

320. A series of spades

By Ron Klinger

Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
?			

What would you do as West with:

♠ K43
♥ KJ
♦ A84
♣ Q10763

The deal is from the 2017 Spingold (USA K-O Open Teams) semi-final between [LAVAZZA](#) and [SCHWARTZ](#).

Board 5: Dealer South : North-South vulnerable

	North		
	♠ 1072		
	♥ 953		
	♦ K9763		
	♣ A9		
West		East	
♠ K43		♠ 96	
♥ KJ		♥ 10874	
♦ A84		♦ J52	
♣ Q10763		♣ KJ85	
	South		
	♠ AQJ85		
	♥ AQ62		
	♦ Q10		
	♣ 42		
West	North	East	South
<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Schwartz</i>
			1♠
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

West's clubs are too weak for a 2♣ overcall and the lack of length in hearts makes a takeout double unattractive. Passing over 1♠ is fine, but when the opponents have found a fit at the 2-level and it goes Pass : Pass to you, it is usually a good idea to compete. An exception is when you have a 4-3-3-3 pattern. West might back in with 3♣ or perhaps something else. A takeout double still does not appeal because of the lack of length in hearts.

West led the ♣3, ace. The ♠2 to the ♠Q won and the ♦Q was taken by the ♦A. West continued with a club to the king and East returned the ♠9: five – king – seven. West played the ♠4, won by the ♠10. After the ♥3 to the ♥Q lost, South ruffed the ♣Q return and ducked a heart. When the hearts were not 3-3, South lost 3 hearts, a spade, a diamond and a club.

Double dummy, South can make 2♠ a number of ways. After ♣A, a heart to the ace and a low heart works. So does a low diamond to the ♦10, but these are not normal plays.

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	North	
	♠ 1072	
	♥ 953	
	♦ K9763	
	♣ A9	
West		East
♠ K43		♠ 96
♥ KJ		♥ 10874
♦ A84		♦ J52
♣ Q10763		♣ KJ85
	South	
	♠ AQJ85	
	♥ AQ62	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ 42	

West	North	East	South
<i>Danailov</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
			1♠
2♣ ⁽¹⁾	2♠	3♣	Dble ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

(1) Not everyone is a suit-quality adherent

(2) Game-invitation

With 7 HCP, North is at the bottom of the range for 1♠ : 2♠ and might well bid just 3♣. With 6 losers, South is entitled to invite game. With 9 losers, North should reject it.

West led the ♣6: nine – king – four. East switched to the ♥4: six – jack – three. Declarer lost a spade, a diamond, a club and two hearts, two light, East-West +200 and 3 Imps to [SCHWARTZ](#).

This is what happened when the deal was replayed in a BBO game:

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT ⁽¹⁾	Pass	3♣	3♥
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

(1) Minors, not ideal, but 3♣ puts all your eggs in one basket

West led the ♣6, taken by the ♣A. The ♠10 won trick 2 and the next spade to the ♠Q was taken by the ♠K. West returned the third spade, won by the ♠J. Declarer exited with the ♥2, taken by the ♥J. After ♣3 to the ♣K, South ruffed the next club and played the ♦10: four – king – five. Next came ♥5: eight – queen – king and West returned a fourth club, ruffed. South made 1 club, 1 diamond, 1 heart and 4 spades, two down, East-West +200.

This column regularly warns players against competing 3-over-3. That is likely to be especially so when you were already prepared to stop in 2♠. This deal is another example. If you could restrain yourself from bidding on as South after 3♣, you could be plus. If South is on lead against 3♣, with neither major suit attractive, South could lead the ♦Q. If declarer plays a club, North can rise with the ♣A and play ♦K and another diamond. South ruffs and the ♠A and ♥A give North-South 5 tricks and +50. Not much but better than –100 or –200.

You will have noticed that the contracts on today's deal were 2♠, 3♠ and 4♠. Not one was successful.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
?			

What would you do as West with:

- ♠ Q985
- ♥ 109
- ♦ 4
- ♣ A109865

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

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?