Lesson 14

Declarer Play techniques: *Duck*, *Unblock*, *Drive-Out*, *Hold-Up*

Book Pages 53-56 - section 4.1

Lesson Objectives

Techniques for planning the *play* - all *contracts* today will be in *No Trumps*

- Count *Top Tricks*
- *S.W.O.T.*
- *Drive out defender's high cards*
- Plan *entries* and *communication* between *hands*
- *Establish length winners*
- *Establish* a *long suit* by *giving up* a *trick* first
- The *hold-up* play
- Future lessons: *finessing* in *No Trumps*, *ruffing* in *trump contracts*

Count *Top Tricks*

After the *opening lead* and *dummy*'s *hand* laid down:

- Remind yourself of your *contract*
- How many *tricks* do you need to *make* your *contract*?
- How many *Top Tricks* have you across your two *hands*?
- How many extra *tricks* do you need to *establish*?

What is a *Top Trick*?

A Top Trick, is a *card* in a *suit* that cannot be beaten by another *card*, i.e. you can *retain control*

A x x	The *Ace* is a *Top Trick*
K x x	The *King* isn't a *Top Trick*, as it can be beaten by the missing *Ace*
A K J 10	Only the *Ace* and *King* are *Top Tricks*, the *Jack* can be beaten by the missing *Queen*
A K J 10 opposite Q x x x	Combined *honours* gives four *Top Tricks*

Count *Top Tricks*

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 10	♠ J 6 2
♥ K Q J 9	♥ A 3 2
♦ 4 3 2	♦ K J 10 9
♣ Q 10 4	♣ A K 2

Contract 3NT

What is the *contract*?

- We are in 3NT

How many *tricks* required?

- We need 9 *tricks*

How many *Top Tricks*?

Count *Top Tricks*

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 10	♠ J 6 2
♥ K Q J 9	♥ A 3 2
♦ 4 3 2	♦ K J 10 9
♣ Q 10 4	♣ A K 2

Contract 3NT

We have 9 *Top Tricks*:

- A♠ K♠
- A♥ K♥ Q♥ J♥
- No diamonds
- A♣ K♣ Q♣

Count *Top Tricks*

WEST	EAST
♠ J 10 9 3 2	♠ A 4
♥ A Q 10 3	♥ K 4
♦ K	♦ A Q J 10 3
♣ K Q 2	♣ A J 10 3

Contract 3NT

What is the contract?

- We are in 3NT

How many *tricks* required?

- We need 9 *tricks*

How many *Top Tricks*?

Count *Top Tricks*

WEST	EAST
♠ J 10 9 3 2	♠ A 4
♥ A Q 10 3	♥ K 4
♦ K	♦ A Q J 10 3
♣ K Q 2	♣ A J 10 3

Contract 3NT

We have 13 *Top Tricks*:

A♠

A♥ K♥ Q♥

A♦ K♦ Q♦ J♦ 10♦

A♣ K♣ Q♣ J♣

S.W.O.T. analysis

Strengths	Count your *Top Tricks* (*tricks* you can *make* without losing the *lead*)
Weakness	Work out how many *tricks* you are short of your target
Opportunities	Inspect each *suit* in turn looking for opportunities to *make* extra *tricks*
Threats	Think about what could go wrong and how you can to counter it

As *declarer* you perform your *S.W.O.T.* analysis as soon as *dummy's cards* are revealed, and before you play any *card*

Driving out *High Cards*

When to *drive out High Cards*

- Long *suit* missing *top honours*
- Count *Top Tricks* before *driving out high cards*
- We'll later cover *hold-up play* and the *danger hand*

No *Top Tricks* in Hearts	♠ ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ ♣	
♠ ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ ♥ 7 6 5 4 ♦ ♣	

Drive out the A♥ Establishes 4 heart extra *winners*	♠ ♥ K <u>Q J 10 9</u> ♦ ♣	
♠ ♥ A ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ 3 ♦ ♣
	♠ ♥ 7 6 5 4 ♦ ♣	

