

36. Well done for some, can do better for others

By Ron Klinger

East dealer : Both vulnerable

North
♠ KJ8
♥ AK10754
♦ --
♣ A1032

South
♠ 10963
♥ --
♦ 6532
♣ KQ764

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

(1) Diamonds + a major

West leads the ♦A. Plan the play.

Today's deals come from the quarter-finals of the Bermuda Bowl (World Open Teams) in 2015.

East dealer : Both vulnerable

| | | |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ KJ8 | |
| | ♥ AK10754 | |
| | ♦ -- | |
| | ♣ A1032 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ A754 | | ♠ Q2 |
| ♥ J3 | | ♥ Q9862 |
| ♦ AKQJ8 | | ♦ 10974 |
| ♣ J8 | | ♣ 95 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ 10963 | |
| | ♥ -- | |
| | ♦ 6532 | |
| | ♣ KQ764 | |

England vs USA1: After the auction above, West led the ♦A. Jeff Meckstroth (USA1, South) made the play look easy. He ruffed the ♦A lead, crossed to the ♣K and ruffed another diamond. After cashing the club ace, he pitched the other two diamond losers on the top hearts. Two spades were lost, but South had eleven tricks, +600, 12 Imps to USA1.

At the other table, West also opened 1NT and South also ended in 5♣. He ruffed the ♦K lead, crossed to the club king and played the spade three to the jack and queen. East returned the spade two to the ace and ruffed the third spade for one off, East-West +100 and +12 Imps.

| | | |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ KJ8 | |
| | ♥ AK10754 | |
| | ♦ -- | |
| | ♣ A1032 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ A754 | | ♠ Q2 |
| ♥ J3 | | ♥ Q9862 |
| ♦ AKQJ8 | | ♦ 10974 |
| ♣ J8 | | ♣ 95 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ 10963 | |
| | ♥ -- | |
| | ♦ 6532 | |
| | ♣ KQ764 | |

Bulgaria vs Sweden: In the Open Room, Sweden's West opened 1♦ in third seat. North doubled, East bid 3♦ and South ended in 5♣. The ♦K lead was ruffed. Declarer played the top hearts and pitched a diamond and a spade. Ditching two diamonds is better. A third heart was ruffed with the club six and over-ruffed. South lost two spades and incurred a spade ruff for two down, East-West +200.

At the other table, Bulgaria's West, opened a strong club. North overcalled one heart and eventually South became declarer in three spades. West led the ♠5, low, queen. East returned the ♠2, ducked to the jack. South discarded two diamonds on the top hearts, crossed to the club king and ruffed a diamond. He then ran clubs and made nine tricks, North-South +140, 8 Imps to Sweden.

France vs Poland: Poland's South, was in 5♣ after West had opened 1♦. He ruffed the ♦A lead and played ♥A, ♥K, pitching two diamonds, club ace and a club to the queen, followed by a spade to the jack and queen for eleven tricks, North-South +600. At the other table:

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>Klukowski</i> | <i>Bessis</i> | <i>Gawrys</i> | <i>Volcker</i> |
| | | Pass | Pass |
| 1NT | 2♦ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 2♥ ⁽²⁾ |
| Dble | Rdbl | Pass | Pass |
| 3♦ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

(1) Major one-suiter

(2) Pass or correct

West did well to remove the redouble, as 2♥ can be made with the loss of two spades and three hearts. Against 3♦, North led a top heart and gave South a heart ruff. The defence took two clubs and a spade for one down, North-South +100, but 11 Imps to Poland.

China vs USA2; USA2's Wolpert opened 1NT in third seat. North doubled. East bid 2♦, diamonds and a major, Pass : Pass. North doubled, all pass. There were better actions for South than passing. South led the ♣K. Declarer lost a spade, two clubs and two hearts, but had the rest, East-West +180. At the other table:

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <i>Sun</i> | <i>Kranyak</i> | <i>Kan</i> | <i>Demuy</i> |
| | | Pass | Pass |
| 1♣ ⁽¹⁾ | Pass | 1♦ ⁽²⁾ | Pass |
| 1NT | 2♥ | Pass | Pass |
| 3♦ | Dble | All Pass | Pass |

(1) Artificial, strong

(2) Artificial, negative

If North's double was for takeout, as it appears, South might have chosen some action other than pass. Still, the defence had five tricks available and were due to collect 200 and 9 Imps. Alas, that did not eventuate. South led the ♠10, four, king. North might have switched to a top heart – and why not? It would have been clear sailing from there, but he chose to return the ♠J. Declarer won with the queen, crossed to the diamond ace and ditched a club on the ♠A. A spade was ruffed with the ♦10 and declarer soon had nine tricks, +670, +10 Imps to China, a swing of 19 Imps.

