

48. The tricks in spades

By Ron Klinger

The Alt Invitational, held in April, was organized by bid72, bridge 24 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online). There were eight teams, playing a round-robin, followed by semi-finals and a final. These were the teams:

Blass	Josef Blass, Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Jacek Kalita, Michael Nowosadski, Jacek Pszczola (Pepsi)
De Botton	Janet de Botton, Thomas Charlsen, Jason Hackett, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Alexander Hydes, Artur Malinowski
Hungary	Miklos Dumbovich, Gal Hegedus, Csaba Szabo, Balasz Szegedi, Gabor Winkler
Upmark	Peter Bertheau, Per Ola Cullin, Simon Hult, Marion Michielsen, Fredrik Nyström, Mikael Rimstedt, Ola Rimstedt, Johan Upmark
Meltzer	Rose Meltzer, Nikolay Demirev, Bartosz Chmurski, Piotr Nawrocki, Piotr Tuczynski, Piotr Wiankowski
Milner	Reese Milner, Hemant Lall, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland
Street	Paul Street, Kamel Fergani, Nicolas L'Ecuyer, Ron Pachtman, Fred Pollack, Piotr Zatorski
Team NL	Maarten Schollaardt, Merijn Groenenboom, Danny Molenaar, Tim Verbeek, Joris van Lankveld, Berend van den Bos, Bart Nab, Bob Drijver, Guy Mendes de Leon, Thibo Sprinkhuizen
Zhao	Zhao Chen, Liu Jing, Bauke Muller, Ricco van Prooijen, Louk Verhees, Simon de Wijs

Round 4: **BLASS** beat **TEAM NL** by 62-27 (16.51-3.49) **ZHAO** beat **MILNER** by 58-44 (13.15-6.85) **DE BOTTON** and **MELTZER** drew 58-58 (10.00-10.00) and **STREET** smashed **HUNGARY** by 90-16 (20-0)

Ranking after Round 4:

1. **BLASS** 57.08
2. **DE BOTTON** 53.69
3. **TEAM NL** 47.18
4. **STREET** 45.51
5. **MELTZER** 40.51
6. **ZHAO** 37.42
7. **MILNER** 19.82
8. **HUNGARY** 18.79

You are the dealer at favourable vulnerability. What would you do with:

- ♠ K87642
- ♥ J
- ♦ K109
- ♣ 1052

The requirements for a weak two are a decent 6-card suit and 6-10 points. The question here is whether the spade suit qualifies as being decent. At one time, long ago, the test for the suit quality for a weak two was that it be headed by two honours at least queen-high. Some required Q-J-x-x-x-x or better. For others, Q-10-x-x-x-x was enough. This has fallen by the wayside for many top players. Especially at favourable vulnerability, there is no suit-quality requirement.

Suppose you open 2♠, Pass on your left and 4♠ from partner. Right-hand opponent bids 5♣ and Left-hand opponent raises to 6♣, all pass. What do you lead?

Round 4 : Board 2

South dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ105	
	♥ 97642	
	♦ QJ5	
	♣ J	
West		East
♠ Q		♠ 93
♥ A1083		♥ KQ5
♦ A8743		♦ 62
♣ 963		♣ AKQ874
	South	
	♠ K87642	
	♥ J	
	♦ K109	
	♣ 1052	

On this deal, one South passed, one opened 3♠ (buoyed by the vulnerability), four opened 2♠ and two opened with a multi 2♦, a weak two in hearts or in spades.

MILNER: North-South: 2♠ : Pass : 4♠!, all pass. When partner opens with a 6-card weak two and you have 4+ support and a singleton or a void, bid game at once. When you have a 10 card trump fit the opponents must have either at least a 9-card trump fit or two 8+ trump fits. Note here that North-South have only 16 HCP including the worthless ♣J and yet 4♠ is unbeatable. The defence began with the ♣3 to the ♣Q, the ♥K and the ♦6 to the ♦A. South had the rest, 10 tricks, +420.

Not only is 4♠ unbeatable but East-West can make 5♣. **ZHAO** North-South: 2♠ : Pass : 4♠! 5♣ : Pass : 6♣, all pass. If South leads a spade or a trump, 6♣ will make. A diamond or the attractive ♥J lead will beat 6♣. South chose the ♥J lead. East won in hand and played ♣A, ♣K. Had clubs been 2-2, 6♣ would have made. When North showed out on the second club, East played a spade, won by North. The heart return was ruffed by South, one down, East-West -100 but +8 Imps.

In **HUNGARY** vs **STREET**, it went 3♠ : Pass : 4♠ : 5♣, Pass : 6♣, all pass. Lead: ♥J, one down, E-W -100 but 8 Imps to **STREET** for 4♠ +420 at the other table via 2♦ (multi) : Pass : 4♦ (bid your major) : Pass, 4♠, all pass.

