

DECLARER PLAY



with Rob Barrington

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Board: 1
 Dealer: N
 Vul: None

♠K86
 ♥AQT72
 ♦JT5
 ♣T9

♠52
 ♥J4
 ♦K976
 ♣AJ875

N
 W E
 S

♠AQT3
 ♥K983
 ♦A43
 ♣62

♠J974
 ♥65
 ♦Q82
 ♣KQ43

9
 10 HCP 13
 8

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
P	1♦	P	1♥
—	2♥	—	3♥
—	4♥	—	

The key to this hand is giving your opponents no choice but to help you make your contract. The diamond suit is potentially troublesome, so it is best left alone by declarer. North is likely to lead a spade for lack of better options. After winning the spade, you should draw trump, play 2 more rounds of spades ending in dummy. If spades break 3-3, or the jack falls, you can now pitch a club on the winning spade left in dummy. On this deal,

the suit doesn't break. Now you ruff the last spade in your hand and then exit your hand with a club. The opponents can take 2 club tricks, but will then be forced to break the diamond suit for you, or give you a sluff and a ruff.

Board: 2
 Dealer: E
 Vul: NS

♠KJ86
 ♥94
 ♦QT42
 ♣Q62

♠A9753
 ♥A65
 ♦AJ
 ♣T93

N
 W E
 S

♠Q4
 ♥T82
 ♦9763
 ♣K874

♠T2
 ♥KQJ73
 ♦K85
 ♣AJ5

13
 8 HCP 5
 14

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
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	P	1♥	P
--	---	----	---

1♠	P	1NT	P
----	---	-----	---

4♥

This is an interesting hand, especially if west resists the urge to lead a diamond 😊. The best lead is a trump. As declarer, you need to take care of two main things to take the maximum number of tricks. First, you need to ruff a diamond in dummy, before you draw trump. While taking care of that important step, you also have to make sure you can lead clubs towards your hand twice. South should

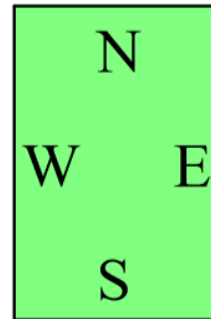
	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	4	4	5	2	3
S	4	4	5	2	3
E					
W					

trump one diamond in dummy, draw another round of trump with the Ace of hearts and then lead a club towards the Jack. You now will use the Ace of spades as an entry to dummy to repeat this club finesse later. (If west returns a spade after winning the 1st club trick, you will take the 2nd club finesse then, otherwise you will draw trump and cross to the spade Ace yourself.

Board: 3
 Dealer: S
 Vul: EW

♠AJ4
 ♥93
 ♦AJ94
 ♣AK75

♠T972
 ♥76542
 ♦T86
 ♣T



♠86
 ♥AQJT8
 ♦K52
 ♣J83

♠KQ53
 ♥K
 ♦Q73
 ♣Q9642

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N					
S					
E	7	4	7	7	5
W	7	3	7	7	5

0
 17 HCP 11
 12

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♣	1NT
P	2♦	P	2♥
P	3NT	—	

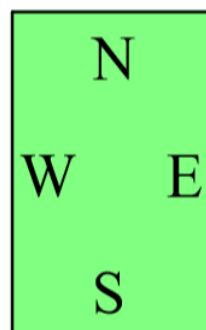
This is the rare “perfect information” hand. When the dummy comes down, we know where absolutely every remaining point in the deck resides. This is one of the infrequent times when it is wrong to take a finesse. You know it’s losing to the King so play the Ace of hearts first and you may get lucky. Before running all of your hearts though, take a diamond finesse, and run that suit 1st.

Now run your hearts and watch what south starts pitching. They will have to unguard either clubs or spades and you will have all 13 tricks!!

Board: 4
 Dealer: W
 Vul: All

♠985
 ♥Q83
 ♦QJ52
 ♣863

♠J643
 ♥AK542
 ♦4
 ♣Q95



♠KT
 ♥J97
 ♦T98
 ♣AKJ72

♠AQ72
 ♥T6
 ♦AK763
 ♣T4

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
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			P
P	1 ♣	1 ♦	P
1 ♥	P	1 ♠	P
3 ♠	P	4 ♠	

To make 11 tricks on this deal, you have to set up dummy's heart suit, and play spades correctly. With this spade suit, the correct line is to play a low spade to the queen. If this wins, you cash your ace. This is the best way to play holdings with no good spot cards. This will produce max tricks for declarer here.

