

266. Path to success

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ J103
♥ Q9
♦ J976
♣ AK108

South
♠ AQ9854
♥ K85
♦ A1043
♣ --

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♠ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Inviting game

West leads the ♥6: nine – ace – five. East switches to the ♦Q: ace – two (low-like) – six. Plan the play.

You have lost a heart. You might lose a spade and you should not lose more than one diamond. Is there any danger?

It looks as though there could be the threat of a diamond ruff. If East has switched to the ♦Q singleton or top from a doubleton. The normal way to play the spades to avoid a spade loser would be to cross to the ♥Q and run the ♠J for a finesse. That would be the thing to do if you needed to avoid a spade loser.

Here you can afford a spade loser. If you lose a spade, a heart and only one diamond, you will have made 4♠. The danger is losing a spade, a heart, a diamond to the ♦K and a diamond ruff. How can you deal with that?

One option is ♠A and a second spade. That works if the ♠K is singleton or if spades are 2-2. It will not work if, say, East began with ♠K-x-x and ♦Q-x. Can you do better?

This was the full deal from the final of a Sydney teams' event.

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ J103
♥ Q9
♦ J976
♣ AK108

West
♠ K7
♥ 7632
♦ 82
♣ QJ532

East
♠ 62
♥ AJ104
♦ KQ5
♣ 9764

South
♠ AQ9854
♥ K85
♦ A1043
♣ --

After ♥6, nine, ace and ♦Q (deceptive) taken by the ace, South crossed to the ♥Q and played the ♠J: two – four – king. West returned the ♦8 to the ♦K. East continued with ♦5 and West ruffed. That was the fourth trick for the defence and South was one down, East-West +50.

There was an easy way to succeed after taking the ♦A. Cross to the ♥Q and play ♠A, ♠K, discarding two diamonds. Then play the ♠J and take the spade finesse. You lose 1 spade, 1 heart and 1 diamond, but you make ten tricks comfortably.

East could have played ♥10 on dummy's ♥9 at trick 1, but that presents no problems. South wins and returns a heart to ♥Q and ♥A. South wins the diamond switch with the ♦A, ruffs a heart, cashes ♠A, ♠K, pitching two diamonds and finesses in spades.

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	North	
	♠ J103	
	♥ Q9	
	♦ J976	
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West		East
♠ K7		♠ 62
♥ 7632		♥ AJ104
♦ 82		♦ KQ5
♣ QJ532		♣ 9764
	South	
	♠ AQ9854	
	♥ K85	
	♦ A1043	
	♣ --	

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT ⁽¹⁾	Pass	4♣ ⁽²⁾
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

(1) Spade raise

(2) Club shortage

West led the ♣Q: ace – four – ♦3. South discarded the ♦4 on the ♣K and played the ♥Q. East took ♥A and switched to the ♠2: four – king – three. Declarer could play ♥K and ruff a heart in dummy for ten tricks, +420 and +10 Imps.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Both vulnerable

North
♠ KJ10874
♥ 93
♦ Q53
♣ 93

South
♠ A53
♥ AQJ8
♦ 109
♣ KJ105

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

(1) Hearts and a minor

(2) Transfer to spades

(3) Pass or correct

West leads the ♦A: three – four (reverse count) – nine. West switches to the ♣4: three – ace – five. East returns the ♥4. Plan the play.

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

Break-in At The Apple Store. Police Looking For iWitnesses.

A great gift: *The Power of Pass* (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.