

# 299. Game tries

*By Ron Klinger*

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	3♦	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ KJ5  
♥ 108  
♦ Q2  
♣ AK10642

Make up your mind about your answer to that problem before tackling this one:

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	2♣
2♥	Pass	Pass	3♥ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	4♦	Pass	?

(1) Asking for a stopper for 3NT

What would you do now with the South hand above?

This was yesterday's problem:

You are the dealer with both sides vulnerable. What do you do with:

♠ Q3  
♥ J94  
♦ AK98754  
♣ 9

In the quarter-final match between [SCHWARTZ](#) and [TULIN](#) in the 2017 Spingold (US Knock-out Open Teams), one South opened 3♦, the other opened 1♦. South has six playing tricks in diamonds. If partner has some values in spades and / or hearts, the ♠Q and ♥J might be useful, but they do not reduce the number of losers in the South hand. If you replaced those values with ♠K-x or ♥K-x-x, I would opt for a 1♦ opening. With the actual hand, 3♦ looks fine, although it is topweight for the bid.

Board 34: Dealer North : Both vulnerable

	North	West	North	East	South
	♠ Q3	<i>Padon</i>	<i>Schwartz</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Gold</i>
	♥ J94		3♦	Pass	3NT
	♦ AK98754	Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♣ 9				

West	East
♠ A86	♠ 109742
♥ AQ765	♥ K32
♦ J3	♦ 106
♣ Q73	♣ J85

South's 3NT was optimistic, given South had no stopper in hearts. On some days it might work – maybe North has something useful in hearts or maybe a heart is not led. This was not one of those days.

South  
♠ KJ5  
♥ 108  
♦ Q2  
♣ AK10642

West led the ♥5. East won with the ♥K and returned the ♥3. West took the ♥Q, ♥A and cashed the ♠A, followed by the ♥7 and ♥6. Declarer had the rest, two light, East-West +200.

Board 34: Dealer North : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ Q3	
	♥ J94	
	♦ AK98754	
	♣ 9	
West		East
♠ A86		♠ 109742
♥ AQ765		♥ K32
♦ J3		♦ 106
♣ Q73		♣ J85
	South	
	♠ KJ5	
	♥ 108	
	♦ Q2	
	♣ AK10642	

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
<i>Danailov</i>	<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>
	1♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♣ <sup>(2)</sup>
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Dble	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) 2+ diamonds

(2) Natural, not forcing to game

South's 2♥ bid was not alerted. It looks as though South was aiming for 3NT and trying to ward off a heart lead via a fake 2♥ bid. Note West's double, showing hearts. This double makes no sense for takeout (spades is the only suit left and West could have bid 2♠ over 2♣ or over 2♥). One can sensibly play the double of the third suit by an opposing partnership as penalties / lead-directing. This can overcome nefarious fake-suit bidding.

South's 3♠ was also not alerted. It might have been stopper-showing, but looks like fourth-suit, seeking help in spades. As North had help in spades – some play Q-x as equivalent to a stopper – North bid 3NT.

East led the ♥3. West won with the ♥A and returned the ♥7 to the ♥K. After ♥2 to the ♥Q, West cashed the ♥6, the ♥7 and the ♠A, two down, East-West +200, no swing.

Not that it was relevant on the deal, but note how Dror Padon (West in the auction at the bottom of page 1) cashed the ♠A after winning the third heart. That was in case partner had the ♠K or better. Cashing the ♠A let partner know not to discard any useful spades.

When the deal was replayed in a game on BBO:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	2♣
2♥	Pass	Pass	3♥ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass!	Pass	

(1) Stopper ask for 3NT

East led the ♥2. West won with the ♥A and played the ♥Q! Then came the ♠A, one down, East-West +100.

I was South and could certainly have passed 4♦. It was unrealistic to hope for a singleton heart with North. After 3♥ stopper ask, some play that a jump to 5♦ shows a minimum opening with a singleton diamond, 4♥ as a strong hand (not relevant here) and 4♦ with 2+ losers in diamonds. That looks like a sensible approach.

## Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer South : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ 6

♥ Q7642

♦ AK74

♣ 1097

East

♠ A108

♥ A853

♦ 85

♣ KJ63

West   North   East   South

3♠

Pass   Pass   Pass

West leads the ♦3: four – eight – nine. South plays the ♠K: seven – six – ace. East returns the ♦5: jack – queen – ace. Next comes the ♣10 from dummy. Which club do you play as East?

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

*Game try: You bid game and then you try to make it.*