

Penalty shoot-out

by Ron Klinger

North dealer : North-South vulnerable

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

?

⁽¹⁾ 5+ clubs, 10+ points

What would you do as West with:

♠ 8
♥ 753
♦ K87
♣ AQJ653

In general, one does not get rich by doubling opponents who jump to game when they are vulnerable vs not vulnerable. When they lack the points for game, they usually have significant compensation in terms of good shape. Of course, that is not always the case. It pays to know your customers.

Today's deal arose in the 2018 TBIB Swiss Teams at the North Shore Bridge Club Super Congress.

Round 2: Board 15

North dealer : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AQ763	
	♥ Q942	
	♦ 1094	
	♣ 2	
West		East
♠ 8		♠ 5
♥ 753		♥ AK6
♦ K87		♦ AQJ6
♣ AQJ653		♣ K10874
	South	
	♠ KJ10942	
	♥ J108	
	♦ 532	
	♣ 9	

If you passed East's double, you collect 800. If you bid 5♣, partner makes 12 tricks, +420. If you reach 6♣ you score +920. North-South do have decent shape, but there is severe duplication with a club singleton in each hand. The defence can take two hearts, three diamonds and a club.

Going -800 would be fine if East-West bid 6♣ and a few pairs did find the small slam. Note how much better the result for North-South if South had three low clubs and a singleton diamond. Now 4♠X is only one down. One might also question the wisdom of South bidding opposite a passed hand.

Datum: E-W 570. Results: 4♣ +170 x 2; 5♣ +400 x 1, +420 x 22, +440 x 2; 5♠X x 3, -800 x 2 (♣A lead x 1, ♥A lead x 1), -1100 x 1 (♦7 lead); 6♣ +920 x 12.

'Phantom sacrifice': An idiocy when committed by partner, but an unforeseeable lie of the cards when committed by you.