

# 159. Deals with diamonds

*By Ron Klinger*

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

What would you do now in this auction?

Would you consider doubling 4♦ now? Maybe the opponents are beyond their safety level and you can teach them a lesson? What is the basis for your double? The possibility of scoring two hearts and two spades and maybe, maybe, a club trick. That is possible but not a certainty and for what gain? To collect +100 instead of +50, a gain of 2 Imps if you take 4♦ doubled one down if 4♦ undoubled is the contract at the other table. And what if 4♦ doubled makes and you concede -510, a loss of 9 Imps if 4♦ undoubled is +130 at the other table.

You are backing yourself to be right more than 90% of the time with this double just to break even. Note that partner has not made a bid and if declarer or dummy has a singleton in hearts or in spades, one of your expected tricks vanishes. Has the 4♦ bid robbed you of a positive score? Were you making 3♥? Maybe yes, maybe no.

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	
	♠ Q1062	
	♥ 10	
	♦ 954	
	♣ J10732	
West		East
♠ 9		♠ J87543
♥ 9652		♥ Q8
♦ QJ1083		♦ AK72
♣ K84		♣ A
	South	
	♠ AK	
	♥ AKJ743	
	♦ 6	
	♣ Q965	

After the auction above, South did double 4♦, all pass. North led the ♥10. South took two hearts and switched to a club, won in dummy. Declarer played a spade. South won and played another club: eight – ten – ♦2. Declarer ruffed a spade, cashed the ♣K, discarding a spade and cross-ruffed hearts and spades for ten tricks, East-West +510.

	North	
	♠ Q1062	
	♥ 10	
	♦ 954	
	♣ J10732	
West		East
♠ 9		♠ J87543
♥ 9652		♥ Q8
♦ QJ1083		♦ AK72
♣ K84		♣ A
	South	
	♠ AK	
	♥ AKJ743	
	♦ 6	
	♣ Q965	

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	2NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♦Q, winning, followed by the ♦10, taken by the ♦K, South discarding the ♣5. East cashed the ♦A and South threw the ♥4. A sensible defence now would be to cash the ♣A and play your fourth diamond to West, who would cash the fifth diamond and the ♣K for two down.

Instead, East switched to the ♥8. South played the ♥A and the ♣Q: king – two – ace. East returned the ♦7 to the ♦J and West cashed the ♦8 for one down, East-West +50, but –10 Imps.

This was the auction when the deal was replayed on BBO:

Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Dble
1NT	Pass	2♦	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the ♠9: two – three - ace. South played the ♥3 to the ♥10 and ♥Q. East cashed the ♣A, followed by the ♠4 (suit-preference for clubs): king – ♥5 – ♠6. West cashed the ♣K and switched to the ♦Q, winning. Then came the ♣4. East ruffed and that was two down, East-West +100.

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North			
	♠ J632			
	♥ Q87			
	♦ J6			
	♣ 9873			
West				
	♠ Q5			
	♥ KJ54			
	♦ KQ94			
	♣ KQ2			
West	North	East	South	
			2NT <sup>(1)</sup>	
Pass	3♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	
Pass	4♣	All Pass		

(1) 20-21 points (2) Stayman (3) 4 or 5 spades

What would you lead as West? After dummy appears, what is unusual about the West hand? Suppose the play goes ♦K: six – five – ace. South returns the ♦2: queen – jack – three. East-West play high-low encouraging. West continues with the ♦4: ♠2 – ♦8 – ♦7. Declarer plays the ♣7 from dummy: four (odd number) – five – queen. What would you play as West at trick 5? (*Answer later*)

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North			
	♠ J632			
	♥ Q87			
	♦ J6			
	♣ 9873			
West		East		
	♠ Q5	♠ 1074		
	♥ KJ54	♥ 1062		
	♦ KQ94	♦ 10853		
	♣ KQ2	♣ 1064		
	South			
	♠ AK98			
	♥ A93			
	♦ A72			
	♣ AJ5			

This was yesterday's second question:

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

(1) 20-22 points

What would you do as North with:

♠ J632  
♥ Q87  
♦ J6  
♣ 9873

It is marginal whether to try for game or not. In the Spingold one North passed, the other headed for game. Vulnerable at Imps, one pushes the accelerator to the floor to try for a vulnerable game, but it would be no surprise to be down in 3NT or in a major-suit game.

