

384. Collecting the extra trick

By Ron Klinger

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

North
♠ Q102
♥ KJ1032
♦ 95
♣ A84

South
♠ AKJ764
♥ A9
♦ A10
♣ J65

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

(1) Sound raise to 3♣

West leads the ♣3. You take the ♣A and draw trumps, East turning up with three trumps and West discarding two low diamonds. You cash the ♥A: four – two – queen. You are playing pairs. How should you continue?

You can see the problem. Without the club lead, everyone will make 13 tricks. On, say, a diamond lead, South wins, draws trumps and plays the ♥A. When the ♥Q drops, South cashes the ♥9, crosses to the ♠A and plays three more hearts, making 13 tricks. South also makes 13 tricks routinely on a heart lead or a spade lead.

The club lead has removed your entry to dummy. If you overtake the ♥9, you can make only four heart tricks and a total of 12 tricks. That will be a bottom score for sure, perhaps a shared bottom, but still a bottom.

You cannot do anything to beat the pairs in 3NT if they make 13 tricks and you cannot beat anyone who bids and makes a slam. What you must try to do is equal those in 4♠ by making 13 tricks, too. How can you do that?

You already have a lot of information.

What do you know about the East hand?

East began with three spades and one heart.

What about East's minors?

That leaves East with 9 cards in the minors.

How are East's minors divided?

East opened 1♣ and so the clubs will be longer than the diamonds. East's pattern figures to be 3-1-4-5 or 3-1-3-6. As West led the ♣3, that will have to be ♣3 singleton or ♣3-2 doubleton. West would not lead the 3 from a doubleton with a card higher than the 3.

What about East's high card values?

You have 17 HCP and dummy has 10, total 27. As the pack has 40 HCP, 13 HCP are with East-West. Since East opened the bidding, East figures to have 11-13 points. From above, you have concluded that East has the ♣K and ♣Q, as well as the ♠10, ♠9 and ♠7. You now know that only West is guarding the hearts and only East is guarding the clubs. That is the typical requirement that allows you to pull off a double squeeze.

Here is the full deal, which arose at the Noosa Bridge Club in January and was reported to me by Simon Andrew of Queensland:

Dealer East : East-West vulnerable

North	
♠ Q102	
♥ KJ1032	
♦ 95	
♣ A84	
West	East
♠ 5	♠ 983
♥ 87654	♥ Q
♦ J8764	♦ KQ32
♣ 32	♣ KQ1097
South	
♠ AKJ764	
♥ A9	
♦ A10	
♣ J65	

You do not need to know anything about squeeze play to bring in all the tricks, After the ♣3, taken by the ace, three rounds of spades and the ♥A, just keep playing spades. As West cannot afford to discard any hearts, after two more rounds of spades, the position will look like this:

North	
♠	
♥ KJ103	
♦ 9	
♣ 8	
West	East
♠	♠
♥ 8765	♥
♦ J8	♦ KQ
♣	♣ KQ97
South	
♠ 4	
♥ 9	
♦ A10	
♣ J6	

When you play the ♠4, West has to discard a diamond, the ♦8 naturally in order to keep the holding in hearts and you pitch the ♣8 from dummy. Now you overtake the ♥9 in dummy and cash another heart, leaving:

North	
♠	
♥ 103	
♦ 9	
♣	
West	East
♠	♠
♥ 87	♥
♦ J	♦ KQ
♣	♣ K
South	
♠	
♥	
♦ A10	
♣ J	

When you play the ♥10, what can East discard? If East throws the ♣K, you discard the ♦10 and the ♦9 to your ♦A gives you the last two tricks. If instead East lets a diamond go, you pitch the ♣J and your ♦A and ♦10 take the last two tricks. You have tied with all the others who made 13 tricks in 4♠.

You can tell your friends that you pulled off a 'non-simultaneous double squeeze'. That should impress them. You do not need to do anything other than play off your spades and watch the discards from West (if a heart is thrown) and East (whether the ♣K and ♣Q are discarded). If not, your diamonds will take the last two tricks.

Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer West : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♦	Dble	2♦	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ 4
♥ J632
♦ KQ975
♣ 1042

Your basic choices are to bid 2♥ or to pass. You can already tell that North will be void in diamonds and so your diamonds will largely be wasted in a heart contract. On the other hand, you are short in spades and partner is short in diamonds.

Suppose you pass. The auction continues:

West	North	East	South
1♦	Dble	2♦	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	?

What now?

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

You know what a big-a-mist is? A fog in Italy..