

## Signals and Discards In Defence

<p> ♠ J 10 9 8 7  ♥ Q 10 9  ♦ 8 2  ♣ Q 7 6  ♠ A Q 2  ♥ A K 7 6  ♦ 7 6 5  ♣ A K 2  ♠ 5 4 3  ♥ 4 2  ♦ K Q J 10 9  ♣ 5 4 3  ♠ K 6  ♥ J 8 5 3  ♦ A 4 3  ♣ J 10 9 8 </p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2N<sup>(1)</sup></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3N</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">1 19-20</td> </tr> </table> <p>North leads ♠J. West wins to play a diamond. North follows with ♦8, a count signal. As it is a high card it shows an even number of cards in the suit. South knows to let both ♦K and ♦Q hold the trick – partner appears to be marked with two diamonds so declarer has three. It's important to cut declarer's communication with the dummy. South can take a third diamond perforce and declarer has two further diamond winners in dummy that cannot be reached.</p> <p>West should be held to eight tricks (two winners in each suit) as long as the defenders are careful with their discarding.</p> <p>(Had North's ♦8 been a singleton the defence could not stop declarer making four diamond tricks.)</p>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	Pass	2N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	3N	All pass	1 19-20							
West	North	East	South																		
	Pass	Pass	Pass																		
2N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	3N	All pass																		
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<p> ♠ 5 4 3  ♥ 4 2  ♦ K Q J 10 9  ♣ 5 4 3  ♠ J 10 9 8 7  ♥ Q 10 9  ♦ 8 5 2  ♣ 7 6  ♠ K 6  ♥ J 8 5 3  ♦ A 4 3  ♣ J 10 9 8  ♠ A Q 2  ♥ A K 7 6  ♦ 7 6  ♣ A K Q 2 </p>	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣<sup>(1)</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦<sup>(2)</sup></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2N<sup>(3)</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3N</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">1 8 playing tricks, unbalanced; or 21-22, balanced 2 Relay 3 21-22, balanced</td> </tr> </table> <p>West leads ♠J and declarer wins to play a diamond. West plays ♦2, a low card to show an odd number of cards in the suit. East knows to hold up one round of diamonds but to take the second round as declarer is marked with a doubleton diamond (unless, of course, West had a singleton; but then declarer could not be prevented from taking four diamond tricks).</p> <p>Declarer will have three diamond winners in dummy that cannot be taken and should fail in 3N. South ought to take eight tricks – two spades, two hearts, a diamond and three clubs.</p>	West	North	East	South			Pass	2♣ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♦ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	2N <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass	3N	All pass		1 8 playing tricks, unbalanced; or 21-22, balanced 2 Relay 3 21-22, balanced			
West	North	East	South																		
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<p>♠ K J 7 ♥ A K J 6 4 ♦ K 7 ♣ K 7 2</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ 10 2 ♦ Q 10 6 4 2 ♣ J 10 9 8 4</p> <p>♠ A 10 9 8 6 3 ♥ 8 3 ♦ J 9 8 ♣ A Q</p> <p>♠ Q 5 4 ♥ Q 9 7 5 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 6 5 3</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td><td>2♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td><td>All pass</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>This is a very reasonable contract but a dynamic defence will see it fail by three tricks. East begins with ♠A and continues with ♠3. This play of a low card is a suit preference signal indicating an entry in the lower-ranking side suit (clubs). West ruffs and duly switches to a club. East cashes both ♠A and ♠Q (the order depending on whether ♠K is played by declarer). East follows with a third spade, playing ♠6, the lowest card, to reinforce the message of wanting a club returned. West ruffs, plays the third club and the defence has gathered in six tricks – one spade, two clubs, two spade ruffs and one club ruff.</p>	West	North	East	South				Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass	
West	North	East	South														
			Pass														
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥														
Pass	4♥	All pass															
<p>♠ 8 7 5 ♥ 2 ♦ 9 5 2 ♣ J 9 8 7 6 5</p> <p>♠ A J 3 2 ♥ K Q 8 ♦ 8 7 3 ♣ A 4 3</p> <p>♠ K Q 10 9 ♥ J 10 6 5 ♦ K Q J ♣ K Q</p> <p>♠ 6 4 ♥ A 9 7 4 3 ♦ A 10 6 4 ♣ 10 2</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>1N<sup>(1)</sup></td><td>Pass</td><td>2♣<sup>(2)</sup></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>All pass</td></tr></table> <p>1 12-14 2 Stayman</p> <p>North leads ♥2. South can work out that this is a singleton. On the bidding West is marked with two or three hearts (for the balanced opening bid of 1N). If West had a doubleton North would have had one too and led the higher of two cards. Therefore ♥2 is a clear singleton. South wins and plays ♥9, the play of a high heart to indicate an entry in the higher-ranking side suit (suit preference signal). North ruffs and returns a diamond. South wins with ♦A and returns another heart. North can ruff again and the contract is defeated.</p>	West	North	East	South	1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass				
West	North	East	South														
1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♣ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass														
2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass														