3NT by South *Lead*: 3♠ *Top Tricks*?	♠ A K 2 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ A K 3 2
♠ 3 ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S
	♠ Q 6 5 ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ 7 6 5

3NT by South *Lead*: 3♠ *Top Tricks*? *7 tricks,* 2 short	♠ A K 2 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ A K 3 2
♠ 3 ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S
Two *tricks* short How can we make two extra *tricks*?	♠ Q 6 5 ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ 7 6 5

Drive out their AK♥ with your QJ♥ 10♥ and 9♥ now *established winners*!	♠ A K 2 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ A K 3 2
♠ 3 ♥ A K ♦ ♣	N W E S
	♠ Q 6 5 ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ 7 6 5

3NT by South *Lead*: 3♥ *7 Top Tricks*?	♠ A K J ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ J 10 9 ♣ A K 3 2
♠ ♥ 3 ♦ ♣	N W E S
Two *tricks* short How can we make two extra *tricks*?	♠ Q 6 ♥ A Q J 10 ♦ Q 8 7 6 ♣ Q 4

Drive out K♥ with your Q♥ J♥ and 10♥ now *established winners*!	♠ A K J ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ J 10 9 ♣ A K 3 2
♠ ♥ K 3 ♦ ♣	N W E S
Do this early whilst you have the ability to *regain* the *lead* in other *suits*	♠ Q 6 ♥ A Q J 10 ♦ Q 8 7 6 ♣ Q 4

Planning for *Communication*

Bridge is a game about *communication*

During *play, communication* is all about:

- *Establishing tricks*
- Leaving *entries*

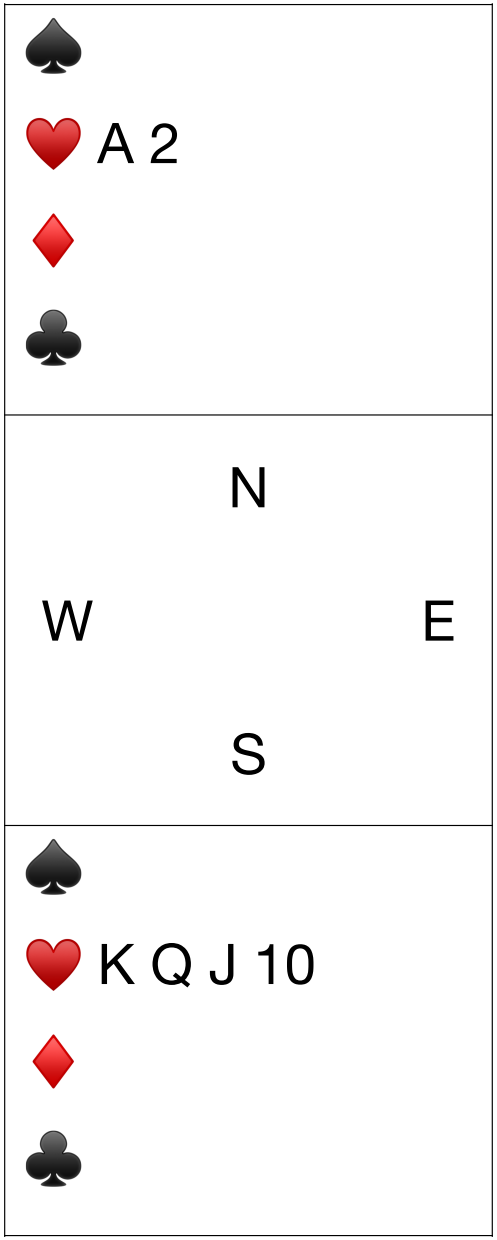
Count your *Top Tricks*

Unblock suits

- *Count* which *hand* is longer and *unblock short hand* first

Single suit examples...

How do you play these cards?


