

312. Reading allowed

By Ron Klinger

Dealer West : Both vulnerable

North
♠ J108
♥ AK843
♦ Q62
♣ 43

South
♠ AKQ932
♥ J2
♦ 1095
♣ AQ

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♥	Pass	2♠ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	4♠ ⁽²⁾	All Pass	

(1) 5+ spades, forcing to game

(2) 'Fast arrival', weaker than 3♣

West leads the ♦A: two – jack – nine. West continues with the ♦K: six – seven – ten and the ♦3: queen – ♠4 – ♦5. East switches to the ♣6. Plan the play?

Do you finesse the ♣Q? If not, what other hope is there?

What is the first thing to do when dummy appears?

Count dummy's HCP (10) and add your own (16), total 26. That means the opponents hold 14 HCP.

Where will most of those points be?

With West for the opening bid.

What points have you seen from the opponents so far?

West ♦A, ♦K (7 points), East ♦J (1 point).

What follows if the ♣K is with East so that the club finesse will work?

There are 14 points missing. East has turned up with 1 point (the ♦J). If East also has the ♣K (3 points), that gives East 4 points in all and West 10 points. That means West began with 10 points.

Is it likely that West opened 1♦ in first seat vulnerable with 10 points?

It is possible, but highly unlikely.

What follows from that?

If West did not open with 10 HCP, but rather with 13 HCP, it means West has the ♣K and taking the club finesse will lose and the contract will be one down.

What other hope is there?

Dummy has five hearts headed by the A-K. You have two hearts. The opponents therefore have six hearts between them.

What is the probable division of the six missing hearts?

They could be 3-3 (36%), but more likely is a 4-2 split (48%). In either of these cases you will be able to set up an extra heart trick (4-2 split) or 2 heart tricks (3-3 split). If hearts are 5-1 or 6-0, there is no hope.

Note that even if the ♠K with East was a reasonable possibility, if that chance were 50%, playing hearts is better as the total of a 3-3 or 4-2 hearts split is 84%.

How will you manage to deal with a 4-2 split in hearts?

♥A, ♥K, heart ruff, over to dummy, heart ruff. That will leave the last heart in dummy high.

How many entries will you need in dummy?

Two, one to ruff the fourth heart and one to return to dummy to cash the fifth heart.

What entries does dummy have outside of the hearts?

Three, the ♠J, ♠10 and ♠8 are potential entries.

Can you afford to draw any rounds of trumps?

You can afford to play one top trump before starting on the hearts. You cannot afford two or three rounds of trumps.

Suppose you cash the ♠A and then play the ♥A: five – two – six and the ♥K: seven – jack – queen and the ♥3: ten . . .

Which card do you play from hand?

Be sure to trump high on the third heart. There would be smirks from the opponents and a scowl from partner if you ruffed the third heart low and were over ruffed. Here is the full deal:

North	
♠ J108	
♥ AK843	
♦ Q62	
♣ 43	
West	East
♠ 765	♠ 4
♥ Q6	♥ 10975
♦ AK843	♦ J7
♣ KJ9	♣ 1087652
South	
♠ AKQ932	
♥ J2	
♦ 1095	
♣ AQ	

The complete play: ♦A; ♦K; third diamond ruffed; club from East, taken by the ♣A; ♠A; ♥A; ♥K; heart ruffed with the ♠K (or ♠Q or ♠9); ♠2 to 10; heart ruffed high; spade to ♠J; fifth heart, discarding the ♣Q.

After ♦A, ♦K, diamond ruff, club taken by the ♣A, you could also play on hearts at once: ♥A; ♥K; heart ruffed high; ♠2 to ♠8; heart ruffed high. The fifth heart is now a winner. You can play the ♠3 to the ♠10, but when you find that West has a third trump, you must not play the heart winner next, else West will ruff it. You must draw the third trump with dummy's ♠J, playing the ♠9 under it. That is why you ruff hearts with your top trumps so that you ensure an entry to dummy's trumps later via your low trumps.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer North : Both vulnerable

North

♠ K32

♥ 104

♦ 74

♣ K97642

South

♠ AQJ985

♥ K52

♦ K3

♣ A3

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
2♥	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Do you agree with South's 4♠ bid?
2. West leads the ♣5. Plan the play.

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

I finally did it. Bought a new pair of shoes with memory foam insoles. I'll wear them to bridge all the time. Never forget what's trumps, what the opening lead was . . .