

BRIDGE ARTICLE 3

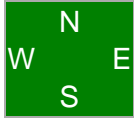
MALENY CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

This is the third article related to bridge for members of our club.

If you have any comments, contributions or suggestions for future articles, please email stuart_craig100@hotmail.com.

Solutions from last week

This was the first problem:

North Deals	♠ A 9
None Vul	♥ A 9 3 2
	♦ Q 6 2
	♣ K J 6 3
	
	♠ K 2
	♥ K 6 5 4
	♦ J 4 3
	♣ A Q 9 5


The contract is 4♥ by South after North opened 1♣ and no opposition bidding. The Q♠ is led. When you play trumps, you will find they split 3-2. See if you can find a way to play this that guarantees the contract.

Solution You have 8 top tricks (2 in spades, 2 in hearts and 4 in clubs). Trumps are 3-2 so we have a trump loser, but the fourth trump will be a winner. So, we have 9 tricks for sure. What about the diamonds? If we lead the suit, we will normally lose all three diamond tricks if the A and K are in different hands, unless the opponents mis-defend. We then have 4 losers and go down. However, if the opponents lead diamonds, we can always make a diamond trick, which is our tenth trick. Make sure you understand how important it is who starts off playing the suit, because this situation often arises in other hands.

How can we get the opponents to lead diamonds? We eliminate all their exit cards and throw them in so they either lead diamonds or give us a trump and discard. In either case we have our tenth trick.

The sequence is: win the first trick in either hand; lead two rounds of hearts winning with the A and K; then cash the other spade winner then the four club winners. If an opponent trumps a club, they are endplayed and forced to lead a diamond or give us a trump and discard. If no one trumps, then lead a trump and whoever wins this trick is endplayed as before.

This was the second problem:

South Deals	♠ A K 7 6
Both Vul	♥ A 7 5 2
	♦ 8 6 3
	♣ K 9
	
	♠ 10 9 8 3
	♥ K Q J 6
	♦ A 7 4
	♣ A 8

South is declarer in 4♥ after he opened the bidding 1NT. West leads the 3♣ and East follows suit. How do you guarantee your contract assuming trumps break 3-2?

Solution You have 9 top tricks (2 spades, 4 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs). You have 4 possible losers (2 spades and 2 diamonds). You can always take a trick with the fourth round of spades if they break 3-2, but what if they are 4-1 or 5-0? For instance, if East has the Q, J and two other spades, it looks like you will lose 2 spade tricks. This is true if you lead spades, but if East leads spades, you can always make 3 spade tricks and lose only one. You have no reason to suppose East has these four spades, but if you can find a way to cater for this possibility without risking the contract with other spade distributions, you have solved the problem.

So, you draw three rounds of trumps and win the other club trick and A♦ to remove exit cards and lead a diamond.

There are quite a few possible continuations, depending on which opponent wins the diamond tricks. In each case, the opponents will have to give you a trump and discard for your tenth trick or allow you to take three spade tricks and again make your contract. Try all the possibilities.

1. West wins the first diamond trick and leads a spade. Win the A in dummy and lead the last diamond. If East wins, he will have to lead a spade or give you a trump and discard. If West wins and leads another small spade, play low in dummy. If East can win the trick, spades are 3-2, otherwise your 10 wins.
2. East or West win the diamond trick and lead another diamond and West wins. West must lead a spade or give you a trump and discard. Play low from dummy. Either your 10 will win or East will win and have to lead away from his other spade honour.
3. East or West win the diamond trick and lead another diamond and East wins. East will have to lead a spade or give you a trump and discard.

TO DRAW TRUMPS OR NOT TO DRAW TRUMPS, THAT IS THE QUESTION

In the hands we've looked at so far, it has been right to draw at least some trumps at the earliest opportunity. We do this to avoid the opponents trumping your winners when side suits break badly. However, there are hands where drawing trumps would reduce the amount of trumping we can do ourselves, where trumps are needed to establish suits, or where there is something urgent that needs to be done (like discarding losers on winners) before we draw trumps and we just hope the bad breaks don't happen.