♠
♥ A 2
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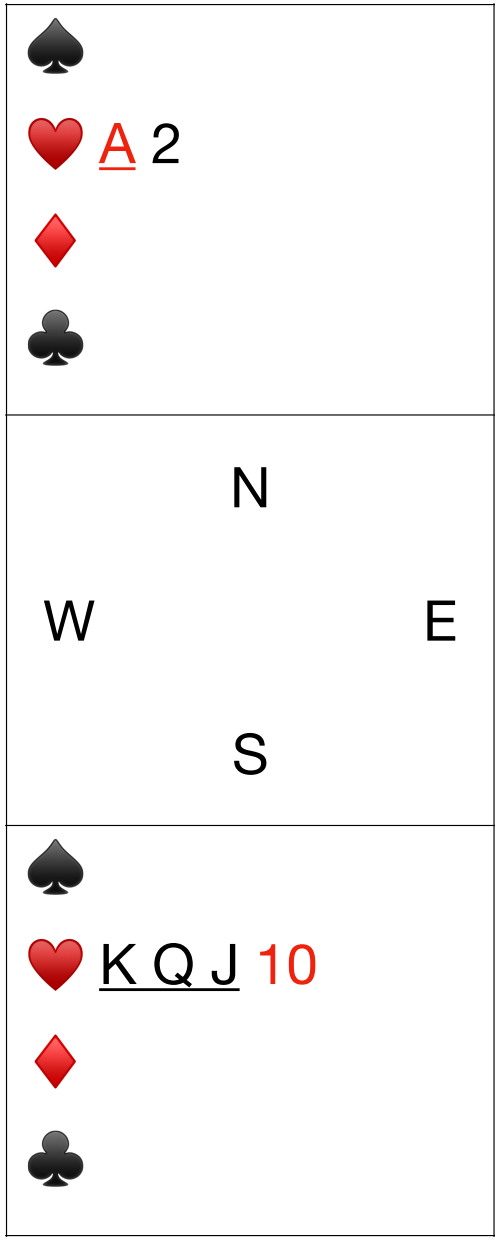
♥ K Q J 10
♦
♣


♠
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♥ K Q J 10
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♥ A Q 2

