

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 1

North Deals

None Vul

		♠ A K 8	
		♥ A 8 7	
		♦ 8 6 5	
		♣ A K 4 2	
♠ 6 5 4			♠ J 10 9 2
♥ Q J 9 6			♥ 4 3 2
♦ Q 10			♦ K J 9
♣ J 10 9 5			♣ Q 7 3
		♠ Q 7 3	
		♥ K 10 5	
		♦ A 7 4 3 2	
		♣ 8 6	
West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦
Pass	2 N ¹	Pass	3 N
All pass			
	1. 17-18, balanced.		

Lead: ♠ J.

There are eight top winners and the ninth trick must be established in diamonds.

After winning the first trick in hand, declarer should play a low diamond from hand and duck the trick. When he regains the lead he can repeat the process.

The outstanding diamonds held by the opponents split 3-2 (in accordance with the odds). When declarer next regains the lead, a diamond to the ace will drop the only outstanding diamond held by the opponents. The lead is held by the dummy and the two last diamonds, which are winners, can be cashed. Ten tricks will result from this line of play.

(had declarer cashed ♦ A earlier then the contract would still be successful provided *both* entries to dummy - ♠ Q and ♥ K - had not been squandered too early).

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

Lead : ♣ Q.

Assuming that the missing trumps split 3-2, declarer has four potential losers - one spade, one heart and two diamonds. Although it may seem attractive to try to establish dummy's club suit, a lack of entries makes this idea fruitless.

Dummy's spade holding of ♠ QJ can, however, provide an extra winner on which a diamond loser may be discarded. This must be done while dummy retains its only entry, ♣ K. If this entry is used to take a spade finesse and this fails, there would be no way to reach an eventual spade winner in dummy.

Declarer should win trick one in hand, play ♥ AK and then ace and another spade. After the defence win this trick with ♠ K, ♣ K is the entry to cash the spade winner left in dummy (on which declarer discards a losing diamond).

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 3

South Deals

E-W Vul

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

1. 12-14, balanced.

2. Transfer, showing 5+spades.

3. Offers partner a choice of games. South passes 3N as he has only a doubleton spade.

Lead: ♥ K.

South should hold up his ♥ A until the third round. This will either exhaust East of hearts or allow the defence to cash just one extra heart if the suit breaks 4-4. South discards two small spades from dummy.

Declarer cannot make his contract without making some club tricks so he must hope ♣ A is held by East. When South plays on clubs east does indeed have this card and, after winning the club, switches to ♠ Q.

Now South has eight tricks. A ninth can be developed in diamonds and the way to do this is to finesse into the safe (East) hand. South can cash ♦ A first and when the queen of diamonds pops up on the second round the contract is assured.

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

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

Lead: ♠ K.

Declarer can count five trump tricks, ace of spades and two spade ruffs in dummy, together with two top clubs to give ten tricks. The eleventh trick could come from a finesse of ♣ J but a better chance is to set up a diamond winner. Dummy will need to retain a trump entry so that this may be achieved.

After winning trick one, declarer may play ♥ Q but on this North discards. Declarer must now switch to diamonds. If North wins and leads a spade, declarer ruffs in dummy and ♦ J is played, forcing out the defence's second diamond winner. Now declarer can enter dummy with a spade ruff (or a trump is two spades have already been ruffed) and discard ♣ J on ♦ 10 giving eleven tricks and a successful contract.

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 5

North Deals

N-S Vul

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

West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	1 N
Pass	2 N ¹	Pass	3 ♠ ²
Pass	4 ♠ ³	All pass	

1. 17-18, balanced and invitational to game.
2. South could bid 3N at this stage but prefers to give North a choice of games by showing 3card spade support.
3. Happy to play in the major once the 5-3 spade fit is revealed.

Lead : ♣ K.

Assuming spades break 3-2, declarer counts four losers - one heart, one diamond and two clubs. The heart loser can be discarded on a diamond winner from dummy once ♦ A has been forced out.

There is, however, a problem as dummy is short of entries. If declarer draws three rounds of trumps and then plays on diamonds, the defence could hold up the first round. Then, when they win the second round of diamonds, there is no entry to dummy to make the established diamond winners.

The solution is for declarer to draw just two rounds of trumps with the king and queen and then play on diamonds. The defence can hold up as before and then, when they take the second round, cash two tricks in clubs. When declarer regains the lead, however, ♠ A is an entry to reach the diamond winner, allowing declarer to discard the heart loser.

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

West	North	East	South
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥ ¹	Pass	2 N ²	Pass
3 N	All pass		

1. Bids the 4card suit, irrespective of the quality.
2. 17-18, balanced.

Lead: ♥ 7.

Yes, sometimes a defender does make a friendly lead. The heart lead here has turned your ♥ J into a winner and brought your tally of top tricks to seven.

You need to establish two further tricks. Spades will produce one for sure and, if South holds the ace, two spades can be made.

East should lead towards ♠ K Q 2 in dummy, playing an honour if South plays low. If this wins, he should return to hand and play another spade towards the remaining honour.

The 50% chance that South holds ♠ A is better than the only alternative - that clubs break 3-3. That's roughly a 36% chance.

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 7

South Deals

Both Vul

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

1. Bids the higher suit first with 5/5.
2. Bids the lower of two 4card minors with 4/4 (2 ♥ always promises 5+cards).

Lead: ♥ K.

A count of potential winners after drawing trumps (which will probably break 3-1), shows that declarer is well short of the total needed. Successful finesses in both minors suits would be required. An alternative possibility is for declarer to play a crossruff.

Declarer must win trick one, cash ♦ K, ♦ A and ruff a diamond. Then he cashes ♠ A and ruffs a spade, cashes ♣ A and ruffs a club, ruffs a spade, ruffs a club and ruffs another spade. By now he has no fewer than eleven tricks. The defence makes just ♥ Q and ♥ J at the end.

When you intend to crossruff, remember to cash side suit winners before you start. Otherwise a defender may be able to discard and later trump your side suit winners.

221014ThePlayOfTheCards

Board 8

West Deals

None Vul

		♠ Q J 10 9 8	
		♥ 7 4 3	
		♦ J 6	
		♣ K 7 4	
♠ A 7 4			♠ K 5 2
♥ K 10			♥ A Q J
♦ K 8 7			♦ A 4 3 2
♣ Q J 10 9 8			♣ 6 5 3
		♠ 6 3	
		♥ 9 8 6 5 2	
		♦ Q 10 9 5	
		♣ A 2	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 N ¹	Pass	3 N	All pass
1. 12-14.			

Lead: ♠ Q.

With seven top winners, West needs two more from the club suit. This involves losing the lead twice. West should hold up the first round of spades even though he has two stoppers. This is because he needs to cater for spades breaking 5-2 (as here). If he takes the first spade, South can win the first club and continue spades. Now, with North holding the other top club, nothing can stop North enjoying three spade tricks. Note that in holding up, no switch can harm declarer.

If spades are continued, West wins and starts on clubs. Provided North does not hold both the ace and king of clubs, the contract is assured.