

74. False start

By Ron Klinger

West dealer : East-West vulnerable

North

♠ 9

♥ Q2

♦ 87543

♣ A7642

East

♠ Q107

♥ A1086

♦ Q962

♣ 85

West

1♠

5♠

Dble
(1) Minors

North

2NT⁽¹⁾

Pass

Pass

East

3♠

Pass

Pass

South

5♣

6♣

Pass

West leads the ♠A, nine from dummy . . . Which card would you play as East?

Today's deals are from Round 2 of the third Alt-Invitational, organized by bid72, bridge 24 and netbridgeonline, together with BBO (Bridge Base Online). These were the teams:

Blass

Josef Blass, Sjoert Brink, Bas Drijver, Jacek Kalita, Michael Nowosadski,
Jacek Pszczola (Pepsi)

Bridge Scanner

Konrad Araszkiwicz, Krzysztof Kotorowicz, Wojciech Olanski, Vytautas Vainikonis,
Erikas Vainikonis, Andrei Arlovich, Mirhail Krasnoselskii, Georgy Matushko

De Botton

Janet de Botton, Thomas Charlsen, Jason Hackett, Thor Erik Hoftaniska, Alexander
Hydes, Artur Malinowski

Donner

Gary Donner, Cecilia Rimstedt, Frederik Nystrom, Johan Upmark, Marion Michielsen,
Per Ola Cullin,

Gupta

Naren Gupta, Bauke Muller, Simon de Wijs, Huub Bertens, Cedric Lorenzini,
Thomas Bessis

Street

Paul Street, Kamel Fergani, Nicolas L'Ecuyer, Ron Pachtman, Fred Pollack,
Piotr Zatorski

Team Rosenthal

Andrew Rosenthal, Aaron Silverstein, Chris Willenken, Jan Jansma, Boye Brogeland,
Espen Lindquist

Team Russia

Andrey Gromov, Anna Gulevich, Vadim Kholomeev, Yury Khuppenen,
Yury Khokhlov, Alexander Dubinin

After you have made up your mind for the problem above, this was yesterday's problem:

West dealer : East-West vulnerable

North

♠ 9

♥ Q2

♦ 87543

♣ A7642

West

♠ AK6532

♥ KJ975

♦ J

♣ J

After the same auction as above, what should West do at trick 2 if East played the ♠10 on West's ♠A and South followed with the ♠4?

West dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 9	
	♥ Q2	
	♦ 87543	
	♣ A7642	
West		East
♠ AK6532		♠ Q107
♥ KJ975		♥ A1086
♦ J		♦ Q962
♣ J		♣ 85
	South	
	♠ J84	
	♥ 43	
	♦ AK10	
	♣ KQ1093	

BLASS North-South: After the auction given, West led ♠A: nine – ten – four and switched to the ♦J: three – two – ace. South played ♣K, ♣A, finessed the ♦10, cashed ♦K, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade and pitched a heart loser on dummy's fifth diamond, one down.

BRIDGE SCANNER North-South:

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♠	3♣
4♥	5♣	5♥	Pass
5♠	6♣	Dble	All Pass

West led the ♠K: nine – ten – four and switched to the ♥K, followed by the ♥7 to the ♥A. East switched to the ♦2: ten – jack – three. That was three down, East-West +500 and 9 Imps to BLASS. The third undertrick was simply a misguess in diamonds by declarer. Playing the ♦10 would have worked if East had started with Q-J-2 or Q-J-6-2 or Q-J-9-2 and saved a trick if East had Q-J-9-6-2.

In a trump contract, when dummy has a singleton and partner's lead will hold the trick, it is usually best to give a suit-preference signal rather than attitude or count. So why did one West treat the ♠10 as asking for diamonds and the other as asking for hearts? The former probably took the ♠10 as bottom from Q-J-10 and so asking for the low suit. The other read the ♠10 as high, maybe from the actual holding, maybe from 10-8-7.

One of the fundamental principles for defence is to make the situation as clear to partner as possible. Here it would be a good idea for East to signal with the ♠Q at trick 1. In most cases the queen-signal promises the jack, but that should not apply here, where the over-riding question is what to play at trick 2. It would make no sense for West to play a spade at trick 2 even if East did have ♠Q-J-x. The ♠Q should therefore be obvious to West to switch to hearts. That would yield two down. Declarer may or may not lose a diamond trick later.

