

## PROBLEM 7

North  
 ♠ A K J 10  
 ♥ A Q J 3  
 ♦ A 9 2  
 ♣ Q 5

South  
 ♠ Q 9 7 3  
 ♥ 6 5 4 2  
 ♦ Q J 3  
 ♣ A J

DEALER EAST VULN: N-S

S	W	N	E
			4♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl.	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

WEST LEADS ♠2

West failed to lead a club simply because he didn't have one (hardly surprising, after East's preempt). His trump lead points to the likelihood of his having the two red kings.

If South plays three rounds of trumps (ending in his hand), East follows twice and discards a club on the third round.

Had East held a void in one of the red suits, he would probably have doubled to call for an unusual lead. We can deduce from the above that, in all probability, East started with a 2-1-1-9 distribution, and West with 3-4-6-0.

Therefore, even if the two red kings are on sides, declarer has a loser in hearts and one in diamonds (except in the unlikely event that East's singleton diamond is the 10). In order to avoid those two losers, South will try to **endplay West with the fourth heart**, forcing him to lead diamonds or give a ruff and discard. But the endplay will be effective only if South played the queen of diamonds previously (covered by the king and won in dummy. West must indeed cover as we shall see shortly.)

This is the winning position declarer will be aiming at:

	♠ J	
	♥ 3	
	♦ 9 2	
	♣ ---	
♠ ---		♠ ---
♥ K		♥ ---
♦ 10 8 X		♦ ---
♣ ---		♣ X X X X
	♠ 9	
	♥ 6	
	♦ J 3	
	♣ ---	

North to lead

Whereas the following is a losing position:

	♠ J	
	♥ 3	
	♦ A 9 2	
	♣ ---	
♠ ---		♠ ---
♥ K		♥ ---
♦ K 10 8 X		♦ ---
♣ ---		♣ X X X X
	♠ 9	
	♥ 6	
	♦ Q J 3	North to lead
	♣ ---	

On lead with the king of hearts, West can exit safely with the eight of diamonds.

To reach the winning position, South must come to his hand three times: once to lead a diamond and twice to take heart finesses. One entry is there with the queen of spades and it seems like the other two will be provided by the ace and jack of clubs.

However, in the battle for entries, the defense has its word to say. To begin with, West will cover the queen of diamonds at trick four; otherwise, if South is allowed to hold the trick, he is presented with an entry then and there. Furthermore, East will foil declarer's plan to reenter his hand twice in clubs: If North leads the queen of clubs, East plays low; if the five is led, East inserts the king.

His original plan having failed for lack of entries, declarer must turn his resources to another, more spectacular manoeuvre.

## SOLUTION

After having played the queen of diamonds at trick four (covered by the king and won by the ace), he leads the queen of clubs. Although East fails to cover, he **overtakes with his ace**, takes a heart finesse and then leads the small club: if East plays low again, South's jack provides one of the needed entries, and if East takes the trick with his king, the following position is reached:

	♠ J ♥ A Q 3 ♦ 9 2 ♣ ---	
♠ --- ♥ K X X ♦ 10 8 X ♣ ---		♠ --- ♥ --- ♦ --- ♣ X X X X X
	♠ 9 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ J 3 ♣ ---	East to lead

East has to give a ruff and discard and thus gives back the club trick he did not seem to be entitled to at first glance. At the same time, an easy squeeze position is set up in the red suits against West.

For example, South ruffs in the closed hand, discarding a diamond from dummy, goes to dummy via a heart finesse and leads the last trump, discarding a heart from hand.

Or: South ruffs in dummy, discarding any small red card, then comes back to his hand with the jack of diamonds and leads his last trump.

The full hand:

	♠ A K J 10 ♥ A Q J 3 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ Q 5	
♠ 5 4 2 ♥ K 10 9 8 ♦ K 10 8 7 6 4 ♣ ---		♠ 8 6 ♥ 7 ♦ 5 ♣ K 10 9 8 7 6 4 3 2
	♠ Q 9 7 3 ♥ 6 5 4 2 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ A J	
	* * * * *	

N.B. If, on the fourth trick, South takes a heart finesse instead of playing a diamond, the contract can no longer be made.

The play will continue as follows: queen of clubs overtaken by the ace, followed by the queen of diamonds, but this time West **does not cover**; after another heart finesse, a small club from dummy will be won by East's King, to reach this position:

	♠ J	
	♥ A 3	
	♦ A 9	
	♣ ---	
♠ ---		♠ ---
♥ K X		♥ ---
♦ K 10 8		♦ ---
♣ ---		♣ X X X X X
	♠ 9	
	♥ 6 5	
	♦ J 3	
	♣ ---	

East on lead has to give a ruff and discard, but the squeeze will no longer work.

