid after 1♠: 1NT, 2♠. You can see how well 2♠ turned out, while the 2NT rebid was certainly optimistic.

## **Problem for Tomorrow:**

You are the dealer at favourable vulnerability. What would you do with:

- **★** 1064
- **♥** A8
- **♦** 63
- ♣ AQ9432

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

Even people whom you consider good for nothing and a menace to society can bring a smile to your face. For instance, when you push them down the stairs.