♦

♣

N

W E

S

♠

♥ K J 10 9 8

♦

♣

♠

♥ A Q 2

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♣

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W E

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♥ K J 10 9 8

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♥ K J 10 9 8

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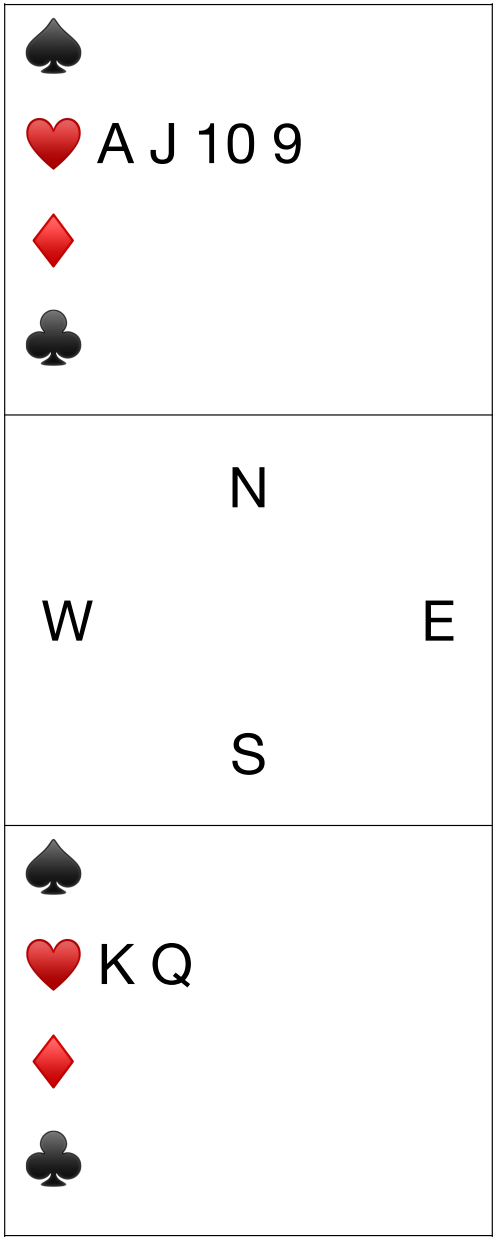
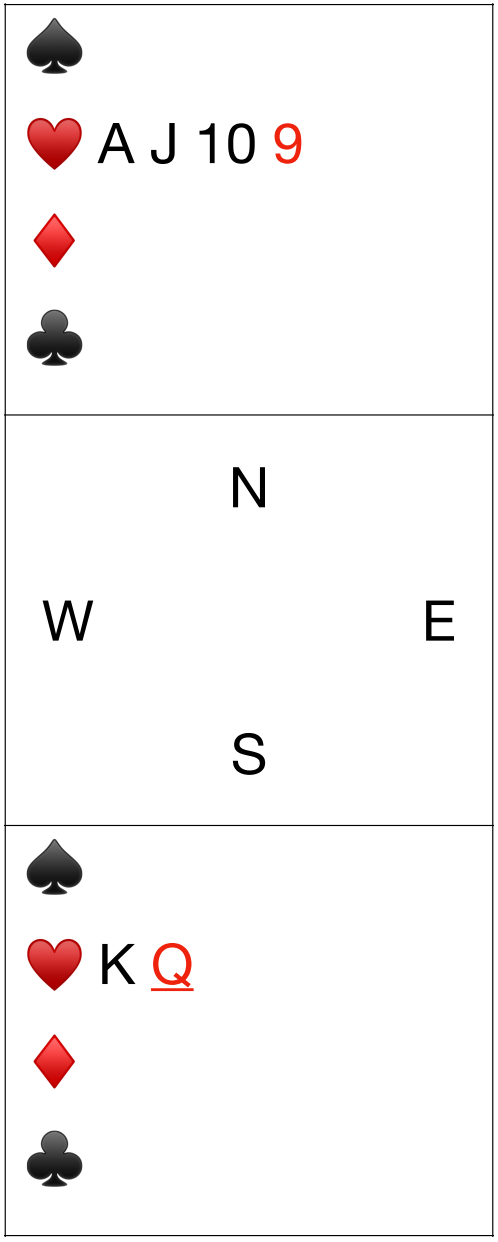
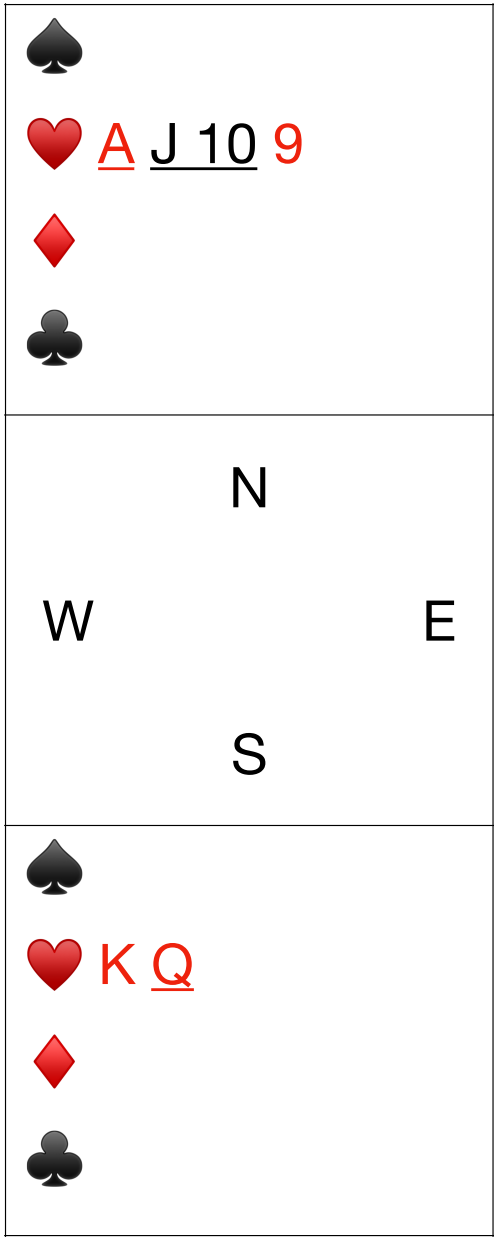

♥ A J 10 9
N
W E
S
♥ K Q


♥ A J 10 9
N
W E
S
♥ K Q


♥ A J 10 9
N
W E
S
♥ K Q

Make up the North-South *hands* with a pack of cards

3NT by South, *Lead*: Q♠

Top Tricks?