South dealer : North-South vulnerable

North

♠ 8
♥ K1086
♦ AKJ9
♣ 10853

East

♠ 9654
♥ QJ943
♦ 4
♣ AJ2

South opens 4♠. All pass. West leads the ♥7: eight from dummy. Which heart would you play as East?

Playing a false-card to try to fool declarer can work well sometimes. On other occasions, it can have serious repercussions when partner is fooled as well. Jeff Meckstroth found that out to his cost on this deal from the 2015 Bermuda Bowl quarter-finals:

Board 16: South dealer : North-South vulnerable

North

♠ 8
♥ K1086
♦ AKJ9
♣ 10853

West

♠ A
♥ 72
♦ Q876532
♣ K64

East

♠ 9654
♥ QJ943
♦ 4
♣ AJ2

South

♠ KQJ10732
♥ A5
♦ 10
♣ Q97

At one table, Nick Nickell (USA1) had opened 1♠ as South and finished in 4♠. West led the ♣4. East took the ♣A and returned the ♣2, nine, king. South won the third club, crossed to the ♦A, knocked out the ♠A and had ten tricks, North-South +620.

At the other table, Andy Robson, South for England, opened 4♠, all pass. Eric Rodwell, West, led the ♥7: eight – *queen??* – ace. Declarer's natural play is to try for a club discard and South crossed to the ♦A and played the ♦K, ♠4, ♠7. South played the ♠Q. West took the ace and now a heart continuation or a low diamond would defeat 4♠. Declarer now lacked the entries to dummy to set up a club trick. However, from East's ♥Q at trick one, West placed the ♥J with South. Hoping East had A-Q-x in clubs. West switched to the ♣4. East returned the ♣2, low, king and South had ten tricks, no swing. Had East played the normal ♥9 at trick one, West would have no difficulty playing the ♥2 when in with the spade ace.

Sweden made 4♠ by South on the ♣4 lead, +620. Bulgaria went one off in 4♠ on the ♦5 lead, ace. The ♦K was ruffed and over-ruffed, but South lost three club tricks later, East-West +100 and 12 Imps to Sweden.

USA2 made 4♠. After the ♦5 lead, ace, the ♦K was ruffed and over-ruffed. The ♠K was taken by the ace and West found the fatal switch to the ♣4. East took the ace and switched to the ♥Q. South won, drew trumps, crossed to the ♥K and played a club to the nine, North-South +620.

At the other table China's South was in 4♠ on the ♥7 lead: six – *nine* – ace. West had bid diamonds and so declarer played the diamond ten to the jack. The ♦A was ruffed and over-ruffed. South played the ♠K, ace. West returned the ♥2 and declarer lost three clubs later, East-West +100 and 12 Imps to USA2.

| | | |
|-----------|------------|---------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ 8 | |
| | ♥ K1086 | |
| | ♦ AKJ9 | |
| | ♣ 10853 | |
| West | | East |
| ♠ A | | ♠ 9654 |
| ♥ 72 | | ♥ QJ943 |
| ♦ Q876532 | | ♦ 4 |
| ♣ K64 | | ♣ AJ2 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ KQJ10732 | |
| | ♥ A5 | |
| | ♦ 10 | |
| | ♣ Q97 | |

France made 4♠ on the diamond seven lead, North-South +620. At the other table:

| | | | |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | 1♠ |
| 3♦ | Pass | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Although 4♠ can always be made double dummy, declarer's natural instinct to play ♦A, ♦K at once gives the defence the chance to defeat the contract. Piotr Gawrys, North for Poland, had no problems in 3NT. The ♥3 lead was won by the ten and the ♠A was knocked out. The ♣4 went to the ace, followed by the ♣J, queen, king, and North claimed ten tricks, +630, no swing.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. East dealer : North-South vulnerable

| | | | |
|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 1NT ⁽¹⁾ |
| Pass | 4NT ⁽²⁾ | Pass | 6NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

(1) 15-17

(2) Slam invitation

What would you lead as West from:

♠ Q102
♥ 108542
♦ 76
♣ Q97

2. South dealer : North-South vulnerable

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♣ | 2♦ | 2♠ |
| 5♦ | ? | Pass | |

What would you do as North with:

♠ Q97
♥ J9
♦ 2
♣ AQJ10863

Why not discuss these problems by phone with your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

“There are two million interesting people in New York and only 78 in Los Angeles.” (playwright Neil Simon in an interview for Playboy Magazine in 1979)