

337. Competing opportunities

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass
2♥ ⁽²⁾	Pass	Pass	2♠
?			

(1) Weak two in hearts or spades (6-9 points)

(2) Pass or correct

What would you do as West with:

♠ Q92
♥ 74
♦ A5
♣ A10832

With five boards to go in the semi-finals of the 2015 Bermuda Bowl, England led Poland by 205-201 and Sweden led USA2 by 236-234. There are not many finishes as close as these in World Championship matches.

This was yesterday's problem:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		2♥ ⁽¹⁾	2♠
Pass	?		

(1) Weak two, 6 hearts, 6-9 points

What would you do as North with:

♠ J105
♥ A65
♦ QJ64
♣ J95

This hand has 10 losers, no ruffing potential, only one sure winner, but a very likely second winner in diamonds. For 4♠ to make, partner will need at least an 8-trick hand. With a hand that strong, partner would have made a stronger bid than 2♠. If you want to apply losers, South will usually have a 7-loser hand for 2♠, occasionally 6 losers and very rarely 5 losers. Using the LTC, your losers 10 + partner's losers, say 5, = 15 and 24 - 15 = 9 tricks expected. That is when partner is very strong for the 2♠ bid. Replace the 5 losers with 6 and the answer is 8 tricks likely and opposite 7 losers, even 2♠ is likely to be one off. Short answer: You should pass 2♠.

The second part of yesterday's question: Would it make a difference to your answer if the auction had been:

West	North	East	South
		2♥ ⁽¹⁾	2♠
3♣	?		

(1) Weak two, 6 hearts, 6-9 points

Now there is even less reason to bid 3♣. As West has found the values to bid, it is highly unlikely that partner can produce a 5-loser hand. You might as well take your chances defending against 3♣.

In the Sweden vs USA2 match, both Norths bid 3♣. How do you think they fared?

Board 92: Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

North	
♠	J105
♥	A65
♦	QJ64
♣	J95
West	East
♠	Q92
♥	74
♦	A5
♣	A10832
South	
♠	AK763
♥	J9
♦	K1093
♣	76

USA2 North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Demuy</i>
		2♥	2♠
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

SWEDEN North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>W'dridge</i>	<i>Sylvan</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Wrang</i>
		2♥	2♠
3♣	3♠	All Pass	

Both declarers lost a spade, a heart, a diamond and two clubs, one short, –100, no swing. Had North for USA2 passed 2♠, that would have become the contract for +110. At the other table, 3♠ would have made for +110. If East removes 3♠ to 3♥, that can be made. If so, –100 saves 1 Imp. If declarer does not make 3♥, North-South gain 4 Imps, +50 vs –100.

In the ENGLAND vs POLAND semi-final, both Easts started with a multi 2♦, a weak two in hearts or in spades. The auctions were identical and so was the result, 2♠ +110, no swing.

West	North	East	South
		2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass
2♥ ⁽²⁾	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Multi, as above

(2) Pass or correct

When your side has a known trump fit, it usually pays to compete 3-over-2 with part-score values. After 2♠, West might have bid 3♣ or 3♥. As it happens, these contracts can be made. Even one down, –50, would be better than –110. The bonus for competing is when the opponents push on to 3♠ and that fails. Now you are +100 for your enterprise instead of –110 for selling out. Still, they are in the semi-finals of the World Open Teams. I wonder whether each West was concerned that East might have had a light to super-light opening, because of the favourable vulnerability.

With four boards to go, the scores had not changed, England 205, Poland 201 and Sweden 236, USA2 234.

Problem for Tomorrow:

With both sides vulnerable, there are three passes to you. What is your opening bid and what is your plan of bidding with:

♠ AKQJ
♥ KQ92
♦ AKJ3
♣ 6

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

When his IQ reaches 50, he should sell. (British Military Staff Appraisal)