

293. Small sacrifice

By Ron Klinger

Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1♠	?	

What would you do as East with:

♠ AK1042
♥ A1084
♦ A94
♣ 9

Suppose you have decided to pass. South responds 1NT, Pass : Pass, back to you. What would you do now?

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ J
♥ --
♦ Q108762
♣ K86532

If you had a weak jump shift available, you could try 3♣ or 3♦, but that is not in the repertoire for most pairs. You could pass, but you might easily miss a game in one of the minors. The recommended action is a 1NT response, showing 6-9 points (pray partner can find a rebid) or 6-12 points if you play 1NT forcing.

Board 3: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ Q9853	
	♥ KQ3	
	♦ KJ5	
	♣ 104	
West		East
♠ 76		♠ AK1042
♥ J97652		♥ A1084
♦ 3		♦ A94
♣ AQJ7		♣ 9
	South	
	♠ J	
	♥ --	
	♦ Q108762	
	♣ K86532	

In one match, it went 1♠ : Pass : 1NT, all pass, at both tables. At one table, West led the ♥6, king, ace. East returned the ♥10, won by the ♥Q. North played the ♦K (the ♦J might have saved a trick), taken by the ♦A. East continued hearts and South came down to ♠J, ♣K-8 and five diamonds. West switched to the ♠7. East cashed ♠K, ♠A, followed by the ♣9, giving West the last four tricks and East-West +300. It is not often you go six down in a freely-bid contract.

Board 3: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

<p>North</p> <p>♠ Q9853</p> <p>♥ KQ3</p> <p>♦ KJ5</p> <p>♣ 104</p>	<p>East</p> <p>♠ AK1042</p> <p>♥ A1084</p> <p>♦ A94</p> <p>♣ 9</p>
<p>West</p> <p>♠ 76</p> <p>♥ J97652</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♣ AQJ7</p>	<p>South</p> <p>♠ J</p> <p>♥ --</p> <p>♦ Q108762</p> <p>♣ K86532</p>

At the other table, the play began the same way: West led the ♥6, king, ace. East returned the ♥10, won by the ♥Q. North also played ♦K at trick 3. When East captured the ♦K, East cashed the ♠K and ♠A before proceeding with the hearts. Now West was on lead and South's ♣K was safe from attack. Declarer lost 2 spades, 5 hearts, the ♦A and ♣A, three down -150, but +4 Imps.

I can almost hear you saying, "See. North-South failed badly in 1NT. If only North-South had been playing two-over-one with a forcing 1NT, North would have rebid 2♦ and North-South would be in a comfortable spot, as 2♦ will make easily."

Just wait a moment before you become too enamoured with that idea. Whether 1NT goes down six or three, it is a great result for North-South. Look at what East-West can make. Double dummy, 6♥ is available. That is not a contract likely to be reached, but certainly 4♥ is feasible. Failing in 1NT is a small sacrifice in comparison.

If the bidding had started 1♠ : Pass : 1NT : Pass, 2♦ it might suddenly rouse the opponents into action. Indeed, in the other match, both sides played in 5♥. It was doubled at one table.

Board 3: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

<p>North</p> <p>♠ Q9853</p> <p>♥ KQ3</p> <p>♦ KJ5</p> <p>♣ 104</p>	<p>East</p> <p>♠ AK1042</p> <p>♥ A1084</p> <p>♦ A94</p> <p>♣ 9</p>
<p>West</p> <p>♠ 76</p> <p>♥ J97652</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♣ AQJ7</p>	<p>South</p> <p>♠ J</p> <p>♥ --</p> <p>♦ Q108762</p> <p>♣ K86532</p>

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

- (1) Not textbook, but effective
- (2) Natural and not forcing after a 1NT overcall
- (3) Transfer to 4♥

I have grudging admiration for Nye Griffiths' 1NT overcall as East. I am not sure that I would have found that bid, but it certainly worked well. South led the ♠J. East won, cashed ♥A and made 11 tricks in comfort, +650. Note also Pele Rankin's excellent pass as North after 5♥ : Pass : Pass.

Board 3: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ Q9853	
	♥ KQ3	
	♦ KJ5	
	♣ 104	
West		East
♠ 76		♠ AK1042
♥ J97652		♥ A1084
♦ 3		♦ A94
♣ AQJ7		♣ 9
	South	
	♠ J	
	♥ --	
	♦ Q108762	
	♣ K86532	

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	2♥!?	4NT ⁽¹⁾
5♥	Dble	All Pass	

(1) Pick a minor

South led the ♠J. East won, cashed the ♥A and made 11 tricks routinely, +850 and +5 Imps. East's 2♥ was certainly brave, but given my druthers, I'd prefer the direct 1NT overcall. One should keep a record of how often doubling the opponents at unfavourable vulnerability actually pays off.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	?	

What would you do as East with:

♠ AQJ98
♥ 64
♦ 97
♣ 10943

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

A thief who stole a calendar got 12 months.