

Play & Learn



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Don't miss a trick

Here's a defensive problem that continues our theme from last month. The auction:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

You are East. Partner leads the ♣Q. What is your plan?

Dummy

♠ A K 5
♥ 9 3
♦ K Q 10 7 6
♣ 7 5 4

You

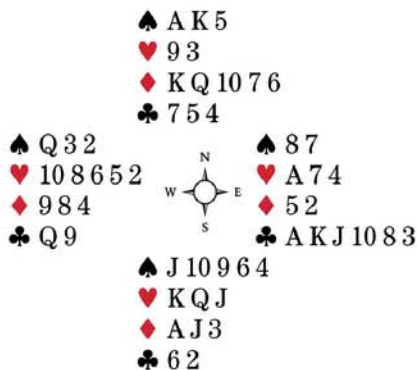
♠ 8 7
♥ A 7 4
♦ 5 2
♣ A K J 10 8 3

You know partner's lead is from shortness because you have the ♣J and partner would lead low from three or more cards in your suit. You aren't sure if the ♣Q is a singleton or top of a doubleton, so your best play at trick one is the king. On the ♣A, partner follows with the 9.

You've won two tricks and expect to win the ♥A. The defenders make a plan just as declarer does. The defenders' goal is to take every trick possible. You want to defeat declarer, but not every contract can be defeated. At pairs, you can often score well by preventing overtricks. On this deal, is there a chance of defeating 4♠? Do

you have a plan?

Here's what you know: South carried on to game once opener made a minimum raise, so you can expect South to have at least 13 points in high cards and distribution. Partner has already shown up with the ♣Q. If you think only in terms of high cards, there isn't room for partner to have much else, but we also count distribution, so partner could have one more card. What if it's the ♠Q? With the top spades in dummy, there's a good chance declarer can finesse partner out of that card. Leading a third club would let partner overruff with the ♠Q and could produce the setting trick. Was that your defense? That plan works great on this layout of the unseen cards:



If you continue with a third club, playing for partner to be able to overruff declarer, you will set 4♠. If you led a club at trick three, don't go doing a victory dance yet. That could allow declarer to make the contract if his hand is as follows:

♠ Q J 10 9 6 4 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A J ♣ 6 2.

Note that if declarer has that hand, your partner has the ♥K. Declarer will ruff the third club high, pull trumps and throw his hearts away on the diamonds.

Don't guess what to do. Cash the ♥A. If your partner encourages, continue hearts. If not, play a third club. On the given deal, partner will play the ♥2 under your ace, so you will take your only other chance to defeat 4♠ by playing a third round of clubs. □

Charity Foundation Election Notice

ACBL members interested in running for the Board of Trustees of the ACBL Charity Foundation have until Oct. 15 to submit a written declaration of candidacy.

The ACBL Board of Directors will elect one member of the Foundation's five-member board for a three-year term at the fall board meeting in Phoenix AZ. Trustees do not receive expense reimbursement.

Candidates should send a declaration of candidacy containing name, address, player number and biographical information to ACBL Charity Foundation, 6575 Windchase Blvd., Horn Lake, MS 38637 or by email (with "Statement of Candidacy" in the subject line) to kelley.mcguire@acbl.org.