


Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

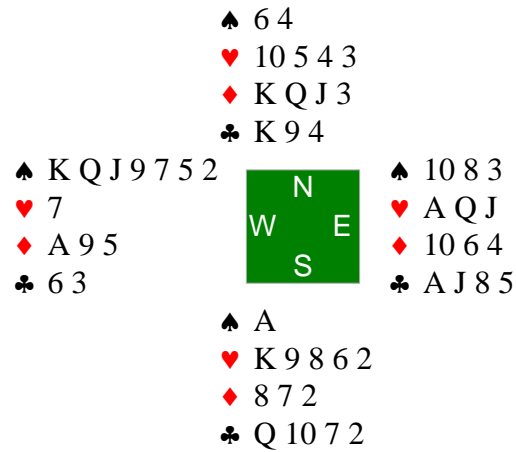
<p>♠ Q 6 ♥ 9 4 3 2 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ 9 4 3</p>	<p>♠ A J 7 3 ♥ A K 7 5 ♦ Q ♣ Q 6 5 2</p>	<p>♠ K 10 9 4 ♥ Q J 10 8 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K J 10</p>	
			
	<p>♠ 8 5 2 ♥ 6 ♦ A K 10 9 8 7 ♣ A 8 7</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

1. Opening lead will be ♥ Q, even though North bid the ♥s. Absent a clearer alternative East needs to set up a ♥ trick.
2. North, count winners in NT: 1 ♠, 2 ♥s, 2 ♦s, 1 ♣. Need 3 more, and the ♦ suit looks like where they're going to come from.
3. Win the opening lead with the ♥ K -- don't tell the opponents that you have the ♥ A. (Anyone who wins the first NT lead with the Ace always has a second stopper!)
4. Plan to overtake the ♦ Q with a higher honor in dummy. You can't afford to squander your only other entry in the ♣ A. You need to establish the ♦ suit, and you can still do it this way.
5. Don't expect the ♦ suit to behave. A favorable distribution of 6 cards, 3/3, only happens 32% of the time. Expect them to divide 4/2. But since you have all the top ones except the ♦ J, you can guarantee your contract by taking the ♦ AK, then playing ♦s to force out the ♦ J. The rest of Dummy's ♦s are good. Thank heaven they didn't lead a ♣!
6. Unblocking is SO important.

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

1. This one is all about eliminating a loser. In 4♠, you can only afford to lose 3 tricks. But counting losers, you find 1 ♠, 2 ♦s and 1 ♣.

2. "Good Declarers" always pull trump, right? This is NOT always true when you don't control the trump suit. Timing is everything here, and we need to take a ruffing finesse in ♥s.

3. The opening lead was the ♦ K. Win the ♦ A and play a low ♥ to the ♥ A. Now lay the ♥ Q on the table. If South plays low, be brave and pitch a losing ♣ or ♦ from your hand. It does not matter who holds the ♥ K.

-- If South has it, you just won the trick with your ♥ Q, you dumped a minor suit loser on it, and you now have just 3 losers. If South covered, you ruffed the ♥ K and your ♥ J is set up for a discard.

-- If North has it, you just lost that trick. But you were able to pitch a loser on that loser, and you promoted the ♥ J for a pitch. This is 100% way to gain an extra trick for a discard.

4. In the money world we spend money to make money. In the bridge world we give up tricks to make tricks!

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

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

♠ 8 2	♠ 8 2
♥ J 10 9 3 2	♥ J 10 9 3 2
♦ A K 8	♦ A K 8
♣ 4 3 2	♣ 4 3 2


<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♣	Pass	1 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass	2 ♦	Pass

1. Counting winners in NT, you can see 4 ♣s, 3 ♥s and 1 ♠. Can you see the BEST chance to make the 9th trick?

2. Don't rely on a 50/50 chance with a finesse. To guarantee the contract, play the ♦ J - (high card from the short side), and next play the ♦ Q. This will make the ♦ 10 your 9th trick, while you still control all the suits.

3. Do not become a finesse-a-holic! Finesses are our last resort. Look for sure tricks first.

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ A K 8 5 ♥ 3 2 ♦ A 5 2 ♣ 9 4 3 2		♠ 6 4 3 ♥ 10 9 8 ♦ K Q 8 7 ♣ K J 5	♠ 7 2 ♥ J 7 ♦ 10 9 6 4 3 ♣ Q 10 8 7
	♠ Q J 10 9 ♥ A K Q 6 5 4 ♦ J ♣ A 6		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

1. Declarer needs to count losers in a suit contract. Looks like 2 ♠s and 1 ♦, and we're home free. Yay!

2. Not so fast. The opening lead was the ♠ A, on which East plays the encouraging ♠ 7. East continues with the ♠ K, and sees partner "echo" with the ♠ 2. Hoping for a ruff now, West plays the ♠ 8. Giving partner a HIGH card to ruff asks partner to return a ♦.

With suit-preference ruffing signals, a high card to ruff asks partner to return the higher-ranking side suit. We always exclude the trump suit from this equation. East's thought process: "I'm ruffing a ♠. Trumps are ♥s. Partner played a high card for me to ruff, so partner wants the higher of the other two suits returned. I'm going to ruff this and send back a ♦."

This is not an exact science if you don't have the right card to send for ruffing. But often partner can work it out. Looking at the ♠s, East can see the 643 in the dummy; he played the ♠ 7 from his hand; so the ♠ 5 is missing. The 8 is a high card.

3. Play a ♦ to partner's ♦ A. Now a ♠ will be ruffed in dummy, but East can over-ruff with the ♦ J to defeat the contract by 2 tricks!

4. Remember: When in a ruffing position, look at all the cards and see which card (high or low) partner played to decide which suit to return for a 2nd ruff!