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ J632	
	♥ Q87	
	♦ J6	
	♣ 9873	
West		East
♠ Q5		♠ 1074
♥ KJ54		♥ 1062
♦ KQ94		♦ 10853
♣ KQ2		♣ 1064
	South	
	♠ AK98	
	♥ A93	
	♦ A72	
	♣ AJ5	

(Note for those who use Banzai Points [A = 5, K = 4, Q = 3, J = 2, 10 = 1], where game with 25-26 HCP requires 37-39 BPs: The South hand has only 26 BPs, not close to a 20-22 HCP / 30-33 BP 2NT opening. Using Banzai, South might open 1♣. If that is passed out, South might make 7 or 8 tricks. If West overcalls 1NT and if that becomes the contract, the defence can come to 7 tricks easily.)

In the Spingold, Jeff Meckstroth (S) opened 2NT and Eric Rodwell (N) passed. West led the ♦Q, ducked, followed by the ♦K, ducked and the ♦9: ♣3 – ♦10 – ♦A. South played ♠A, ♠K, dropping the ♠Q, the ♠8 to the ♠J and the ♠6 back to the ♠9. West discarded ♥4 and ♥5. South cashed the ♥A and played a second heart, West winning with the ♥K. West played a diamond, winning, but South had 4 spades, 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 1 club, eight tricks, +120.

At the other table, with Ron Pachtmann (N) – Piotr Zatorski (S):

West	North	East	South
			2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	3♥ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) No 5-major, 1 or 2 4-card majors)

(2) 4 spades

West led ♦K winning, and ♦Q. South took ♦A, ♠A, ♠K and played ♠8 to ♠J. Then came the ♣7: four – five – queen. West returned ♦4, ruffed with ♠6. After ♣3: six – jack – king, West continued with ♦9, ruffed in dummy. South cashed ♣A and played ♥3. West took ♥K and that was one down – 100 and 6 Imps to [NICKELL](#).

Reverting to the questions on page 3 regarding this auction for the deal above:

West	North	East	South
			2NT <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	3♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>(3)</sup>
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

(1) 20-21 points (2) Stayman (3) 4 or 5 spades

What would you lead as West? After dummy appears, what is unusual about the West hand? Suppose the play goes ♦K: six – five – ace. South returns the ♦2: queen – jack – three. East-West play high-low encouraging. West continues with the ♦4: ♠2 – ♦8 – ♦7. Declarer plays the ♣7 from dummy: four (odd number) – five – queen. What would you play as West at trick 5?

West has no good lead. The ♠Q might take a trick, but not if you lead a spade. Leading a heart will give declarer the ♥Q as well as the ♥A. You could lead top from the diamonds or the clubs. In such cases, leading from the longer holding is safer. That points you to the ♦K lead.

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ J632	
	♥ Q87	
	♦ J6	
	♣ 9873	
West		East
♠ Q5		♠ 1074
♥ KJ54		♥ 1062
♦ KQ94		♦ 10853
♣ KQ2		♣ 1064
	South	
	♠ AK98	
	♥ A93	
	♦ A72	
	♣ AJ5	

As soon as dummy appeared, a quick count of points, 16 West, 4 in dummy and 20 with declarer, means partner probably has no points, maybe the ♣J if South has upgraded a 19-point hand. When partner plays ♦5-♦3, encouraging, you expect partner to have the ♦10 (otherwise why encourage?). When partner contributes the ♦8 on the third diamond, East should have the ♦10 left and so you can place East with four diamonds and South with three. When East shows an odd number of clubs, you can give East three clubs and South three clubs.

What else can you deduce? South's 3♠ showed 4 or 5 spades, but you can be sure it is only four. If South had 5 spades, South would already have played ♠A, ♠K. You can be confident that South's shape is 4 spades-3-3-3. After ♦K to ♦A, ♦2 won by ♦Q and ♦4 ruffed in dummy, South ran the ♣7 to West's ♣Q. With no good exit, West played the ♦9. South ruffed in dummy and threw the ♥3. South would have saved a trick by discarding the ♣J, but that was not obvious.

The original spade layout was like this:

	J632	
Q5		1074
	AK98	

Once declarer had ruffed twice in dummy, the defenders were bound to make a trump trick however South played the trumps. When declarer finessed the ♣J, West returned a club. South lost a spade, a heart, a diamond and two clubs, two down, East-West +200 and 8 Imps to [NICKELL](#).

## Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♥	Dble <sup>(1)</sup>	4♥	Pass
Pass	?		

(1) 4+ spades

What would do as North with:

♠ J10843  
 ♥ 87  
 ♦ AQJ73  
 ♣ J

2. Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	Dble	1NT <sup>(1)</sup>
(1) 15-17 points			All Pass

What would you lead as West from:

♠ 42  
♥ A1098654  
♦ 763  
♣ 3

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

*Cows have hooves because they lactose.*