

# 341. Get shorty, not shirty

*By Ron Klinger*

Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

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

(1) 15-17 points

What would you do as North with:

♠ J104  
♥ J  
♦ KJ2  
♣ KJ8542

The deal arose in the 2017 Spingold (USA Open Teams) semi-final match between [DIAMOND](#) and [MITTELMAN](#).

Board 33: Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

North		South	
♠ J104		♠ AKQ	
♥ J		♥ Q2	
♦ KJ2		♦ Q64	
♣ KJ8542		♣ Q9763	

  

West	East
♠ 962	♠ 8753
♥ K97653	♥ A1084
♦ A953	♦ 1087
♣ --	♣ A10

At one table, [MITTELMAN](#) North-South bid 1NT : 3NT, all pass. West led the ♥6. East took the ♥A and returned the ♥10 (unblocking), queen, king. West continued with the ♥9 and East unblocked the ♥8. The defence took six hearts, the ♦A and ♣A, four down, East-West +200.

Yesterday's column mentioned 3-level splinters as an attractive option after a 1NT opening. That is what North did at the other table with [DIAMOND](#) North-South:

West	North	East	South
			1NT <sup>(1)</sup>
Dble <sup>(2)</sup>	3♥ <sup>(3)</sup>	Dble	4♣
4♥	5♣	All Pass	

(1) 15-17 points  
(2) Some 1-suiter  
(3) 0-1 heart

South lost to the three missing aces, one down, -50 but +4 Imps. You might not think that 4 Imps is such a big deal, but suppose you swap South's ♥Q for East's ♥A. Now the 1NT : 3NT bidders go three down, -150, but 5♣ makes for +400 and +11 Imps. You might consider whether your 1NT : 3-level responses work well for you. If they are not great, you might consider swapping to splinters over 1NT.

A further development is submarine splinters over 1NT: a 3-level suit response to 1NT shows shortage in the next suit. Thus 1NT : 3♣ = short diamonds, 1NT : 3♦ = short hearts, 1NT : 3♥ = short spades and 1NT : 3♠ = short clubs. This allows opener to bid responder's short suit to say, 'Not keen on 3NT. Let's find our best fit'. Higher 3-level bids are natural by opener and include 3NT as an option. For example, 1NT : 3♣ (short diamonds), 3♠ = 4 spades and diamonds stopped for 3NT.

## Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : Both vulnerable

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

(1) 5+ spades

(2) Fourth-suit, asking for a diamond stopper for 3NT.

What would you lead as West from:

♠ Q3  
♥ 1094  
♦ K542  
♣ K984

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

*Why do we call it a TV 'set' when there is only one of them?*