	♠ A 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ 3 2 ♣ J 10 7	
♠ Q ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A ♦ A K 9 7 5 ♣ K 3 2	

We are in 3NT

We need 9 *tricks*

We have 9 *Top Tricks*:

A♠ K♠

A♥ K♥ Q♥ J♥ 10♥

A♦ K♦

No clubs

What could possibly go wrong?

	♠ A 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ 3 2 ♣ J 10 7	
♠ Q ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A ♦ A K 9 7 5 ♣ K 3 2	

Winning 1st *trick* with A♠...

- *cashing* A♥ *blocks* hearts
- we can no longer *cash* the K♥ Q♥ J♥ 10♥ *winners*!

3NT only *5 tricks* = -200

	♠ A 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ 3 2 ♣ J 10 7	
♠ Q ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A ♦ A K 9 7 5 ♣ K 3 2	

Winning 1st *trick* with K♠...

- *retains* A♠ *entry* to *dummy*
- *cash* A♥ *discarding* 9♥
- *lead* to *dummy*'s A♠ *entry*
- hearts no longer *blocked*
- *cash* K♥ Q♥ J♥ 10♥

3NT 9 *tricks* = +400

	♠ A 3 2 ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ 3 2 ♣ J 10 7	
♠ Q ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A ♦ A K 9 7 5 ♣ K 3 2	

Make up the North-South *hands* with a pack of cards

3NT by South, *Lead*: Q♣

Top Tricks?

	♠ A K ♥ A 10 8 3 2 ♦ A J 10 3 ♣ A 2	
♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ Q	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ Q J 10 5 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ 9 8 4 2 ♣ K 3	

We are in 3NT

We need 9 *tricks*

We have 10 *Top Tricks*:

- A♠ K♠ Q♠ J♠ 10♠ 5♠
- A♥
- A♦
- A♣ K♣

What could possibly go wrong?

	♠ A K ♥ A 10 8 3 2 ♦ A J 10 3 ♣ A 2	
♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ Q	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ Q J 10 5 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ 9 8 4 2 ♣ K 3	

