184. Rest where you are or go for it?

By Ron Klinger

With one session, 14 boards, to go in the final of the 2020 North America Online Bridge Championship, LEVINE (Mike Levine – Eddie Wold, Geir Helgemo – Tor Helness, Jeff Meckstroth – Eric Rodwell) led KOLESNIK (Finn Kolesnik age 16 – Jacob Freeman age 19, Bob Hamman – Peter Weichsel, Bart Bramley – Kit Woolsey) by 81 Imps to 69.

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	$1NT^{(1)}$
Pass	2 ♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♥
Pass	?		
(1) 12-14			
(2) Simple St	tayman		

What would you do as North with:

▲ K1054
♥ KQ97
◆ 8
◆ Q1098

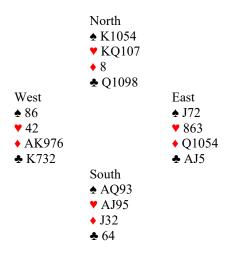
The expectation for a weak 1NT opening is 7-8 losers. If opener is 4-3-3-3, an 8-loser hand is common for the 12-14 points range. North has 10 HCP + a singleton (add 3 points). That puts you marginally in the game zone.

What about losers? North has a 6-loser hand. If opener has 7 losers, 6 + 7 = 13 and 24 - 13 = 11 tricks likely. If opener has the 8-loser hand, 6 + 8 = 14 and 24 - 14 = 10 tricks are likely. You could invite with $3\heartsuit$, but as the Losing Trick Count indicates 10 or 11 tricks are probable, you should bid $4\heartsuit$. The LTC does not come with guarantees – I cannot promise you the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind – but the LTC is about 80% accurate. That justifies $4\heartsuit$.

After 4 boards in Session 4, the score was LEVINE 92, KOLESNIK 75. LEVINE won more Imps on this deal:

Session 4: Board 47

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable



After the auction above, Woolsey passed 2^{\heartsuit} , which became the contract. Rodwell (W) led the A and switched to the A: four – two – nine. Bramley (S) ruffed the A in dummy, played \P K and \P 10 to the \P A and ruffed the J. After A to A, he drew the missing trump and had ten tricks, +170.

Board 47: Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

	North ♠ K1054 ♥ KQ107 ♦ 8 ● Q1008	
	♣ Q1098	
West		East
♠ 86		♦ J72
♥ 42		v 863
◆ AK976		♦ Q1054
♣ K732		◆ AJ5
111/52	South	1100
	♠ AQ93	
	🔻 AJ95	
	♦ J32	
	♣ 64	

At the other table:

North	East	South
Helness	Weichsel	Helgemo
	Pass	1♥ ⁽¹⁾
2NT ⁽²⁾	Pass	3 ♥ ⁽³⁾
4♥	All Pass	
	Helness 2NT ⁽²⁾	Helness Weichsel Pass 2NT ⁽²⁾ Pass

(1) Playing 4-card majors

(2) 4+ hearts, game invitation or stronger

(3) Minimum opening, not forcing

West led the A and switched to the 2: eight – jack – four. East cashed the A and continued with the 5. South ruffed with the 9, cashed the A, played the 5 to the K, ruffed the Q with the J, ruffed a diamond in dummy, drew the last trump and had ten tricks, +420 and +6 Imps.

Note that even though South has only 12 HCP with the $\bigstar J$ useless and an 8-loser hand, game in hearts is still a good bet.

With 9 boards to go it was LEVINE 98, KOLESNIK 75.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	2♣	2 ♠ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	?	
(1) NI-to1			

(1) Natural, not forcing

What would you do as East with:

★ 5
♥ AQJ10
◆ 103
◆ KQJ874

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

If you replace the 'W' in 'What', 'When' and 'Where' with a 'T', you are rewarded with the answer to each of them.

New book: *The Power of Pass* (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email <u>suzie@ronklingerbridge.com</u> or telephone 0411 229 705.