## PROBLEM 8

North  
 ♠ A K Q  
 ♥ A K 3  
 ♦ K Q J 3  
 ♣ J 10 8

South  
 ♠ 9 7 4 3 2  
 ♥ 9 6 2  
 ♦ A 8  
 ♣ A 3 2

		DEALER EAST		VULN: NONE	
S	W	N	E		
Pass	Pass	Dbl.	Pass	2♥*	
3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass		
5♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass		

\*Weak, 6-10 pts.

WEST LEADS ♥4

Declarer wins the opening heart lead, an obvious singleton, and draws two rounds of trumps. If they split 3-2, he has twelve tricks on top, but East shows out on the second round. Now South has to score all his trumps by ruffing two clubs in hand after discarding his losing clubs on diamonds. He also needs two heart tricks; for that, he must lead a heart from his hand so that West cannot afford to "beat the air" by ruffing in front of dummy. That brings the total to twelve tricks: five spades, two hearts, four diamonds and one club. However, this plan will not succeed if West has only three clubs because he will discard a club when South leads a heart and be in a position to overruff the third club.

In order to avoid West's club discard, South may try to ruff the two clubs before leading a heart toward dummy, but this line will again fail if West holds 4-1-5-3. Here is the scenario: club ace, four rounds of diamonds, club ruff, spade to dummy, club ruff and a heart, but by now North-South have run out of trumps and West can ruff the heart and cash his fifth diamond. Therefore, declarer has to play three rounds of diamonds to begin with (throwing a club) to find out whether:

- a) both opponents follow, or
- b) East shows out on the third round (as the cards actually lie).

These two situations call for different lines of play:

- a) South must unblock the ace of clubs, enter dummy with a spade and cash the last diamond. If West follows, holding 4-1-4-4, declarer's problems are over (club ruff, heart toward dummy and club ruff).  
If West ruffs the fourth diamond, his distribution being 4-1-3-5, the only winning combination is for East to have started with the doubleton KQ of clubs; West, with nothing but clubs left, will set up the jack. But this is obviously impossible here because East did not follow with an honor when South cashed the ace of clubs; in short, if West's hand is 4-1-3-5, and East fails to play an honor on the first club, the contract is doomed.
- b) **East must have at least the king of clubs** to have six points for his opening weak two bid. In order to make the contract, **the queen of clubs must also be held by East** and the **nine by West**.

### SOLUTION

(A quick reminder of the play so far: heart lead won, two rounds of spades and three rounds of diamonds.) At trick seven now, the jack of clubs is led, covered by East and won by South. Back to dummy with a spade, the last diamond is cashed, South throwing his last club, and finally the ten of clubs is led, covered by East's other honor and ruffed in hand, to reach the following position:

	♠ ---	
	♥ A 3	
	♦ ---	
	♣ 8	
♠ J		♠ ---
♥ ---		♥ Q J
♦ 10		♦ ---
♣ 9		♣ 7
	♠ 9	
	♥ 9 6	
	♦ ---	
	♣ ---	

South leads a heart and West can neither ruff nor discard his nine of clubs because the eight would become high; he can only part with his diamond. The trick is won with the ace of hearts and the losing club is ruffed for the twelfth trick, West's master trump and East's high heart clashing on the same trick.

The full deal:

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

## PROBLEM 9

North

♠ 6

♥ Q 4 3 2

♦ A K 8 7

♣ K Q 9 8

South

♠ A 10 7 3 2

♥ A K 6 5

♦ ---

♣ A 10 5 4

DEALER NORTH VULN: NONE

S	W	N	E
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

WEST LEADS ♦J

If hearts split 3-2, declarer has an excellent chance of scoring six trump tricks (four in the closed hand plus two ruffs in dummy *or* four in dummy plus two ruffs in hand). One spade and two diamond tricks on top bring the total to nine, so that only three club tricks are required to make the contract.

However, if hearts split 4-1, the number of trump tricks are reduced to five and four clubs tricks must be scored as a result. For that reason precaution must be exercised to protect against a possible JXXX club holding, which will logically show up in the hand with the short heart suit.

Basically, in order to score five or six trump tricks, declarer has a choice between two lines of play:

### **Line (1) Ruff diamonds in hand.**

South ruffs the opening lead and draws two rounds of trumps with the ace and king. If trumps split 3-2, his troubles are practically over: a club to dummy's honor, a diamond ruffed, ace of spades and a spade ruff, and the queen of hearts.

