

10/08/2020 Hand of the Week 26: Suit combinations

Card play this week! You bid to 3NT and get a club lead.

D		N med029		W		N		E		S	
9		♠ 976 ♥ KJ3 ♦ AQ10873 ♣ 10		P		2♦		P		2NT	
W Sue OMahon				P		3♣		P		3NT	
				P		P		P			
		♣ 7									
		S M27Evans									
		♠ K ♥ A986 ♦ K96 ♣ AK842									
				3NT S						NS: 0 EW: 0	

After thanking the opponents for not leading a spade how do you plan the play?

You should make 2 clubs and 2 hearts and 6 diamonds for 10 tricks. Seems easy, but take another look!

Usually the advice is to play high cards from the short holding first to avoid blocking the suit, but take a moment before doing that here. There is a problem if the suit breaks 4-0, in which case you have to pick up the J♦ via a finesse.

You can cater for a 4-0 split with either opponent by playing the A♦ from hand first. If both opponents play a diamond there is no worry, but if one shows out you still have the option to finesse in either direction. By playing the K♦ first you would lose out if East held 4 diamonds.

The full hand:

D		N med029		W		N		E		S	
9		♠ 976 ♥ KJ3 ♦ AQ10873 ♣ 10		P		2♦		P		2NT	
W Sue OMahon				P		3♣		P		3NT	
♠ A105 ♥ 5 ♦ J542 ♣ QJ975				P		P		P			
		S M27Evans									
		♠ K ♥ A986 ♦ K96 ♣ AK842									
				E Barbara Bi							
				♠ QJ8432 ♥ Q10742 ♦ ♣ 63							
										3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0	

Lets try another combinations

N	med029
♠	976
♥	KJ3
♦	AQ8732
♣	10
S	M27Evans
♠	K
♥	A986
♦	K96
♣	AK842

Missing the Jack and 10 you would have to take 2 finesses if the suit breaks 4-0.

In this situation you will always lose a trick if the suit is 4-0 with East. The play in this situation is to cash the K♦.

If East shows out you can now finesse the diamonds, return to South with one of your Aces, and take a second finesse against West to pick up the suit.

If both opponents follow suit on the first round of diamonds you are home and dry!

If your contract looks safe think about possible bad suit breaks that might need you to play safe!