

Declarer Suit Play

QUIZ ANSWERS

| | | BIDDING | |
|----|------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. | WEST (YOU) | EAST (DUMMY) | WEST EAST |
| | ♠ AQ743 | ♠ KJ6 | 1♠ 2♥ |
| | ♥ K7 | ♥ AQJ1042 | 2♠ 4♠ |
| | ♦ J | ♦ Q3 | Pass |
| | ♣ QJ72 | ♣ 1093 | |

North leads ♦A followed by ♦K. What do you play from hand at trick 2? What is your plan and which card do you play at trick 3?

You would trump the second round of diamonds and then play ♠3 to dummy's king.

Your plan is to draw the opposition's trumps in 3 or 4 rounds (depending on how many each opponent has) and then hopefully make 6 heart tricks to go with 5 trump tricks and thus make 11 tricks.

Although this time it is unlikely to matter, it is a good idea to play low in the spade suit towards the honour in the short trump length so that you can play 4 rounds of the suit if needed without touching another suit. Hence, after you win ♠K, you next play ♠J and then ♠6.

| 2. | WEST (YOU) | EAST (DUMMY) | WEST EAST |
|----|------------|--------------|-----------|
| | ♠ A62 | ♠ J4 | 1♥ 1NT |
| | ♥ KQJ104 | ♥ 976 | 2♣ 3♥ |
| | ♦ 9 | ♦ AJ84 | 4♥ Pass |
| | ♣ QJ102 | ♣ K965 | |

North leads ♦K. What is your plan and which card do you lead at trick 2?

You would win the ♦A because you have a singleton diamond in your own hand. At first glance, it looks like you have to lose ♥A, ♣A and two spade tricks. Yet, you can only afford to lose 3 tricks. Can you avoid losing those tricks?

The answer is "yes" because dummy has only 2 spades. Hence, you must use dummy's trumps to ruff one of the spade losers. You must therefore do this before you draw trumps.

Therefore, at trick two play either spade from dummy (it does not matter which) and lose either the first or second round of that suit (better technique to lose the first round) so that you can trump the third spade in dummy.

| | | | | |
|----|------------|--------------|------|------|
| 3. | WEST (YOU) | EAST (DUMMY) | WEST | EAST |
| | ♠ QJ843 | ♠ K762 | | 1NT |
| | ♥ J4 | ♥ Q76 | 3♠ | 4♠ |
| | ♦ K5 | ♦ AQ87 | Pass | |
| | ♣ KQ92 | ♣ J10 | | |

North leads the ♦J. With which card do you win the first trick? What is your plan and which suit do you play at trick two?

Looking at your two hands, it appears that you have the ♠A, two high hearts and ♣A to lose. Yet, you are in 4♠ and can only afford three losers.

The good news is that the opponents have led your strongest suit, diamonds. It appears you may be able to discard one of your heart losers on the third rounds of diamonds but to do that:

- a. You must not draw trumps or indeed play any suit except diamonds.
- b. You must not block the diamond suit.

Hence, at trick one, you must win the ♦K in your own hand and then play a diamond to the ace followed by the ♦Q and hope both opponents have at least three diamonds. That, then, is your plan.

| | | | | |
|----|------------|--------------|------|------|
| 4. | WEST (YOU) | EAST (DUMMY) | WEST | EAST |
| | ♠ K3 | ♠ A965 | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| | ♥ AQ1053 | ♥ KJ4 | 1NT | 3♥ |
| | ♦ A84 | ♦ 7632 | 4♥ | Pass |
| | ♣ K54 | ♣ Q2 | | |

North leads the ♠Q. What is your plan? Which suit do you play at trick 2 and why?

You cannot afford to lose two diamonds and two clubs.

An option would be to draw trumps and hope you can discard a losing club on the 4th round of diamonds but there is a much better, safer way.

Win the opening spade lead (it does not really matter in which hand) and play either ♣Q or a low club towards the queen.

The opposition will win with the ace but you can regain the lead (or if you won the trick, play a second round of clubs straightaway) and then play ♣K and trump the third round of clubs in the dummy hand, to make ten tricks.

5. This is your trump suit. When you play trumps, how many rounds do you play?

| | WEST | EAST | |
|----|---------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | ♠ AK843 | ♠ Q752 | North and South have 2 trumps each. |
| b. | ♠ AK84 | ♠ 9742 | North has 3 and South has 2 trumps. |
| c. | ♠ AKQ6 | ♠ 854 | North and South have 3 trumps each. |

In answering this question, you may later play more rounds of trumps, (perhaps to try to get the opposition to discard the wrong cards) but the answers below indicate when you normally would stop drawing trumps because you might run out of trumps yourself if you draw too many rounds:

| | WEST | EAST | |
|----|---------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | ♠ AK843 | ♠ Q752 | North and South have 2 trumps each. |

Play just 2 rounds and then play other suits to score or develop tricks.

| | | | |
|----|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| b. | ♠ AK84 | ♠ 9742 | North has 3 and South has 2 trumps. |
|----|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|

Play just 2 rounds.

As you are missing the queen, jack and 10, the only trump out will be a loser for your side. Do not waste 2 trumps of yours in losing to a certain winner in the opponents' hands!

| | | | |
|----|--------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| c. | ♠ AKQ6 | ♠ 854 | North and South have 3 trumps each. |
|----|--------|-------|-------------------------------------|

Play three rounds keeping the 13th or last trump for later in the play.

You will be thankful that the trumps broke evenly in the opponents' hands. Note that while we usually try to have at least 8 cards in our two hands in the trump suit, occasionally we have only 7.