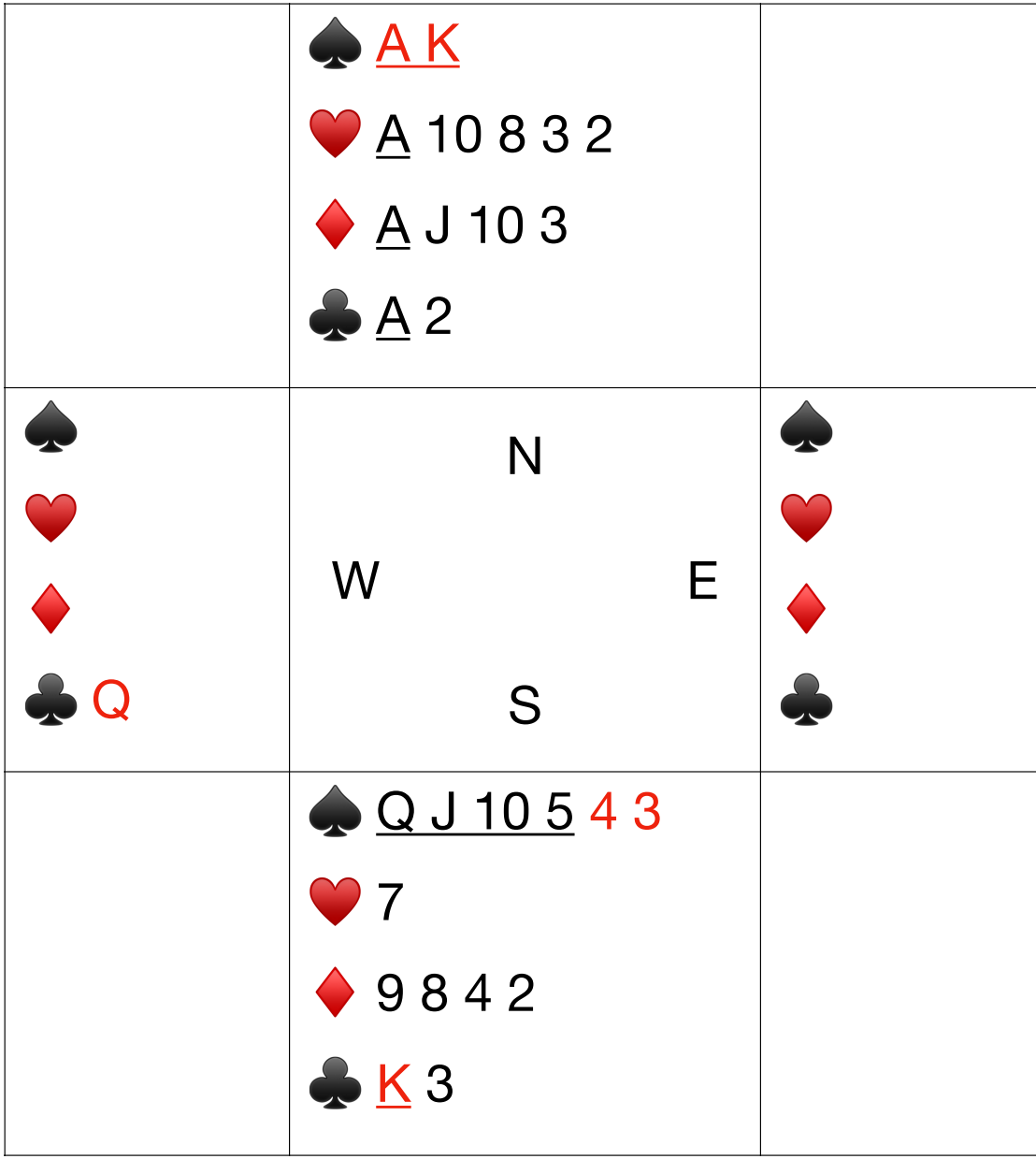
If we *win* with *declarer*'s K♣...

- we *win* the A♠ and K♠...
- then what?

Do we *win* Q♠ J♠ 10♠ 5♠?

- Can't get to *declarer*'s *hand*
- We only *make* A♥ A♦ A♣

3NT only 6 *tricks* = -150



Keep *entry* to *declarer's hand*

- *win* with *dummy's* A♣...
- *cash* the A♠ K♠ *tricks*
- *lead* 2♣ to *declarer's* K♣
- *cash* Q♠ J♠ T♠ 5♠ *tricks*
- *cash* A♥ A♦ *tricks*

3NT 10 *tricks* = +430

	♠ A K ♥ A 10 8 3 2 ♦ A J 10 3 ♣ A 2	
♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ Q	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ Q J 10 5 4 3 ♥ 7 ♦ 9 8 4 2 ♣ K 3	

Establish length winners

13 *cards* in a *suit*, how do they *split*?

- *suits* usually *split* nicely (3-3)
- if you have a 4-3 *fit* then 4th *card* is likely to be a *winner*
- (not % accurate, but the objective)

"The 13th *card*" in *No Trumps*

- If we *lead* a *suit* and there aren't any left...
- this is a *length winner*

	♠ A K Q 3 2	
♠ J 9	N W E S	♠ 10 8 7
	♠ 6 5 4	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 5-3 *split* missing 5 *cards*

Once you've played A♠ and K♠:

- as both *followed suit* then there must be a 3-2 *split*
- Q♠, 3♠ and 2♠ are all *winners*
- Giving 5 spade *winners*

	♠ A K Q 3	
♠ J 9 2	N W E S	♠ 10 8 7
	♠ 6 5 4	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 4-3 *split* missing 6 *cards*

Once you've played A♠ K♠ Q♠:

- as both *followed suit* then there was a 3-3 *split*
- 3♠ is therefore a *winner*
- Giving 4 spade *winners*

	♠ K Q 4	
♠ J 9 2	N W E S	♠ 10 8 7
	♠ A 6 5 3	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 4-3 *split* missing 6 *cards*

Once you've played K♠ Q♠ A♠:

- as both *followed suit* then there was a 3-3 *split*
- 3♠ is therefore a *winner*
- Giving 4 spade *winners*

	♠ A K Q J 6 3	
♠ 9 5	N W E S	♠ 10 8 7 4
	♠ 2	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 6-1 *split* missing 6 *cards*

Once you've played A♠ K♠:

- as both *follow suit* then you'll know that there is either a 2-4 or 3-3 *split*
- J♠ 6♠ 3♠ are all *winners*
- Giving 6 spade *winners*

	♠ A K Q 3 2	
♠ J	N W E S	♠ 10 9 8 7
	♠ 6 5 4	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 5-3 *split* missing 5 *cards*

Once you've played A♠ K♠:

- as West did *not follow suit* then you'll know that there is 1-4 *split*
- East will win the 10♠ over 3♠
- But you could then win the 2♠
- You may have to *lose the lead* early whilst you still have other *winners* to *establish* an extra *trick*
- Giving 4 spade *winners* - so long as you can *enter* North's *hand* via another *suit*

	♠ A K 8 3 2	
♠ J 9	N W E S	♠ Q 10 7
	♠ 6 5 4	

How many spade *winners*?

You have a 5-3 *split* missing 5 *cards*

But you can never win all your *tricks*

- You need to *lose a trick* early on to retain *control* of this *suit*
- So lose the 2♠ to West's J♠
- Hopefully you'll eventually *make* 4 spade *winners*: A♠ K♠ 8♠ 3♠

If you instead win the first *trick* with the A♠, then you may only *make* 2 spade *winners*: A♠ K♠

Establish **a long *suit* (give up the *lead*)**

Count *Top Tricks*

You may need to lose a *trick* early in a *suit* to keep *communications*

But there's no point going *off* in a *contract* where you already have enough *tricks* to *make* your *contract*

3NT by South, *Lead*: J♠

Top Tricks: Seven

Are there any extra *tricks*?

	♠ A ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ 8 5 3 2 ♣ A 8 7 6 5	
♠ J ♥ ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ A K 9 7 ♣ K 3 2	

Our longest *suit*?

- 4 + 4 = 8 diamonds
- **5** + 3 = 8 clubs - better!

What do *defenders* have:

- 13 - 8 = 5 diamonds
- 13 - 8 = 5 clubs - better!

If *defender*'s clubs *split* 3-2

...very likely (67.8%)

we can take a chance...

	♠ A ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ 8 5 3 2 ♣ A 8 7 6 5	
♠ J ♥ ♦ x x ♣ x x x	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ x x x ♣ x x
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ A K 9 7 ♣ K 3 2	

Duck the first club *lead* by:

- playing *low* from both *hands*
- might *make* extra club *tricks*

But, first, are there any risks?

❌ limited *entries* into *dummy*

- *unblock* clubs correctly

✅ *stoppers* in all *suits*

- can risk giving up *lead*

How many *tricks* do we *make*?

Why are clubs better than diamonds?

	♠ A ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ 8 5 3 2 ♣ A 8 7 6 5	
♠ J ♥ ♦ x x ♣ x x x	N W E S	♠ x ♥ ♦ x x x ♣ J x
	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ A K 9 7 ♣ K 3 2	

The *hold-up* play

Used to protect a *danger hand* e.g.:

- *defenders* have a long *suit*
- your *honours* are misplaced
- *defenders lead* through your *honours*

Example board...

3NT by South, *Lead*: K♥

- West has *led* the K♥ against our 3NT *contract*
- *Top of sequence* from the *longest suit?*
- West *holds:* ♥KQJx

How many *Top Tricks*?