<p>♠A2 ♥A76 ♦Q432 ♣K432</p> <p>♠7643 ♥9843 ♦J ♣10987</p> <p>♠K5 ♥KQJ ♦AK76 ♣AQ65</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1N<sup>(1)</sup></td><td>Pass</td><td>6N<sup>(2)</sup></td></tr></table> <p>1 12-14 2 Knows of a combined 34-36 hcp</p> <p>East leads ♠Q. Declarer has eleven top tricks – two spades, three hearts, three diamonds and three clubs – and needs one of the minor suits to break 3-2. It's important for the defence to keep the same length as dummy. If declarer cashes three rounds of clubs East must hold on to all four diamonds. If, instead, declarer cashes the diamonds first West should hold on to all his clubs.</p> <p>This sort of defence can be more difficult when it's the hidden hand that holds the important length(s). But here the defenders have sight of the dummy's long minors.</p>	West	North	East	South		1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	6N <sup>(2)</sup>								
West	North	East	South														
	1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	6N <sup>(2)</sup>														
<p>♠942 ♥AQ942 ♦65 ♣765</p> <p>♠KQ7 ♥K6 ♦J83 ♣KQ1042</p> <p>♠63 ♥753 ♦AKQ74 ♣983</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>4♠</td><td>All pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>East's light opening will propel East West into a reasonable game but one that can be beaten with good signalling. South cashes three rounds of diamonds. On the third round North discards ♥9, a high card denoting encouragement in that suit (i.e. hearts). South switches to a heart and the contract is held to eight tricks.</p> <p>Had North lazily played, say ♥2, an alert South would have read that as discouraging in hearts. Now South would switch to a club believing that the setting trick may come from partner holding ♣A. Alas that's a disaster that allows declarer to throw all three hearts from the East hand on the solid clubs.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠	All pass		
West	North	East	South														
		1♠	Pass														
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass														
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<p>♠ A K Q ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ K 10 7 6 ♣ J 7 3</p> <p>♠ 10 9 5 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ A 9 4 3 ♣ 10 6 4</p> <p>♠ J 8 ♥ 10 4 3 ♦ Q J 8 2 ♣ A K Q 5</p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>3N</td><td>All pass</td><td>1N<sup>(1)</sup></td></tr></table> <p>1 12-14</p> <p>Declarer has seven top tricks – three spades and four clubs – and will play on diamonds to try to bring the total to nine. West should duck the first round of diamonds but win the second round. On this trick East can indicate the switch he wants. He plays ♣2, a low card that shows discouragement for clubs. That means West should switch to a major. But which one? Dummy's spades indicate that there is no future in that suit so the switch should be to hearts. A grateful East can win four hearts and, with the ace of diamonds in the bag, the contract is held to eight tricks.</p> <p>If West managed to find a heart lead East would take the first four tricks. On the fourth heart West could show encouragement for diamonds by playing ♦9 and East would switch to ♦5. This play isn't necessary on the hand because declarer will always have to play on diamonds to try to make game.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	3N	All pass	1N <sup>(1)</sup>								
West	North	East	South														
Pass	3N	All pass	1N <sup>(1)</sup>														
<p>♠ 5 3 ♥ K Q 10 9 3 ♦ 9 5 3 2 ♣ 8 2</p> <p>♠ K J 2 ♥ A J 2 ♦ 10 6 4 ♣ 7 6 4 3</p> <p>♠ A Q 10 9 7 ♥ 7 6 ♦ K Q J ♣ A J 5</p> <p>♠ 8 6 4 ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ A 8 7 ♣ K Q 10 9</p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>1N<sup>(1)</sup></td><td>Pass</td><td>2N<sup>(2)</sup></td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>3♠<sup>(3)</sup></td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠<sup>(4)</sup></td><td>All pass</td></tr></table> <p>1 6-9 2 17-18, game invitational 3 Shows 3spades and gives partner a choice of games 4 Confirms 5spades</p> <p>North has to be alert to help partner defeat this contract. South leads ♣K. Declarer wins and draws trumps in three rounds. On the third round North should discard ♥10, a high card that encourages partner to play a heart. Now when South wins ♦A that hand can switch to a heart. The defence should now prevail by taking one heart, one diamond and two clubs – North will gain an entry in hearts to fire a club through declarer's vulnerable club holding. If South mistakenly wins the diamond and cashes ♠Q it sets up East's ♠J for declarer's tenth trick.</p>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass	1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2N <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	3♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass	4♠ <sup>(4)</sup>	All pass
West	North	East	South														
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass														
1N <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2N <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass														
3♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass	4♠ <sup>(4)</sup>	All pass														