

The Real Deal Workout #97

Teams: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	Pass	?	

What would you do as East with:

♠ J 4
♥ Q 7 5 2
♦ 10 9
♣ A K 8 6 2

Considerations

Opener has bid two suits and responder has chosen the second suit as trumps. With 2 spades and 3 diamonds, responder might have bid **2S**, especially when in the upper range for the 6-9 (10)-point **1NT** response. With 0-3 or 1-3 in spades-diamonds, North would pass **2D**. In other cases, North's pass figures to include 4+ diamonds.

When the opponents find a trump fit and subside at the 2-level, it almost always pays to compete. Here East has an easy way into the auction with a takeout double. East has both unbid suits and is maximum for a passed hand. **Recommendation: Double.**

The deal arose in the final of 2022 Spingold (USA Knockout Open Teams).

Board 32: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

		North		
		♠ 7		
		♥ J 10 9 8 6		
		♦ 7 6 5		
		♣ Q J 10 4		
West			East	
♠ A K 10 9 3			♠ J 4	
♥ K 4			♥ Q 7 5 2	
♦ K Q J 2			♦ 10 9	
♣ 9 7			♣ A K 8 6 2	
		South		
		♠ Q 8 6 5 2		
		♥ A 3		
		♦ A 8 4 3		
		♣ 5 3		

At one table:

West	North	East	South
	2♥ (1)	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
(1) 5-card weak two, need not have a second suit			

North led the **HJ**. South took the **HA** and switched to the **D3: two – five – nine**. The **SJ** won trick 3, followed by the **D10**. South took the **DA** and switched to a club. Declarer had the rest, including a finesse of the **S10**, East-West +660.

At the other table:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All pass

West led the **DK**, winning, then the **DQ**, winning and the **DJ**. Declarer captured the **DJ** with the **DA**, cashed the **D8** to draw West's last trump and played a club. East won and switched to the **H5**. South took the **HA** and played another club. East won and switched to the **SJ, queen, king**. Declarer garnered a spade trick to bring his tally to four tricks, four down, –800 and 4 Imps to East-West.

NOT SO FAST! When the hand was over, South called the Director and claimed that East could have been influenced by his partner's hesitation. There had been a 100 second delay between West's pass and East's Double.

The Director agreed and removed East's double. The score stood at down 4 but, undoubled, this gave East-West +200 (instead of +800) and 10 Imps to North-South.

Board 32: Dealer North : East-West vulnerable

	North	
	♠ 7	
	♥ J 10 9 8 6	
	♦ 7 6 5	
	♣ Q J 10 4	
West		East
♠ A K 10 9 3		♠ J 4
♥ K 4		♥ Q 7 5 2
♦ K Q J 2		♦ 10 9
♣ 9 7		♣ A K 8 6 2
	South	
	♠ Q 8 6 5 2	
	♥ A 3	
	♦ A 8 4 3	
	♣ 5 3	

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	Pass	Double	All pass

In these cases, if the Director finds that there has been an offence, the ruling will be in favour of the non-offending side.

Not surprisingly, the offending team appealed. There were two problems with the Director's ruling. (1) There was a screen separating North-East and South-West. At the time that East doubled, East could not be aware whether the time taken on the other side had been by South or by West. Maybe South had been thinking of bidding further.

(2) Given East's cards, the double seemed clear-cut. East would have taken the same action if the bidding tray from the other side of the screen had appeared in tempo.

For me, a good test is what action would be taken by East players in the same peer group as East, in this case, experts. If 80% or more would have made a takeout double, the bid can be classified as clear-cut. My gut feeling is that more than 90% of experts would have doubled. The appeals committee agreed with the appellants and the score reverted from North-South 10 Imps (the Director's ruling) to 4 Imps to East-West.

Tis better to give than to receive, but not when it comes to penalties.

Exercise 98 for next time

Imps: Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

North

♠ A 10 5

♥ A 3 2

♦ Q J 7 5

♣ A 10 7

South

♠ Q 8 7 6 4 2

♥ 8 7

♦ K 10 4

♣ J 6

West

North

East

South

Pass

4♠

1♥

All pass

2♠

West leads the **HK: ace – nine (encouraging) – seven**. You play the **SA: jack – two – three**. How would you continue?