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	3	5	4	3	1
S	2	5	4	3	
E					
W					

	10	
5	HCP	12
	13	

Board: 5
 Dealer: N
 Vul: NS

♠975
 ♥QJ7532
 ♦Q54
 ♣3

♠A63
 ♥AKT9
 ♦K6
 ♣JT64

N
 W E
 S

♠QJT82
 ♥6
 ♦92
 ♣AQ875

♠K4
 ♥84
 ♦AJT873
 ♣K92

15
 5 HCP 9
 11

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	6		4	5	3
S	6		4	5	3
E					
W					

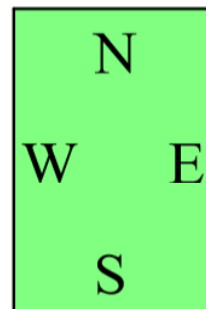
NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	2♠*	3♦	P
3NT	—	—	—

The 2S bid by east showed spades and a minor suit. Safety is sometimes more important than taking the maximum number of tricks possible on a hand. After the Queen of spades lead, we can't afford to mess up the diamond suit. The best safe line is to win the Ace of spades in your hand and then play the King of diamonds and then low to the ten. As long as diamonds aren't 5-0, you know have good tricks and the King of spades as an entry to the dummy.

Board: 6
 Dealer: E
 Vul: EW

♠K432
 ♥K7
 ♦KQ86
 ♣AQT

♠QT987
 ♥AT32
 ♦5
 ♣J32



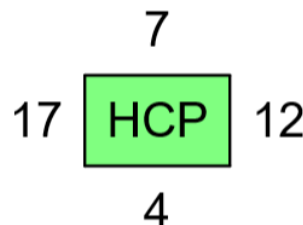
♠AJ6
 ♥954
 ♦A432
 ♣K97

♠5
 ♥QJ86
 ♦JT97
 ♣8654

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1♦	P	1♠
P	1NT	P	3NT

Even with all these points, E/W can barely make 3NT on this hand. You have to be careful and give yourself the most chances to make your contract on this deal. The defense should take the 1st 4 heart tricks. Declarer needs to be careful with their pitches in both hands. You have to make sure you keep 4 diamonds in one of the hands. After the opponents finish the hearts, you should see if diamonds are breaking. If not, you have to fall back on the spade finesse. Make sure to maximize your chances as often as possible and keep a good count of your winners.

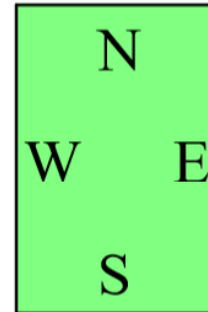
	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N					
S					
E	3	3	4	2	
W	4	3	4	2	



Board: 7
 Dealer: S
 Vul: All

♠QJT8
 ♥5
 ♦A93
 ♣KQJ83

♠A3
 ♥QJ98732
 ♦854
 ♣9



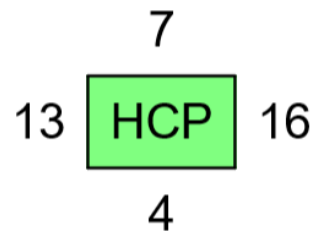
♠K9752
 ♥AK
 ♦QT62
 ♣A2

♠64
 ♥T64
 ♦KJ7
 ♣T7654

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		P	1♣
3♥	3♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

This is another simple squeeze hand. You draw trump immediately on this hand, and then test clubs. When you get the bad news you can cash all your high clubs (pitching two diamonds from dummy), and hearts. Now run spades from the dummy and watch for the ten of clubs from South. If they don't pitch that club while you run all the spades, then on the last spade from dummy, pitch your club and lead a diamond. If South has this card it will fall now 😊. Notice if they pitch a club, you pitch your last low diamond and now have a winning 8 of clubs.

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N			1		
S			1		
E	6	6		4	6
W	5	5		4	5

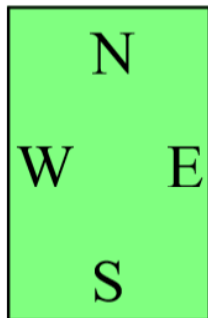


Board: 8
 Dealer: W
 Vul: None

♠AT64
 ♥K654
 ♦T843
 ♣4

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	4	2	1	2	4
S	4	2	2	2	4
E					
W					

♠Q932
 ♥93
 ♦AQ52
 ♣A93



♠J85
 ♥Q872
 ♦J97
 ♣KT8

♠K7
 ♥AJT
 ♦K6
 ♣QJ7652

12
 7 HCP 7
 14

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
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			P
1♦	P	2♣	P
2♠	P	3NT	

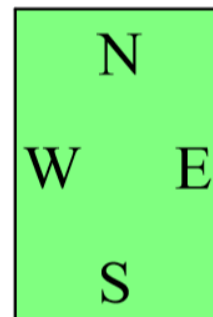
Another fun hand for a squeeze if the opponents don't get their tricks early. On a likely heart lead you will win your Ace and take a club finesse that loses. If the opponents now play two rounds of hearts, you can take 11 tricks. It's very hard for west to realize that this is their last chance to take their ace of spades, but it is 😊. After winning the 3rd heart trick (and pitching a spade from dummy), South can run clubs and simply watch for the ace of spades. If they don't see it on the last club, they save all 4 diamonds in dummy and run that suit for 11 tricks.