	♠ K Q 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ K 5 4 2 ♣ K Q J 3	
♠ ♥ K ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ A 6 2 ♥ A 4 2 ♦ Q J 7 6 ♣ A 4 2	

Eight *Top Tricks*

- A♠ K♠ Q♠
- A♥
- No diamonds
- A♣ K♣ Q♣ J♣

Can we find the 9th *trick*?

	♠ K Q 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ K 5 4 2 ♣ K Q J 3	
♠ ♥ K ♦ ♣	N W E S	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ A 6 2 ♥ A 4 2 ♦ Q J 7 6 ♣ A 4 2	

Make up & *play* the *hands*

The missing *trick* can be *established* in diamonds by *driving out* the A♦

We must first *hold-up* the A♥ by playing *low* from *hand*

If we don't then when we *drive out* the A♦ East will *lead* a heart to *opener*'s four heart *winners*

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

West then *leads* Q♥

We *hold-up* the A♥ for a 2nd time by again playing *low* from *hand*

We still need to *drive out* the A♦ before we *cash* A♥

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

If West now *leads* the J♥

We *win* the trick with A♥

East has no more hearts

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

We then lead to the K♦

East *wins* with the A♦

East cannot *lead* to West's 9♥ 5♥ *winners*

If instead West *held* the A♦ then we always going to go *down* 1 *trick*

We *play* the *hand* assuming East *holds* A♦

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

We did not know whether West or East *held* the A♦

By holding up the A♥:

- in case East had it and hearts did not *split* 4-4
- we gave ourselves extra chances to *make* the *contract*

Only had 8 *Top Tricks*

But now *make* 10 *tricks*!

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

The *hold-up* play

- In a NT *contract* the *opponents* typically *lead* our weakest *suit* from the ***danger hand***
  - we *delay* as much as possible *winning* the *trick*
  - to sever *communications* between *defenders*
- Do not *hold-up* if *defenders* could switch to another weaker *suit*

Playing *hands*...

After *dummy* has been *faced*

Questions to ask yourself

- What *contract* am I in?
- How many *tricks* do I need?
- How many *Top Tricks* do I have?
- If not enough then how do I *make* more *tricks*?
- What could go wrong?

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

Board 1 : *Dealer*: North

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

- North should *lead* Q♥
- West sees 7 *top tricks*:
  - 2 x ♠, 2 x ♥, 3 x ♦, 0 x ♣
- West can *make* 9 *tricks* by *winning* K♥ and playing Q♣
- North need not *win* his ace straightaway
- If South *wins* K♣ first and *returns* a heart (*partner's lead*), West *wins* A♥ and plays J♣
- North *wins* A♣ and can *cash* two heart *tricks* but West *makes* the rest

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

Board 2 : *Dealer*: East

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

- West should *lead* K♥
- South can see ten *top tricks*:
  - 4 x ♠, 1 x ♥, 0 x ♦, 5 x ♣
- South will *win* A♥ and must *cash* K♣ then *lead* 9♣
- That way five club *tricks* can be *cashed*, followed by four spades
- ***Cash* the *honour* from the *short hand* first**

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

Board 3 : *Dealer*: South

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

- East should *lead* Q♠
- North can see four *top tricks*:
  - 2 x ♠, 1 x ♥, 1 x ♦, 0 x ♣
- North can *make* seven *tricks* by *driving out* A♣ before *cashing* the *winners* in other *suits*
- North *makes* two spades, one heart, one diamond, and three clubs

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

Board 4 : Dealer: West

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

- South should lead 6♥
- North plays Q♥ - this sets up four heart winners for N/S
- East can see seven top tricks:
  - 3 x ♠, 1 x ♥, 3 x ♦, 0 x ♣
- A club trick could be set up by driving out A♣, but N/S can cash four heart winners
- Instead hope diamonds break 3-2
- Cash the K♦ and play 4♦ to dummy
- Unless diamonds break 5-0 or 4-1 there will be five diamond tricks

Summary

What you have learnt in this lesson

- Counting *Top Tricks*
- *Driving out defender's high cards*
- Planning *entries* and *communication* between *hands*
- *Establishing length winners*
- *Establishing* a *long suit* by giving up a *trick* first
- The *hold-up* play