ROSENTHAL East-West played in 5♥, +650, after East-West competed to 5♣. **STREET** East-West bid 1♠ : 2♠, 4♠, all pass, +650, no swing.

GUPTA East-West: The auction recorded is 1♠ : Pass : 2♠ : 2NT, 4♠ : 5♣, all pass. Declarer lost a spade and two hearts, but avoided a diamond loser, one light, –50. That is a strange 2NT bid for South, so treat the auction with caution (a cute anagram). **RUSSIA** East-West: 1♠ : Pass : 2♠ : Pass, 4♠, all pass, +650 and 12 Imps to **RUSSIA**.

DE BOTTON 5♥ +680 [1♠ : P : 2♥ – good spade raise : 3♣, 4♥ : 5♣ : 5♥, all pass] picked up 1 Imp against **DONNER** for 5♠ +650 [1♠ : P : 2♠ : 3♣, 4♠ : 5♣ : X : P : 5♠, all pass].

East dealer : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♥
		All Pass	

What would you lead as West from:

♠ AJ
♥ J83
♦ AQ9432
♣ 72

Bd. 21: East dealer : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 865432	
	♥ AK4	
	♦ 6	
	♣ AK5	
West		East
♠ AJ		♠ Q109
♥ J83		♥ Q
♦ AQ9432		♦ KJ1075
♣ 72		♣ J1093
	South	
	♠ K7	
	♥ 1097652	
	♦ 8	
	♣ Q864	

BLASS North-South: After the auction above, West led the ♠A. What is it with this predilection to lead out aces against a trump contract? Obviously West was hoping to find East with the ♠K and score a third-round ruff, but there was no evidence that East should have the ♠K. One might lead an ace against a trump contract when dummy is known or expected to have a source of tricks on which declarer can discard. There was no evidence of that either.

West switched to the ♦A at trick 2, then the ♠J: four – queen – king. South played the ♥2: three – ace – queen, came to hand with the ♣5 to the ♣Q and laid down the ♥10: eight – four – ♦7. After a heart to the king, declarer ruffed a spade and had 11 tricks + 450.

BRIDGE SCANNER North-South: Pass : 2♦ (multi) : Pass : 4♣ (transfer me to your major), Pass : 4♦ : Double : Pass (OK, now bid 4♥ yourself), Pass : 4♥, all pass. Declarer won the club lead and cashed ♥A, ♥K, ♣K, ♣Q and ruffed the fourth club in dummy. A spade went to the king and ace and so declarer lost two spades, a diamond and a heart, one light, East-West +50 and 11 Imps to **BLASS**.

ROSENTHAL vs **STREET**: Flat board in 4♥ –50. Ditto in **DE BOTTON** vs **DONNER**.

GUPTA: 4♥ one off, –50.

With **RUSSIA** North-South, everyone bid diamonds:

West	North	East	South
3♦	4♦ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♦ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	Dble	All Pass	Pass

(1) Weak two in hearts or in spades

(2) Bid your major.

North took ♣A, ♥K, ♣K, followed by ♣5: jack – queen – ♦2, one off, –200, 6 Imps to **RUSSIA**.

Round 2 Results:

	Imps	Victory Points
De Botton – Donner	57 - 67	7.67 - 12.33
Street - Rosenthal	58 - 19	17.01 - 2.99
Russia - Gupta	56 - 36	14.26 - 5.74
Blass – Bridge Scanner	97 - 44	18.47 - 1.53

VPs After Round 2

1. Blass	36.56
2. Street	29.96
3. De Botton	21.39
4. Donner	19.38
5. Russia	16.17
6. Bridge Scanner	15.79
7. Gupta	11.48
8. Rosenthal	9.27

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. With neither side vulnerable, the opponents bid 1NT : 3NT. What would you lead as West from:

♠ 109
♥ A975
♦ 87543
♣ 98

2. North dealer : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	2♥ ⁽¹⁾	Dble
3♥	4♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Weak two

What would you lead as West from:

♠ QJ2
♥ J8
♦ 76
♣ AJ7543

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

The best thing about social isolation is using as much garlic as you like.