

BRIDGE ARTICLE 2 “Help from your Opponents”

MALENY CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

HELP FROM YOUR OPPONENTS

In article 1 we looked at a hand where we forced an opponent to lead trumps at the cost of a vital trick by eliminating all the other suits he could lead and putting him on lead. Forcing an opponent to give away a trick by giving him/her the lead at a time when all their options cost a trick is called an “endplay”. We say that he is “thrown in”. An endplay in trumps (like last week) is very rare, but endplays in other suits are more common.

Look at this hand:

South Deals ♠ A 4 3
None Vul ♥ A 9 5
♦ 8 7 6 3 2
♣ 8 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 5
♥ K Q J 10 8 7 6
♦ A Q 9
♣ A K

South plays in 6♥ after he opened 2♣ and found his partner with two aces and heart support. West leads the K♠.

How many top tricks does South have? What can South do to bring his total number of tricks to 12?

South has 11 top tricks (one spade, seven hearts, one diamond and two clubs). His twelfth trick could come from a finesse in diamonds if East has the king. (You would win the A♠, draw trumps ending in dummy, lead a small diamond from dummy and play the Q if East follows low. This gives you your twelfth trick.)

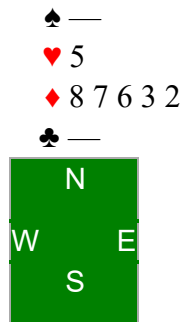
However, you can make the contract whenever trumps are 2-1 and East follows to the first spade by throwing West in and forcing him to concede your twelfth trick.

You must be a bit careful about how you play the hand and keep in mind what you are trying to achieve. Your aim is to draw two rounds of trumps and eliminate the clubs and spades from your hand and dummy's. Then you lead a diamond from dummy, playing the 9 if East plays low. West will win and either have to lead a diamond (so your A and Q are both winners) or lead a black suit. In the latter case, you trump in dummy and discard your losing Q♦. In either case, you have now got 12 tricks.

How do you make this happen? You must lead spades twice from dummy and trump them to eliminate the spades. You need to lead the AK of clubs to eliminate the clubs. You then need to lead a diamond from dummy. All up, then, you need to be in dummy three times.

You win the first trick with the A♠ and immediately lead a small spade and trump it high in your hand. Now lead a small trump to dummy's 9 and lead the last spade and trump it high. Now cash the A and K of clubs before you lead a trump to dummy's A.

The stage is now set, as below:

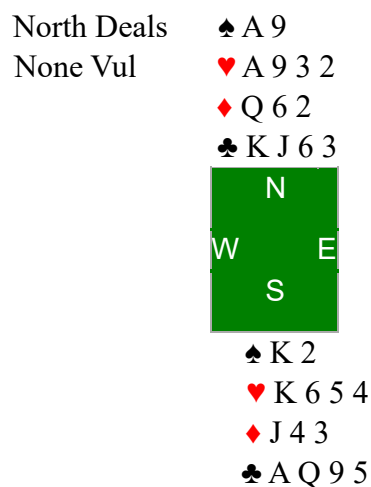


The lead is in dummy, having just won the A♥. Lead the 2♦ and cover whatever East plays. If he plays a small card, play the 9. If he plays the 10 or J play the Q. In either case, West is thrown in and must concede the last two tricks. Either he plays a diamond into your AQ or A9 or leads a black suit and you trump in dummy and discard the Q♦. This is called a “trump and discard”. You have what would normally be a losing diamond. You can’t trump it in dummy by your own devices, but if the opponent leads a suit neither you nor dummy hold, you can trump it in one hand and discard the loser in the other.

Notice that trumps had to split 2-1 for this to be guaranteed to work. If East had 3 trumps the same play would still be likely to work. You would have only drawn two rounds of trumps before leading a diamond from dummy and you would have to hope East could not trump the diamond that West returned when he was thrown in. If West had 3 trumps, he would be able to lead the third trump when he was thrown in so you would just draw three rounds of trumps and try the diamond finesse.

If the opening lead had been a club, rather than K♠, you need to lead a spade to dummy’s A and trump a small spade before drawing any trumps or you would not have enough entries to dummy. Try it! If West’s opening lead had been a trump, you would again not have enough entries to dummy for the end play. You would only make eleven tricks if West had the K♦. Try it!

Now try this hand:



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 next time).

Here is another hand for you to try (it is a bit more difficult):

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

This time 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 next time)