

# 158. Bad, bad, bad

*By Ron Klinger*

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

(a)

| West              | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | Pass | 3NT   |
| Pass              | Pass  | Pass |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you lead as West from:

♠ K106532  
♥ K75  
♦ 7  
♣ 854

Make up your mind for that question before moving on to the next one:

(b)

| West              | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | 3♠   | 3NT   |
| Pass              | Pass  | Pass |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you do lead as West this time?

Make up your mind for that question before moving on to the third question:

(c)

| West              | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | 4♠   | 5♦    |
| ?                 |       |      |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you do now as West in this auction?

This deal comes from the 2017 Spingold (USA Knock-Out Open Teams). It arose in the first session of the Round of 16 match between the [MITTELMAN](#) and [NICKELL](#):

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

|           |          |        |
|-----------|----------|--------|
|           | North    |        |
|           | ♠ Q      |        |
|           | ♥ A103   |        |
|           | ♦ A96543 |        |
|           | ♣ J96    |        |
| West      |          | East   |
| ♠ K106532 |          | ♠ J987 |
| ♥ K75     |          | ♥ QJ9  |
| ♦ 7       |          | ♦ J10  |
| ♣ 854     |          | ♣ AQ32 |
|           | South    |        |
|           | ♠ A4     |        |
|           | ♥ 8642   |        |
|           | ♦ KQ82   |        |
|           | ♣ K107   |        |

The problems on page 1 arose when the deal was replayed in a session on BBO.

(a)

|                   |       |      |       |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
| West              | North | East | South |
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | Pass | 3NT   |
| Pass              | Pass  | Pass |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you lead as West?

Auction (a) did not occur. If it had, West has no clear-cut lead. A low spade gives South the ninth trick at once with the ♠Q and declarer can make ten tricks easily enough and eleven with some daring. If West leads a heart, South needs to take the ♥A and play a club at trick 2 or cash the diamonds first and then play a club for nine tricks. If West leads a club, East can take the ♣A and switch to a spade, but South takes the ♠A and has nine tricks or ten if prepared to finesse against East's ♠Q.

(b)

|                   |       |      |       |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
| West              | North | East | South |
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | 3♠   | 3NT   |
| Pass              | Pass  | Pass |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you lead now as West?

Auction (b) did not occur. If it had, West would lead a spade. To beat 3NT, West must lead ♠K. That is unlikely to cost. If East has ♠Q-x-x and South ♠A-x-x, South would duck spades twice whether West led ♠K or a low spade. If South has ♠A-Q or dummy has ♠Q-x and South ♠A-x, it makes no difference which spade you lead.

This was yesterday's first problem:

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

|                   |       |      |       |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
| West              | North | East | South |
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | ?    |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What would you do now as East with:

♠ J987  
♥ QJ9  
♦ J10  
♣ AQ32

A raise to 3♠ is reasonable. It cuts out a 3♥ bid and indicates a lead against 3NT. East actually bid 4♠.

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

|           |          |        |
|-----------|----------|--------|
|           | North    |        |
|           | ♠ Q      |        |
|           | ♥ A103   |        |
|           | ♦ A96543 |        |
|           | ♣ J96    |        |
| West      |          | East   |
| ♠ K106532 |          | ♠ J987 |
| ♥ K75     |          | ♥ QJ9  |
| ♦ 7       |          | ♦ J10  |
| ♣ 854     |          | ♣ AQ32 |
|           | South    |        |
|           | ♠ A4     |        |
|           | ♥ 8642   |        |
|           | ♦ KQ82   |        |
|           | ♣ K107   |        |

That brings us to:

(c)

| West              | North | East | South |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|                   |       | 1♣   | Pass  |
| 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 3♦    | 4♠   | 5♦    |
| ?                 |       |      |       |

(1) Weak, 6+ spades, 0-7points

What should West do now?

*Answer:* West should pass. East's bold/foolhardy 4♠ bid has pushed North-South into 5♦. It is usually unwise to bid 5-over-5 if you are not the stronger side. You can consider 1♣ : Pass : 2♠, a weak jump-shift, as a pre-emptive bid and a pre-emptor is expected not to bid again unless forced to or invited to by partner.

South had erred by bidding 5♦. South should have doubled 4♠. Had West passed 5♦, any lead by East will allow the defence to come to two hearts and a club. However, West bid 5♠ : Pass : Pass : Double, all pass.

North led ♦A: ten – two (discouraging) – seven and switched to ♣J, taken by ♣A. Declarer played the ♠7: four . . . two . . . queen. West thus lost 2 spades, a heart, a diamond and 2 clubs, four down, –800. West could have saved a trick by rising with ♠K, but that would have looked silly if North had ♠A bare and South had ♠Q-4 or if South had ♠A-Q-4. No, the real damage was the 5♠ bid and going –800 when you would be +100 defending 5♦.

Incidentally, note that West has 8 losers and East has 8 losers.  $8 + 8 = 16$  and  $24 - 16 = 8$  tricks expected for East-West if spades are trumps.

