

33. A handful of quarters

By Ron Klinger

You are the dealer, with neither side vulnerable. What do you do with:

♠ A3
♥ KQJ
♦ A7
♣ A106532

This was Board 1 in the quarter-finals of the 2015 Bermuda Bowl (World Open Teams):

South dealer : Neither side vulnerable

	North	
	♠ --	
	♥ 98642	
	♦ 95	
	♣ KQ9874	
West		East
♠ 98754		♠ KQJ1062
♥ A105		♥ 73
♦ K1086		♦ QJ432
♣ J		♣ --
	South	
	♠ A3	
	♥ KQJ	
	♦ A7	
	♣ A106532	

China vs USA2: Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Fireman</i>	<i>Hu</i>
			1♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

If North can bid 5♣, one might raise to 6♣ as South with all those controls. Still, 5♣ +420 would have picked up Imps at a number of tables, but not this one. Witness:

West	North	East	South
<i>Kan</i>	<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>
			1♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	1♦ ⁽²⁾	1♠	2♣
3♣ ⁽³⁾	4♠ ⁽⁴⁾	5♠	Dble
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♣
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Artificial, strong

(2) Artificial, negative

(3) Good spade raise

(4) Club support, spade void

Both Souths made twelve tricks, North-South 420 and 1090, 12 Imps to USA2. Both those results were better than the NS pairs in Bulgaria vs Sweden. One South opened 2NT, the other a strong club. Both gave up in 5♠ doubled, North-South +100, no swing.

North			
♠ --			
♥ 98642			
♦ 95			
♣ KQ9874			
West		East	
♠ 98754		♠ KQJ1062	
♥ A105		♥ 73	
♦ K1086		♦ QJ432	
♣ J		♣ --	
South			
♠ A3			
♥ KQJ			
♦ A7			
♣ A106532			

England vs USA1:

West	North	East	South
<i>Katz</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
			1♣
Pass	1♥	3♠	Dble
5♠	6♣	Pass	7♣
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

West cashed the ♥A, East-West +100. In these auctions it is vital for partnerships to have agreements whether it is stronger to bid 6♣ at once or whether Pass then pull partner's double of 5♠ is the stronger action.

West	North	East	South
<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Robson</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
			2NT
Pass	3♦ ⁽¹⁾	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♠
Dble	6♣	All Pass	

(1) Hearts

Note that none of the other Souths opened 2NT. North-South +920, 14 Imps to USA1.

In France vs Poland, both teams found the par spot.

West	North	East	South
<i>Rombaut</i>	<i>Mazurkiewicz</i>	<i>Combescure</i>	<i>Jassem</i>
			1♣ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	1♦ ⁽²⁾	3♠	Dble
4♠	4NT	Pass	5♣
5♠	Pass	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	6♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Balanced 12-14 or clubs or 18+ any

(2) 0-7 any or 8-11 minors or very strong

Declarer was two down, North-South +300.

West	North	East	South
<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Volcker</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Bessis</i>
			1♣
Pass	1♥	3♠	Dble
4♦	5♣	5♠	5NT
Pass	6♣	6♦	Pass
6♠	7♣	Dble	All Pass

After finding the 6♠ save, Poland scored a bonus when North bid one more. E-W +100 and 9 Imps to Poland.

You have this situation in your trump suit:

North (dummy)
Q84

South (you)
K10632

The lead is in dummy and as you have no convenient entry to hand, you decide to lead the four from dummy. Your plan is to finesse the ten, but when East produces the jack, you play the king and West takes the ace. West switches to a suit which you win in your hand. You have no clues from the bidding. What is your next play in trumps?

You expect the situation to look like this:

	North	
	Q84	
West		East
A975		J
	South	
	K10632	

When you are back in hand after 4 – jack – king – ace, you play the 2: five from West and you finesse the eight and cash the queen. When in hand next, you play the ten to draw West's last trump. If instead, you play the ten and the queen or the queen and the ten, you lose a trick to West's nine.

Well, that was the theory. The reality was different when I was declarer playing with a human partner against two BBO robots. The play did go 4: jack – king – ace and when I came back on lead, I played the 2 – five – eight and East won with the nine. This was the actual layout:

	North	
	Q84	
West		East
A5		J97
	South	
	K10632	

The BBO robot had produced a stunning false-card with the jack. I have not seen this position before.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. West dealer : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♥ ⁽¹⁾	Dble ⁽²⁾	3♠
4♥	4♠	5♦	Pass
Pass	5♠	Pass	Pass
6♦	?		

(1) At least 5-5 in spades and clubs

(2) 6+ points, 4+ hearts

What would you do as North with:

♠ AK852
♥ 942
♦ --
♣ AKJ43

If you choose to double, it goes Pass : Pass : Pass. Your lead?

2. West dealer : Both vulnerable

North

♠ K72

♥ 954

♦ 93

♣ K9876

South

♠ AQ106

♥ AKQ87

♦ A8

♣ A5

You open 2♣ (artificial, game-forcing) in fourth seat as South and, with no opposition bidding, you end in 6♥. West leads the ♦J. Plan the play.

Why not discuss the problems by phone with your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

In a novice game, declarer calls the Director to the table and tells him he is a slam contract. So far he has won the opening lead and then successfully played the ♦A and ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart and ruffed a diamond. The Director is impressed and asks declarer why he has been called over. The declarer tell him that the contract is 6NT. (Story from Eddie Kantar)