BLASS was +14 Imps vs **TEAM NL** for 2♠ : Pass : 4♠, all pass, +420, and 2♦ multi : Pass : 3♥ pass or correct : Pass, 3♠ : Pass : Pass : 4♣, Pass : 5♣, all pass, +600. You can see how much more effective it is to bid 2♠ : Pass : 4♠ or 2♦ : Pass : 4♦ (bid your major).

MELTZER did even better against **DE BOTTON** by scoring +15 Imps for 2♠ : Pass : 4♠, all pass, +420 and +750 in 5♣ doubled on this auction

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

(1) For takeout

(2) A strong 2♣ overcall

If you are going to open light in third seat it is usually to indicate a good lead to partner. North's hearts would not qualify for that. If you want to open with the 9-point North hand, a 1♠ opening appeals more.

This was the second of yesterday's problems:

With both sides vulnerable, East passes and South opens 2♠ (weak, 5 spades and a 4+ minor). West passes. What would you do as North with:

♠ Q1053
♥ Q74
♦ A9
♣ KQJ7

East dealer : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ Q1053	
	♥ Q74	
	♦ A9	
	♣ KQJ7	
West		East
♠ J		♠ A62
♥ K8532		♥ AJ109
♦ KQ86		♦ 52
♣ 542		♣ 10983
	South	
	♠ K9874	
	♥ 6	
	♦ J10743	
	♣ A6	

On this deal, four Souths passed initially – not everyone plays the 2-suited weak twos – and four chose the 2♠ opening as described. North has very good support for spades and an excellent holding in whichever minor South holds. If you played 2♠ as 5 spades and a 5-card minor, North would definitely be worth 4♠. Opposite 5 spades and a 4-card minor, it is close between bidding 4♠ and inviting game.

MELTZER North-South: 2♠ : Pass : 4♠, all pass. With the spade layout favourable, South can always make ten tricks. West led the ♦K. Declarer took the ♦A, played three rounds of clubs, shedding the ♥6, followed by the ♠Q, which won. South finished with 11 tricks, +650.

DE BOTTON North-South: 2♠ : Pass : 3♥ (artificial, game-invitation in spades) : Pass, 3♠, all pass. South made ten tricks, +170, but 10 IMPs to **MELTZER**.

BLASS made 11 tricks in 4♠, +650 (lead: ♦K). South passed and it went: Pass : 1♣, 1♠ : 2♠, 4♠!, all pass. Note South's 4♠ with only 8 HCP. South has a 7-loser hand and figured North should have a sound 7-loser hand or better. Since South was a passed hand, North would pass 1♠ with a sub-minimum or dead minimum opening. South trusted North's raise to 2♠ to be a good opening, albeit minimum.

TEAM NL North-South: 2♠ : 2NT (name your minor), 3♦ : 3♠ (inviting game), 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♥3, ten tricks, +620, -1 Imp.

STREET North-South: 2♠ : 2NT, 3♠ : 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♥2, ten tricks, North-South +620.

HUNGARY North-South : Pass : 1♣, 1♠ : 2♠, 4♠!, all pass. West led the ♦K: ace – two (encouraging) – four. Declarer played ♣A, ♣K, ♣Q, discarding the ♥6, followed by the ♠3: two – seven – jack. West switched to the ♥3: four – nine – ♠4. Next came the ♠9: ♥2 – ♠10 (an expensive card) - ace. East brought back the ♥10. South ruffed and played the ♦3: queen – nine – five. West played the ♥K. South ruffed with the ♠K, his last trump.

South played the ♦J. Dummy and East were both void in diamonds and dummy had ♠Q-5 and East the ♠6. Whether South discarded the ♣J on the ♦J or ruffed with the ♠5 or ruffed with the ♠Q, East's ♠6 became the fourth trick for the defence. I bet East did not expect to take two trump tricks with the ♠A-6-2. That was one down, North-South -100 and 12 Imps to **STREET**.

MILNER was +650 in 4♠ by North via Pass : 1NT, 2♣ : 2♠, 4♠, all pass. Lead: ♣10. Result +650.

ZHAO was +650 in 4♠ by South via Pass : 1♣, 1♠ : 2♠, 4♠!, all pass. Lead: ♦K. Result +650, no swing.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Vulnerable vs not vul, you open 1♦ with:

♠ 7
♥ AK65
♦ AK87654
♣ Q

Partner responds 1♠. What is your rebid?

Suppose you choose to rebid 2♥. Partner rebids 2♠. Now what?

2. Vulnerable vs not vul, West opens 2♠, weak. What would you do as North with:

♠ A63
♥ A10854
♦ A
♣ QJ83

Why not discuss the problem by phone with your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

Why do we drive on a parkway and park on a driveway?