In the Spingold:

| West           | North            | East              | South           |                                                                                        |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Rodwell</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>Meckstroth</i> | <i>Bercuson</i> | East led the ♦10. Declarer lost the expected two hearts and one club, North-South +130 |
|                |                  | 1♦                | Pass            |                                                                                        |
| 1♠             | Pass             | 2♠                | Pass            |                                                                                        |
| Pass           | 3♦               | Pass              | Pass            |                                                                                        |
| 3♠             | Pass             | Pass              | 4♦              | End                                                                                    |

| West              | North             | East               | South          |                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Zatorski</i>   | <i>Katz</i>       | <i>Pachtmann</i>   | <i>Nickell</i> | North led the ♣6. Declarer took the ♣A and played ♠7-four-king-queen. The result was two down, North-South +100 but 1 Imp to MITTELMAN. |
|                   |                   | Pass               | 1♦             |                                                                                                                                         |
| 1♠                | 2♠ <sup>(1)</sup> | 2NT <sup>(2)</sup> | Pass           |                                                                                                                                         |
| 3♥ <sup>(3)</sup> | 4♦                | 4♠                 | All Pass       |                                                                                                                                         |

(1) Limit raise or stronger for diamonds

(2) Strong spade raise (3) Long-suit trial bid

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 1♦    | Pass | 1♥    |
| 3♠   | 4♥    | Pass | ?     |

What would you do as East with:

♠ K109  
♥ 973  
♦ 86  
♣ A9653

This comment appeared on page 1 of Daily Column 104: The Perils Of Pre-empts: 'Unless you can defeat a slam that the opponent might reach, there seems little benefit in raising a pre-empt with a modest balanced hand. It simply helps the opponents judge their fit.'

If you adhere to that suggestion you would pass 4♥. You have one trick with the ♣A. Your side may or may not have a spade trick. Partner has not promised you a defensive trick outside spades.

East ought to pass, but that did not happen. East bid 4♠, South 5♥ and North 6♥, all pass. This was the deal:

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

|           | North     |         |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
|           | ♠ --      |         |
|           | ♥ KQ104   |         |
|           | ♦ AKJ1097 |         |
|           | ♣ QJ7     |         |
| West      |           | East    |
| ♠ AQJ7432 |           | ♠ K109  |
| ♥ 8       |           | ♥ 973   |
| ♦ 542     |           | ♦ 86    |
| ♣ 108     |           | ♣ A9653 |
|           | South     |         |
|           | ♠ 865     |         |
|           | ♥ AJ652   |         |
|           | ♦ Q3      |         |
|           | ♣ K42     |         |

As you can see, 6♥ is unbeatable, North-South +980. North's 6♥ was not free of risk. West might have had a singleton club and ♣A and club ruff would have beaten 6♥. As South might have much less for the 1♥ response, North could not do more than 4♥ over 3♠. When South could bid 5♥, North placed South with good values.

This was yesterday's second problem:

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      | 1♦    | Pass | 1♥    |
| 3♠   | 4♥    | Pass | ?     |

What would you do as South with:

♠ 865  
♥ AJ652  
♦ Q3  
♣ K42

I am betting that in this auction, South would have passed 4♥ and West's 3♠ would have done its job.

Dealer North : Nil vulnerable

|           |           |         |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
|           | North     |         |
|           | ♠ --      |         |
|           | ♥ KQ104   |         |
|           | ♦ AKJ1097 |         |
|           | ♣ QJ7     |         |
| West      |           | East    |
| ♠ AQJ7432 |           | ♠ K109  |
| ♥ 8       |           | ♥ 973   |
| ♦ 542     |           | ♦ 86    |
| ♣ 108     |           | ♣ A9653 |
|           | South     |         |
|           | ♠ 865     |         |
|           | ♥ AJ652   |         |
|           | ♦ Q3      |         |
|           | ♣ K42     |         |

*(Directions changed for convenience)*

In the Spingold:

| West              | North           | East           | South            |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Meckstroth</i> | <i>Bercuson</i> | <i>Rodwell</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> |
|                   | 1♦              | Pass           | 1♥               |
| 3♠                | 4♥              | 4♠             | 5♥               |
| Pass              | Pass            | Pass           |                  |

West led the ♠A, ruffed. Declarer played ♥K, ♥10 to the ♥J, ruffed another spade, crossed to the ♦Q, drew the last trump and had 13 tricks, +510.

| West             | North             | East            | South             |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>Pachtmann</i> | <i>Nickell</i>    | <i>Zatorski</i> | <i>Katz</i>       |
|                  | 1♦                | Pass            | 1♥                |
| 3♠               | 4♥                | 4♠              | 5♣ <sup>(1)</sup> |
| Pass             | 5♦ <sup>(2)</sup> | Pass            | 5♥                |
| Pass             | 6♥                | All Pass        |                   |

(1) Cue-bid, control in clubs and effectively a slam try

(2) Cue-bid, control in diamonds

West led the ♠A. Declarer ruffed and drew trumps, 12 tricks +980, +10 Imps.

With Eric Rodwell and Piotr Zatorski both bidding 4♠ over 4♥, I may have to eat my words and retract my comments at the top of the previous page about the undesirability of that 4♠ bid. No, I won't. I still think that in the long run 4♠ with one defensive trick is a losing proposition and is more likely to help the opponents than your side.

## Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       | 1♠   | 2♥    |
| Pass | Pass  | Dble | Pass  |
| 3♦   | Pass  | Pass | 3♥    |
| Pass | Pass  | 4♦   | ?     |

What would you do now as South with:

♠ AK  
♥ AKJ743  
♦ 6  
♣ Q965

2. Dealer South : Both vulnerable

| West | North | East | South              |
|------|-------|------|--------------------|
|      |       |      | 2NT <sup>(1)</sup> |
| Pass | ?     |      |                    |

What would you do as North with:

♠ J632  
♥ Q87  
♦ J6  
♣ 9873

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

*Becoming vegan would be a big missed steak.*