

189. Rush hour

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : Both vulnerable

North
♠ J9853
♥ 43
♦ A42
♣ J82

South
♠ AKQ72
♥ 10
♦ K73
♣ 10643

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

(1) 9-10 points, 4+ hearts

West leads the ♥K, followed by the ♥2: four – ace – ♠Q. You draw trumps with ♠A, ♠K, East discarding the ♥6. How would you plan the play?

The Taiwan Contract Bridge League organized the Yeh Cup Online Open Teams over the middle three days in August. There were two sections of 14 teams, playing a round-robin of 7-board matches. At the end of the qualifying, the four leading teams in each section would play a 12-board quarter-final against the four leaders in the other section, followed by semi-finals and a final.

The field included two teams from Australia:

Australia I: Sophie Ashton – David Wiltshire, Peter Gill – Sartaj Hans, Andy Hung – Jamie Thompson
Australia II: Renee Cooper – Ben Thompson, Andy Braithwaite – Arjuna De Livera, Matt Mullamphy – Ian Thomson – Ron Klinger

There were also two teams from New Zealand, which included a couple of Aussies:

NZ I: Nick Jacob – Geo Tislevoll, Matthew McManus (A) – Michael Ware, James Coutts – Justin Mill (A)
NZ II: Ashley Bach – Michael Cornell, Matthew Brown – Michael Whibley, Peter Newell – Martin Reid, Jonathon Westoby

In Round 1, New Zealand 1 played New Zealand II. New Zealand II won by 3 Imps to 2.

This was yesterday's question:

Dealer West : Both vulnerable

North
♠ J9853
♥ 43
♦ A42
♣ J82

East
♠ 10
♥ AJ8765
♦ Q986
♣ KQ

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

(1) 4+ hearts, maximum pass.

West leads the ♥K. How do you defend?

Board 7: Dealer West : Both vulnerable

North	
♠ J9853	
♥ 43	
♦ A42	
♣ J82	
West	East
♠ 64	♠ 10
♥ KQ92	♥ AJ8765
♦ J105	♦ Q986
♣ A975	♣ KQ
South	
♠ AKQ72	
♥ 10	
♦ K73	
♣ 10643	

At both tables, after similar sequences, both Wests led the ♥K. At one table, East overtook with the ♥A and switched to the ♣Q and the ♣K. The idea was to unblock the clubs so that West could cash the ♣A if West gained the lead. If South had the ♣A, East was not going to make more than one trick anyway.

I am not sure why there was a rush to play clubs. If South had ♣A-10-x-x and West had ♦K-10-x or K-J-x, there was a greater need to switch to diamonds before declarer could gain a discard on the clubs. Further, if West did have the ♣A, West with ♥K-♥Q (from the bidding and lead) and the ♣A, would hardly have an outside entry. It is true that, double dummy, South can always go only one off, but the club switch made it very easy for South.

At trick 4, East reverted to hearts. South ruffed, drew trumps and played a club. West took the ♣A and South's ♣10 was high for a diamond discard. That was one down, East-West +100.

At the other table, West's ♥K lead won trick 1. South ruffed the next heart with the ♠Q and drew trumps with ♠A, ♠K. How should South continue?

As there is no prospect of making 4♠, you turn your attention to holding the loss to one down. On the surface you have three clubs and a diamond to lose. You will need a favourable layout not to go two down.

One successful plan is to play ♦A, ♦K, and exit with the third diamond. This will hold the losers to four whenever an opponent holds exactly two clubs, A-K, A-Q or K-Q.

Another line that works is a low club to the ♣8 in dummy. East wins, but what is East to do? If East plays the other club honour, the ♣10 will set up for a diamond discard. If East switches to a diamond, South can play ♦A, ♦K, and a third diamond and the defence can only collect two club tricks. Yes, I know it is not an easy play, but what other hope is there?

After ruffing the second heart and cashing ♠A, ♠K, South played the ♣3: five – jack – queen. East's ♣K won the next trick and East exited with the ♦9. Declarer won with the ♦A, crossed to the ♦K and played a third diamond. However, West won this and cashed the ♣A for two down, East-West +200 and 3 Imps to [NZII](#). It is true that 3 Imps is not a huge loss, but show me the bridge player who would not prefer one down to two down.

Problem for Tomorrow:

With neither side vulnerable, there are two passes to East. What would you do as East with:

♠ 8652
♥ K8643
♦ 32
♣ 73

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

Why is it called the 'rush hour' when traffic moves at its slowest then?

New book: <i>The Power of Pass</i> (by Harold Schogger and Ron Klinger). \$A25.00 Available from Suzie Klinger, post free until 2021: email suzie@ronklingerbridge.com or telephone 0411 229 705.