Otherwise (if hearts are 4-1), the following positions have to be considered:

a) *West has four hearts.*

To discover a possible JXXX of clubs held by East, South crosses to dummy with a club, ruffs another diamond (to complete a dummy reversal) and leads a small club toward North's remaining club honor. West cannot afford to ruff; North wins, cashes the queen of hearts and plays on clubs, finessing the ten. West can score his trump trick any time, the only trick for the defense.

b) *East has four hearts.*

To discover a possible JXXX of clubs held by West, South goes to dummy with a club, ruffs another diamond and plays the ace of clubs. But this does him no good because East ruffs and returns a spade. Declarer is bound to go down: if he goes to dummy to draw the last trump, he can no longer return to his hand to take the club finesse, since East's spade switch took out his last entry.

### **Line (2) Ruff spades in dummy.**

Declarer wins the first trick in dummy, discarding a spade, plays the ace of spades, ruffs a spade and continues with the queen of trumps and another trump to the king. If the trumps split 3-2, the hand is virtually over: spade ruff<sup>1</sup>, diamond ruff and a trump....

Otherwise (if hearts are 4-1) the following positions have to be considered:

a) *East has four hearts.*

To discover a possible JXXX of clubs held by West, South ruffs the penultimate spade<sup>1</sup>, discards the last spade on a diamond, cashes a club honor in dummy and leads a small club toward his ace. The contract is made along the same line as in (1)a.

b) *West has four hearts.*

To discover a possible JXXX of clubs held by East, South ruffs the next to last spade, discards the last spade on a diamond and continues with the king and queen of clubs. But West ruffs and dummy lacks the entry to take the club finesse.

*To summarize:*

With Line (1), ruffing diamonds, declarer is in trouble when East has four trumps, (position (1)b), whereas with Line (2), ruffing spades, he is in trouble when West has four trumps (position (2)b). Which is the better line of play?

## SOLUTION

**The answer is: Line (2), RUFFING SPADES IN DUMMY.**

The fact is that with Line (1) in the position b) the contract is doomed on normal play, whereas on Line (2), in the position (b), **declarer can still recover as long as West doesn't hold more than three spades.**<sup>2</sup>

After the second spade ruff, this is the position:

	♠ ---	
	♥ ---	
	♦ A 8 7	
	♣ K Q 9 8	
♠ ---		♠ X
♥ J 10		♥ ---
♦ X X X X		♦ X X
♣ X		♣ J X X X
	♠ 10	
	♥ K 6	
	♦ ---	North to lead
	♣ A 10 5 4	

Declarer comes to hand with the ace of clubs and leads a small club<sup>3</sup>, (West can't afford to ruff), ruffs a diamond and comes down to this position:

	♠ ---	
	♥ ---	
	♦ A 8	
	♣ K 9	
♠ ---		♠ X
♥ J 10		♥ ---
♦ X X		♦ X
♣ ---		♣ J X
	♠ 10	
	♥ K	
	♦ ---	South to lead
	♣ 10 5	



South cashes the king of trumps <sup>4</sup>, pitching dummy's small diamond, then leads a club and North is bound to score two more tricks.

Even if West is void in clubs and ruffs the ace, declarer can still bring home his contract: South wins the heart return (best play), crosses to dummy in clubs, cashes the top diamond, throwing a small club, and ruffs a diamond. East is caught in a club-spade squeeze.

The full deal:

	♠ 6	
	♥ Q 4 3 2	
	♦ A K 8 7	
	♣ K Q 9 8	
♠ Q 8 5		♠ K J 9 4
♥ J 10 8 7		♥ 9
♦ J 10 9 3 2		♦ Q 6 5 4
♣ 6		♣ J 7 3 2
	♠ A 10 7 3 2	
	♥ A K 6 5	
	♦ ---	
	♣ A 10 5 4	
	* * * * *	

<sup>1</sup> In case East overruffs, it will be easy to locate a possible JXXX of clubs.

<sup>2</sup> If West had only two spades and ruffs the third round in front of dummy, declarer can always win: South ruffs the diamond return (best defense), draws the last trump discarding a diamond and goes to dummy with a club. North-South are down to the following holding:

North
♠ ---
♥ ---
♦ K
♣ K 9 8
South
♠ 10
♥ ---
♦ ---
♣ A 10 5

The king of diamonds is played, South pitching the ten of clubs. If West has four clubs, it will be revealed when the ace of clubs is played. If East holds four clubs, he will be squeezed in the black suits.

<sup>3</sup> If the clubs break 3-2, declarer is in no danger since, after throwing the last spade on the ace of diamonds, he will continue by playing clubs.

<sup>4</sup> If declarer plays clubs before the king of trumps, West ruffs and defeats the contract with a diamond switch.