Board: 9
 Dealer: N
 Vul: EW

♠ J3
 ♥ 62
 ♦ J9742
 ♣ KQJ5

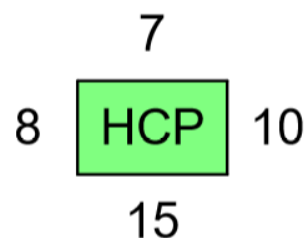
	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	2	2	1	1	
S	2	2	1	1	
E					
W					

♠ 9854
 ♥ J7
 ♦ AQ53
 ♣ 432



♠ Q762
 ♥ AQ95
 ♦ K8
 ♣ AT6

♠ AKT
 ♥ KT843
 ♦ T6
 ♣ 987



NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
P	P	1NT	P
P	P		

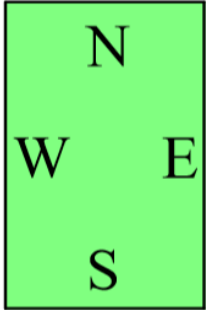
Back to the basics with this hand. On the likely club lead, you should duck the ace twice and win the 3rd club. You can see 5 tricks at this point and entries are going to be a problem. Sometimes you really want to take a finesse but you just don't have enough entries to accomplish everything. So at trick 4, lead a low heart towards the Jack. You may win the trick, but worst case your queen develops into a trick (and maybe the 9 later). This will put east on lead. If they resist the urge to cash their spades, they can make it very tough for South now. Did you cash your Spades East?

Board: 10
 Dealer: E
 Vul: All

♠Q
 ♥J9873
 ♦K7
 ♣A8732

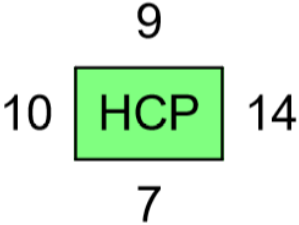
	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N					
S					
E	2	1	5		4
W	2	1	5		4

♠K976
 ♥AT
 ♦QT32
 ♣T95



♠J85
 ♥542
 ♦A865
 ♣Q64

♠AT432
 ♥KQ6
 ♦J94
 ♣KJ



NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	P	2♦
P	2♥	P	3♣
P	4♥	—	

This hand is all about establishing west’s club suit before drawing all the trump. The 2nd best lead for south is a trump on this hand. East should win the 2nd trump trick in their hand and play King of clubs and then the Jack to the Ace. Trump a club high and then lead a diamond to the king (last chance to do this). This line will produce 11 tricks. **What was south’s best lead?? A low diamond 😊. Leading away from an Ace can occasionally be right. This is one of those times where you may be able to take extra trick by taking this risk 😊

Board: 11
 Dealer: S
 Vul: None

♠AQJ3
 ♥QT63
 ♦KJ862
 ♣

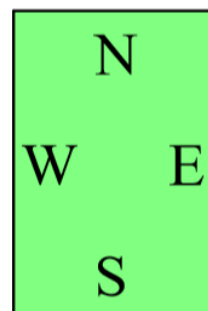
	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	1	1			3
S	1	1			3
E				1	
W				1	

♠KT765

♥75

♦AT43

♣63



♠842

♥J98

♦Q5

♣K9854

♠9

♥AK42

♦97

♣AQJT72

13

HCP

6

14

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
-------	------	-------	------

		1♣	X
1♠	P	3♣	X
P	P	P	

Maybe we shouldn't be 3 clubs with the south hand, but we find ourselves in 3C doubled. Don't panic when you're doubled. You can do this. The key to this hand, on any lead, is to lead a spade towards the king as soon as possible, and also to ruff a heart in dummy. If the opponents do not lead diamonds, you will try to ruff 2 hearts in dummy and pitch a diamond on the King of spades. If west gets off to a diamond lead, you will pitch your 4th heart on the king of spades. Either way, making 3 doubled!!

Board: 12
 Dealer: W
 Vul: NS

♠A653
 ♥
 ♦Q85
 ♣KJ6542

♠T2
 ♥AT85
 ♦KT432
 ♣AT

N
 W E
 S

♠KQJ94
 ♥742
 ♦J97
 ♣98

♠87
 ♥KQJ963
 ♦A6
 ♣Q73

	N	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	2		5	1	
S	2		5	2	
E		3			2
W		3			2

11
 10 HCP 7
 12

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
-------	------	-------	------

1♣
 1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠
 3♥ P 4♥ —

Another 7 card suit for the declarer to set up.
 This hand is all about setting up those
 diamonds in the dummy. Draw trump and
 pitch 2 clubs on the good diamonds you
 worked to set up in dummy.

Thank you so much for attending this declarer
 play seminar. See you at the tables 😊

Rob Barrington