Consider this hand:

South Deals ♠ J 6
 None Vul ♥ A 10 8
 ♦ K 8 7 2
 ♣ 8 5 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 9 7 4
 ♥ K Q J 9 7 5
 ♦ A 3
 ♣ A 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
2 ♣	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

West leads the K♣. You have 9 top tricks (6 hearts, 2 diamonds and a club). Where is the tenth trick coming from? You can trump the third round of spades in dummy. If you draw two rounds of trumps and they split 2-2, then you lose two spades and a club in whatever order the opponents choose, trump your third spade and, together with your top tricks, claim 10 tricks. You would go on to the next hand without realizing this hand was played badly.

Suppose trumps are 3-1 or 4-0. If you even lead one round of trumps, the opponents can (and should) lead another trump each time they are in in spades. Then, by the time you can trump your third spade, dummy will have no trumps left and you go down. You should lead a spade at trick 2. Now the opponents can play trumps twice and you will have a trump in dummy to deal with your third spade and your contract makes.

It is theoretically possible that West had a singleton diamond and can trump a diamond if you don't draw trumps. However, 7-1 splits are rare, East may well have bid a 7-card suit and West may well have led a singleton diamond. Even if East did bid diamonds or West led a diamond, it would be well against the odds to draw trumps.

Here is another hand:

South Deals	♠ A 8 7 5 4						
None Vul	♥ A J 7						
	♦ A 6 2						
	♣ K 4						
	<table border="1" style="background-color: #008000; color: white; border-collapse: collapse; width: 80px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>				N	W E	S
N							
W E							
S							
	♠ 2						
	♥ K Q 10 9 8 4 2						
	♦ 9 7 5						
	♣ 9 2						
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				
			3 ♥				
Pass	4 ♥	All pass					

West leads the Q♣ against South's 4♥ contract. You play the K but East wins the A and returns a club to West's 10. West now plays Q♦. You win the A. What should you lead next? How do you hope the play will go from here?

You have 9 top tricks (1 spade, 7 hearts and 1 diamond). You have already lost two tricks and seem to have 2 more diamond losers coming. You need to avoid losing two diamonds?

The only hope is to play four rounds of spades and hope they break 4-3 and you can discard a diamond on dummy's established fifth spade. Can you see how to play to make this a possibility?

First you need to lead three small spades from dummy and trump them in your hand. Then you need to get to dummy, after trumps are drawn to cash the fifth spade (now high if spades were 4-3). You will need to use your trumps as entries to dummy to do this.

So, after winning the A♦, play A♠ and a small spade and trump. Lead a small trump to dummy's 7 and trump another spade. Lead a small trump to dummy's J and trump the third small spade. Finally lead a trump to dummy's A. If all the trumps are now gone (i.e. trumps were not 4-0) and spades were 4-3, cash the fifth spade and discard a diamond. You still have a diamond to lose but you have 10 tricks.

Now here are some hands for you to try (solutions next week):

East Deals ♠ 8 4
 None Vul ♥ A 4 3
 ♦ K Q 5 4 2
 ♣ J 8 7

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 3
 ♥ K Q
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ K Q 10 9 5 4 3

South plays in 6♣ after he discovers his partner has club support, one ace and one king. West leads the K♠. What do you lead at trick 2 to give yourself the best chance of making the contract? How do you hope the play will go?

Here is another hand:

North Deals ♠ Q J 6
 None Vul ♥ 3
 ♦ A Q 8 4 3 2
 ♣ A 8 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A K 10 9 7
 ♥ Q 7 6
 ♦ K 9 7
 ♣ J 2

South plays in 6♠ and West leads 5♦. East plays the 10. What suit do you play at trick 2 to give you the best chance of making your contract? How do you hope the play will go?

Try this one:

North Deals ♠ A
 None Vul ♥ 8 5 4 3
 ♦ 9 8 5 2
 ♣ J 10 9 8

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 9 8 6 4 3
 ♥ 6 2
 ♦ A K
 ♣ A K Q 7

South plays in 5♣ and West leads the K♠. What do you lead from dummy at trick 2? How do you hope the play will go?